



Security Council

Seventy-fourth year

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New York

Provisional

President: Mr. Lavrov/Mr. Nebenzia/Mr. Polyanskiy (Russian Federation)

Members:

Belgium	Mr. De Croo
China	Mr. Wang Yi/Mr. Wu Haitao
Côte d'Ivoire	Mr. Ipo
Dominican Republic	Mr. Vargas Maldonado
Equatorial Guinea	Mr. Esono Angue
France	Mr. Lemoyne
Germany	Mr. Annen
Indonesia	Mrs. Marsudi
Kuwait	Sheikh Al Sabah
Peru	Mr. Balarezo
Poland	Mr. Przydacz
South Africa	Mrs. Pandor
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Ms. Pierce
United States of America	Mr. Cohen

Agenda

Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security

The contribution of the Collective Security Treaty Organization, the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in countering terrorist threats

Letter dated 13 September 2019 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2019/742)

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

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security

The contribution of the Collective Security Treaty Organization, the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in countering terrorist threats

Letter dated 13 September 2019 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2019/742)

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I wish to warmly welcome the Secretary-General, Ministers and other representatives present in the Security Council Chamber. Their presence today underscores the importance of the subject matter under discussion.

In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of Afghanistan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, India, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following briefers to participate in this meeting: His Excellency Mr. Vladimir Imamovich Norov, Secretary-General of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization; Mr. Valery Semerikov, Acting Secretary-General of the Collective Security Treaty Organization; and Mr. Sergey Ivanov, Deputy Executive Secretary of the Commonwealth of Independent States.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I also invite His Excellency Mr. Peter Burian, European Union Special Representative for Central Asia, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2019/742, which contains a letter dated

13 September 2019 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting a concept note on the item under consideration.

I now give the floor to the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. António Guterres.

The Secretary-General: I am grateful for this opportunity to address the Security Council on cooperation between the United Nations and the Collective Security Treaty Organization, the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in countering terrorist threats.

We face an unprecedented threat from intolerance, violent extremism and terrorism. It affects every country, exacerbating conflicts and destabilizing entire regions, and it is constantly evolving. The new frontier is cyberterrorism: the use of social media and the dark web to coordinate attacks, spread propaganda and recruit new followers.

In response to that unprecedented threat, we are taking unprecedented action. The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and related Security Council resolutions provide a comprehensive framework. Pursuing and dismantling terrorist groups is vital, but it is just one among many measures. We must complement security measures with prevention efforts that identify and address the root causes, while always respecting human rights.

We must build the resilience of societies so that people and communities reject terrorist narratives that prey on fear and hopelessness. We must reinforce the social compact, including the provision of basic services and opportunities, particularly for young people. Most recruits to terrorist groups are between 17 and 27 years old. We need to provide paths that offer a sense of hope and purpose to our young men and women, including education, training and jobs. We need comprehensive and inclusive approaches, starting at the grassroots, where families and communities are on the front lines.

The subjugation of women and girls is something that many extremist and terrorist groups have in common, regardless of ideology. That is not a coincidence; it is foundational to their purpose. Gender equality and engaging women and girls must be central to our efforts to prevent and counter terrorism. We also need to support victims of terrorism, who have the

greatest moral authority and who consistently call for justice. Among the victims are the children of foreign terrorist fighters, who will need help to overcome trauma and stigma as they grow up.

International cooperation is the first priority of our Counter-Terrorism Strategy. No single country or organization has all the answers to the cross-border challenges posed by terrorism and by returning and relocating foreign terrorist fighters. Countries need to cooperate with one another as well as with partners, including the private sector and civil society, to successfully address such challenges.

The three organizations that are the subject of today's ministerial debate are playing an important role in promoting regional counter-terrorism cooperation by facilitating the exchange of critical information and knowledge and the implementation of joint investigations and operations. The United Nations is strengthening its institutional links with each of them.

Our partnership has established frameworks for joint activities, exchanges of information and collaboration on capacity-building assistance to Member States, in line with the principles established by the Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact, which guides all United Nations activities on counter-terrorism.

I am particularly proud of our engagement, together with the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia, on the regional Joint Action Plan for the implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in Central Asia. By developing a joint plan of action, the first regional initiative of its kind, the parties involved have shown what they can achieve with collective action, leadership and political will.

The Joint Plan of Action contributes to strengthening the capacities of Central Asian Member States to enhance border security, prevent violent extremism conducive to terrorism and foster dialogue with religious leaders. I would like to commend the important work of the Interparliamentary Assembly of Member Nations of the Commonwealth of Independent States to harmonize the counter-terrorism legislation of its members. Parliamentary engagement is critical in creating comprehensive approaches that are effectively resourced and anchored in human rights and the rule of law.

Terrorism is fundamentally the denial and destruction of human rights, and terrorist groups share an agenda that is authoritarian, intolerant and frequently misogynistic. Our efforts to counter terrorist ideology must be founded on respect for the dignity and human rights of all.

The counter-terrorism cooperation between the United Nations and the Collective Security Treaty Organization, the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization is deepening as it covers a growing range of issues. I look forward to our continued cooperation as we work together to end the threat of terrorism and build a more secure and prosperous future for all.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank the Secretary-General for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Norov.

Mr. Norov (*spoke in Russian*): At the outset, I would like to express my gratitude to the Russian Federation for the invitation to take part in today's meeting. This topic is extremely timely and relevant, especially in today's world where factors of instability are increasing, owing to the terrorist threat and the merging of terrorism and transnational organized crime.

Foreign terrorist fighters returning from hotspots are striving to create new strongholds in various parts of the world, including in the Eurasian space. The threat of their gaining access to radioactive and toxic substances, as well as to new types of financing and weapons, is growing. At the same time, the fight against terrorism and related threats has been one of the main priorities in the activities of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) from the very moment the organization was created.

In 2001, three months before the tragic events in New York, the founding Heads of State of the members of the SCO signed a convention on the fight against terrorism, separatism and extremism. The adoption of this document demonstrated to the whole world that our countries, even then, had a deep awareness of the negative trends that were unfolding, and embraced a path of an unwavering fight against these three forces of evil. The SCO has a well-developed legal framework and bases and practical mechanisms that make it possible to conduct effective work in the area of security. Many of them, including the SCO Convention against Terrorism and the SCO Convention on Countering Extremism, are

open to accession by any interested State. Developing and putting into practice a common definition of terrorism and extremism is rightly considered to be one of the most important achievements of the SCO.

The SCO Regional Anti-terrorism Structure has operated effectively in Tashkent. Just last year, some 360 terrorist crimes were pre-empted and some 80 underground cells and 67 terrorists, including 10 ringleaders of terrorist groups, were eliminated. Considerable work was done to cut off the financing of terrorism, the illegal flow of weapons and explosives, as well as recruitment through the Internet. The SCO also significantly increased its capacity in combating today's challenges and threats, with new members India and Pakistan joining the organization. The SCO is now transcontinental, comprising countries accounting for half the population of the entire world,

The Peace Mission anti-terrorist command and staff exercises, as well as the Web International anti-drug operation, are organized regularly. I would like to say in particular that the SCO is not a military organization focused on States or other international organizations. It is an open organization geared towards broad international cooperation. There are no small or large States in the SCO: all are equal, and all decisions are taken by consensus.

One of the key factors of strengthening security and stability in the region is to resolve the conflict in Afghanistan as soon as possible. The SCO is making a significant contribution to this end by activating dialogue through the SCO-Afghanistan Contact Group. The road map for future actions of the Contact Group, which was approved at the SCO summit in Bishkek, is aimed at supporting further efforts to restore peace and facilitate the economic development of the country, as well as combat terrorism and drug trafficking.

In order to combat the link between drug trafficking and terrorism and address the threat of drug trafficking from the territory of Afghanistan, a renewed SCO anti-drug strategy is being implemented. Over the past five years, through joint efforts, we have seized more than 40 per cent of the illegal narcotic substances found in Eurasia. We also actively cooperate with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and regularly organize joint events on the margins of the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs. The next meeting of the expert group of the Paris Pact Initiative will be held with the assistance of the SCO

secretariat in Shanghai this November. With a view to implementing the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and Security Council anti-terrorism resolutions, we are actively developing cooperation with relevant United Nations entities and other international and regional organizations. We are strengthening our cooperation with the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, the Office of Counter-Terrorism and the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia.

In that context, we welcome the adoption of resolution 73/334, on cooperation between the United Nations and the SCO, at the seventy-third session of the General Assembly, which makes it possible to hold regular consultations between the Secretaries-General of the two organizations and to support the broad cooperation of the SCO with specialized agencies of the United Nations system. Cooperation between the SCO and the Collective Security Treaty Organization, the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia and INTERPOL has also been strength.

The SCO is consistently developing its cooperation regarding humanitarian aspects of the fight against terrorism and extremism and regional security efforts. Guided by the spirit of Shanghai, we are developing dialogue between cultures, religions and civilizations on the basis of mutual trust, respect and equality of the parties. In this regard, we attach particular importance to SCO cooperation with such specialized agencies of the United Nations as UNESCO, the World Tourism Organization, the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific and others.

At the same time, we believe it is important to implement joint measures to deal with the root causes and conditions of terrorism and extremism and prevent youth from being recruited into terrorist groups and also to reintegrate people who return from conflict areas. We are improving our legal basis for ensuring that young people are able to enjoy their full rights and have access to knowledge and education. We attach particular importance in that regard to drafting a United Nations convention on the rights of youth.

States members of the SCO are in favour of strict adherence to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and of strengthening the role of the Security Council as the main organ for maintaining

international peace and security, and are ready to complement the Council's efforts at the regional level. We call on the international community to strengthen global cooperation in fighting terrorism, counter efforts aimed at undermining the role of the United Nations as the universal multilateral organization for the maintenance of international peace and security and stability, and strive to reach consensus on the issue of adopting a comprehensive convention to combat international terrorism.

The SCO will continue expanding its multifaceted cooperation with the United Nations and its Security Council. Currently, we are preparing to conduct our third joint special high-level event with the United Nations to counter terrorism and its financing, and we would like to invite all those present in the Chamber today to take part in it.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank Mr. Norov for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Semerikov.

Mr. Semerikov (*spoke in Russian*): I wish at the outset to thank the Russian presidency of the Security Council for the invitation to participate in this meeting of the Council. I am convinced that our meeting today will help us to work out additional practical cooperation mechanisms and help to pool the efforts of the United Nations and regional organizations for the purpose of maintaining peace and security. Our organization — the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) — is considered a partner in this kind of interaction, as expressed at the seventy-third session of the General Assembly and set out in resolution 73/331, entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Collective Security Treaty Organization".

The resolution states, *inter alia*, that in the 25 years since the signing of the Collective Security Treaty, the Collective Security Treaty Organization has transformed into a multifunctional structure with the potential to provide an adequate response to a wide range of threats and challenges within the area of its responsibility.

Joint efforts are particularly necessary today against the backdrop of potential major conflict, the very real threat of the existing international security architecture being dismantled, a crisis in terms of trust and an atmosphere of confrontation. The world is facing

the threat of global terrorism, which now covers a larger geostrategic space and has expanded its subversive activities using new technologies, in particular information and communications technologies and social networks.

In terms of steps to pool the efforts of the international community, we deem very important the fact that Mr. António Guterres placed the combat against terrorism high on his list of priorities as Secretary-General and singled out as a key area in this respect the need to undertake broad international cooperation.

Combating terrorism and extremism is one of the main elements of the activities of the CSTO. In 2016 our Heads of State considered the situation in our area of responsibility and decided to implement a set of measures aimed at countering international terrorism and extremism. These include a number of practical organizational activities as well as political and military measures aimed at developing the CSTO's capacity to combat terrorism, most of which we have already implemented.

Given that trafficking in illegal drugs and weapons, as well as illegal migration, fuel the activities of terrorists and extremists, we have increased the effectiveness of our annual special preventive activities, for example Canal, aimed at combating drug trafficking, and Nelegal, aimed at curbing illegal migration. In the course of these operations, in 2018 we seized more than 16 tons of drugs, including various kinds of synthetic drugs. We also confiscated 470 weapons of various types. We apprehended 443 people who had been wanted internationally, of whom 30 had links to terrorist and extremist activities.

In order to prevent international terrorists from using information and communication technologies, including for the purpose of recruiting new members, we conduct an annual operation aimed at countering crimes committed through the use of such technologies. In the course of such an operation in 2018, we identified more than 10,000 sources that disseminate information serving the interests of terrorist and extremist organizations.

Given the threat posed by international terrorist organizations, we enhanced our collective rapid-reaction force, adding special units dedicated to the fight against terrorism. In the course of exercises involving that force, we focus closely on counter-terrorism activities.

In order to enhance our efforts to counter terrorism, we are working on coming up with a single list of terrorist organizations recognized as such in our States; the scope and importance of this work is impossible to overemphasize. We are also reacting to the threat of the return to their countries of origin from the Middle East of foreign terrorist fighters trained by terrorist groups and who have participated in their activities. To that end, last year we conducted Operation Mercury, whose goal was to block terrorist recruitment channels and fighters' entry into and exit from our countries with the goal of participation in terrorist activities, and to neutralize the resource base of terrorist organizations in CSTO areas. We can already state that as a result, the operation was effective, necessary and timely and made a direct contribution to the implementation of Security Council resolutions 2178 (2014) and 2396 (2017).

We view the measures that I have just listed as best practices elaborated by the CSTO, as corroborated by the fact that our activities have been of interest to United Nations agencies, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, as well as those of individual States, especially in the area of countering drug trafficking. They all participated actively in the organization and implementation of those activities and monitored them.

We believe that in order to promote international cooperation in stemming the spread of terrorist ideology and propaganda, in line with Security Council resolutions 1624 (2005) and 2354 (2017), we must pool our efforts in the area of information security. We attach special attention to the development and acceptance, under the auspices of the United Nations, of universal norms and principles of responsible conduct in the area of information.

Despite the measures we have undertaken in order to combat terrorism regionally, the States members of the CSTO, as well as other countries, are increasingly encountering new forms of terrorism and tactics used by terrorists. The CSTO Permanent Council, in a statement adopted in November 2018, determined that one of the organization's priority aims was to enhance joint efforts to combat terrorism and extremism. Recently we have noted with concern that efforts have been made by certain forces to relocate their terrorist activities to Central Asia and Afghanistan, towards the southern CSTO borders, as made clear by the various terrorist acts committed in Afghanistan. We were

therefore compelled to react in order to ensure the security of our States in the region. In particular, the Council of Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Council of Defense Ministers and the Committee of Secretaries of Security Councils prepared, for the consideration of our Heads of State in November, a list of additional measures aimed at lowering tensions on the border between Tajikistan and Afghanistan. At the same time, we enhanced our work on developing and accepting a targeted inter-State programme on strengthening the border between Tajikistan and Afghanistan.

Security issues in Central Asia are also reflected in the updated plan of the collective activities of CSTO States aimed at implementing the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy for the 2019-2021 period.

