



# General Assembly

Seventy-fifth session

Official Records

Distr.: General  
9 December 2020

Original: English

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## Sixth Committee

### Summary record of the 1st meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 6 October 2020, at 10 a.m.

*Chair:* Mr. Skoknic Tapia ..... (Chile)

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*The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.*

### **Agenda item 5: Election of the officers of the Main Committees**

1. **The Chair** invited the Committee to take note of the decision on his election as Chair and on the election of other officers of the Sixth Committee for the seventy-fifth session adopted on 11 June 2020 through a silence procedure (no-objection procedure), pursuant to General Assembly decision 74/555 and taking into account the provisions of General Assembly decision 74/557. He said that, under that procedure, the Committee was deemed to have elected Ms. Pelkiö (Czechia), endorsed by the Group of Eastern European States, and Mr. Bhandari (Nepal), endorsed by the Group of Asia-Pacific States, as Vice-Chairs, and Mr. Korbieh (Ghana), endorsed by the Group of African States, as Rapporteur.

2. *It was so decided.*

3. **The Chair** said that the nomination of Ms. Weiss Ma'udi (Israel) for the remaining post of Vice-Chair had been endorsed by the Group of Western European and Other States. He took it that the Committee wished to elect Ms. Weiss Ma'udi (Israel) as Vice-Chair.

4. *It was so decided.*

5. *Ms. Weiss Ma'udi (Israel) was elected Vice-Chair by acclamation.*

6. **Mr. Nasimfar** (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that it was unfortunate that a representative of an occupying regime that had no respect for the rule of law had been nominated to serve as Vice-Chair of the Sixth Committee, which was the main platform for the development of international law. His Government dissociated itself from the election that had just taken place. Furthermore, his delegation's participation in the work of the Committee did not in any way imply an acknowledgement of the legitimacy of the Israeli regime or any recognition thereof.

7. **Mr. Al Tarsha** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that Israel should not hold any positions in the United Nations, having consistently violated international law and the resolutions of the Organization. His delegation's participation in the proceedings was not a recognition of Israel and was rather aimed at ensuring the success of the Committee in its work.

### **Organization of work (A/C.6/75/1; A/C.6/75/L.1)**

8. **The Chair** drew attention to the allocation of agenda items to the Committee, as contained in document A/C.6/75/1, and to the note by the Secretariat entitled "Organization of work" (A/C.6/75/L.1), in

particular paragraphs 3 to 7 concerning the status of documentation and the proposed programme of work. He said that, although the Committee, during the seventy-fourth session of the General Assembly, had adopted a provisional programme of work for the current session, the Bureau had recently circulated its recommendation for a revised programme of work in the light of the entirely new set of working arrangements introduced by the Organization in response to the ongoing coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. Under the revised version of the proposed programme of work, the Committee would seek to consider all the agenda items allocated to it at the current session and would hold its plenary meetings in person during the time slots allocated to it for such meetings. Meetings of the working groups would be held virtually, using an online platform with remote simultaneous interpretation, and informal consultations on draft resolutions would also be held virtually, without interpretation. Such arrangements were being implemented on an exceptional basis and were not intended as a change to the traditional pattern and format of the Committee's meetings.

9. The Committee would not engage in an extensive debate on the report of the International Law Commission at the current session, since the Commission's annual session had been postponed. Even so, the programme of work was extremely ambitious. The Bureau had therefore recommended that the Committee approve time limits for the delivery of statements and that delegations consider making the full versions of their statements available online in the eStatements section of the *Journal of the United Nations*. He took it that it was the wish of the Committee to limit statements delivered in a national capacity to 5 minutes and statements by regional groups to 10 minutes during the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly, without prejudice to future sessions.

10. *It was so decided.*

11. **The Chair**, referring to the programme of work, said that two events would be organized in place of the meetings and events that usually took place in connection with International Law Week. A high-level virtual event would be held, with remote simultaneous interpretation, to celebrate the seventy-fifth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations, under the general theme "The UN at 75: International law and the future we want". A second virtual event would feature presentations by the Special Rapporteurs of the International Law Commission, followed by a question and answer segment. That event would fulfil the request set out in General Assembly decision 74/566 that the Commission closely engage with the Sixth Committee

during the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly.

12. In accordance with established practice, the proposed programme of work would be applied with flexibility in the light of the progress made by the Committee. When the Committee had exhausted the list of speakers on an item on its agenda, and conference services were still available, it would begin consideration of the next item on its agenda.

13. He encouraged sponsors and coordinators of draft resolutions to prepare zero draft versions of their proposals for draft resolutions, and in the interests of time, to circulate them in advance of the debate on the respective agenda items. The respective coordinators would be invited to take the floor, immediately following the plenary debate of each agenda item, to briefly introduce the zero draft of the proposed draft resolution, where possible. Time permitting, delegations would also be afforded the opportunity to provide any initial reactions to the proposals of the coordinators. Coordinators were encouraged to convene at least one open-ended meeting for informal consultations after the plenary debate. All informal consultations would be announced in advance, including in the *Journal*. The texts of draft resolutions should be submitted for processing in good time, preferably no later than one week after the completion of the debate of the Committee on each item or the completion of the work of the relevant working group, as the case might be. The Committee would continue its previous practice of taking action on draft resolutions as soon as they were ready for adoption. Such action would always be announced, in advance, in the *Journal*.

