



## KINGDOM OF BELGIUM

Statement by

Mr. Alexander De Croo, Deputy Prime Minister and  
Minister for Finance, in charge of the Fight against Tax Fraud, and  
Minister for Development Cooperation

### Debate at the Security Council

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Mr President, Your Excellencies, Dear Colleagues,

Like others, I would like, on behalf of Belgium, to thank the SG and the other speakers for their informative briefings.

[Belgium aligns itself with the statement to be made by the European

Union.] Mr. President,

We **welcome** the constructive cooperation between the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) and the United Nations. This excellent cooperation is demonstrated in particular by the invaluable assistance provided to the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate by these organisations during their visits to Member States.

It is important that these partnerships between the United Nations and regional organisations **be aligned with the United Nations frameworks** such as the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and Security Council resolutions, and be fully in line with United Nations values. All measures taken by Member States to combat terrorism must be based on **full respect of obligations under international law**, including human rights, international law on refugees and international humanitarian law. Indeed, any non-respect of these **essential guarantees** could jeopardise the success of combating terrorism by helping to fuel the breeding ground for violent extremism.

Effectively combating terrorism requires a **resolutely holistic approach**, where prevention, punishment and due diligence go hand in hand. An approach that includes strengthening civil society, promotes socio-economic inclusion and avoids polarising communities. Only this method will strengthen the resilience of our societies against violent extremism and terrorism.

In this 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** (UNRCCA) and SRSG Natalia Gherman.

Mr President,

Having been struck by several devastating terrorist attacks on its soil, the **EU has developed a comprehensive anti-terrorist framework**. The protection of citizens, the prevention of radicalisation and cooperation with international partners are at the very heart of this anti-terrorist strategy.

Proof of the importance that we attach to EU-UN cooperation can be found in the signature of the "Framework on counter-terrorism" between the two partners last April. This framework is based on the United Nations Charter and advocates a strengthening of international law, as well as respect for the rule of law and human rights. In particular, the partners aim to increase their respective commitments in Central Asia, South Asia and South-East Asia.

It is in a holistic spirit that the **European Union** is developing its efforts to combat terrorism with partner states in the region. With the "STRIVE ASIA" programme, aimed at strengthening resilience against violence and extremism, the EU is focusing on the **roots of radicalisation**. Increasing the role of women, promoting dialogue between communities, building the capacity of the media and the education sector to confront extremist ideologies - all of this is at the heart of the project.

The programme is also an excellent illustration of the close cooperation between the United Nations and regional organisations: STRIVE ASIA is being implemented through an effective partnership between the EU, the Counter-Terrorism Office, UNODC and UNDP.

The programme is an integral part of the **recently approved EU strategy for Central Asia**, which aims to address common challenges such as environmental degradation and terrorism, and to strengthen cooperation with our partners in the region to promote peace in Afghanistan. As a donor, the EU has allocated over €1 billion in bilateral and regional aid over the past seven years.

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

Thank you, Mr President.