The main lesson that we can draw from our experience in countering terrorism is that we need to enhance our collective efforts to fight terrorism, without double standards or exceptions, on the basis of the strict implementation of Security Council anti-terrorism resolutions and the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. We believe that here it is important to act in line with the Code of Conduct towards Achieving a World Free of Terrorism, which was initiated by Kazakhstan at the opening of the seventy-third session of the General Assembly (see A/73/PV.13) and acknowledged by most countries.

We are by and large pleased with the way our cooperation with the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism is developing, as well as that with Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, within the framework of existing memorandums, and we advocate for the broadening of such cooperation. We deem it useful and effective to have contacts with the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999) 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015) concerning ISIL (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities; the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1373 (2001) concerning counter-terrorism; and the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1988 (2011).

In that connection, we would like to express our gratitude for the appraisal of the work done by the CSTO in the implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism strategy, as set out in resolution 73/331, on cooperation between the United Nations and the Collective Security Treaty Organization.

We see great potential in ensuring security in the area of responsibility of the CSTO to consolidate the efforts of international and regional organizations. Sometimes, however, at the political level, actors and regions behave in a manner that is more autonomous, which means that various processes in certain regions are less unified than one would think. Figuratively speaking, just as we look at small-scale maps, we also need to look at more detailed, large-scale maps and see the bigger picture. If we take a comprehensive global and regional approach to issues of international security, including the issue of fighting terrorism, it is important to make sure that we do not see those elements as opposites other, but rather find links between the general and the specific.

In conclusion, as the international community — international and regional organizations in particular — consolidate their efforts to counter terrorism, I would like to ask the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the States members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization to consider and respond to the open letter of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the States of the CSTO calling for increasing trust and fostering cooperation on issues related to countering global threats and challenges. The call was made by the CSTO Council of Foreign Ministers in May and circulated here at the United Nations. We still hope that that call will be heard.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank Mr. Semerikov for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Ivanov.

Mr. Ivanov (*spoke in Russian*): I am pleased to welcome the participants in this meeting on behalf of the Executive Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).

One of the priority areas of cooperation among the States members of the CIS is to jointly ensure security, which is based on common views of existing external threats and challenges and the determination to collectively counter them. The focus of cooperation in the security sphere over the past few years has been on countering terrorism. It has a respective normative and legal basis and an effective system of cooperation among competent bodies.

Member States are constantly improving and developing those two components based on evolving demands and needs of the times. Last year, the

agreement on information-sharing within the CIS to counter terrorism and other forms of violent extremism entered into force, as did the agreement on cooperation in combating criminal activity in the area of information technology. Such documents provide concrete follow-up for information-sharing, develop further cooperation in the area of counter-terrorism and allow the efforts of States' specialized entities and competent bodies to be optimized in an entire range of law enforcement activities in CIS territory to identify, counter, investigate and terrorism-related crimes.

Measures are being taken within the CIS to eliminate the conditions that contribute to the financing of terrorist activities. That is the goal of cooperation in the area of countering the legalization of profits obtained through illicit means, terrorism financing and the spread of weapons of mass destruction. We are successfully implementing the programme of cooperation of the CIS member States in combating terrorism and other violent manifestations of extremism for 2017-2019. In October, we plan to approve a similar programme for the period 2020-2022. The main focus will be on taking joint operational preventive measures, conducting special operations and sharing preventive information, best practices and experiences of cooperation with other international organizations. As we implement the programme, we are taking joint measures against individuals who attempt to enter the territory of CIS member States after being involved in the activities of terrorist organizations. We also actively cooperate in identifying and countering the flow of funds obtained through economic criminal activities and counter the attempts to use these funds to finance terrorism.

While preserving and strengthening the role of competent law enforcement bodies actively engage members of civil society, the private sector and the media, and traditional religious leaders. We also focus particular attention on countering the spread of extremist ideas and recruitment by terrorists. We cooperate to develop, produce and deliver modern technology and equipment for the purposes of combating terrorism. Modern technology is broadly used by specialized services and other competent bodies of the CIS to share information about individuals involved in terrorist activity, identify their location, stop them at border crossings as part of migration flows, investigate-information technology-related crimes and ensure security at major international, public and

sporting events , as well as in public transport and on other critical sites.

Cooperation between defence ministries and law enforcement bodies is becoming a new area of focus. Experience in Syria has shown that military operations in connection with law enforcement operations can be effective in fighting terrorism. In the light of that, the joint military exercises Comradesip-in-Arms-2017 and Issyk Kul-Counter-Terror 2018 have been conducted over the past two years. During those exercises, the focus has been on developing joint measures of competent bodies with a view to taking action to release hostages or to prevent terrorist acts being planned, and a military exercise operation to block and eliminate armed terrorist groups. A joint counter-terrorism exercise — Ararat-Antiterror-2019 — is being conducted now. To ensure stability on the southern borders of the CIS, we have developed a cooperation mechanism for competent bodies when crisis situations occur.

I would like to underscore that cooperation among the members of the CIS in combating terrorism is conducted with important international organizations, including the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism, the relevant bodies of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the Collective Security Treaty Organization and the Eurasian Group on Combating Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing. There is no doubt that effective cooperation in combating terrorism can be achieved only on the basis of an agreed legal framework. A leading role in harmonizing national legislation is played by the Interparliamentary Assembly of Member Nations of the CIS, which constantly works to harmonize national legislation to combat terrorism, while finding new ways of implementing its mandate, as the Secretary-General mentioned.

We have every reason to believe that the work we do is an important contribution of CIS to ensuring regional and global security. Given the increased terrorist threat, it is now extremely important to strengthen international mechanisms for cooperation and enhance their operational responsiveness and effectiveness, as well as forecasting and analytical activities. In that regard, today's discussion is important in developing joint measures to counter terrorism in all its forms.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank Mr. Ivanov for briefing.

I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation.

Today we are all faced with the issue of terrorism, which is more acute than ever before. Terror International, which is led by the Islamic State in Iraq (ISIL) and the Levant and Al-Qaida, continues sowing fear and destruction throughout the world. As a result of terrorist activities, there is a very worrisome situation in the Near East, including in Syria and Iraq. The terrorist threat from that region is spreading rapidly through the African continent, including Libya. Central, Southern and South-East Asia are also becoming the stage for savage acts of terrorism.

The issue of foreign terrorist fighters is now at the forefront of our concerns, as the Secretary-General mentioned earlier. Foreign terrorist fighters are returning to their countries of origin or relocating to third countries. Fewer and fewer States are spared the threat of terrorism. In that regard, I draw the Council's attention to the fact that several years ago, my country's Federal Security Service established an international databank on countering terrorism. Fifty States and several international organizations, including INTERPOL, participate in that initiative. It provides genuine assistance in tracking the movements of foreign terrorist fighters throughout the world. We call on everyone to join that very important initiative.

The situation is such that the international community is now making consolidated efforts to counter terrorism. In 2015, right here at the United Nations, President Putin called for the establishment of a broad anti-terrorist front on the basis of the Charter of the United Nations and international law, without politicization or preconditions (see A/70/PV.13). Today, that initiative is becoming particularly relevant.

The double standards practiced by some States make it difficult to respond to modern threats, including terrorism. Ignoring the principles of a consistent, collective fight against international terrorism is fraught with dire consequences. I wish to emphasize that using terrorist entities for political purposes is unacceptable and there can be no justification for it.

Today, we are seeing an increased demand to deepen cooperation with regional and subregional organizations, in line with Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations. Our meeting this morning is dedicated to the role of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), the Commonwealth of

Independent States (CIS) and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) in the fight against terrorism in cooperation with the United Nations. These regional entities have a wealth of experience in combating terrorist threats and make a weighty contribution to strengthening stability across the Eurasian continent. Their practical activities guarantee the security of their States members and their effective counter-terrorist efforts have led to a noticeable stabilization in the situation in Central Asia. The importance of these efforts is reaffirmed in particular in resolutions 73/331, 73/16 and 73/334, adopted by consensus this year by the General Assembly, on cooperation between the United Nations and the CSTO, CIS and SCO, respectively.

At the same time, we are concerned by periodic attacks by foreign terrorists fighters on the territory of Central Asian countries, as well as the recruitment operations being conducted by various terrorist entities in the region, including those associated with ISIL. One of the most important aspects of the CSTO's work is combating the involvement of citizens in terrorist activities at all stages, from ideological indoctrination to returning from regions with increased terrorist activity after having gained so-called terrorist experience. Concrete steps are being taken to block channels for recruitment into terrorist groups and to combat illegal migration. A great deal of attention is being given to identifying threats on the Internet, which has become a tool for spreading extremist ideologies.

Interaction between the CSTO secretariat and the United Nations is becoming increasingly substantive in the area of counter-terrorism. The memorandum of understanding between the secretariat of the CSTO and the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT) is being successfully implemented. At the upcoming CSTO summit in November, the next CSTO plan of action to continue implementing the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy for 2019 to 2021, to which CSTO contributes on a regular basis, will be discussed.

The SCO plays a significant role in ensuring stability in the area. Its priority is to strengthen security in the region, including by countering extremism, terrorism and separatism. The defence ministries of member States are also involved in counter-terrorism exercises. The SCO has compiled a solid package of legal documents regulating various aspects of the national counter-terrorism activities of its member States, as the Secretary-General of the SCO mentioned earlier. I wish

to highlight the Convention on Countering Extremism, adopted in 2017 at the highest level, which enshrines the fundamental principles of international cooperation in this area, with decisive roles and responsibilities falling to States. The Convention is open for accession by all interested States, and we invite them to do so. I would also like to note that the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure of the SCO, which is sorely needed in Eurasia, is working effectively. In March, a memorandum of cooperation was signed between the SCO Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure and the Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate.

The CSTO and the SCO are paying close attention to the threats emanating from Afghanistan, including threats to the Central Asian region. The north of Afghanistan risks becoming a new platform for international terrorist organizations led by ISIL. This naturally requires appropriate external assistance to Afghanistan in overcoming these threats and challenges. Experience of recent years has shown that no plan for the development of economic cooperation between Central Asia and Afghanistan can be implemented without an adequate response to threats emanating from this State. In that context, I note that, based on this reality, the SCO-Afghanistan Contact Group is proceeding to implement the road map approved earlier this year on cooperation between SCO member States and Kabul.

The CIS Anti-Terrorism Centre has been active since 2000 in ensuring the coordination of the work conducted by national security structures, special services and law enforcement agencies in the fight against international terrorism. The Centre works closely with the anti-terrorism sanctions committees of the Security Council, the Counter-Terrorism Committee and UNOCT. I hope that all countries and entities involved will continue their work.

I would like to conclude by expressing our satisfaction with the fact that the CSTO, CIS and SCO, as their leaders' statements have reaffirmed today, are open to further deepening cooperation with the United Nations in the area of combating terrorism in order to maintain both regional and international peace and security.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I call on the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Kuwait.

Sheikh Al Sabah (Kuwait) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to congratulate you, Mr. President, my friend and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, and your friendly country on your able and professional leadership of the Security Council for this month. I would also like to thank Mr. António Guterres, Mr. Vladimir Norov, Mr. Valery Semerikov and Mr. Sergey Ivanov for their valuable briefings today.

Today's topic — cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security — is highly important for the State of Kuwait. Thus, during our presidency of the Council in June, we organized a high-level briefing on cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States and the means necessary to strengthen such cooperation (see S/PV.8548). In this context, we encourage the Security Council to convene more meetings to review and promote cooperation with regional and subregional organizations, which would promote many principles, most important of which are multilateralism, diversity and dialogue, in line with Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations.

Experience has proven that no one country alone can confront the increasingly diverse, complicated and interconnected contemporary challenges that are facing our world today, such as terrorism, transnational organized crime and trafficking in drugs and in people, *inter alia*. In order to effectively confront these challenges, we require concerted and collective efforts and the establishment of strong, regionally owned frameworks to prevent conflicts and ensure peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding. That is why we once again stress the important role of regional and subregional organizations, given their proximity and their knowledge of the history and culture of their regions and their commonalities, which make them better poised to understand the nature of regional conflicts and disputes.

Central Asia is a vital and promising region, thanks to its geostrategic importance and natural resources. The three regional organizations we are discussing today — the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Collective Security Treaty Organization and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization — have close ties with the countries of Central Asia. They play an important role by galvanizing collective efforts to confront the challenges facing those countries.

The phenomena of terrorism and violent extremism are two of the ugliest forms of crime and threats to international peace and security, targeting many innocent civilians, including women and children. Given the growing threat of terrorism to global security and the developing *modus operandi* of terrorist operations and manifestations, as well as the recruitment of new terrorist elements, countries and organizations must maintain and step up their efforts to promote their counter-terrorism capacities.

The phenomenon of foreign terrorist fighters is one of those threats. Its growing nature and the increasing number of individuals undertaking terrorist activities have become a source of serious concern, especially for countries of origin, transit and destination.

The United Nations and its counter-terrorism bodies, such as the Security Council, the Counter Terrorism Committee, the Office of Counter-Terrorism and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, all have a vital and important role to play in designing international policies and strategies based on legal frameworks, such as resolutions of the Security Council and General Assembly and relevant international conventions and treaties.

Despite all such international measures and actions, we need more regional and effective cooperation. We commend the vital and effective role of the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia in bringing the views of the countries of Central Asia into convergence, convening them around the negotiation table and strengthening dialogue, which has led to many fruitful results.

We also commend cooperation and coordination between the Centre and the three regional organizations subject of our discussion today. The Centre plays a pivotal role in cooperating with the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and in supporting efforts aimed at promoting security and stability in Afghanistan in a number of areas, foremost of which is countering terrorism, violent extremism and organized crime, including trafficking in drugs.

We hope that such cooperation between the Centre and relevant regional organizations will culminate in supporting Afghanistan economically and developmentally. The speediest possible achievement of security and stability in Afghanistan is considered essential to the maintenance and strengthening of regional and international peace and security.

Afghanistan has long suffered from terrorism and violent extremism, which have adversely affected all aspects of life there, including development.

We must seize the opportunity to help Afghanistan to overcome similar challenges by encouraging relevant parties to reach a peace agreement that would pave the way for a road map for comprehensive national reconciliation. A peace agreement is undoubtedly a critical element in restoring security and stability in friendly Afghanistan. In that regard, we value the efforts of UNAMA and welcome the adoption by the Security Council last week of resolution 2489 (2019), on the renewal of the Mission's mandate.

The State of Kuwait is a member of various regional organizations, including the Gulf Cooperation Council, the League of Arab States and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation. We believe that those organizations must shoulder their responsibilities to confront the aforementioned challenges, in line with the relevant Security Council resolutions. Those organizations have already adopted a series of strategies and plans and made intensive efforts in that regard. For example, they have collectively contributed to the adoption of relevant counter-terrorism instruments and conventions, in addition to adopting strategies that effectively contribute to promoting the efforts of their Member States to combat terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, criminalize extremist ideologies and establish a database on terrorism and terrorist organizations. Those organizations have also raised awareness through social media and moderation centres. They have further renounced extremism and sought to enhance the role of youth and the family, while launching programmes to rehabilitate terrorists returning from areas of conflict.