14. He took it that the Committee wished to proceed accordingly.

15. *It was so decided.*

16. **Ms. Zabolotskaya** (Russian Federation) said that the circumstances of the current session were, to a large extent, beyond the control of Member States. The Committee should nonetheless ensure that its programme of work was in line with the rules of procedure of the General Assembly and that delegations were able to engage in negotiations in person. With regard to the note by the Secretariat (A/C.6/75/L.1), in particular paragraph 7 thereof, the Committee must agree, before the working groups were approved, that any meetings held by the working groups in a virtual format would be considered informal meetings, since formal meetings could not be held virtually. While technical updates or postponements could be agreed on in writing, it was essential for delegations to discuss any substantive changes to draft resolutions in person. She

therefore asked for any time remaining during in-person plenary meetings to be used to that end.

17. **Ms. Llano** (Nicaragua) said that, as it was possible to hold in-person meetings while observing health and safety protocols and without endangering the transparent, inclusive and consensus-based working methods of the Committee, it was of the utmost importance that the Committee members be given sufficient time during in-person meetings to discuss draft resolutions.

18. **Mr. Liu Yang** (China) said that the COVID-19 pandemic posed many challenges to the work of the Committee, including its ability to hold in-person meetings. He hoped that every minute available during in-person meetings would be used to maximum effect. Since such meetings were better than virtual meetings for negotiating draft resolutions, it would be helpful if some of the time left over during plenary meetings could be used for negotiations. He also suggested that the coordinators use a written procedure, rather than organizing informal discussions, to reach agreement on draft resolutions requiring only a technical update. He agreed with the representative of the Russian Federation that working group meetings held in a virtual format would have the status of informal meetings.

19. **Mr. Al Tarsha** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that his delegation associated itself with the position expressed by the Russian Federation.

20. **The Chair** said that the solution he had presented to the Committee was the best option the Bureau had found in the current circumstances, considering all the limitations faced, including in relation to the number of in-person meetings, and having sought to take into account the wishes of all delegations. The working groups would report to the Committee as a whole at a plenary meeting.

21. Turning to the question of the establishment of the working groups, he drew attention to paragraphs 8 to 12 of the note by the Secretariat (A/C.6/75/L.1) and noted that a total of seven working group meetings had been suggested. With regard to agenda item 77, "Criminal accountability of United Nations officials and experts on mission", it was his understanding that, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 74/181, the Committee wished to establish a working group on the topic, to be chaired by Mr. Molefe (South Africa), and that the working group would be open to all States Members of the United Nations or members of specialized agencies or of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

22. *It was so decided.*

23. **The Chair**, turning to agenda item 87, “The scope and application of the principle of universal jurisdiction”, said that it was his understanding that, in accordance with General Assembly resolution [74/192](#), the Committee wished to establish a working group on the topic, to be chaired by Mr. Carazo (Costa Rica), that the working group would be open to all Member States and that relevant observers to the General Assembly would be invited to participate in its work.

24. *It was so decided.*

25. **The Chair**, referring to agenda item 114, “Measures to eliminate international terrorism”, said that it was his understanding that, in accordance with General Assembly resolution [74/194](#), the Committee wished to establish a working group, to be chaired by Mr. Perera (Sri Lanka), with a view to finalizing the process on the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism as well as discussions on the item included in its agenda by General Assembly resolution [54/110](#) concerning the question of convening a high-level conference under the auspices of the United Nations. The working group would be open to all States Members of the United Nations or members of specialized agencies or of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

26. *It was so decided.*

27. **The Chair** said that, in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, no resolution involving expenditure should be recommended by a committee for approval by the General Assembly unless it was accompanied by an estimate of expenditures prepared by the Secretary-General. It was therefore imperative for the Committee to allow sufficient time for the preparation and consideration of estimates of expenditure arising from draft resolutions. In that connection, all draft resolutions with financial implications should be submitted to the Fifth Committee by 12 November 2020, except for draft resolutions relating to agenda items scheduled to be considered after that date.

28. **Ms. Guardia González** (Cuba), speaking also on behalf of Iran (Islamic Republic of), the Russian Federation, the Syrian Arab Republic and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), said that the legitimate right of all States Members of the United Nations to participate in its work on an equal footing and without discrimination should be upheld. The increasingly systematic application by the host country of the Agreement between the United Nations and the United States of America regarding the Headquarters of the United Nations in a discriminatory fashion was undermining the independent exercise of the sovereign

rights and privileges of certain Member States. By imposing travel and movement restrictions on representatives of Member States, insisting on the relocation of personnel of a mission amid the COVID-19 pandemic, breaching the inviolability of diplomatic property, engaging in the illegal and arbitrary expulsion of members of permanent missions and making it difficult to honour financial commitments to the United Nations, the host country aimed to prevent Member States from fully exercising their rights, including to vote.

29. The United States of America was abusing its status as host country, in particular by delaying or even denying the issuance of visas, thereby preventing delegates from gaining access to United Nations Headquarters. The failure to issue visas to the 18 delegates of a Member State was unacceptable, as was the unprecedented decision to deny a visa to a foreign minister. Equally unacceptable was the issuance of visas that prevented delegates from travelling in the course of their mission in New York.

