



Bangladesh

Statement under Agenda Item 111: Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism at the Sixth Committee of the 73rd Session of the UN General Assembly

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Statement by: Mr. Faiyaz Murshid Kazi, Minister (Political), Permanent Mission of Bangladesh, New York

Madam Chairperson,

On behalf of Bangladesh delegation, I congratulate you and other Bureau members on your election and assure you of our continued support.

Under this agenda item, Bangladesh aligns itself with the statement made by the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), and by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on behalf of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC).

Madam Chairperson,

Bangladesh remains committed to implementation UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, in partnership with all relevant stakeholders at the national, regional and international levels. We underscore the importance of comprehensive and balanced implementation of all four pillars of the Strategy, together with the Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism (PVE).

Bangladesh welcomes the outcome of the Sixth Biennial Review of the Strategy earlier this year. We encourage all Member States to approach the process with further courage and conviction with a view to accommodating diverse views on combating terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. The unwarranted divergence among Member States on certain fundamental issues only serves the interest and purpose of terrorists and their sympathisers. We consider it

self-defeating to assume that there is only a single set of means or template to combat terrorism. We reiterate the need for engaging in informed discussions on all outstanding issues during the inter-sessional periods with a view to making Biennial Review outcomes further attuned and responsive to the evolving realities of terrorism.

Bangladesh appreciates the work of the newly established UN Office on Counter Terrorism (UNOCT) and its sound working relation with our delegation. We welcome the holding of the first UN High-level Conference of Heads of Counter-Terrorism Agencies of Member States in late June this year, and the report published on the Conference highlights. In view of the broad-based interest the Conference generated among Member States, UNOCT may consider further reviewing the scope and format of the meeting to help facilitate focused and meaningful participation of capital-based delegates.

We encourage continued coordination between UNOCT and the Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate (CTED), and welcome their joint report pursuant to the Security Council Resolution 2395 (2017). It would be advisable for each entity to focus on its respective areas of mandate and competence, and thus allow Member States an opportunity to pursue a cohesive and calibrated strategy for their engagement with the various components of the UN Counter-Terrorism architecture. It would perhaps take time for UNOCT to assert its effective leadership in enhancing coordination of the UN's counter-terrorism work. It would, however, largely depend on the level of cooperation UNOCT received from the concerned UN entities to this effect. The Global Coordination Compact concluded by UNOCT with other relevant UN entities should help promote this cause.

Madam Chairperson,

At the national level, we are still struggling with efficiently coordinating the work of different UN entities in relating to their work in support of our various authorities. Despite certain institutional efforts in this regard, we continue to find duplication and overlapping in the work of UN entities. While we remain engaged with UNOCT and others to rectify such situations, we also urge donors of various projects to remain sensitive to the competence of different UN entities in order not to disperse resources among different bodies more or less for the same purpose. The need for

concerned UN entities to undertake projects in response to nationally identified priorities instead of from the perspective of resource availability, cannot be overemphasized.

Our political leadership's 'zero tolerance' approach to terrorism has resulted in effectively defeating and dismantling the operational capacity of certain home grown terrorist outfits claiming themselves to be affiliated with some international or regional networks. The sustained investments made in capacity building of the concerned law enforcement, intelligence and border management authorities have also allowed Bangladesh to live up to its commitment not to allow its territory to be used for terrorist acts against any of our neighbours. This has been complemented by demonstrable progress in combating financing of terrorism, as recognized by the Financial Actions Task Force (FATF), and in weakening the nexus between terrorist groups and transnational organised criminal networks.

The existing legal regime in Bangladesh allows for giving effect to relevant Security Council Resolutions through a stipulated institutional mechanism. For prosecuting terrorism related cases, our government is currently in the process of setting up seven special tribunals in seven divisional headquarters. We have shown interest in further replicating CTED's awareness building work involving judges, prosecutors and investigators at the national level for a wider outreach. We have flagged our interest in further capacity building support from UNOCT and its partners in combating terrorist threats in cyberspace, addressing deradicalisation in prisons and enhancing aviation security. We underscore the importance of timely exchange of information for tracking and intercepting movement of Foreign Terrorist Fighters (FTFs), especially those from our expatriate communities abroad.

Our 'whole-of-society' approach has proved to be useful in preventing the spread of violent extremism and radicalisation. Our partnership with the Global Community Engagement Resilience Fund (GCERF) can be deemed a good practice for many other comparable situations. The engagement of civil society actors in PVE initiatives has, among other issues, enhanced our law enforcement personnel's awareness about their human rights obligations.

Our concerned authorities maintain heightened vigil along our border areas with Myanmar in the aftermath of the influx of more than 700,00 Rohingya fleeing violence and persecution in Rakhine

State since August last year. We reiterate our concern over Myanmar's unfounded and repeated attempts to vilify the entire Rohingya population under pretext of countering threats posed by a fringe extremist group. This is in clear contravention of the UN's principled position not to associate any nation, religion or ethnic group with terrorism. We urge Myanmar to engage in self-introspection about the root causes for radicalisation of the alleged home grown terror outfits. We call upon Myanmar to work together with relevant UN entities to address violent extremist trends among communities other than the Rohingya in Rakhine State. We caution against any State or non-State actor attempting to take advantage of the Rohingya's vulnerable situation and incite or radicalise them in any way that can jeopardise our national security interest and have impact on the wider region.

Bangladesh remains concerned over asymmetric threats and attacks faced by our peacekeepers, including from terrorists in a number of theaters. From our practical experience on the ground, we remain convinced that peacekeepers should not be asked to engage in counter-terrorism operations. Peacekeeping missions may have relevant expertise at their disposal to build host States' capacity for countering terrorism, at the latter's behest.

Madam Chairperson,

On the legal front, Bangladesh remains supportive of concluding the work on a Comprehensive Counter-Terrorism Convention. We also support the proposal to convene a high-level conference to adopt the Convention by resolving the outstanding issues over the legal definition of terrorism. We underscore the need for a comprehensive convention of universal standards for counter-terrorism strategies and operations in lieu of selective, unilateral benchmarks and criteria. Pending this much-anticipated development, Bangladesh will continue to invest efforts in ratifying and implementing the relevant international counter-terrorism instruments. We are also actively considering signing the Code of Conduct on a World Free of Terrorism mooted by Kazakhstan.

I thank you.