In closing, my country hopes that those discussions will lead to further proposals and strategies in order to expand, scale up and improve cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations as a means to consolidating our collective capacity to effectively and swiftly address threats to international peace and security.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now call on the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance and Development Cooperation of Belgium.

Mr. De Croo (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): As others have done, I would like, on behalf of Belgium, to

thank the Secretary-General and the other speakers for their briefings.

We welcome the constructive cooperation between the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Collective Security Treaty Organization and the United Nations. That excellent cooperation is demonstrated by the invaluable assistance provided to the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate by those organizations during the visits of their member States.

It is important that the partnership between the United Nations and regional organizations be aligned with United Nations documents, such as the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, Security Council resolutions and fully embrace the values of the United Nations. All measures taken by Member States to combat terrorism must be based on the full respect for obligations under international law, international human rights law, international refugee law and international humanitarian law. Indeed, any lack of respect for those essential guarantees runs the risk of compromising the success of combating terrorism and contributing to the breeding ground for violent extremism.

An effective fight against terrorism involves a resolutely comprehensive approach in which prevention, punishment and due diligence to go hand in hand. An approach that includes strengthening civil society, promotes socioeconomic inclusion and avoids the polarization of communities is essential. Only such a method will bolster the resilience of our societies against violent extremism and terrorism. In that regard, I would like to express my sincere gratitude for the work accomplished by the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia and Special Representative of the Secretary-General Natalia Gherman.

Struck by several devastating terrorist attacks, the European Union has developed a comprehensive anti-terrorist framework. The protection of citizens, the prevention of radicalization and cooperation with international partners are at the very heart of that anti-terrorism fight. The signature of a counter-terrorism charter by the European Union and the United Nations in April is testament to the importance that we attach to cooperation between those two partners. That framework is based on the Charter of the United Nations and advocates the strengthening of international law and respect for the rule of law

and human rights. The partners seek to increase their respective commitments to Central Asia, South Asia and South-East Asia. The European Union, in a holistic spirit, is developing its efforts to combat terrorism with its partners in the region.

With the Strengthening Resilience to Violence and Extremism (STRIVE) programme in Asia, the European Union is tackling the root causes of radicalization. At the very centre of that project is an effort to increase the role of women, promote dialogue among communities, strengthen the capacity of the media and reinforce the education sector to confront extremist ideologies. The programme is also a good example of the close cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations. STRIVE Asia is being implemented because of the effective partnership among the United Nations, the Office of Counter-Terrorism, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the United Nations Development Programme.

The programme is part and parcel of a strategy recently approved by the European Union for Central Asia, which aims to take up common challenges, such as the deterioration of the environment and terrorism, and to strengthen cooperation with our partners in the region in order to promote peace in Afghanistan. As a donor, the European Union has allocated over €1 billion for bilateral and regional assistance to the region over the course of the past seven years.

Terrorism is not an abstract concept. It is a tragedy that kills civilians on a daily basis and without discrimination, whether they be men, women or children. We owe it to our people, and especially the most affected populations, such as in Afghanistan, to respond jointly to this threat, without ever forgetting the founding values of the United Nations.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now call on the State Councillor and Minister for Foreign Affairs of China.

Mr. Wang Yi (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): Let me begin by expressing our appreciation to Russia for convening today's ministerial debate. I listened carefully to the statements by Secretary-General Guterres, Secretary-General Norov, Acting Secretary-General Semerikov and Deputy Executive Secretary Ivanov, and I commend the cooperation on fighting terrorism between the United Nations, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Collective Security Treaty Organization.

Terrorism is a public enemy of humankind and counter-terrorism is a responsibility we all share. We continue to face a complex and challenging situation. Terrorism, separatism and extremism remain rampant and are becoming increasingly pervasive and home-grown. The close link between terrorism and extremism is more visible than ever before. For this reason, international cooperation against terrorism must be strengthened, not weakened. We need to recognize that we are in a global community with a shared future. As such, we must take a holistic approach and deliver our joint responses, tackling both the symptoms and root causes of terrorism. Promoting political settlement is the best option for addressing hotspot issues, and different civilizations and religions should live in harmony based on mutual respect.

The global fight against terrorism has lasted nearly 20 years, since the incident of 11 September 2001. The experience gained and lessons learned over the course of the global fight deserve to be closely reviewed. As we confront a new round of resurgent terrorism in the world, it is important that we take the following actions.

First, we should apply uniform standards and keep up the pressure. All terrorist activities must be resolutely combated, irrespective of who is behind them and of when, where and why they are committed. There should be no double standard or selectiveness in this fight. No one should use terrorist forces to pursue geopolitical gains, still less tie terrorism to a particular country, ethnicity or religion.

Secondly, we should set clear priorities and tackle the use of the Internet for terrorist purposes. The Internet is not beyond the law and should not become a haven for terrorists. We must prevent terrorist groups from using the Internet for propaganda, recruitment, financing, incitement or organization purposes.

Thirdly, we should pay more attention to preventing and eliminating the root causes of terrorism. We must take active deradicalization measures to stop the spread of extremist ideas and thereby remove the breeding ground for terrorism. We must promote exchange and dialogue between civilizations that is based on equality, respect and tolerance and reject the notion of the so-called clash of civilizations, leaving terrorist forces no gaps to exploit. More importantly, we must pursue development, especially sustainable development, if we are to root out terrorism once and for all.

Fourthly, we should step up cooperation and enable the United Nations to play its central role. Fighting terrorism requires the individual efforts of Member States; however, at the same time, the United Nations and its Security Council should fully play their key role in order to ensure better coordination at the national, regional and global levels. In that connection, it is crucial to fully implement the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and relevant Security Council resolutions.

The United Nations and such regional organizations as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Collective Security Treaty Organization shoulder a particular responsibility in fighting terrorism. We must enhance synergies through stronger cooperation and contribute jointly to safeguarding world peace and regional stability.

Under the stewardship of Under-Secretary-General Voronkov, the Office of Counter-Terrorism has done a great job. It has hosted a series of high-level meetings this year and has achieved positive outcomes. China supports the Office in continuing to play its coordinating role, as well as the holding of a United Nations counter-terrorism week in June next year. We will favourably consider hosting a high-level meeting on counter-terrorism in China. China will stay deeply involved in international counter-terrorism cooperation. We are ready to work with all other countries to deny terrorists safe havens, provide a safe and happy life to our people and make our world a peaceful and secure place for all.

China's efforts on counter-terrorism and deradicalization, as an important component of the global fight against terrorism, have made a valuable contribution to global progress on that front. Let me cite two sets of figures. Between 1990 and 2016, the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region was plagued by violent terrorist activities, seeing thousands of violent terrorist attacks which, at their peak, numbered one incident per day. In contrast, there has not been a single case in Xinjiang in the past three years. What has made the difference? It is the vigorous measures taken by the Government of the Autonomous Region, including drawing on the good experiences of other countries, to engage in preventive counter-terrorism and deradicalization, in accordance with the law. Such efforts have effectively curbed the frequency of terrorist activities and ensure maximum safeguards for the right to subsistence, the right to development and other basic

rights of the nearly 25 million people in Xinjiang. The measures have been supported and endorsed by people of all ethnic groups in Xinjiang and across China. That is a basic fact recognized by all foreigners who have been to Xinjiang.

Past progress shows that the deradicalization measures in Xinjiang have been highly effective. They constitute useful experiments in preventive counter-terrorism and concrete steps in implementing the United Nations Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism, as well as China's important contribution to the global fight against terrorism. The United States and other individual Western countries have ignored those basic facts and, in line with their own political agenda, have engaged in smear campaigns against China's legitimate measures. China is firmly opposed to what they have been doing, and the international community should disagree with their actions.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now call on the Minister for International Relations and Cooperation of South Africa.

Mrs. Pandor (South Africa): I thank you for this opportunity, Sir. May I congratulate you on your role as President.

I wish to begin by thanking the Secretary-General of the United Nations for his briefing and the speakers of the various organizations associated with this debate.

The debate today affords us an opportunity to reaffirm the value of cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations to address peace and security challenges, including the scourge of terrorism. Terrorism continues to threaten our populations and, on the African continent, has begun to derail our collective efforts to bring about peace, security and sustainable development.

Continued terrorist attacks across the world have shown us that no nation or region is immune to its threat and there is no short-term solution to countering the threat of terrorism and its devastating consequences. If we are to triumph over this scourge, we will need, in addition to our national efforts, a strengthening of international, regional and subregional cooperation and coordination efforts.

A multilateral framework, anchored in the United Nations, remains critical to preventing and countering the diverse and evolving aspects of this threat. With near universal membership, the United Nations is best

placed to foster cooperation across the globe, as well as to ensure support to Member States and regions in implementing the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy across its four pillars. The collective sharing of experiences and information and the adoption of best practices in dealing with our common threats contribute positively to the development and enhancement of our capabilities. It also improves effectiveness in addressing our specific contexts in countering terrorism.

We believe that regional organizations are key partners of the United Nations in that important task. South Africa has consistently prioritized an enhanced strategic partnership between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations, not only in countering terrorism but also in conflict prevention and resolution. As a member of the Council, my country continues to strive for closer partnership between the United Nations and the African Union. This takes into account the volume of African conflict situations on the agenda of the Security Council, as well as the growing threat of terrorism across Africa.

Different regions of the world experience the threat posed by terrorist groups and/or the return or relocation of foreign terrorist fighters differently. We encourage the development of partnerships with regional organizations, given their understanding of local and regional dynamics and of what would be required to address the issue. In that regard, the international community must find ways to support the efforts of regional organizations aimed at fighting terrorism and violent extremism, including by sharing experiences and providing technical assistance and adequate resources for capacity-building.

As we ponder solutions to this awful threat, it is essential that we understand and address the root causes and conditions that give rise to terrorism. We should aim to seek political solutions aimed at resolving long-standing conflicts in order to create the necessary conditions for stability and a better future over the long-term. We should seek to address the marginalization of some sectors of the population and socioeconomic and political disparities.

More often than not, where there is conflict there may also be a deficit of the rule of law, thus allowing terrorists the space to entrench themselves and expand their activities. We have seen this on the African continent with the devastating effects of terror activities

in the Sahel following the conflict in Libya, associated with the free flow of arms and the rise of terror groups.

The African Union has been proactive in dealing with the threat of terrorism, as evidenced by its normative frameworks developed since 1999, primarily the Organization of African Unity Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism and its related Protocol of 2004, as well as its counter-terrorism strategy, adopted in 2015. Likewise, our own Southern African Development Community also adopted its counter-terrorism framework and strategy in 2015. At the domestic level, South Africa adopted its national counter-terrorism strategy in 2013 and has an active action plan in response to it.

South Africa believes that, owing to the very nature of terrorism, it is difficult to defeat it militarily or solely through the use of coercive measures. South Africa therefore remains supportive of counter-terrorism initiatives that focus on prevention measures, addressing conditions that give rise to terrorism and promoting dialogue, tolerance, diversity and understanding among peoples, cultures and religions.

South Africa will continue to work with all Members of the United Nations, the African Union, the Southern African Development Community and other relevant parties in addressing the scourge of terrorism and all its attendant manifestations at the regional and international levels.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Indonesia.

Mrs. Marsudi (Indonesia): I thank you, Sir, for organizing this important debate.

This topic is not a new issue for us, but remains very relevant today. Therefore, Indonesia has set counter-terrorism and synergy between the United Nations and regional organizations as two of four Indonesian priorities during its term on the Security Council. I would like to underline once again that the link between the two is indeed pertinent in today's context, particularly in addressing the current phenomenon whereby the global terrorism movement has transformed itself into small franchise cells, finding its breeding ground in our region and home.

One thing is for sure — terrorism will always find new ways and forms in posing a threat to the world. It is our job to be ready to deter it. That is why cooperation between the United Nations and regional

and subregional organizations is vital to preventing, countering and safeguarding our community from all present and future threats posed by terrorism. With that in mind, there are at least three points on how we can strengthen, expand and enhance cooperation in this area.

First, there is the matter of strengthening efforts to prevent the spread of terrorist ideology. There should be no room, space or condition for the terrorist ideology to grow. We need to ensure that there are no precursor conditions that allow terrorists to spread their ideology. Such precursor conditions — including, inter alia, prolonged conflicts, poverty, religious intolerance, violent extremism, Islamophobia and nationalist right-wing movements — must be addressed.

For prevention, we need to ensure fully functional Government, advance socioeconomic growth and development, promote inclusive and tolerant societies and develop early warning mechanisms, among others. Such efforts should begin at the national level and can be supported by regional and global efforts.

Secondly, there is the need to strengthen regional and subregional mechanisms in countering terrorism. Developing the right tools and mechanisms is key to addressing terrorism and its many manifestations. That is why, in addition to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Convention on Counter-Terrorism and its 2012 plan of action, Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines have also established trilateral cooperation to address distinct transnational threats posed by terrorist groups in the Sulu Sea. The framework enables joint air, land and sea exercises and border patrols, and has so far been effective in reducing the number of terrorist attacks and incidents in the Sulu Sea.

Thirdly, we must replicate and align strategy at the global level with those at the subregional, regional and national levels. Efforts at the multilateral level should strengthen our endeavour at the regional and national levels. This has been the case in our region, where the Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism became the main point of reference for the creation of ASEAN Plan of Action to Prevent and Counter the Rise of Radicalization and Violent Extremism 2018-2025, which in turn has become the main source of our draft national action plan on countering violent extremism.

In conclusion, no country or region is immune from the threat of terrorism. Therefore, global cooperation is

the only feasible way to counter it. Our meeting today is very useful for strengthening our global collaboration in countering terrorism.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Equatorial Guinea.

Mr. Esono Angue (Equatorial Guinea) (*spoke in Spanish*): I should like at the outset to congratulate you, Sir, for your exemplary leadership of this meeting of the Council. I also express my appreciation and gratitude to the Russian presidency for having convened this very timely debate pursuant to Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, which helps raise the profile of the role of regional and subregional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security.

We also appreciate the statements of Secretary-General António Guterres, Mr. Vladimir Norov, Mr. Valery Semerikov and Mr. Sergey Ivanov, which provide clear examples of how collaboration between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations can help strengthen global efforts to ensure lasting peace and security and sustainable development.

The Republic of Equatorial Guinea reaffirms that terrorism, in all its forms and manifestations, constitutes one of the most serious threats to international peace and security and that terrorist acts are unjustifiable crimes, whatever their motivation and wherever they are committed. We also reaffirm in that regard the need to combat terrorism by all means and with consummate respect for the sovereignty of States and in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and international law, including the applicable norms of human rights, refugee and humanitarian law.