30. The practices of the host country were in violation of the Charter of the United Nations, the United Nations Headquarters Agreement, in particular sections 11, 12, 13 and 27, related norms of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations and the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations. The affected Member States had repeatedly raised their concerns, including through General Assembly resolution [74/195](#), but to no avail. The United Nations Legal Counsel had recently noted the lack of progress in talks with representatives of the host country. Member States must ensure that the work of the United Nations was not held hostage to political agendas. The Secretary-General should use his powers to ensure that the principle of the sovereign equality of States was respected and to guarantee the equal and non-discriminatory participation of Member States in the work of the Organization. To that end, section 21 of the United Nations Headquarters Agreement should be triggered. The Chair of the Committee should also follow up on the issue in conjunction with the relevant United Nations authorities.

#### **Agenda item 114: Measures to eliminate international terrorism ([A/75/176](#))**

31. **Mr. Al Habib** (Islamic Republic of Iran), speaking on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, said that the Movement unequivocally condemned the crime of terrorism and rejected it in all its forms and manifestations, including acts in which States were directly or indirectly involved. Terrorist acts were a flagrant violation of international law, including

international humanitarian and human rights law, in particular the right to life. Such acts endangered the territorial integrity and stability of States and national, regional and international security, and had adverse consequences for the economic and social development of States.

32. Terrorism should not be equated with the legitimate struggle of peoples under colonial or alien domination and foreign occupation to achieve self-determination and national liberation, nor should it be associated with any religion, nationality, civilization or ethnic group, and any such association should not be used to justify measures such as profiling of suspects and intrusion on privacy. The brutalization of peoples under foreign occupation must be denounced as the gravest form of terrorism, and the use of State power to prevent peoples struggling against such occupation from exercising their inalienable right to self-determination should be condemned.

33. States should honour their obligation under international law and international humanitarian law to combat terrorism by prosecuting or extraditing the perpetrators of terrorist acts and preventing them from organizing, instigating or financing terrorist acts against other States from within or outside their territory. They should themselves refrain from encouraging activities within their territory directed towards the commission of such acts; allowing their territory to be used for the planning, training or financing of such acts; and supplying weapons which could be used for that purpose.

34. The Non-Aligned Movement rejected actions, measures and the use or threat of use of force directed against its members by another State under the pretext of combating terrorism or in pursuit of political aims, including by categorizing them directly or indirectly as sponsors of terrorism. It also firmly rejected the unilateral establishment of lists of States accused of supporting terrorism, a practice that was inconsistent with international law and in itself constituted a form of psychological and political terrorism. States should also refuse to provide political, diplomatic, moral or material support for terrorism and should ensure that the perpetrators, organizers or facilitators of terrorist acts did not abuse refugee or any other legal status.

35. The Movement expressed grave concern over the acute and growing threat posed by foreign terrorist fighters and emphasized the need for States to address the issue, including through the fulfilment of their international obligations. In that connection, it called upon the United Nations to facilitate capacity-building in accordance with existing mandates to assist States,

upon request, in addressing the problem. The Movement was also deeply concerned at terrorist groups' misrepresentation of religion to justify terrorism and violent extremism. It was therefore imperative to counter terrorist narratives through a comprehensive and international framework and to address terrorism in an effective and comprehensive manner, including by engaging with community leaders and clerics of all denominations.

36. The Movement called upon all States to respect human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism, in accordance with the rule of law and their obligations under international law. It called upon the Security Council sanctions committees to further streamline their listing and delisting procedures by making the position of the Ombudsperson independent, transparent and permanent.

37. The Movement reiterated its call for the convening of an international summit conference under the auspices of the United Nations to formulate a joint organized response to terrorism and to identify its root causes. It once again noted the importance of concluding a draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism and called upon States to cooperate in resolving the outstanding issues. The Movement reaffirmed its support for the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and the primary responsibility of States for its implementation, including through cooperation with the Office of Counter-Terrorism and the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre. The Office of Counter-Terrorism should help to bring greater coherence and effectiveness to United Nations counter-terrorism activities, in particular by addressing, upon request, the capacity-building needs of States through assistance tailored to the specific realities of the States concerned, taking into account the centrality of national ownership.

38. **Ms. Abu-ali** (Saudi Arabia), speaking on behalf of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), said that the members of the Organization condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, regardless of the motivations and by whomever and wherever committed. Terrorism was a flagrant violation of international law, including international humanitarian law and human rights law, in particular the right to life. Terrorist acts endangered the territorial integrity and stability of States as well as national, regional and international security. OIC reiterated its respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of all States and reaffirmed that terrorism should not be associated with any religion, race, faith or society. It strongly condemned all attempts to link Islam with terrorism, as such attempts played into the hands of

terrorists and promoted religious hatred, discrimination and hostility against Muslims. OIC also firmly rejected the blaming of Muslim minorities for the local transmission of COVID-19. It reiterated the importance of promoting dialogue, understanding and cooperation among religions, cultures and civilizations for peace and harmony in the world, and welcomed all international and regional initiatives and efforts to that end.

