

Mr. Seck (Senegal) (spoke in French):

Mr. President, the delegation of Senegal thanks you and welcomes your initiative to convene this public debate on counter-terrorism. It cannot come at a better time, given the almost metronomic recurrence of terrorist attacks across the globe.

International terrorism, which continues to spread, has reached hitherto unseen proportions and remains of utmost concern for the international community, including for the countries of West Africa and the Sahel that have been struck hard by attacks, kidnappings, summary executions and unprecedented violence perpetrated by armed groups with such names as Al-Shabaab, Al-Mourabitoun, Ansar Dine, Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb, Boko Haram and others, but their methods are as similar as they are barbarous, sowing the seeds of destruction, terrorism, massacres and desolation within our communities.

Given this threat, it is urgent that the international community provide its support to the West African and the Sahel-Saharan regions in the implementation and operationalization of action plans and other subregional initiatives, including the United Nations integrated strategy for the Sahel, the African Union initiative to create an African force to fight against terrorism, the Nouakchott process and Group of Five for the Sahel force project.

To be effective, any initiatives to counter terrorism or fight violent extremism should first address both the structural and contextual factors that lead to the rise of terrorism, including ignorance, marginalization and discrimination as well as poor governance and the lack of socioeconomic prospects, the erroneous interpretations or the instrumentalization of religion and the abuse religious vocabulary. My point is that authoritarian repression or a military approach is not enough in and of itself.

It is therefore key that, on the one hand, we ensure the effective implementation of development programmes and that, on the other, we also support initiatives that give priority to dialogue, tolerance and understanding among civilizations, cultures, peoples and religions. In all these cases, intolerance should never be associated with a religion, nationality, civilization or ethnic group. This is a global scourge that affects the international community as a whole, placing it in a state of emergency — indeed, a state of siege.

In its efforts to implement measures to counter international terrorism and violent extremism, Senegal has adopted an approach that combines prevention, cooperation and quick response with, inter alia, the adoption, in 2007, of two laws that provide for severe punishment of perpetrators of terrorist acts and, in 2009, a law that combats the financing of terrorism.

These measures strengthen the Senegalese reality, which is characterized by a successful ethnic blending, religious harmony — religious symbiosis, even — in a State where the rule of law, democracy, human rights, good governance and the fight against the impunity are cardinal values. Terrorist groups are masters in the art of using the Internet and social media to incite violence, recruit fighters, and finance and plan terrorist acts. In this respect, the relevant provisions of resolutions 2178 (2014) and 2253 (2015) must be implemented in a coordinated, methodical and effective manner by Member States, in particular through pursuing cooperation in intelligence and better collaboration with private organizations that provide these services, all of this in order to improve enforcement systems.

To finance their activities, terrorist cleverly — or I should say, cynically — exploit gaps in financial systems and regional, national and international legal instruments to collect funds, including through

the illicit exploitation and sale of such natural resources as oil and precious stones, as well as through kidnappings for ransom, trafficking in human beings and weapons, various forms of extortion, looting and sale of valuable cultural artefacts.

To counter these activities, it is necessary to readapt the international financial system by making it more secure, calling upon Member States to apply the standards set by Financial Action Task Force rules on terrorist financing and strengthen partnerships with the private sector, in particular charitable organizations, so as to identify suspicious activity. In this regard, we think it important to recall the Secretary-General's recommendations made in his report (S/2016/92) on the implementation of resolution 2253 (2015), while working to keep the fight against terrorism and its financing from having a detrimental effect on migrants, refugees and displaced persons. Nor should the countries of origin of these migrants be penalized, as they benefited in 2014 from around \$400 billion in remittances by emigrants, which is more than three times official development assistance.

The recruitment by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant and other extremist groups, foreign terrorist fighters from a hundred different countries and whose number exceeds 30,000, according to United Nations statistics, is another major challenge that we have to face in an urgent, effective and coordinated manner. These combatants constitute a real threat to countries of origin, transit countries and destination countries. To eradicate these phenomena better cooperation in border control is imperative. However, measures to be taken in this context should not undermine the principle of the free movement of people and goods. It is in this spirit and in this framework that a subregional workshop will be held in Dakar in May 2016 on border control in West Africa, Central Africa and the Sahel. Promoting dialogue and preventing conflicts, involving the people by mobilizing youth, empowering women, education, strengthening competencies and improving access to jobs are just as important to a good strategy for countering violent extremism, the radicalization of young people and recruitment by extremist organizations.

Considering how difficult it seems to be for the international community to come up with successful strategies, it is crucial that we take an inclusive and united approach with a view to the long term that strengthens cooperation at all three of the subregional, regional and international levels. In that regard, it helps when Member States, acting in full sovereignty, devise national strategies and plans of action that are based on local realities and therefore better adapted to their own socioeconomic and security contexts. The international community as a whole and the United Nations in particular should assist in strengthening States' capacities in that regard.

We believe that the upcoming June review of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy will be an excellent opportunity for deeper reflection on the effectiveness of the United Nations counter-terrorism architecture and on the Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism. We should take advantage of the event to ensure the relevance of the Strategy, which has to be able to adapt to today's new challenges and realities.

I would be remiss if I did not commend the outstanding work of the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force, which has united 34 international entities in the fight against this scourge and plays an essential role in coordinating United Nations efforts in the area. Similarly, the Counter-Terrorism Committee, established pursuant to resolution 1373 (2001) and effectively chaired by the Egyptian delegation, deserves all our support and cooperation for its numerous activities implemented under the leadership of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, whose recommendations in its country visit reports should receive regular follow-up and evaluation as well as information exchange with the countries concerned.

Lastly, I would like to reiterate Senegal's willingness and unwavering commitment to making every effort in our shared fight against terrorism, including in the as yet unfinished task of drafting an international convention on combating terrorism, and especially in view of the fact that Africa already has a regional convention on the subject in place, with a dedicated research centre headquartered in Algiers.

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