The continuous and persistent illicit flow to non-State actors of weapons, especially small and light weapons, contributes significantly to exacerbating insecurity and violence in various parts of our continent, undermining social cohesion, socio-economic development and the effective functioning of institutions. My country, Equatorial Guinea, was the victim of an attempted terrorist act with political and economic objectives in December 2017 involving foreign elements that, had it been successful, would have had dire consequences for the security and stability of the entire Central African subregion given its level of integration and interconnectedness.

We believe that the response to current challenges to peace and security, especially terrorism, requires a sustained and comprehensive approach that involves active participation and collaboration, addressing the root causes of the problem faced by all States and international and regional organizations, in order to stop, defuse, isolate and neutralize the terrorist threat.

The report of the Secretary-General on cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations (S/2018/592) and the presentations we have had the honour of hearing today have provided clear examples of the advantages of cooperation among such institutions, in particular for the various regions, and, in this case, for the countries of Asia and Eastern Europe, regions that are critical to the fight against terrorism, whether in terms of peacebuilding, the prevention of violent extremism and conflicts, disarmament, the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction or, most especially, controlling the flow of foreign terrorist fighters.

As established by the Charter of the United Nations, the Security Council bears primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. Recognizing the Council's leading role in that regard, we would like to point out that, as the presentations showed, collaboration between the Council and regional organizations facilitates the exchange of information, good practices and lessons learned, which are all key elements for mounting a more effective collective response in our shared struggle against terrorism.

Such initiatives help build trust among participating States through coordination and mutual capacity-building efforts in the fight against terrorism. Such coordination also helps identify blind spots in the fight against terrorism through a better understanding and use of local knowledge and perspectives, which help sustain political commitment at the regional level.

We recognize and encourage in that regard the growing collaboration, among the regional organizations of the United Nations, the offices of the special representatives assigned to those regions, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism and the various Security Council committees, to support the work of the Collective Security Treaty Organization, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the Commonwealth of Independent States in implementing the resolutions of

the Security Council and the General Assembly in the fight against terrorism.

We believe that the experience in fighting terrorism of the three organizations present here, which represent a significant percentage of the world's population and territory and of many of its States, are valuable for the development and strengthening of similar initiatives in other regions, especially in Africa. During the presidency of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea in February 2019, my delegation organized an open debate on cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations, on the theme "Silencing the guns in Africa", which adopted a focus similar to that of today's debate (see S/PV.8473).

We believe it is important to consolidate the relationship between the Security Council and the regional organizations and to make it more strategic. Given the mobility of foreign terrorist fighters in Asia, many of whom come from or return to Africa and other regions, we encourage efforts by organizations to coordinate with their counterparts in other regions, in particular in Africa. We welcome in that regard the collaborative efforts of the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization with the African Centre for Studies and Research on Terrorism of the African Union, and encourage similar efforts be carried out to strengthen regional security and stability.

We also note the global efforts of the member States of the three organizations, such as those of Kazakhstan, to strengthen the global fight against terrorism through the Code of Conduct Towards Achieving a World Free of Terrorism, of 2018, to which the Republic of Equatorial Guinea had the honour of subscribing.

We believe in conclusion that it is crucial to recognize the need to invest in the root causes of terrorism and conflict and thereby in sustainable and equitable development and peace, especially through the empowerment of women, young people and the most vulnerable communities. We will be able in that way to construct a compelling narrative against terrorism and violent extremism. We note that the Collective Security Treaty Organization, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the Commonwealth of Independent States are taking that approach.

In line with Council press statement SC/13179, we welcome further cooperation and coordination between the United Nations and those organizations in order

to build the capacities of those regions to overcome challenges with a view to achieving peace, stability and the sustainable development of their peoples. We encourage them to continue this important work so that we can all learn to craft innovative collective responses to the new terrorist threats.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Dominican Republic.

Mr. Vargas Maldonado (Dominican Republic) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, I would like to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council. It is a pleasure to meet again in this Chamber to discuss cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional bodies in combating the international terrorist threat.

We are particularly grateful to Secretary-General António Guterres for his briefing, which provided us with important information. We also extend our thanks to the other speakers here today for their informative briefings.

Terrorism is a latent threat with cruel and inhuman effects that can destabilize international peace and security. The problems of foreign terrorist fighters and their return home, radicalization, recruitment through the Internet and the financing of terrorist activities continue to pose a terrible threat to the development and well-being of our peoples. That is why it remains a priority issue, not only for the members of the Council but also for the various multilateral discussion forums.

Bilateral and multilateral cooperation has proven to be key in the fight against terrorism. As a State, we recognize the importance of cooperation with regional and subregional bodies for the monitoring, seizure, confiscation and recovery of assets derived from illicit activities. Our country is actively working with the Financial Action Task Force of Latin America on the ongoing improvement of policies on preventing and combating money-laundering, as well as on the recovery of assets through the Asset Recovery Interagency Network for the Caribbean.

In addition, in July the Dominican Republic formalized its accession to the Egmont Group, represented by our financial intelligence unit. These organizations undoubtedly contribute significantly to the creation and implementation of regulations at the national level with regard to the development of State

capacities, the creation of tools and the implementation of international, regional and subregional regulations.

The fight against terrorism is also a fight for political stability and the defence of human rights, development and prosperity. We therefore applaud the work of regional and subregional organizations, especially that of the Inter-American Committee Against Terrorism, which provides the States members of the Organization of American States with legislative assistance in the areas of terrorism and its financing, as well as in the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004), maritime and port security, cybersecurity and tourism security.

We believe that in order to ensure the continuity of a successful collaborative relationship, these organizations with shared objectives should always rely on the United Nations, international human rights law and international humanitarian law as a point of reference. It is imperative that these bodies observe and abide by the resolutions of the Council and the General Assembly, and that they work closely with the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism; the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate; the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime; the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1988 (2011), pertaining to Afghanistan and the Taliban; and the Committee established pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015), concerning the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities.

The Dominican Republic reaffirms its commitment to the struggle for a world of peace in which our peoples can develop within the framework of societies that are inclusive, just, full of opportunities and respectful of fundamental freedoms and rights. We urge the international community, especially the members of the Council, to continue to pool their efforts and develop strategic alliances to eradicate terrorism in order to build a better world for future generations and to render honour and justice to those who have lost their lives in these cowardly acts.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now call on the Minister of State attached to the Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs of France.

Mr. Lemoyne (France) (*spoke in French*): Let me begin by thanking the Secretary-General, the representatives of the Collective Security Treaty

Organization, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the Commonwealth of Independent States for their briefings on the actions of their respective organizations.

Terrorism is one of the greatest threats to international peace and security today. That threat persists. Despite the loss of its territorial foothold, Da'esh, to name but one terrorist group, continues to pose a serious threat to international peace and security, particularly through its affiliates and the attacks it continues to inspire. The fight against terrorism is therefore at the heart of the Council's action. It requires an organized, firm and united response from States and the international community as a whole and cannot be effective unless it fully respects human rights, in line with the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, adopted by the 193 Member States.

In that regard, the United Nations has a major and growing role to play at the global level, which requires, first, the creation of norms and obligations to ensure that States have robust counter-terrorism mechanisms; secondly, the adoption of sanctions to deprive terrorist groups of the means to carry out attacks; and, finally — and this is what brings us together today — the strengthening of international and regional cooperation to encourage States to collaborate further and exchange good practices.

At the regional level, Central Asia continues to face significant economic, political and security challenges, as noted earlier. The deteriorated security situation and political uncertainty in Afghanistan are, obviously, destabilizing factors, especially for its neighbours. I say that because I remember our recent visit to Tajikistan. Our Tajik friends, who took in French contingents when we were in Afghanistan, must know that we will stand by them in the face of these challenges, and the same applies to the other States of the region. The risk of terrorism spares no one today and often thrives in a context of social frustration, particularly among young people who may be tempted by radicalization.

This fragile context makes cooperation essential among all the actors in the region, particularly States and international and regional organizations, whose Secretaries-General I welcome today. The United Nations has an important role to play in encouraging such cooperation, as demonstrated by the Organization in May at the regional conference of the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism on the crucial issue of

combating the financing of terrorism through drug trafficking and organized crime.

The work of the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia must also continue. Its activities were welcomed by Sheikh Al Sabah, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Kuwait, and Mr. De Croo, Deputy Prime Minister of Belgium, and we associate ourselves with those words. Supporting the countries of the region in developing national responses to such challenges and encouraging them to strengthen regional cooperation are priority objectives.

The European Union, as a regional organization, also fully participates in the fight against terrorism, particularly in Central Asia. Over the past decade, we have developed important border management programmes, namely, the Border Management Programme in Central Asia, and counter-narcotics programmes, such as the Central Asia Drug Action Programme. A few months ago, in June, we adopted a new Central Asia strategy, which explicitly seeks to strengthen our counter-terrorism cooperation to prevent violent extremism and radicalization by addressing the root causes. The European Union is therefore fully engaged and committed and intends to continue its efforts in the area of regional cooperation. Moreover, we may extend to Afghanistan certain dialogue and cooperation frameworks established with the Central Asian countries.

Young people and education are another significant area of work under the new European Union strategy.

In conclusion, I would like to say that the synergies between the United Nations and regional organizations in the fight against terrorism work. It is up to us, as Security Council members, to support them. Rest assured that France will fully play its role in that regard.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now call on the Minister of State at the Federal Foreign Office of Germany.

Mr. Annen (Germany): I would like to warmly thank our Russian friends, the Secretary-General and today's briefers. It has become painstakingly obvious over the past two decades that international, regional and subregional cooperation are key to a successful fight against terrorism and violent extremism. A transnational threat can be overcome only by joint and comprehensive international action, close partnerships and the exchange of information among regional

organizations, the United Nations and Member States. We therefore salute the successful efforts of the organizations represented here today by the briefers.

Allow me also to make some remarks about organizations that have not been invited today. In addition to my French colleague, I also wish to make some comments about the European Union, which, as all those present know, cooperates closely with various United Nations bodies. We have signed a framework on counter-terrorism. We work very closely with the joint United Nations Liaison Office for Peace and Security in Brussels and with the Office of Counter-Terrorism's Brussels presence. That also holds true for other organizations, such as the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe and NATO, which has already been by one of our briefers, with successful collaboration with all relevant bodies, including United Nations entities. I think that that is very important.

We cherish such cooperation, including in different and less known forums. Within the Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF), Germany puts particular emphasis both on issue-driven, such as the use of drones by terrorists, for example, that being one of the urgent issues we must tackle, and on regional cooperation. Just this week, we are assuming the co-chairmanship of the GCTF Capacity-building in the West Africa Region Working Group, together with our friends from Algeria. The objective is to support West African countries in their fight against terrorism. The speed and scope of that particular effort are being defined by our partners from the region. Africa therefore truly has an important role to play.

Allow me to make some short remarks about core principles in the work that all of us here must do. If we want to successfully counter terrorism and violent extremism, we must not forget the glue that keeps us together, as well as the important role of the Security Council. I refer to our common set of universal human values. We need to strictly adhere to the human rights standards and principles on which we all have agreed within the United Nations framework. Only by upholding those values will we remain credible and be able to defeat terrorist ideologies.

I think that it is very important to mention recent reports that show that negative encounters with armed forces, even if they are in a legitimate fight against terrorism, are a major factor for young men and women to join terrorist groups. Human rights, international

humanitarian law and the rule of law must therefore be respected, including in the fight against terrorism and, I stress, without exceptions. Trust in the functioning of the State, its institutions and the rule of law are central elements for preventing violent extremism. My point is that disrespecting such values is a factor that can lead marginalized groups or individuals to violent extremism and into terrorist networks.

I also want to flag another aspect that, in our view, is very significant, since we in Germany are convinced that including a gender perspective in preventing and combating terrorist threats is also highly important and a factor in prevention. As victims, women are impacted in different ways when a terrorist attack occurs and are often more vulnerable than other parts of society. Furthermore, it is important to analyse the root causes of terrorism and to understand that such causes are often also gender specific. The reasons for the recruitment of male and female terrorists, for example, often differ. Finally, women are important agents of change and need to be part of the strategy that we are discussing today.

Again, the in-depth experience of regional and subregional bodies can be highly useful. That is why we thank the Russian Federation for convening this meeting. I would like to provide just one example of what we are doing. We support the reintegration of female Al-Shabaab defectors in Somalia through psychological counselling and gender-appropriate vocational training. We believe that that could be a model approach and are more than willing to share our experience with the Council and Member States.

Let me end with something that has been mentioned by our colleagues from France, Belgium, South Africa and other members. We need to look at the root causes. I think that that is very important. We need to understand that we cannot limit our focus to a single issue. Suppression and prevention are two sides of the same coin.

To conclude, let me be very clear: we need to be morally and ethically superior to the terrorists by strictly following the rule of law and fully respecting human rights. In that regard, Germany is more than willing and prepared to continue working with Member States and the United Nations in that endeavour.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now call on the Under-Secretary of State in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Poland.

Mr. Przydacz (Poland): There is no doubt that combating terrorism in all its forms is one of the major challenges that the international community faces. In today's global world, terrorism, alongside organized crime, the illegal trade in weapons and trafficking, poses a major threat to international peace and security. There is also no doubt that terrorism is constantly evolving and that combating it always requires new approaches, mechanisms and tools. Cyberterrorism and foreign terrorist fighters have become challenges that need to be addressed in a comprehensive and concrete manner.

Terrorism can be effectively and ultimately eradicated only when there is the common will and determination of all stakeholders to do their part. The unique role of the United Nations in combating terrorism is undisputed. The United Nations not only has the responsibility to act decisively on its own but also should step up its efforts by reaching out to other actors.

Bearing in mind the central role of the United Nations in combating terrorism, cooperation with regional organizations in that regard is not only possible, as stipulated in Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, but clearly welcome. It not only helps to promote good governance, the rule of law and other democratic values but also fosters regional cooperation in economic, political and security affairs, leading to the establishment of sustainable peace and prosperity. Regional organizations, as they have a narrower geographical focus, may sometimes better understand regional specificities and better address specific challenges locally. Strong and coordinated action by the United Nations and regional organizations in combating terrorism has significant potential to strengthen the responsiveness and agility of the international community.

Poland strongly supports close cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations and plays an active role in such cooperation with, among others, the European Union, NATO, the Council of Europe and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. It is of utmost importance, however, that the spirit and principles of the United Nations be at the top of any activities and decisions taken by all stakeholders. Regional organizations will contribute to international peace and security only if they act as honest brokers whose actions are the result of consensus between all their member States.

Without clarity on this and without full respect for such basic rules, it would be difficult to define the goal of potential cooperation. The United Nations must avoid any deviation from its own basic rules.

The common objective of the States members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) is counteracting separatism, extremism and terrorism. SCO member States assert that they respect the pivotal role of the United Nations system and of the World Trade Organization in shaping the global order politically and economically, and hence it is justified to expect the SCO member States to engage in accommodating the activities of both these universal organizations to present challenges and requirements.

