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**Statement by Saudi Arabia on Behalf of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation at the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy Review**

**United Nations General Assembly, New York**

SAUDI ARABIA: Mr. President, I have the honor to speak on behalf of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation member states. The terrorist attacks at Istanbul Airport this week remind us how terrorism and violent extremism which is conducive to terrorism continue to undermine our shared objectives of a peaceful and prosperous world.

The 10th anniversary of the adoption of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy by consensus and its 5th review offers us the opportunity to renew our collective and unwavering resolve to combat these scourges. In this spirit, the OIC welcomes the adoption of resolution by consensus as yet another step forward in promoting the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy’s implementation at the national, regional and international levels. We thank the two co-facilitators, Ambassador Martín Moritán of Argentina and Ambassador Einar Gunnarsson of Iceland, and their able team for their tireless work in arriving at a consensus text.

The resolution captures our concerns over some emerging threats posed by terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism and suggests appropriate remedial measures. It underscores the need for addressing all local and external drivers of terrorism and violent extremism without taking a selective approach. The OIC affirms that there is a need to make concerted determined efforts to effectively address the root causes, drivers and conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism, including preventing unlawful use of force and aggression, ending foreign occupation, unilateral coercive measures, and political and economic and social injustices.

The resolution underlines the need for enhanced synergy and effectiveness in the various UN agencies’ work on counter-terrorism, and requests the Secretary-General to offer further suggestions to this effect for member states’ consideration by the middle of next year. In this context, the OIC stresses that transparency and coordination of the activities of UN counter-terrorism entities should be enhanced, and duplication should be avoided.

While the OIC supports institutional coherence in the UN’s counter-terrorism efforts, we also emphasize the need for conforming the mandates of the various UN organs and entities. The OIC recognizes the work of the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF) and strongly encourages it to continue working with the same diligence, and to keep member states updated on its work.

The group also notes with appreciation the important work carried out by the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Center, and its role of building the capacity of member states to counter terrorism, and in this regard, calls on all member states to continue to support the Center and to contribute to growth into a center of excellence.

The OIC member states encourage CTITF and other relevant UN entities to enhance their consultations with member states during the planning and preparation stage of their activities. The OIC would particularly stress the need for further analytical information on the Secretary-General’s report on the resources required for providing capacity building support to member states in compliance with the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. We wish to see concrete proposals on mobilizing resources for capacity building projects to counter terrorism, as well as the proposed terms of reference for the Secretary-General’s fund to support innovative projects aimed at preventing violent extremism which can be conducive to terrorism, as mentioned in his Plan of Action.

The OIC recognizes the resolution’s added emphasis on addressing various aspects and dimensions of terrorist threats. These include, though are not limited to, the need for enhanced international cooperation concerning the recruitment, movement, prosecution and repatriation of foreign terrorist fighters, for effective multi-pronged action to combat terrorist financing and its nexus with transnational organized crime, for informed and pragmatic steps to counter terrorist propaganda and narratives, including through the internet, and for heightened surveillance and preventive measures against terrorists getting access to small arms and light weapons, as well as weapons of mass destruction.

The OIC member states remain committed to working together with the United Nations and other relevant partners to address these real and potential threats in a focused and result-oriented manner. The OIC also recognizes that threats posed by terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism to women, youth and children. We recognize the emphasis given in the resolution on effectively addressing these threats, and in this regard, we stress that sustained engagement is required to enable women and youth to act as potential agents of change and resilience to prevent violent extremism within their respective communities.

The OIC member states urge that the rights and protection of migrants and asylum seekers should also be preserved while ensuring that internationally agreed law, norms and standards in their favor are not abused by terrorists.

Mr. President, the OIC reiterates its principled position against terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, committed by whomsoever, wherever, and for whatever purpose. As such, the OIC affirms its unequivocal objection of all attempts to associate any country, race, religion, culture, or nationality, with terrorism and violent extremism that is conducive to terrorism. The group also underlines the importance of holding international law, international humanitarian law, rule of law, human rights, and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism.

In this context, we remain concerned over the growing intolerance and discrimination against Muslims around the world, which we believe constitutes an affront to their human rights and dignity. We recall the Human Rights Council resolution entitled ‘Combatting intolerance, negative stereotyping, stigmatization, discrimination, incitement to violence and violence against persons based on religion or belief, resolution A/HRC/16/18 as an important tool to counter radicalization, marginalization, and alienation, and call for its effective implementation by the international community as a means to deprive terrorist groups of any justification for violent extremism on the grounds of ethno-religious stigmatization and discrimination.

We underscore the importance of inter-faith and inter-cultural dialogue as an effective mechanism to combat extremism and incitement to hatred based on religion. The OIC member states reaffirm the importance the group attaches to the sustained, effective and comprehensive implementation of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, and the need for a robust mechanism to be in place to ensure the balanced pursuit of all its four pillars. The OIC stresses that the implementation of the strategy lies first and foremost in the hands of member states, while the General Assembly has a central role to play in following up its implementation.

To conclude, Mr. President, the OIC reiterates that the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy is a living document which should be examined and reviewed regularly. The group will continue to remain involved in this endeavor as a matter of priority including at the highest political level.

SAUDI ARABIA (EXERCISING ITS RIGHT OF REPLY): Mr. Chairman, I would like to tell the Syrian delegate that the reality in Syria speaks for itself. All the world is witnessing what is happening in Syria. While you have said that certain countries finance terrorism, and this is a way by the Syrian government to forget all about what you are doing.

As for Israel, we have also noticed that Israel has been killing the Palestinians, and the Israeli government is trying to forget all about the killings and all the occupation of Palestine and the conversion of Gaza into a place for killings and sufferings, and all the crimes have been perpetrated by Israel against the Palestinian people. In the face of this terrorism of state by Israel there is no justification of the statements made by Israel.

As for our endeavors to combat terrorism, it is very clear how we have been combatting terrorism, and the resolution that we have adopted today is the best proof of the efforts made by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in these endeavors.