39. OIC reaffirmed its commitment to strengthening international cooperation in the fight against terrorism. It was essential to adopt a comprehensive approach by addressing the root causes of terrorism, including the unlawful use of force, aggression, foreign occupation, festering international disputes, and political marginalization and alienation. It was also necessary to combat all terrorist groups and organizations, wherever they existed, without any distinction. OIC requested the Secretary-General, in cooperation with Member States, to work with the relevant United Nations mechanisms to broaden the application of sanctions imposed pursuant to Security Council resolution 1267 (1999) to include individuals and entities associated with anti-Muslim extremist groups in order to respond to that evolving threat of terrorism. Member States should enhance their cooperation and coordination with the aim of prosecuting the perpetrators of terrorist acts; preventing the provision of funds, safe havens, assistance or weapons to terrorist groups and organizations; and refuting their narratives and ideologies. OIC reiterated the need to distinguish between terrorism and the exercise of the legitimate right of peoples to resist foreign occupation, a distinction duly reflected in international law, international humanitarian law, Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations and General Assembly resolution 46/51.

40. The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy was a living document that should be updated and re-examined regularly and implemented in a balanced manner. It was important to enhance capacity-building to assist Member States in fulfilling their obligations under United Nations resolutions by increasing the resources for United Nations entities and departments entrusted with that task and by enhancing bilateral technical assistance and technology transfer. The OIC recognized the role played by the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre in that regard. It looked forward to the convening of a second United Nations High-Level Conference of Heads of Counter-Terrorism Agencies of Member States.

41. **Mr. Ke** (Cambodia), speaking on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), said that international terrorism was a global threat that undermined international peace and security, hindered

sustainable development and undercut global economic prosperity. ASEAN strongly condemned and rejected terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and would work tirelessly to eradicate it by bringing perpetrators to justice.

42. The COVID-19 pandemic and the ensuing economic recession had exacerbated the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism while diverting resources away from vital services for victims of terrorism. ASEAN supported the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which would benefit the global economy while addressing the root causes of violence. It also supported enhanced policy coordination and information-sharing in relation to travel monitoring and border control, including through the use of technological advancements, as discussed during the 2020 Virtual Counter-Terrorism Week. Furthermore, the interconnectedness of digital social networks necessitated greater coordination of efforts to prevent the spread of violent extremism through social media channels that made it easy for terrorists to target and radicalize susceptible individuals online. The ASEAN Plan of Action to Prevent and Counter the Rise of Radicalization and Violent Extremism 2018–2025 was aimed at further strengthening cooperation within ASEAN with a view to developing integrated, evidence-based approaches to countering radicalization in the region and beyond.

43. Countering terrorism required comprehensive, well-coordinated responses from the international community, with the United Nations leading the way forward. ASEAN therefore fully supported the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and looked forward to its seventh review during the current session. ASEAN also appreciated the work of the Office of Counter-Terrorism and the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate and their provision of technical support to Member States. The ASEAN Comprehensive Plan of Action on Counter-Terrorism together with the ASEAN Convention on Counter-Terrorism provided a framework for regional cooperation to prevent and suppress extremism and deepen counter-terrorism coordination.

44. No terrorist act could be justified in any circumstances. Furthermore, terrorism could not and must not be associated with any religion, nationality, civilization or ethnic group. The members of ASEAN had been actively promoting those ideals at the national and regional levels. The region had shown continued commitment to addressing the complex challenges posed by terrorism, violent extremism conducive to the spread of terrorism and transnational crime against the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic, which required



broad cross-sectoral cooperation between government agencies, engagement with local communities with a view to developing strategies to counter terrorism and violent extremist narratives and encouraging the adoption of tailored approaches that promoted social inclusion. ASEAN was also committed to deepening regional cooperation to counter money-laundering and the financing of terrorism.

45. ASEAN would continue to play an active role in addressing the growing threat of terrorism across the globe. Its members were prepared to work with other delegations to refine and improve the global counter-terrorism architecture, including with a view to achieving consensus on the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism.

46. **Ms. Gauci** (Observer for the European Union), speaking also on behalf of the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia and Turkey; the stabilization and association process country Bosnia and Herzegovina; and, in addition, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, said that the European Union was taking a comprehensive approach to combating and preventing terrorism and violent extremism in full compliance with the rule of law and with international law, in particular international human rights law, international humanitarian law and international refugee law. In addition to other key challenges requiring resolute action, a special effort needed to be made to assess the potential effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on terrorist activities, as well as on efforts to prevent and counter violent extremism and terrorism, and to identify possible targeted action.

47. A strong human rights-based approach was needed to prevent and counter violent extremism and terrorism. Counter-terrorism must never be used as a pretext for violating human rights. The European Union supported a “whole-of-society” approach that was gender-responsive and provided opportunities for young people to strengthen their resilience against radicalization; addressed the underlying conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism and violent extremism; and promoted non-violent means for addressing grievances. Counter-terrorism measures must not impede exclusively humanitarian activities. To that end, the European Union was committed to developing best practices and measures to preserve the humanitarian space. It would also work to address the shrinking of the civic space as an unintended consequence of, or as a result of arbitrary or disproportionate application of, counter-terrorism measures.