It should be recalled that regional organizations truly play their role only when they reflect the interests of all their members and are not used as a tool for the domination of a few. Let us not forget that regional organizations willing to cooperate with the United Nations in combating terrorism need to abide by and promote among themselves and their member States all the principles of the United Nations, including the principles of the inviolability of State borders, the recognition of existing borders and the rejection of unlawful territorial annexations. Let us reiterate also that international law imposes the obligation of the non-recognition of the legal effects of illegal acts.

Unfortunately, the position of the SCO and of the Collective Security Treaty Organization and the Commonwealth of Independent States with regard to the illegal annexation of parts of the territory of Ukraine puts their impartiality in question. Their lack of will to take the appropriate measures to respond to the aforementioned conflict, as well as the conflict in Georgia in 2008, unfortunately casts a shadow on the organizations' contribution to the promotion of peace, security and stability.

In that light, I would like to reiterate that so long as there is no common approach with regard to issues of such fundamental importance to the global architecture, the cooperation of the United Nations with such partners in combating terrorism will be disputable.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I do not understand whether the representative of Poland spoke on behalf of his country or of the United States, but that is a different question.

Ms. Pierce (United Kingdom): My Minister would have liked to have been here to deliver this intervention, but the Ministers have cantered through their interventions, unlike the normal business of the Council, so I am afraid that he is tied up in another event, and I apologize for that.

I wanted to start by agreeing with what the French, German and Polish ministers have said about the importance of international humanitarian law in this area and, of course, about the work of other organizations, including, but not limited to, the European Union, NATO and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, all of which, as Ministers have explained, do very important work on the agendas on prevention and protection and on the combat against terrorism.

For its part, the United Kingdom very much welcomes these counter-terrorism partnerships with regional and subregional organizations. As terrorist threats evolve, cooperation between partners is vital to addressing the cross-border movement of many people, ideas and materials. However, as the Secretary-General affirmed this morning, such cooperation has to be anchored in the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and in Security Council resolutions, and it has to reflect a balanced and comprehensive approach, in compliance with international law, as outlined by both the Security Council and the General Assembly. We fully agree with the Secretary-General that promoting gender equality, as Ministers have also said, is an important component of countering terrorism and violent extremism.

The United Kingdom welcomed the Council's recent adoption of resolutions 2462 (2019) and 2482 (2019), with their increased emphasis on the obligation to protect humanitarian activity. It is important that regional partnerships and interactions reflect this obligation and that counter-terrorism measures not be used as a justification for ignoring this obligation or for violating the Geneva Conventions or international humanitarian law more generally. In that respect, we were pleased to hear that the Shanghai Cooperation Organization has increased its attention to humanitarian assistance, and we hope that this will include the protection of humanitarian activities while countering terrorism.

If I can turn to Central Asia, terrorism remains a threat in that region, which is, of course, a key area for this discussion. The attack in Tajikistan last August

that caused the deaths of four foreign cyclists was an awful reminder of that threat. We welcome the work of the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia in implementing the United Nations counter-terrorism frameworks and Security Council recommendations. We also welcome the engagement we have seen so far from Central Asian Governments; we would encourage them to cooperate more with one another, with the United Nations Regional Centre, the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism and the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate. In that regard, it was good that the briefers could tell us about stronger partnerships, but, at the same time, I would like to stress the importance of a harmonized approach, including on designations.

We have also touched on Afghanistan, which the Council discussed recently. Like the rest of Asia, it has great potential but faces great challenges. The United Kingdom is pleased to see the countries of Central Asia working together to support their neighbour Afghanistan. Much has been said about the threat not only of extremism but also of narcotics trafficking emanating from the country. While we should recognize those risks, it is important not to overstate them. It is the Afghan people themselves who suffer most at the hands of extremists. The international community and regional partners must continue to work together, as indeed we have for many years, to support peace and stability in Afghanistan.

Turning to counter-terrorism cooperation, we hope that we will be able to continue to work together to prevent terrorism and violent extremism in all regions. Military and law-enforcement measures alone will not suffice; as the German Minister said, we need to tackle the root causes. The United Kingdom therefore encourages all partners in the field of counter-terrorism to strengthen their collaboration with civil society and to ensure that gender and human rights considerations are always integrated across the full spectrum of counter-terrorism efforts globally.

Finally, I would like to stress the importance of human rights. We welcome the affirmations from the briefers today on human rights; they are absolutely vital to this issue. The General Assembly and the Security Council have reaffirmed many times that the promotion and protection of human rights is a fundamental pillar of counter-terrorism. We have seen that violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms have in themselves often contributed to validating terrorist

narratives and enabling recruitment. It is particularly important in Central Asia, where progress made on human rights is fragile and needs to be protected. It is imperative that the countries of the region and the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia cooperate with regional actors to ensure that counter-terrorism approaches comply with human rights obligations.

For its part, the United Kingdom is active in Central Asia. We collaborate and coordinate with a range of international partners, as I mentioned at the beginning. Our priorities are regional security, good governance, human rights and prosperity. Our projects support those priorities and we emphasize inclusion, participation and support for those vulnerable to extremism ideologies. We emphasize the need for the countries of Central Asia to cooperate on cross-border issues and to increase engagement with the rules-based international system. Counter-terrorism offers a good opportunity for both.

In conclusion, I thank you, Mr. President, for the opportunity to share our views on this important peace and security issue and to shine a light on a region that is of increasing strategic importance.

Mr. Ipo (Côte d'Ivoire) (*spoke in French*): Côte d'Ivoire welcomes today's meeting on the theme "United Nations cooperation with regional and subregional organizations in maintaining peace and security: the contribution of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) in countering terrorist threats".

We welcome the Secretary-General and the various ministers in attendance, whose presence underscores the importance of today's meeting and attests to our unwavering commitment to combating terrorism.

We thank the representatives of the various regional organizations for their excellent briefings.

Terrorism is one of the most serious contemporary threats to international peace and security, to which individual States cannot find solutions. Fortunately, the awareness of the need for a collective approach to the fight against the scourge has, in recent years, led States to strengthen and better coordinate their efforts to combat it, through regional and subregional mechanisms.

The joint efforts of the SCO, the CIS and the CSTO, which cover a vast geographical area from Eastern

Europe to the Far East, are therefore the result of that collective approach, which Côte d'Ivoire fully supports. My country believes that those three organizations have undeniable comparative advantages, based on a good understanding of the local political, economic and social dynamics. They are therefore better equipped to develop conflict prevention and counter-terrorism mechanisms that are adapted to the situation on the ground.

My delegation also welcomes the excellent cooperation among those regional organizations and the United Nations, in particular through the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia, the Counter-Terrorism Committee and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.

With regard to regional crises, including the conflict in Afghanistan, it is imperative to pay special attention to the political and security situation. My delegation therefore calls for increased support for political dialogue among all actors in Afghan society, including women and young people, as well as for capacity-building in security institutions, in order to address the many challenges facing the country.

In the area of preventive diplomacy, the work of the SCO, the CIS and the CSTO should further promote initiatives to ease tensions and promote dialogue among the States of the region in order to help build regional peace and stability. Côte d'Ivoire also welcomes the gains made from the cooperation among those three regional organizations, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the Counter-Terrorism Committee. Despite several challenges, such cooperation has yielded encouraging results in the areas of counter-terrorism, anti-money-laundering and combating arms and drug trafficking. The fight against terrorism must also be accompanied by actions aimed at reducing poverty and unemployment, which foster radicalization and violent extremism.

Like the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Collective Security Treaty Organization, many regional organizations around the world have acknowledged the threats that terrorism poses to regional and international peace and security and recognized the need to establish appropriate mechanisms to better unite and coordinate their efforts.

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) has in that regard adopted a counter-

terrorism strategy, based on an integrated approach that emphasizes coordination and information-sharing among member States. On 14 September, ECOWAS member States decided to take another step by taking ownership of their collective security through the adoption of a five-year (2020-2025) \$1 billion priority action plan to finance the fight against terrorism.

In conclusion, Côte d'Ivoire reaffirms its commitment to strengthening cooperation among the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in the fight against terrorism with a view to maintaining international peace and security.

Mr. Balarezo (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me to thank Russia for convening today's important meeting, which is essentially a discussion about Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations. Latin American countries actively participated in developing that Chapter at the San Francisco Conference, which led to the establishment in 1948 of the Organization of American States, one of the first regional organizations with links to the United Nations through Chapter VIII. Today's discussion is very important in that context and we would commend it.

We would also like to thank and congratulate the representatives of the three regional organizations for their very useful briefings.

Today's meeting is important as I said because it addresses the issue of terrorism, which is one of the main threats to our States. Intensifying the fight against that scourge is crucial. That must be accompanied in turn by specific mechanisms that enable us to collectively prevent and combat the scourge. As some representatives have already said, it must be done with full respect for international law, human rights and fundamental freedoms.

We listened carefully to the briefings. We would like as I said to congratulate the work conducted by those three regional organizations. We believe that they help uphold the international commitments of the States in their regions. We thank and support them in particular for their role in promoting the national implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and in ensuring adherence to Security Council resolutions.

We believe in that regard that the cooperation agreements that those organizations have signed with the Executive Directorate of the Counter-Terrorism

Committee, as well as with the Office of Counter-Terrorism, are a useful practice.

We would also like to commend the role of the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia in coordinating those efforts in an effective manner. We thank those organizations for their role in diagnosing and developing a joint response to complex threats, based on an approach that acknowledges and is based on unique regional features, such as porous borders and transnational organized crime, which are a dangerous combination for the stability of Eurasia.

I would therefore like to highlight the recent adoption of resolution 2482 (2019), under Peru's presidency and leadership of the Council (see S/PV.8582), which addresses in particular the phenomena of terrorism and international organized crime and the links between them. The resolution justifies the role that regional and subregional organizations are called upon to play in the face of these challenges, including in the provision of technical assistance and helping States to strengthen their capacities.

We also believe that every strategy must adopt a gender perspective, as some delegations have already mentioned, as well as focus on safeguarding the rights of children. The addendum to the Madrid Guiding Principles and the key principles for the protection, repatriation, prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration of women and children with links to United Nations-listed terrorist groups are excellent tools in that regard.

I wish to conclude by reiterating Peru's unwavering commitment to preventing and combating terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, in particular through the actions able to be undertaken by the Council, which constitutes a forum for consensus that we must take advantage of and strengthen.

I wish to make one final remark, if I may. As is well known, there is a particular concern in America regarding the establishment of, or links between, terrorist groups, transnational criminal organizations and the illegitimate regime of Nicolás Maduro.

Mr. Cohen (United States of America): We wish to thank Secretary-General Guterres and our other briefers for their presentations today. This is a timely discussion as we work together to address a problem that reaches beyond the capacity of any one State.

Following the territorial defeat of Islamic State in Iraq and the Sham (ISIS) in Iraq and Syria, we are faced with the challenge of repatriating, prosecuting and rehabilitating many Central Asian foreign terrorist fighters who had travelled abroad to fight in terrorist groups. The United States commends the Governments of Central Asia for their actions to take responsibility for their citizens in Iraq and Syria and their efforts to repatriate them to their home countries.

On that issue, we can do more together than we can alone. That is why the Council has taken a number of significant steps to address the evolving terrorist threat. We adopted resolution 2178 (2014) to prevent foreign terrorist fighters travelling to battlefields and resolution 2396 (2017) to deal with the challenges of them returning to our own countries. We also adopted several counter-ISIS financing resolutions and expanded the sanctions regime of the Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015) concerning the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities in 2015 to include ISIS. However, we only added Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant -Khorasan in Afghanistan to the 1267 list in May, and we need to designate the many more ISIS affiliates operating across the globe.

In addition to our collective efforts at the United Nations, we agree that regional and subregional organizations continue to play an important role in addressing the terrorist threat in Central Asia and beyond. As other speakers have noted, NATO efforts have expanded information-sharing, improving preparedness and resilience to terrorist attacks and increasing capabilities to defend against the use of technology for terrorist purposes. The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe has helped Central Asian partners implement Security Council resolutions on foreign terrorist fighters by holding workshops to address this threat, as well as introducing new programmes to counter violent extremism in the region.

In addition to regional organizations, platforms like the C5+1 initiative, which includes the five Central Asian nations and the United States, have been useful in deepening counter-terrorism capacities and facilitating dialogue on efforts to repatriate, rehabilitate and reintegrate foreign terrorist fighters. Just yesterday, under the auspices of the Global Counter-Terrorism Forum, the United States co-hosted

a side event highlighting the experiences of those that have repatriated their foreign terrorist fighters.

But regardless of organization, forum or platform, all efforts to strengthen counter-terrorism cooperation with the United Nations must be conducted in line with Security Council resolutions, the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and applicable international law. Efforts to counter terrorism that do not respect human rights ultimately breed resentment and violent extremism. When Member States or regional organizations conflate terrorism with non-violent political dissent, they do a disservice not only to the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms but to our global effort to defeat terrorism.

Unfortunately, that is the dangerous approach we are witnessing in Syria, where the Al-Assad regime and its allies justify air strikes on civilians, schools, ambulances and hospitals as legitimate counter-terrorism operations, which have killed over 1,000 people since April and left over 2,000 wounded. In more than 50 cases, Russian and/or Syrian attacks have hit medical facilities deconflicted by the United Nations, putting the Organization's credibility and civilian lives at risk. Those attacks must stop. Continued violence in Syria will only further terrorist radicalization and recruitment.

We are indeed deeply concerned by the situation in Xinjiang, where more than 1 million Uyghurs and other Muslims have been arbitrarily detained under the guise of counter-terrorism. Men, women and children in Xinjiang have been subjected to torture, forced labour and invasive arbitrary surveillance, solely on the basis of their religion and ethnicity. China, like all nations, has every right to respond to actual terrorist threats, but counter-terrorism cannot be used as an excuse to repress the peaceful religious practices of Chinese Muslims and an entire minority group.

Preventing and countering terrorist radicalization and recruitment online and offline is a global concern. The United States also works to ensure that terrorists do not find safe haven online while we protect freedom of speech. We collaborate voluntarily with technology companies to share information in order to address use of the Internet for terrorist purposes.

We urge regional organizations like the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the Collective Security Treaty Organization and the Commonwealth of Independent States to look closely at revising how they

address terrorism in order to better avoid conflating separatism, extremism and terrorism in their core documents. We also urge them to fully promote the observance of applicable international law.

It is important for the United Nations to work with regional organizations to counter terrorism and prevent violent extremism. However we must collectively ensure that regional organizations reflect all elements of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, including engagement with civil society, while promoting a human rights-compliant rule-of-law approach to fighting terrorism. The United States is committed to working with our Central Asian partners and the broader international community to counter terrorism and prevent violent extremism.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The representative of China has asked for the floor to make a further statement.

Mr. Wu Haitao (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): In his statement, the representative of the United States referred to the question of Xinjiang, making groundless accusations in a smear campaign against China. China resolutely rejects all such accusations.

