

Mr. González de Linares Palou (Spain) (spoke in Spanish):

I would like to thank the People's Republic of China for convening this debate, which, unfortunately, is timely and necessary. Terrorism is not only one of the main threats to international peace and security, but it is also something that affects us all. It is a global phenomenon and, therefore, it requires a united and collective response. This debate is therefore timely, as will be the review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, to which the Secretary-General referred. The review this year has a very particular importance.

First of all, due to the unfortunate prominence that terrorism has acquired on the international agenda and the oft-mentioned changing nature of its threat, terrorists' capability to adapt requires of us swiftness, decisiveness and flexibility. We therefore have to tackle negotiations on the Global Strategy with a determination to strike at terrorism in a way that will defeat it and with sufficiently nimble and flexible tools, which would make it possible to respond immediately to terrorist attacks. A few new elements have already been considered by the Security Council, such as the issue of foreign terrorist fighters, which were the subject of resolution 2178 (2014), and the Madrid guidelines for its optimal implementation. Also at issue are new sources of financing, which we have considered in a series of instruments that led last year to resolutions 2199 (2015) and 2253 (2015). Another new element in 2015 was the presidential statement on the fight against terrorism at the national level. Hence we are gradually closing in on terrorism. We are not going to be able to eliminate it once and for all, with a decisive blow. That would be difficult, but not, however, impossible. But we can try to eliminate it by asphyxiating it. It is vital that we not let down our guard. In some areas, such as cybersecurity, we still have some leeway to develop new instruments.

Another important area is that of justice, where we can bring more pressure to bear in order to eradicate terrorism. Spain, during its upcoming presidency of the Council, in December of this year, intends to explore the possibilities of increasing international judicial cooperation. Also in December we will review resolution 1540 (2004), which calls for preventing weapons of mass destruction from falling into the hands of non-State actors with terrorist objectives. We need hardly stress the importance of this threat, and therefore I would like to ask all Member States to participate to the fullest, so that we can make this review a truly effective instrument. Various measures have also been adopted by States at the national level, and as a whole, we have enough individual experience and good practices in order to become a formidable opponent of terrorism.

I would like to turn once again to the review of the Global Strategy to make a few comments. With respect to prevention, which is the first pillar, we have at our disposal an instrument that Spain greatly values: the Secretary-General's Plan of Action, referred to in General Assembly resolution 70/254, of 12 February. Let us not get bogged down in Byzantine discussions about what is or is not violent extremism. We all know that there is an aspect of extremism that facilitates and leads to terrorism, and it is those aspects on which we should take action. In that context, we deem it important that the Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism be carried out in the framework of a comprehensive approach that is also reflected in the concept of tackling the life cycle of radicalization, which the Global Counter-terrorism Forum has given priority to in its work.

Within this comprehensive approach, I would underscore, for the sake of brevity, just two specific aspects: the need to include all social sectors, and the need to develop effective counter-narratives. States, in the face of violent extremism, must promote a mechanism to include all and to conduct a dialogue with all, including communities that are susceptible of being radicalized at the State, regional or local level. But this will not happen by itself, and so we have to create mechanisms and devise national plans and possibilities for cooperation, as rightly stated in the Plan of Action. I will

give the example of two initiatives that have been put into practice by my country. We set up a centre for the coordination of information on radicalization, and five months ago we launched an initiative on stopping radicalization. To promote civic cooperation, citizens have access to a webpage and an e-mail address, as well as a toll-free phone line, that guarantee confidentiality as well as total anonymity. There is also a special icon on the AlertCops application for smartphones. In five months, we have received 150 communications, of which 45 per cent have proved to be worthy of police investigation.

Along those lines, I will speak about the narrative that we must develop in the face of violent extremism. It should not be limited to negative aspects but should also have a positive dimension, underscoring elements that all of the members of the international community agree on: pluralism, coexistence, respect for differences and an invitation to all to participate. In this respect, the participation of victims, with their example of not seeking revenge and their call for justice, offers us one of the most authoritative voices against violent extremism. That is why Spain, along with the United States, last October brought for the first time before the Security Council the voices of victims of terrorism. I should like also to underscore the importance of the role of women in the fight against radicalization and terrorism, as can be seen in resolution 2242 (2015), adopted last October, also during the Spanish presidency. Furthermore, the implementation of the Secretary-General's Plan of Action makes clear the need, and this also represents an opportunity, to strengthen the structure of international cooperation.

Thus we reiterate the idea that we should create a high-level post of representative of the Secretary-General against violent extremism. With respect to the second pillar, I have already expressed a few ideas on the need to react quickly, decisively and nimbly. I will simply stress that we ask the Member States during negotiations not to lose sight of the fact that the objective of the Global Strategy is to defeat terrorism; that is its only objective. With respect to capacity-building, which is the third pillar, the work of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force and the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre offers us ways to strengthen those capabilities where it is most necessary.

The commitment and participation of States will help significantly to strengthen our societies in the face of this scourge. I cannot but close with a reference that bears repeating, even though it is quite obvious: the need to respect human rights, which is the fourth pillar, because they are an essential element of the DNA of our societies, such that if we fail to protect human rights, even indirectly or temporarily, we would be altering the essence of our way of life and coexistence; hence we would be handing terrorists their first victory.

I would like to conclude with a saying that the terrorist threaten us with repeatedly: that they need to be lucky only once, and we need to be lucky all the time. What they overlook is that our societies and our ways of life are robust and deeply rooted in our consciences, and cannot be defeated. We have demonstrated this, because one, 10 or 100 times, terrorists can be lucky, but we can work to prevent them from even having the option of trying to be lucky.

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