48. To address both domestic and international threats, the European Union and its member States were strengthening law enforcement and information exchange, preventing the exploitation of the Internet for terrorist purposes and cutting off the sources of terrorism financing. In recognition of the integral part that assistance to victims of terrorism and their families played in its counter-terrorism efforts, the European Union had established the EU Centre of Expertise for Victims of Terrorism. At the international level, the Union was working with countries in the Middle East, North Africa, the Sahel, the Horn of Africa, the Western Balkans, and Central, South and South-East Asia to help build capacities, encourage mutual learning and find areas for cooperation, including judicial cooperation.

49. The European Union would continue to support a strong and efficient United Nations that drove global action to prevent and counter violent extremism and terrorism through a balanced approach to the four pillars of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. The European Union was encouraged by the “All-of-United-Nations” approach to countering terrorism and preventing violent extremism. In that regard, close coordination between the Office of Counter-Terrorism and the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre was essential. There was an urgent need for counter-terrorism structures of the United Nations to implement human rights checks and balances involving the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism. The European Union fully supported the Office of the Ombudsperson of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions [1267 \(1999\)](#) [1989 \(2011\)](#) and [2253 \(2015\)](#) concerning Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) (Da‘esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities, and remained committed to strengthening due process and ensuring clear and fair procedures under all sanctions regimes.

50. The European Union had made clear when it agreed to postpone the review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy that no negotiations should be undertaken in the General Assembly on substantive counter-terrorism issues before the review was completed. It therefore considered that a technical rollover of the resolution under the current item was the best way forward.

51. More detailed comments on those issues could be found in her written statement, available in the eStatements section of the *Journal*.

52. **Mr. Kvalheim** (Norway), speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden), said that terrorism and violent extremism posed a major challenge to the shared values of peace, security, human rights, and the rule of law. ISIL and Al-Qaida were using the COVID-19 pandemic to strengthen their narratives and to incite mistrust in Governments. Their continued attacks and attempts at destabilization in the Sahel were particularly worrying. Right-wing extremists had also used the pandemic to spread conspiracy theories online and recruit new followers. Disadvantaged or socially isolated people were more likely to fall for violent extremist propaganda whatever the underlying ideology. The global threat posed by terrorism and violent extremism required a global response, with human rights, democracy and the rule of law at its core and the United Nations playing a leading role.

53. The Nordic countries were members of the Group of Friends of Preventing Violent Extremism, which sought to raise awareness of the conditions that fuelled the spread of violent extremism and terrorism and to integrate the prevention of violent extremism across the United Nations system. The Group welcomed the efforts of the Secretary-General, the Office of Counter-Terrorism and the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate to place issues relating to gender, terrorism and violent extremism on the Organization's agenda.

54. A whole-of-society and gendered approach needed to be taken to preventing terrorism and violent extremism. In particular, while women participated in the work of terrorist organizations as campaigners, recruiters, financiers and perpetrators of terrorist acts, strengthening women's political and economic rights could empower them to play a vital role in countering violent extremism. In marking the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of Security Council resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#) on women and peace and security and the fifth anniversary of the adoption of resolution [2242 \(2015\)](#) on the integration of gender in counter-terrorism work, Member States should recall the importance of including a gender-sensitive response in their efforts to prevent violent extremism and counter terrorism.

55. Civil society actors, community leaders, school teachers, youth representatives and municipal workers were also critical to combating terrorism, and such platforms as Strong Cities Network, Nordic Safe Cities and the Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund were essential to supporting local counter-terrorism initiatives. Young people also played a key role in preventing radicalization. Hearing their grievances and engaging them in meaningful

discussions could diminish the influence of violent extremism locally and online.

56. The Nordic countries looked forward to participating in a comprehensive review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy as soon as the situation allowed it. The Strategy must continue to rest on all four of its pillars, since terrorism could not be addressed by military and security means alone. It was important to address the root causes of violent extremism, involve civil society and local communities, empower young people and ensure gender equality. The Nordic countries would welcome the holding of a high-level conference on human rights and counter-terrorism, as proposed during the 2020 Virtual Counter-Terrorism Week. As the Security Council had made clear, Member States must ensure that their counter-terrorism measures complied with their obligations under international law; failure to do so was contributing to increased radicalization and fostering a sense of impunity.

57. **Mr. Umasankar** (India) said that terrorism was the most potent threat to global peace and security. Terrorists and their proponents were using the infinite resources available to them online to learn about bomb-making, beheadings, secure communications and financial flows and using emerging technologies to promote their ideologies and carry out their evil acts.

58. The only way to counter the threat of terrorism was through concerted international cooperation, including at the regional and subregional levels, in the areas of extradition, prosecution, information exchange and capacity-building. His Government's own counter-terrorism efforts included exchanging information, building capacity for effective border control, preventing the misuse of modern technologies, monitoring illicit financial flows and cooperating in investigations and judicial processes. The United Nations should increase its cooperation with bodies such as the Financial Action Task Force in order to prevent and combat the financing of terrorism. His Government fully supported the leadership of the Office of Counter-Terrorism and was contributing to the United Nations trust fund for counter-terrorism in support of the implementation of priority projects to prevent and counter terrorism. The Security Council continued to be an effective forum for the maintenance of international peace and security and for combating terrorism. However, countries should not be allowed to retaliate against innocent civilians by designating them as terrorists without credible evidence and to invoke non-transparent working methods and procedures when doing so.