In his statement, State Councillor Wang Yi described the counter-terrorism and deradicalization measures taken by the Government of the Xinjiang autonomous region of China. All these counter-terrorism measures taken by China have effectively curbed the spread and the frequent occurrence of terrorist activities and have safeguarded the right to survival and development of all people in Xinjiang. I urge the representative of the United States to not stand on the opposite side of facts and justice or, indeed, not to stand against the various ethnic groups found among the people of Xinjiang.

With regard to counter-terrorism, we should reject double standards. A crisis in Libya has demonstrated to us the spread of terrorist forces to sub-Saharan Africa, leaving the Sahel region profoundly victimized.

The wars in Iraq and Syria have also led to the return of terrorists and the worldwide spread of terrorism. Should the countries that advocate humanitarian intervention and push for regime change not be held responsible? Should they not engage in serious self-reflection?

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The representative of the United Kingdom has asked for the floor to make a further statement.

Ms. Pierce (United Kingdom): I will be brief. I just wanted to say, and should have said in my intervention, that we share the American concerns on Xinjiang. On humanitarian intervention, I do not think that it is a topic for the Security Council today but we will be happy to participate in discussions on that topic at a different stage.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I shall now make a further statement in my capacity as the representative of the Russian Federation.

Since we are having a discussion on this topic, on behalf of the Russian Federation, I want to say that we express our full solidarity with China's position.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan.

Mr. Tileuberdi (Kazakhstan) (*spoke in Russian*): Please allow me at the outset to congratulate the delegation of the Russian Federation on assuming the presidency of the Security Council this month and to thank it for the invitation to participate in today's meeting. We would also like to thank the Secretary-General and the heads of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) for their very informative and useful briefings.

During its term on the Security Council in 2017 and 2018, Kazakhstan paid special attention to the role played by regional organizations in ensuring peace, conflict prevention and conflict settlement. Those bodies better understand the specificity of the issues that arise in their regions. Close cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations allows for more effectively countering the challenges and threats in various parts of the world, and we welcome the initiative undertaken by the Russian side to conduct the discussion today.

The world is in a state of danger and uncertainty today, owing to the rapid spread of terrorism and extremism. The global security architecture and international law have been weakened, as the situation continues to worsen. At the seventieth session of the General Assembly, the first President of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbayev, proposed an initiative to form a global coalition to combat terrorism (see A/70/PV.13).

In pursuance of that idea, we developed a code of conduct to achieve a world free from terrorism that 84 States have joined. It calls on all countries to undertake 10 steps that could help eradicate terrorism by 2045, the centenary of the United Nations. We are grateful to our partners for their ongoing support in implementing that initiative.

Kazakhstan has also ratified all 19 of the United Nations sectoral conventions on the suppression of terrorism. We call on other Member States that have not yet done so to accede to the code and the relevant conventions.

In 2018, as Chairman of the CSTO, Nursultan Nazarbayev defined as one of the five core priorities of the organization its participation in the formation of an international system to counter terrorism. Last year, in Central Asia, we launched the third phase of the joint plan on the implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and Kazakhstan became the first donor funding the implementation of that project.

We are committed to continuing our close cooperation with the Office of Counter-Terrorism. In pursuance of resolution 2396 (2017), together with the Office, we are preparing the launch of an advance passenger information and passenger name record system in Kazakhstan and are ready to share best practices with other Eurasian countries.

At the initiative of Kazakhstan, through the CSTO and CIS, we are working on developing a single list of international terrorist organizations, unifying legal norms on the arms trade and regulating migration in all the regional bodies. Within the framework of the SCO, we took the important step of signing in Astana in 2017 the SCO Convention on Combating Extremism, which has created the legal framework to halt financial resources for international terrorist organizations.

I would like to take this opportunity to draw the attention of those present to the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), established back in 1992 at the initiative of Kazakhstan. It is also evolving dynamically, with new and unique packages of confidence-building measures on the Asian continent.

Yesterday, at the general debate in the General Assembly Hall, the President of Kazakhstan, Mr. Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, stressed the importance

of transforming that universal pan-Asian structure into an organization for the security and development of Asia (see A/74/PV.4). During our CICA presidency from 2020 to 2022, we intend to include the issue of countering terrorism as one of our military and political priorities.

The defeat of Da'esh in Syria and Iraq resulted in foreign terrorist fighters moving back to their countries of origin or relocating to other parts of the world. We are trying to counter that process and have mounted a humanitarian operation, known as Jusan, to bring back from Syria 600 nationals from our country, the majority of whom are children. Among those who returned were men and women who participated in terrorist activities and criminal proceedings have been initiated against them. We are working with the remaining returnees in a targeted manner to rehabilitate and reintegrate them into society. The Jusan operation is ongoing. We are currently working for the return of 12 children from Iraq whose mothers have received life sentences for terrorist activity.

We are particularly concerned about the situation in Afghanistan, where terrorist groups are cooperating with organized criminal networks engaged in drug trafficking. We must ensure that the efforts of the Central Asian Regional Information and Coordination Centre for combating the illicit trafficking of narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and their precursors are more effective.

In conclusion, I would like to reaffirm that Kazakhstan will continue to take active efforts to further strengthen the global counter-terrorism capacity of the United Nations and regional organizations. I am convinced that all the proposals voiced today, at such a high level, will see their practical implementation contribute to the eradication of terrorism throughout the world.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Kyrgyzstan.

Mr. Aidarbekov (Kyrgyzstan) (*spoke in Russian*): We are very grateful to the Russian Federation for convening this meeting on cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security and for the invitation to participate. The contributions of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and the Shanghai Cooperation

Organization (SCO) to countering terrorist threats are important. We believe that the United Nations and regional organizations have a unique and complementary role to play, which, if successfully coordinated, could make a significant contribution to the cause of international peace and security.

On the importance of the United Nations cooperation with the three regional organizations, it should be noted that more than half of the world's population live in the member States of those organizations.

The threat of terrorism today is very serious. States are constantly faced with that challenge. Today this threat permeates virtually any dimension of life. Countering that evil should be based on close exchanges among States, organizations and entities. I would like to note in that regard the efforts to ensure regional security that we are making within the framework of such organizations as the CSTO, the CIS and the SCO.

The cooperation between the CSTO and the United Nations has been very meaningful and long-standing; in 2004, the organization was given the status of an observer to the General Assembly. A number of important documents were signed with key United Nations agencies relating to combating global terrorism, drug trafficking, illegal migration and maintaining peace and security. Representatives of the United Nations agencies and the CSTO secretariat meet on a regular basis and discuss topical issues of international cooperation in the area of the maintenance of peace and security .

It is encouraging to note that in the framework of the CSTO, joint exercises and special operations are being carried out. As members may know, the Kyrgyz Republic has drawn the attention of CSTO allies to the problem of foreign terrorist fighters returning to their countries of origin and the risk they pose of creating new hotspots and armed conflicts.

Therefore, we consider it necessary to coordinate more effectively the measures of the international community in relation to that problem. At our initiative, at a meeting of the CSTO Collective Security Council in November 2018, Heads of State adopted a special statement noting with concern the attempts of certain entities to transfer terrorist activities from the Middle East, Syria and Iraq to Central Asia and Afghanistan, closer to the southern borders of CSTO member States.

This year, the Kyrgyz Republic is serving as the president of CSTO. In order to enhance international efforts to counter terrorism and the spread of terrorist ideology, a draft decision of the CSTO Collective Security Council has been developed on the plan of implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy for the period 2019-2020, for adoption at the meeting of the Collective Security Council to be held in Kyrgyzstan in November. I also believe that it is important to mention the unified approach to counter-terrorism within the CIS framework. Its member States unanimously agreed that it was necessary to develop a common doctrine of counter-terrorist security and a mechanism to implement it, taking into account national interests.

Since the CIS was established, a vast institutional and legal base has been developed in the field of counter-terrorism. Among the fundamental documents, I would like to highlight the Treaty on Cooperation among the States Members of the Commonwealth of Independent States on Combating Terrorism, which laid the groundwork for cooperation among CIS member States in combatting terrorism, as well as the programme of cooperation of CIS member States in combating terrorism and other violent manifestations of extremism.

In terms of practical measures, the CIS Heads of State Council established the CIS Anti-Terrorism Centre on 21 June 2000. I would like to mention the signing, in Tashkent on 31 October 2018, of a memorandum of understanding between the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism and the CIS Anti-Terrorism Centre. The SCO has also developed a solid legislative framework on combating terrorism in all its forms that allows SCO member States to effectively cooperate in that area.

The activities of the competent SCO bodies relates to the practical implementation of the Shanghai Convention on Combating Terrorism, Separatism and Extremism, the SCO Convention against Terrorism and the SCO Member States Cooperation Programme on Combating Terrorism, Separatism and Extremism for 2019-2021. SCO member States are guided by the goals and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law and strictly adhere to the relevant resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly.

Furthermore, I would like to take special note of the adoption of resolution 73/334, on 30 August, in which the General Assembly noted that the SCO had become an essential regional organization for addressing security in the region, in all its dimensions. Kyrgyzstan also chaired the SCO until June and those functions are now performed by the Russian Federation. One effective mechanism to maintain regional security is the joint exercises conducted by the armed forces of SCO member States, which are designed to enhance their field training and the training of command units, resolve logistical and deployment issues during operations and address other important matters. In that context, I would like to specifically mention the joint military anti-terrorist command-staff exercises known as Peace Mission, conducted within the framework of the SCO, with the aim of preventing the penetration of terrorist groups into our countries.

The States members of all three organizations understand the central role of the United Nations in combating the three evils of terrorism, separatism and extremism. Our countries advocate for the development and implementation, under the auspices of the United Nations, of a global strategy, grounded in international law, for combating new threats and challenges. Kyrgyzstan believes that international cooperation is essential to combating terrorism and advocates for its legal basis to be strengthened in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and Security Council and General Assembly resolutions.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Belarus.

Mr. Makei (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*): I wish to thank you, Sir, for your important and timely initiative to hold a discussion in the Security Council on cooperation with the three regional organizations, namely the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO).

It is particularly pertinent to consider this issue through the prism of maintaining international peace and security, especially in the context of combating terrorism. The Republic of Belarus is a member of CSTO and CIS and an observer State of SCO. We greatly value the potential of those organizations and contribute to ensuring their effective functioning. It is important to note that at previous session of the General Assembly, three resolutions concerning cooperation with those

bodies were unanimously adopted (resolutions 73/334, 73/331 and 73/16), thereby confirming the wide recognition of their contribution to the maintenance of international peace and security and testifying to their international status.

We welcome the signing in November 2018 of the memorandum of cooperation between the CSTO secretariat and the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism. Let us be objective — the world is not becoming any more predictable. A lack of trust in the relations between States has led to an increase in confrontational rhetoric and open disregard for the norms and principles of international law, as well as to attempts to interfere in the internal affairs of States or to destabilize the situation in various regions and countries of the world to benefit specific forces. That situation has only contributed to the spread of one of the main threats to international peace and security, namely terrorism.

Unfortunately, terrorist activities do not stand still; rather, they constantly evolve with the changing world. We hear more and more about new and atypical forms of terrorism. Most recently, a high-level international conference on the topic of combating terrorism through innovative approaches and the use of new and emerging technologies was held in Minsk, in cooperation with the United Nations.

The conference brought together countries of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and was an unprecedented event for our region. Countries representing virtually all the international organizations active in the European and Eurasian region, including CSTO, CIS and SCO, took part. We hope that the outcome of the conference will serve as an excellent basis for intensifying the efforts of States and international organizations to create a broad international anti-terrorist coalition.

Speaking at the opening of the conference, the President of the Republic of Belarus, Alyaksandr Lukashenko, proposed an initiative to form a “belt of digital good-neighbourliness”. In our opinion, the conclusion of international agreements and arrangements, both bilateral and multilateral, will make it possible to ensure information security and restore trust, as well as more effectively counteract the threats and challenges of terrorism, including in cyberspace.

I would like to note that under the CSTO framework, an agreement on cooperation in the field of international information security is already in force. The success of bilateral and regional mechanisms in that area could contribute to the development of a common understanding regarding a global instrument on international information security. It would be very useful for CSTO, CIS, SCO and the OSCE, and its platform for cooperative security, which is a good mechanism for the cooperation of regional organizations, to take an active stance in that regard.

We are convinced that only through decisive joint efforts of all States and close coordination of the efforts of international and regional organizations, under the auspices of the United Nations, will we be able to effectively counter terrorism and make a real contribution to strengthening our common security. That is why Belarus supports the development of effective partnerships between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in order to maintain international peace, security and stability. This is a requirement of today's world and a precondition for sustainable development of countries and peoples and for creating peaceful, secure conditions to achieve progress and prosperity.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Tajikistan.

Mr. Muhridin (Tajikistan) (*spoke in Russian*): First of all, I would like to thank the Russian delegation, which is presiding this month over the Security Council and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), for convening today's timely meeting.

In recent years, the rapidly changing situation in the world has been accompanied by an increase in tensions and armed conflicts and new challenges and threats to international security. The expanding cross-border nature of terrorism, extremism, drug trafficking and organized crime is a matter of grave concern, as is the rise in the number of returning foreign terrorist fighters. I am convinced that, only through joint efforts, will countries be able to effectively counter terrorist and extremist organizations, which are deftly implementing modern technologies and methods.

I should like to note that, during its 2018 chairmanship of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), the Republic of Tajikistan focused on importance of strengthening cooperation between CIS member States and other international and regional

organizations on countering such challenges and threats. We also made efforts to step up the role played by the CIS in addressing issues related to ensuring security and stability and improving the work of CIS bodies to combat terrorism, extremism, drug trafficking and economic crime.

As was noted earlier, the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) is making efforts and a significant contribution to combating terrorism, extremism, organized transnational crime, illicit trafficking in narcotics and weapons, illegal migration, and illegal trafficking in human beings. It has also been working to strengthen its peacekeeping capacity and address the consequences of natural and human-made disasters.

The agenda for cooperation between these two organizations is very diverse and allows for addressing a wide range of issues through sharing information, organized visits, participation in conferences and events, while taking advantage of both organizations' potential. It is important to note the important role that CSTO plays in helping ensure security on Tajikistan's southern border with Afghanistan.

In that context, we believe that, with the United Nations playing the central role in resolving the situation in Afghanistan through political dialogue as soon as possible, coordinated efforts are one of the key factors to strengthening security in the region. It is well known that the Shanghai Cooperation Organization is one of the most dynamically developing international organizations and that it has a huge potential for countering such challenges. As a full-fledged member of the United Nations, the CIS, the CSTO and the SCO, Tajikistan consistently contributes to the implementation of those organizations' programmes and strategies in countering the challenges and threats of our time.

We believe that the response to the increasing threat of terrorism must be comprehensive and that the United Nations must be a key coordinator. The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, the relevant Security Council resolutions and United Nations counter-terrorism conventions form the basis of our collective struggle against terrorism. In accordance with its international obligations, Tajikistan is taking the necessary measures to combat terrorism and extremism. We are party to all the United Nations conventions and other foundational international and regional instruments in this area.