59. The United Nations and its Member States should take into consideration the rights of victims of terrorism, the vast majority of whom were women and children, and the obligations of States towards such victims under international law. The inability of Member States to agree on a comprehensive convention on international terrorism, which would provide a legal basis for the global fight against terrorism and provide all Member States with a multilateral platform to do so, was a glaring shortcoming. An international legal framework for combating terrorism would boost enforcement efforts to destroy terrorist safe havens, financial flows and support networks. He urged Member States to realize the gravity of the situation and to adopt the text of the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism, which was a balanced one and the product of long discussions. To that end, India strongly supported the recommendation contained in paragraph 25 of General Assembly resolution 74/194 that the Committee establish a working group with a view to finalizing the process on the draft convention.

60. **Ms. Tan** (Singapore) said that terrorist groups were exploiting the situation created by the COVID-19 pandemic to instil fear and hatred, undermine social cohesion and radicalize and recruit members. She urged States to remain vigilant and push ahead with their counter-terrorism efforts. Terrorism continued to pose a clear threat to international peace and security and ran counter to the rule of law and the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. Singapore strongly condemned all acts of terrorism and was committed to working with other countries to address the increasingly complex threat it presented.

61. Her Government's comprehensive counter-terrorism strategy included building the capabilities of its security services and mobilizing the public to play its part in national safety and security efforts. To combat money-laundering and terrorism financing, Singapore had put in place a framework involving inter-agency coordination, public-private partnerships and a rigorous regulatory regime backed by strong enforcement and strict penalties. The Terrorism (Suppression of Financing) Act had been recently amended to strengthen national frameworks to counter the financing of terrorism.

62. Recognizing the effectiveness of a collective regional approach in countering the threat of terrorism, Singapore engaged in joint defence and security exercises with its neighbours and used regional platforms to exchange strategic information on terrorism, radicalism and violent extremism. It also cooperated closely with the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) and other

international organizations to strengthen counter-terrorism efforts in the region. Singapore was party to 15 international counter-terrorism agreements, including the 2014 Protocol to Amend the Convention on Offences and Certain Other Acts Committed on Board Aircraft. It was also fully committed to the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and looked forward to engaging with other Member States at the seventh review of the Strategy and the second United Nations High-Level Conference on Counter-Terrorism, once it was safe to hold such events again.

63. Singapore looked forward to participating in the working group on measures to eliminate international terrorism and would work closely with the Chair and the other members of the working group to resolve the outstanding issues relating to the draft convention.

64. **Mr. Kim In Chol** (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) said that terrorism, which undermined international peace and security and threatened national sovereignty, was one of the biggest challenges facing the world. Every day, terrorist acts in different parts of the world were claiming the lives of innocent civilians and destabilizing regions and societies. The tendency to tie terrorist acts to religion or ethnicity aggravated distrust and stand-offs between States to the detriment of socioeconomic development worldwide.

65. Acts of State-sponsored terrorism aimed at so-called regime change in sovereign States were in flagrant violation of the principles of respect for sovereignty and non-interference in internal affairs enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and in international law. Such acts included labelling sovereign States as sponsors of terrorism, applying pressure using sanctions or other means, supporting anti-government terrorist organizations and seeking to overthrow Governments. In 2020 alone, there had been attempts to overthrow the legitimate Governments of Venezuela and Syria and blockades had been imposed against them, representing acts of economic terrorism. The draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism currently under discussion should contain explicit provisions for calling into question and terminating acts of State-sponsored terrorism by certain States that flagrantly violated the sovereignty of States in an exercise of high-handedness and arbitrariness.

66. International efforts to combat terrorism would succeed in eliminating terrorism only if the root causes of terrorism, which could be traced back to domination, interference, poverty, social inequality and racial and religious discrimination, were properly addressed. The unprecedented turmoil caused by the global COVID-19 pandemic could trigger disastrous terrorist acts. All

countries were urged to redouble their efforts to root out the causes of terrorism. His delegation welcomed the recent adoption of General Assembly resolution 74/306, which called upon all Member States to take strong action against racism, xenophobia, hate speech, violence and discrimination in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

67. His Government had always opposed terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and any support thereto. In view of the particular situation on the Korean Peninsula, his Government had implemented legal and administrative measures to prevent terrorism, in strict compliance with the relevant international counter-terrorism conventions. It had acceded to a number of those conventions, including the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism and the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and it was cooperating closely with the United Nations in its efforts to combat terrorism by implementing in good faith the relevant provisions that had been incorporated into domestic law. His Government would continue to discharge its responsibility and role in eliminating terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and safeguarding the peace and stability of the Korean Peninsula and the region.

68. **Mr. Akram** (Pakistan) said that, although the international community had, through global cooperation, succeeded in defeating the core of major terrorist organizations, terrorism was manifesting itself in various new forms that were not being effectively addressed. Pakistan strongly condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, having been the target of cross-border terrorism for decades. Despite the thousands of lives lost and massive economic losses, Pakistan had succeeded in defeating terrorism within its borders.