I would like to take this opportunity to invite participants in today's meeting to participate in the high-level event entitled "International and regional cooperation on countering terrorism and its financing through illicit drug trafficking and organized crime", which is to be held on 27 September in Conference Room 7. The event has been organized by the Republic of Tajikistan in cooperation with the Office of Counter-Terrorism and builds on the outcome of the high-level conference on countering the financing of terrorism, held in Dushanbe in May.

In conclusion, I wish the Russian Federation every success as it presides over the Security Council and the SCO.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan.

Mr. Mammadyarov (Azerbaijan): At the outset, I would like to commend the Russian Federation for its initiative to convene today's important debate on cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security.

Terrorism and related criminal activities continue to represent a serious threat to international peace and security, the enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms and the political independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of all States Members of the United Nations. Such activities also impede social and economic development. Terrorism constitutes one of the most serious crimes and must be condemned and prosecuted. Instances of shielding and glorifying terrorists should not be tolerated.

The sensitive geographic location of Azerbaijan and continued existence of unresolved conflicts in the region, together with the notorious ethnic cleansing and occupation of my country's sovereign territories, increase the level of transborder threats, including terrorism. Since the end of the 1980s, as a means of realizing groundless and unlawful territorial claims and as a method of warfare, externally directed terrorist attacks have been repeatedly perpetrated against Azerbaijan, claiming the lives of thousands of its citizens, including civilians.

While recognizing the significance of addressing all conditions that are conducive to the spread of terrorism, it is critical that intensify conflict-resolution efforts be intensified in various parts of the world.

Areas of armed conflict, in particular territories under foreign military occupation, often create fertile ground for terrorists and organized criminal groups and networks to benefit from the exploitation of natural resources, illicit trafficking in drugs and cultural property, money-laundering and other related crimes.

We recognize that significant efforts have been made by the United Nations and other international, regional and subregional organizations to develop cooperation and coordination and strengthen the capacities of Member States in combating international terrorism and organized crime. As a member of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), the Republic of Azerbaijan is interested in maintaining cooperation within that multilateral platform and developing mutually beneficial economic, political, legal and humanitarian relations with the member States of the CIS on a bilateral basis in accordance with the principles of sovereign equality and the territorial integrity of States.

As a dialogue partner, Azerbaijan shares the purposes and principles of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), which are based on respect for the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of States, and reiterates its full support for the continued cooperation between the United Nations and the SCO. Azerbaijan is pleased to be developing its partnership relations with the SCO in strengthening regional security and stability, countering terrorism, extremism and separatism, drug trafficking and related criminal activities, and promoting regional cooperation in other areas of mutual interest and concern.

Cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations is essential for the promotion of the purposes and principles of the United Nations. In a number of instances, regional and subregional organizations have proved to be indispensable mechanisms to that end. At the same time, serious challenges remain. While regional organizations are normally well positioned to understand the threats and challenges that their respective regions are facing, it is obvious that not all of them can boast about their ability, political will and institutional capacity to ensure compliance by their member States with the relevant statutory commitments.

First and foremost, regional organizations should not let themselves be misused by those who gravely violate international law and advocate the culture of

impunity. It is crucial that all Member States comply with their international obligations as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and implement the relevant Security Council resolutions. They must also ensure that their respective territories are not used for terrorist and related criminal activities, in particular for the financing of and providing, directly or indirectly, any support for such activities under any pretext or form.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Mr. Zarif (Islamic Republic of Iran): At the outset, I thank you, Sir, for convening this meeting and all briefers for their valuable input.

Regional cooperation in countering terrorism is imperative, particularly in such regions as Central and West Asia, where the threat of terrorist groups is pervasive. We value the role of the Collective Security Treaty Organization, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the Commonwealth of Independent States, and underline the importance of cooperation between the United Nations and these organizations in countering terrorist threats.

Regional cooperation is also long overdue in the Persian Gulf. In this regard, we note with appreciation and support the constructive proposal of the Russian Federation for security in that region. This morning, in his remarks before the General Assembly, President Rouhani of the Islamic Republic of Iran presented an important initiative on a new coalition, the Hormuz Peace Endeavour (HOPE), a coalition for hope, and invited all States of the Hormuz Strait community to join this endeavour (see A/74/PV.5). HOPE is based on the fact that all regional States have the responsibility to ensure peace, stability and prosperity in the region, and, together with the global community, share a common vital interest in maintaining freedom of navigation and energy security for all. Likewise, regional endeavours are imperative to prevent war, conflict, violence, extremism, terrorism and sectarian tension.

The objectives of HOPE include promoting solidarity, mutual understanding and peaceful and friendly relations and cooperation among States of the region, ensuring the territorial integrity, political independence and international boundaries of all regional States, cooperating in eradicating terrorism, extremism and sectarian tensions, peacefully resolving

all regional tensions and conflicts, preventing tensions through enhanced communication and early warning, and ensuring energy security, the freedom of navigation and the free flow of oil and other resources to and from the Hormuz Strait community and beyond.

Those objectives can be promoted only through adherence to such common principles as dialogue and mutual respect; respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity and the inviolability of international borders; peaceful settlement of all disputes; rejection of the threat and use of force; non-aggression and non-intervention in the internal or external affairs of other States; and rejection of and non-participation in coalitions and alliances against fellow States. Energy security and the free flow of natural resources are further principles to which we must all subscribe.

We have presented a plan of action that includes, first, preparatory arrangements for a Hormuz Strait community summit to commence deliberations on a broad spectrum of security and cooperation issues, including energy security, arms control and confidence-building measures, military contacts, the possible establishment of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction, and the conclusion of a Hormuz Strait community non-aggression pact. Secondly, the plan also includes, secondly, the establishment of joint task forces on various issues in relation to practical measures to gradually expand cooperation, including on early warning, prevention and resolution of conflicts; combatting drugs and human trafficking; joint investments and ventures in energy, transit and transportation; and cooperation in cybersecurity. Thirdly, the States of the Hormuz Strait community will have periodic meetings at various levels, including at the summit level. Such meetings may also have a private-sector and academic components.

At the same time, on the basis of resolution 598 (1987), the United Nations will be invited to furnish the necessary international umbrella and ensure the legitimate interests of the international community. The Islamic Republic of Iran stands ready to fully engage in dialogue with countries of the region and the United Nations to discuss all aspects of the HOPE initiative.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Uzbekistan.

Mr. Kamilov (Uzbekistan) (*spoke in Russian*): Before starting my brief statement, I wish to align myself fully with the thought expressed by many

previous speakers that cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations has tremendous potential in terms of taking preventive steps and countering such a major threat as of our time terrorism.

It is quite clear that terrorism represents the leading and major source of violence around the world today. Terrorism makes use of the latest technology, diversifies its sources of funding, takes advantage of newly opened international transit corridors and adopts new methods and ways of attracting new recruits and income streams.

I am not going to dwell on the various conventions and United Nations instruments to which Uzbekistan is signatory, but will simply say that one of the most important topics today is preventing the process of radicalization among young people. I believe that this issue is crucial to more than just Uzbekistan and our region. As has been noted, a related and ever more important issue is the return of foreign terrorist fighters and of people who for whatever reason find themselves in areas of conflict — not only adults from Uzbekistan and our region, but also many women and children, many of whom are currently in Syria and Iraq.

Uzbekistan has already transported 156 citizens of Uzbekistan from Syria, mostly women and children, in a complex and high-risk operation. Today we are awaiting the return of 65 children from Iraq and 170 people from Syria. Accordingly, we certainly require the support of international organizations and of States directly involved in the processes under way in the Middle East. In this regard, I am referring primarily to the assistance of permanent members of the Security Council represented here today.

We are ready to cooperate. We have experience in the rehabilitation and reintegration of returnees into a healthy and normal society. I hope that the successful conduct of such operations can have a positive influence so that new groups will not travel to conflict areas in future.

In conclusion, I would simply like to draw the Council's attention to two points. First, when discussing terrorism, it seems customary to mention the region of Central Asia. We in that region would very much like the international community not to have the impression that Central Asia is a region with huge potential for the spread of terrorism, extremism and other, similar processes. We have been hearing for 25 years that Central Asia is on the verge of exploding.

In fact, Central Asia is developing. There is a brand new political atmosphere in the region and mutual trust and cooperation among leaders are increasing. We have managed over the past few years to resolve a number of very complex issues, including the demarcation of State borders, the management of water resources, and the development of transport links, and established close cooperation in the security sphere. All of this is to say that Central Asia has significant capacity and potential to ensure its own security, but, given the global nature of the processes we are discussing, broad international support is required. Today we heard about various formats of cooperation between countries of our region and the international community, including other major States. Of course, we are very interested in pursuing this kind of cooperation.

The second issue that I wanted to touch upon is that, in this context, while it is quite justified, we always mention Afghanistan when we speak of challenges and sources of extremism and terrorism. However, as neighbours of Afghanistan in the region that Afghanistan has historically, culturally and economically always been a part of, we note that Afghanistan is not only a challenge, but is also a tremendous opportunity.

By way of example, if we manage to implement the potential transport and connectivity projects, a quick look at a map suffices to reveal what could be done if the European continent were linked to Afghanistan, Afghanistan to Central Asia and then, further on, to South Asia. There would then be a direct link between Europe and South Asia, with Afghanistan as the lynchpin. Just by implementing these types of projects, Afghanistan could reap considerable revenue that could contribute to restoring its economy.

I will not talk about such obvious things as there being no military solution to the Afghan problem. The only way to move forward is through direct dialogue between the Government and the opposition. That is self-evident. Uzbekistan is actively pursuing a political solution and is a part of the political process, and we will continue to do all we can to contribute to further bolstering the peace process that has begun to coalesce for the first time in the past 40 years. In spite of a certain level of tensions, Uzbekistan is implementing widescale transport and communication projects and links with Afghanistan and our trade in border areas is growing. We have also established an education centre for Afghan students, a medical centre and cargo centres.

Experience shows that despite existing tensions and problems, we need to work and look towards the future. This is all being done not to satisfy the current Government or political forces, but rather for the future of Afghanistan, where an entire generation that has grown up over the past 40 years has known only war. In this regard, in terms of preventing youth radicalization, the United Nations and other regional organizations, major States and neighbours of Afghanistan all need to focus on education programmes. Only through education and enlightenment will we be able to counter the process of radicalization among the young population.

Those are the two issues that I wanted to address today. All the other issues have been covered here, and I do not want to repeat what has already been said.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia.

Mr. Mnatsakanyan (Armenia): I thank the Russian Federation for convening today's debate. This meeting is an important opportunity to recommit to effective cooperation in countering terrorism, the scourge of which has become more diffuse, with an increase of terrorist acts, including those motivated by intolerance or extremism.

No country in the world is immune to terrorism. The international community should stand united and work hand in hand to counter terrorism in all its dimensions. Any attempts to justify those who inspire or perpetrate terrorism and violent extremism or those who incite hate crime and violence, especially in conflict environments, should be decisively and unequivocally condemned at all levels.

Armenia remains a staunch advocate of enhanced international collaboration to combat terrorism, regardless of geography, underlying motives or narratives. It is our deep conviction that terrorism should not be associated with any particular civilization, religion, nationality or ethnic group. We are gravely concerned about instances where entire communities are deliberately targeted for the mere fact of belonging to a particular ethnic or religious group. The meticulously planned acts of barbarism and vandalism against cultural monuments, as well as the annihilation of several world heritage sites in Iraq and Syria, are a case in point and a matter of serious concern for humankind.

Armenia was among the first Member States to resolutely condemn the persecution of the civilian population perpetrated by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant, the Al-Nusra Front, Al-Qaida and their affiliates. The brutal crimes against the Armenian population in the Syrian cities of Kesab and Deir ez-Zor, the deliberate destruction of cultural and religious monuments and the mass atrocities committed by terrorists from the Islamic State in Iraq and the Sham and the Al-Nusra Front have demonstrated that terrorism is essentially a manifestation of the denial of fundamental human rights. Armenia has demonstrated consistent commitment to helping to bring lasting change to the areas affected by the crisis, as reflected through the deployment of our national humanitarian mission in Syria.

Armenia remains firmly committed to the global fight against terrorism and is actively engaged in international and regional activities to this end. We highly value the existing cooperative platforms aimed at amplifying our national efforts and improving bilateral dialogue to prevent and counter terrorism. Armenia continues its thorough implementation of the United Nations counter-terrorism conventions and their additional protocols, as well as the relevant resolutions adopted by the Security Council.

The recent visit conducted by the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED) to Armenia highlighted our country's progress in addressing terrorism-related challenges, including through effective international cooperation. Following the recommendations contained in the CTED report on the follow-up assessment visit, Armenia began the process of establishing and applying advanced passenger information systems.

Regional and subregional organizations have a pivotal role to play in promoting and facilitating cooperation, including through sharing best practices and building greater capacity to effectively address the threats of terrorism. We give high priority to the ongoing activities conducted in partnership with the Anti-Terrorism Centre of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and the relevant structural units of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO). The competent authorities of Armenia continue to contribute to the effective implementation of the 2017-2019 CIS programme of cooperation of the CIS member States in combating terrorism and other violent manifestations of extremism. Representatives

of national security agencies, special services and law enforcement bodies have consistently participated in the joint counter-terrorism exercises of the CIS, under the general coordination of its Anti-Terrorism Centre.

As we speak, the two final stages of the Ararat Anti-Terror 2019 exercise are being carried out in Armenia, with the participation of the competent State security agencies from several CIS member States, including Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Armenia actively participates in the regularly conducted joint operations of the CSTO member States — Kanal, Nelegal, and Proxy — as well as in the joint counter-terrorism exercises of the CIS, coordinated by its Anti-Terrorism Centre.

Armenia attaches equally high importance to its work within other regional and subregional organizations of which it is a member or with which it enjoys close cooperation. As a dialogue partner of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, we are looking forward to further expanding the agenda of our partnership and taking our dialogue forward.

Against the backdrop of the current international agenda, with proliferating threats, challenges and conflicts, cooperation among States from subregional to regional to global levels has been and remains as relevant as ever in helping identify common solutions and sustainable dialogue for the maintenance of international peace and security.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

Mr. Qureshi (Pakistan): At the outset, I would like to extend my gratitude to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation for organizing this ministerial debate. Cooperation between regional organizations and the United Nations is critical to combating the emerging security threats, particularly terrorism.

Let me congratulate States members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and the United Nations, on the adoption of General Assembly resolution 73/334 on cooperation between the United Nations and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, on 30 August. Pakistan was one of the sponsors of the resolution.

The resolution builds on the strong foundations laid down by the five previous such resolutions since

2009 in strengthening dialogue, cooperation and coordination between the United Nations and the SCO. We support and welcome the SCO's burgeoning cooperation with various United Nations specialized agencies, organizations, funds and programmes with a view to achieving common goals. The SCO also affords us an important channel to underline our interest in regional peace, stability and development for regional cooperation against terrorism and extremism.