69. Terrorism should not be equated with legitimate popular struggles for self-determination against colonial and foreign occupation, such as the ongoing struggle for self-determination of the people of Indian-occupied Jammu and Kashmir. State terrorism, which included foreign occupation and the suppression of self-determination efforts, also needed to be addressed. Since 1990, more than 100,000 Kashmiris had died under occupation by India and thousands of Kashmiri women had been raped. India had intensified its terrorist activities on 5 August 2019, imprisoning Kashmiri political prisoners, abducting tens of thousands of young people and meting out collective punishments. India had recently admitted to having engaged in fake encounters, resulting in the killings of innocent young people. Pakistan was also the victim of attacks by terrorist

groups financed and organized by India from across its western borders.

70. Although every relevant United Nations resolution stated that terrorism should not be linked to any religion, phrases such as jihadis, Islamists and radical Islam were nonetheless often used in connection with terrorism, and a crime committed by a Muslim was immediately categorized as a terrorist act, whereas when a crime was committed by a non-Muslim it was simply called a crime. Islamophobia was State policy in India, where Nazi-inspired Hindus were seeking to purify India of its Islamic legacy by forcibly converting, expelling or rendering stateless the country's 200 million Muslims.

71. To eliminate terrorism, it was essential to address its root causes: injustice, oppression, foreign intervention and occupation. As his Prime Minister had urged, the Secretary-General should convene summits that would address the conflicts and the root causes that were instigating violence and conflict around the world.

72. **Ms. Squeff** (Argentina) said that terrorism posed a grave threat to international peace and security, human dignity, democracy and economic and social development. Argentina condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. It had itself been the victim of two very serious terrorist attacks carried out in Buenos Aires.

73. States must act in compliance with international law, international humanitarian law, international human rights law, international refugee law and the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations when countering terrorism. South-South and triangular cooperation should be harnessed more frequently to strengthen counter-terrorism efforts, and forums for exchanging best practices should be consolidated under the auspices of the United Nations.

74. As part of its efforts to implement the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in a balanced manner, Argentina had strengthened its laws to ensure that victims of terrorism enjoyed rights and guarantees such as counselling, assistance, legal representation, protection and access to justice.

75. The specific needs of women and children affected by terrorism must also be taken into account, including by incorporating a gender perspective into all national and international responses. Argentina supported initiatives to advance training and the exchange of information and best practices in the context of the Inter-American Committee against Terrorism of the Organization of American States.

76. Argentina had ratified 14 universal counter-terrorism instruments and was in the process of ratifying

the Convention on the Suppression of Unlawful Acts Relating to International Civil Aviation and the Protocol Supplementary to the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Seizure of Aircraft. It was also a party to the Inter-American Convention against Terrorism. Her Government had undertaken a reform of the Argentine Criminal Code to bring it into line with the country's international obligations.

77. The United Nations, as an organization with universal membership, had the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. By taking multilateral action under its leadership and by adhering to its principles, States could confront the threat of terrorism and achieve a safer world for all.

78. **Mr. Paredes Campaña** (Colombia) said that the principle of legality and the need to uphold the rule of law required that democracy must be defended unconditionally, including by confronting the threat of terrorism and its financing head-on. A robust and coordinated international response that respected human rights and international humanitarian law was the only way to win against terrorism, which posed a serious global threat to economic, social and political stability. The victims of terrorism were an important element in that response and his country looked forward to the first-ever Global Congress of Victims of Terrorism, to be held in 2021.

79. Terrorism was a transnational phenomenon linked to organized crime and could only be addressed through international cooperation and the implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions and the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. The seventh review of the Strategy in 2021 should address the security policy objectives of Member States and examine the links between terrorism and transnational organized crime. The international community should focus its efforts on countries where criminal and terrorist organizations had developed criminal networks and become entrenched. Cooperation, which needed to be even closer during the pandemic, should address the needs of Member States and be aligned with their national policies. Access to funds and financing, while valuable, was no less important than access to new capabilities and expertise.

80. Terrorism, money-laundering and associated crimes should be treated as transnational crimes. Efforts to combat money-laundering should help limit the access of terrorist organizations to financial resources, since money-laundering was clearly linked to terrorism financing, drug trafficking, trafficking in persons and illegal mineral extraction. The international community must address the emerging risks associated with those

links, and look for ways both to stem the flow of terrorism financing and to combat money-laundering. Greater technical and operational cooperation was needed, as well as enhanced means and channels for sharing information and intelligence, and close judicial cooperation.

81. **Ms. Cerrato** (Honduras) said that terrorism threatened to destabilize the world and undermine the well-being of its population. It posed a serious threat to democratic values and international peace and security that could only be overcome through solidarity and collaboration.

82. Her country condemned any and all forms of terrorism as being manifestations of human cruelty, for which there could be no political, ideological, religious or cultural justification. It was committed to the maintenance of international peace and security and aligned itself with all actions and agreements that strengthened the interrelations and obligations among nations with a view to promoting a culture of peace.

83. As a party to international instruments against terrorism such as the 1999 International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism and the Inter-American Convention against Terrorism, Honduras reiterated its commitment to combating terrorism, with full respect for the Charter of the United Nations and other rules of international law, human rights and international humanitarian law. In that connection, it supported the call for a high-level conference to be held under the auspices of the United Nations to finalize the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism.

84. Lastly, it was important to undertake a holistic analysis, in accordance with the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and Security Council resolution 2482 (2019), of the relationship between terrorism and non-State armed groups, including gangs, since their activities had an adverse impact on the protection of human rights.

85. She thanked the Office of Counter-Terrorism for having organized the 2020 Virtual Counter-Terrorism Week despite the ongoing pandemic and reiterated her delegation's commitment to take part in the second United Nations High-Level Conference on Counter-Terrorism and the seventh review of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

86. **Ms. Ponce** (Philippines) said that the COVID-19 pandemic was not the only challenge facing the world. Terrorist groups, including the Abu Sayyaf Group, continued to carry out attacks and had increased online recruitment. The siege of Marawi, in which foreign

terrorist fighters had taken part, had demonstrated the crucial importance of an effective legal framework. In response, her Government had passed the 2020 Anti-Terrorism Act, which allowed the prosecution of foreign terrorist fighters and acts of terrorism. The Act was being implemented in a manner that upheld the basic rights and fundamental liberties enshrined in the Constitution. The passage of the Anti-Terrorism Act underscored her Government's commitment and strict adherence to Security Council resolutions 1373 (2001) and 2178 (2014) and to the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. The Act also brought her country's anti-terrorism laws into compliance with Financial Action Task Force recommendations.

87. Her Government had adopted a national action plan on preventing and countering violent extremism aimed at addressing the underlying conditions that drove individuals to join violent extremist groups. The Philippines would participate in the United Nations Countering Terrorist Travel Programme. Although her delegation recognized the primacy of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, it believed that States must also make progress towards concluding a comprehensive convention on international terrorism.

88. The Philippines abhorred terrorism in all its manifestations wherever, by whomever, and against whomsoever committed and whatever the excuse. Although, in the long term, it was important to address the underlying causes of terrorism, the priority must be to uproot it where it had become established, in order to prevent it from spreading and flourishing elsewhere. That needed to be done with the strictest regard for human rights and the rule of law.

89. **Mr. Zuhuree** (Maldives) said that terrorism and violent extremism posed a global challenge that required global action, including efforts to eliminate the terrorist ideologies that were being used to brainwash young people and infiltrate vulnerable communities. Maldives condemned and denounced terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

90. To address the threat posed by violent extremism to its vulnerable tourism-based economy, his Government had passed laws aimed at preventing terrorism and terrorist financing and had established a national counter-terrorism centre that served as the national focal point in all counter-terrorism matters. It was a serious criminal offence for any Maldivian to travel to fight in wars on foreign soil. His Government's national strategy for preventing and countering violent extremism used a whole-of-society approach and was aimed at building a more cohesive and resilient society, addressing miscommunication and stigma by promoting

solidarity and countering hate speech, xenophobia and related intolerance through inclusive dialogue. It also sought to empower young people through education and provide them with opportunities to realize their true potential.

91. At the regional and international levels, his Government was working closely with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to build capacity and to share information and best practices in the region. It was also engaging in consultations on a road map for the establishment of a regional network on preventing and countering violent extremism.

92. As a country where Islamic faith defined most aspects of life and culture, Maldives had always maintained a policy of moderation and openness. There was no place for hatred and violent acts in Islam.

93. **Mr. Bhandari** (Nepal) said that, although the COVID-19 pandemic presented unprecedented challenges, the threat posed by terrorism was equally grave. Unlike the coronavirus, the threat of terrorism emanated from the human psyche. Terrorists used narratives of anti-immigrant sentiment, racial hatred and religious intolerance to stoke social dissent and disrupt communal harmony. By exploiting such new technologies as the Internet and social media, they transcended borders and manipulated young people into joining their ranks. While Governments were focusing their efforts on coping with the pandemic, terrorist groups were promoting anti-State narratives and trying to exploit the situation.

94. Nepal condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, wherever, whenever and for whatever purposes committed. His Government had taken the utmost care to prevent its territory from being used to launch attacks against other countries. It was a party to six international counter-terrorism instruments, the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Regional Convention on Suppression of Terrorism and the 2004 Additional Protocol thereto. It had also established legal mechanisms to address the nexus between transnational organized crime and terrorism and had enacted laws to curb terrorism financing.

95. Terrorism recognized no borders and no country could combat it alone. A concerted, coordinated and multilateral response was thus needed, with the United Nations at its centre. His delegation appreciated the important role played by the Organization in the response to the evolving global threat of terrorism through its comprehensive counter-terrorism architecture. Nepal supported the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and was committed to

incorporating related strategies, policies and guidelines into its domestic implementation framework. It called for the early conclusion of a comprehensive convention on international terrorism.

96. Financing and technical assistance to build capacity in developing countries and partnerships for sharing information and technology were key to combating terrorism. It was also important to protect and preserve human rights to prevent violent extremism and radicalization leading to terrorism as well as to address the root causes fuelling terrorism. Poor and unemployed young people, particularly from marginalized communities, were most vulnerable to falling prey to terrorist groups. Investment in poverty reduction, job creation and education was therefore of paramount importance.

*The meeting rose at 12.45 p.m.*