Pakistan condemns terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, including against people under illegal occupation. Pakistan has proactively and successfully taken action to eradicate the scourge of terrorism and will continue its efforts in the same spirit, in coordination with regional and international partners. However, we also believe that there is a need to focus on certain elements and factors indicated in the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, such as the first of the four pillars, namely, addressing the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism.

That is more pertinent to South Asia, which continues to be challenged by common enemies: poverty, illiteracy, disease and underdevelopment. Political differences and unresolved disputes further compound this predicament. Enduring peace and prosperity in South Asia will remain elusive until the main dynamic in South Asia is shifted from confrontation to cooperation. It is important to seize the opportunities for the peaceful resolution of outstanding disputes and collective endeavours for regional prosperity.

Terrorism and organized crime continue to pose serious threats to our countries. Despite the successes achieved against Da'esh in Iraq and Syria, the group continues to manifest and evolve its outreach and tactics. In our region too, Da'esh has emerged as a major security threat, which can be a major destabilizing factor for all regional countries. The group continues to be strengthened by returning foreign terrorist fighters.

Countering such threats requires greater international cooperation, including among regional organizations and the United Nations. In that regard, we welcome the recent signing of the memorandum of understanding between the SCO Regional Anti-terrorism Structure (RATS SCO) and the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED). The memorandum provides an important platform to enhance the strategic cooperation between those two bodies in the fight against terrorism.

RATS SCO has also signed memorandums of understanding for cooperation with the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO). It will be important to use such cooperation mechanisms to develop strategies and address the capacity needs of Member States in the fight against terrorism and organized crime. In that regard, Pakistan would like to propose the following.

First, several States members of the SCO, the CIS and the CSTO have extensive experience in fighting terrorism. The secretariats of the three organizations should develop synergies, whereby those countries can contribute to the capacity-building needs of others. Pakistan stands ready to contribute to such activities.

Secondly, the movement of foreign terrorist fighters from Iraq and Syria to other parts of the world is a major challenge. The United Nations and the three organizations must come up with innovative means for countering that threat, including through mechanisms for the sharing of information on the movement of such persons.

Thirdly, as highlighted above, Da'esh in particular relies on the use of modern communication technologies for spreading its ideology. The United Nations and the three regional organizations must develop strategies for countering such activities.

Fourthly, the memorandum of understanding between RATS SCO and CTED must be operationalized at the earliest opportunity. Activities should be planned for assisting SCO members in accordance with the scope of the memorandum.

In conclusion, Pakistan firmly believes that the goals and ideals espoused by the SCO are completely in line with the principles and purposes of the United Nations. Our membership of both those organizations is an acknowledgment of the common principles, ideals, aspirations and goals for which the United Nations and the SCO stand. We will continue to follow those guiding principles.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Mongolia.

Mr. Damdin (Mongolia): Let me begin by expressing my sincere appreciation to Minister Sergey Lavrov for inviting me to speak at this ministerial debate. I also thank other speakers for their remarks.

Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations is essential to effectively addressing the complex challenges facing the world today, especially those related to terrorism, violent extremism and transnational organized crime.

The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and its reviews have been instrumental in providing the international community with solid and updated guidance on addressing terrorism along its four mutually reinforcing pillars. Furthermore, the establishment of the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism and the subsequent signing of the Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact among the 36 United Nations entities, in addition to INTERPOL and the World Customs Organization, laid the solid groundwork for the whole-of-United Nations approach to tackling the threats of terrorism. We expect that such initiatives will further strengthen United Nations cooperation with the relevant regional organizations and better target its assistance to Member States in enhancing their anti-terrorism and anti-organized crime capacities.

Mongolia stands strongly committed to our common struggle against the scourge of terrorism, having become a party to all United Nations conventions against terrorism and organized crime applicable to it, and is taking all necessary measures for their implementation. Moreover, as an observer of the SCO, we concluded the Protocol between the Anti-Terrorist Coordination Council of Mongolia and the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure of the SCO (RATS) in 2014, thereby actively engaging in various activities organized under the auspices of RATS.

In addition to our global and regional efforts to counter terrorism, we have also been cooperating with the countries of the region. Thus, Mongolia signed cooperation agreements in combating terrorism with the Kyrgyz Republic and the Russian Federation, as well as an agreement on cooperation in combating crimes with the People's Republic of China. Those agreements provide the legal basis for information-sharing and the exchange of best practices and for conducting other preventive measures among the relevant organizations.

As suggested by the concept note (S/2019/742, annex) circulated for today's meeting, I would like to share some thoughts concerning possible modalities and approaches to enhancing our cooperation in countering the global terrorist threat.

First, there needs to be a more focused targeting of capacity-building assistance — one of the pillars of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. I wish to recall that in my statement back in 2007 at the joint Mongolia-Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe conference on countering terrorism, held in Mongolia, I proposed the individual action plan of small and medium-size developing countries on making their territories immune from terrorism. The proposal was made on the basis of the expectation that, after the universal tightening of security regimes in most of the developed countries following the 9/11 terrorist attack, terrorist cells would be pushed to settle in weaker economies, where rules and regulations tend to be loose, weak and, often, corrupt.

After more than a decade, we can see that that anticipation has become a reality. Today, we are witnessing the trend of terrorist cells finding their refuge and strengthening and spreading their hold in some weaker economies to the extent that they are capable not only of occasional strikes but also waging wars. On the other hand, the situation is further exacerbated by the phenomenon of home-grown terrorism in developed countries.

Therefore, developed countries and international organizations ought to provide technical assistance to vulnerable countries in consolidating their anti-terrorism and anti-organized crime capacities. As a result of such technical assistance and cooperation, we should have, ideally, a uniform anti-terrorism capacity throughout the global legal jurisdiction. Once the capacity of all countries is brought to the required level, no space will be left for terrorists and criminals to nest in and no Government will be too weak to fight terrorism.

Secondly, we need to effectively address the growing nexus between terrorism and transnational organized crime, including trafficking in drugs, weapons and persons. Profits from such illicit trafficking are primarily used for financing terrorism. We should also be aware of the emerging tendency to target and drag nationals of smaller developing countries into drug-trafficking and other related crimes. In order to prevent them from being seduced and lured into such illicit activities, preventive measures through international cooperation ought to be put in place.

Thirdly, the engagement of youth is critical to preventing and countering violent extremism

and terrorism. Rapid advances in cyberspace and digital communication technologies bring not only considerable benefits to societies but also risks associated with its abuse by terrorist actors. With a view to better utilizing social media in promoting a culture of peace, non-violence, tolerance and mutual understanding among youth around the world, my Ministry, in collaboration with Facebook, organized a Peacebook Forum in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, in April.

At the High-level Interregional Conference on a Whole-of-Society Approach to Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism and Radicalization that Lead to Terrorism, organized by the Government of Mongolia in collaboration with the Organization on Security and Cooperation in Europe and the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism, held in June this year in Ulaanbaatar, we had a separate discussion on inter- and intrareligious dialogue, within the religious freedom discourse being supported and promoted by the United States Administration.

Another initiative of ours related to employing advances in technology for peace is the creation of a completely digital peacebook journal of international relations, which would publish and popularize research on global issues by scholars and peacebuilders from around the world. The benefits for young people in creating such a journal would include the promotion of a culture of peace, tolerance, intercultural and interreligious dialogue and the enhancement of the voice and participation of young people in decision-making for the prevention and resolution of conflicts, including decisions to counter violent extremism and terrorism.

Mongolia also supports other important initiatives aimed at eliminating terrorist and violent extremist content online, including the Global Counterterrorism Forum and Tech against Terrorism, as well as the Christchurch Call to Action.

In conclusion, let me reiterate our firm belief that the very goal of preventing and countering terrorism cannot be achieved by a single country. Therefore, our joint efforts in implementing the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy will be more productive if supported by effective collaboration with the relevant regional and subregional organizations. In that context, I see today's meeting as an excellent opportunity to foster multi-stakeholder cooperation in countering terrorist threats.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now call on the Minister of State for External Affairs of India.

Mr. Muraleedharan (India): I thank you, Mr. President, for organizing today's debate. We also appreciate the circulation of the very useful concept note (S/2019/742, annex), outlining the contours of today's discussion.

We would also like to thank the Secretary-General and the heads of the regional security organizations for their comprehensive and insightful briefings.

Today's security problems are not constrained by physical or political boundaries. Terrorism, drug trafficking, transnational crime and the security implications of new technologies are transnational challenges that cannot be viewed in compartmentalized terms. Our response to them therefore also has to be coordinated across borders.

Terrorism is the single most significant threat to peace and stability today. We are confronted by groups that have linkages across regions and continents in terms of recruitment, financing and operation. We are committed to combating that menace in all its forms and manifestations. There can be no justification for acts of terror on any grounds whatsoever.

We believe that our fight against terrorism should not only to seek eliminate terrorists and disrupt terror organizations and networks; it should also identify, hold accountable and take strong measures against States that encourage, support and finance terrorism or provide sanctuary to terrorists and terror groups. We call upon all countries to work together to expedite the adoption of the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism in the General Assembly without any further delay.

Regional and subregional groups can play an important role in fostering the cooperation and coordination needed to effectively combat terrorist networks. In recent years, India has put in place several practical cooperation mechanisms with a number of countries and groups. It is a careful and sensitive process, as it involves building trust and common working habits and methodologies. We have several counter-terrorism and security dialogues, which bring together experts from all relevant fields in regular bilateral and multilateral interactions.

We also engage constructively with the work of such forums as the Financial Action Task Force

and United Nations counter-terrorism bodies to deny terrorists financing and other forms of support. Of the organizations being discussed today, India has been a member of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) since 2017. We joined the SCO to secure peace, progress and prosperity for the region and to create new opportunities for economic engagement in the region. In his visit to Bishkek earlier this year to participate in the 2019 SCO Summit, Prime Minister Narendra Modi urged all humanist forces to come together and called for an international conference to combat the scourge of terrorism. He also reiterated that a united, peaceful, safe and prosperous Afghanistan is crucial for the stability and security of the SCO region and acknowledged the work of the SCO-Afghanistan Contact Group in this regard.

We welcome the clarity shown by the SCO on terrorism from its inception. We are determined to strengthen cooperation within the SCO framework for comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security. SCO members should also explore how the SCO Regional Anti-Terrorism Structure can provide a more effective platform for cooperation through exchange of information, capacity-building, mutual legal assistance, the sharing of best practices and cooperating in multilateral forums such as the United Nations.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now call on Mr. Burian.

Mr. Burian: I thank you, Mr. President, for organizing this very important debate. It is my pleasure to represent the European Union (EU) at this debate and to deliver this statement on its behalf and on behalf of its member States. The candidate countries the Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania, and the country of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina, align themselves with this statement. The European Union, being at the frontline in support of United Nations counter-terrorism efforts, certainly has its rightful place at this debate.

Today, as we all continue to face the imminent threat of terrorism, a comprehensive and coordinated approach from the whole international community is needed more than ever before. Only together will we be able to respond to this threat, and that is why the EU is a convinced supporter of international and regional cooperation on this matter.

I am pleased to note that Central Asia was among the first regions to adopt the regional joint action plan for implementing the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, prepared with EU funding. This confirms that Central Asian countries share a common will to cooperate on tackling the threat, based on United Nations principles and approaches. In this regard, I would like to recall and commend the recent conferences, supported by the EU, along with the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), as an example of promoting regional cooperation to address terrorism and its financing, strengthening regional synergies and contributing to the global efforts of the United Nations. We welcome the spirit of cooperation and engagement in Central Asia, as mentioned by Foreign Minister Kamilov, as the best way to address existing challenges together. The EU wants to fully support this.

The EU recently adopted its new strategy for Central Asia, presenting a vision and priorities for our relations with this region, covering multiple dimensions, including the security aspect. It conveys a strong message vis-à-vis the EU's commitment to developing stronger, modern and non-exclusive partnerships, including by enhancing cooperation in multilateral and regional forums, with the United Nations at its core. One of the key pillars of this strategy is promoting resilience, with countering terrorism linked to other important elements such as the rule of law and good governance, inter alia.

In Central Asia, we are further strengthening our support, including through our development assistance programmes focusing on counter-terrorism and the prevention of violent extremism. The Strengthening Resilience to Violent Extremism (STRIVE) global programme, funded by the EU and implemented by the Hedayah International Centre of Excellence for Countering Violent Extremism, is one of our flagship programmes where we work in Central Asia. Another example is the EU-United Nations joint initiative on STRIVE Asia, for which the EU and the United Nations are organizing a joint event here in New York tomorrow.

We share the view of previous speakers that it is essential to address the prevention of radicalization and focus on the root causes of terrorism. Deradicalization, rehabilitation and reintegration must be dealt with as a package in order to prevent the further spread of terrorist ideology. The EU is ready to share its best practices and lessons learned with its partners to that end. Preventing

and suppressing the financing of terrorist acts is another priority and obligation of States as recalled by resolution 2462 (2019) and highlighted in the outcome declaration of the High-level International Conference on Countering Terrorism and Preventing Violent Extremism, held in Dushanbe. Countering terrorism financing must be a key part of our efforts to weaken and degrade terrorist organizations. In this regard, we must also ensure that our efforts are effective, while not limiting the space in which humanitarian actors can operate in a principled manner.

Foreign terrorist fighters and the international travel of terrorists are another topic of the global debate with particular importance for the region. The EU is committed to ensuring the implementation of resolution 2396 (2017), on threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts, and to working with partners on achieving its goals. It is crucial to hold foreign terrorist fighters accountable for their actions and maximize the possibility of successful prosecution, while respecting international law, in particular human rights law.

In this regard, we would like to commend Central Asian countries for their willingness to repatriate and reintegrate family members of foreign terrorist fighters, especially children. We stand ready to support capacity-building programmes in partner countries having to cope with returning terrorist fighters and their family members. Both border security and information sharing are crucial in terms of countering relocating foreign terrorist fighters, as stressed by resolution 2396 (2017). In this context, I would like to recall EU support for effective border management through its Border Management Programme in Central Asia as it enters into a new phase with a significantly enlarged budget and also including Afghanistan.

A strong multilateral, interregional framework remains key to building a deeper understanding of the nature of the challenges and establishing cooperative mechanisms across continents. The role of the United Nations is indispensable in this regard. We also would like to commend the OSCE for its role in the region, contributing to capacity-building in order to help implement United Nations commitments.

Finally, I wish to underline that the fight against terrorism is a long-term effort that requires strong cooperation in spite of our differences. We are actively seeking partnerships and collaborations with

international, regional and subregional partners. In this regard, let me once again reaffirm the EU's keen interest in working together with all partners, based on shared, internationally agreed standards and best practices, in

full compliance with universally agreed human rights and within the boundaries of the rule of law.

The meeting rose at 1.40 p.m.