

STATEMENT BY H.E. MR. Y. HALİT ÇEVİK, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF TURKEY AT THE PLENARY MEETING OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON THE UN SECRETARY GENERAL'S PLAN OF ACTION ON PREVENTING VIOLENT EXTREMISM

Mr. President,

Thank you for organizing this important and timely debate.

Violent extremism in all forms is a growing source of concern for Turkey. The latest General Assembly resolution on the review of the UN Global Counter Terrorism Strategy, facilitated by Turkey, urges all Member States to unite against violent extremism in all its forms and manifestations.

Without doubt, rule of law based security measures, such as intercepting, deterring, and prosecuting terrorists, remain as the fundamental pillar of counter-terrorism efforts.

However, we have also long been convinced that a broader approach is necessary to prevent young people from being attracted to the lure of the terrorist groups, to make our societies more resilient against extremist narratives, and to rehabilitate the radicalized ones.

Therefore, Turkey fully supports the view of the Secretary-General that the international community needs to adopt a comprehensive approach which encompasses not only security-based counter terrorism measures, but also systematic measures which address the drivers of violent extremism at the local, regional, as well as global levels.

As the embodiment of universal ideas and concerted international action, the United Nations could/should play a crucial role in leading the efforts to address the drivers of violent extremism at the global level, setting the basic principles, and guiding and assisting the member states in their own national counter radicalization efforts.

Turkey welcomes the Plan of Action of the Secretary General in that respect.

As we have pointed out at the briefing organized by the Secretary General on January 15, we believe that the Action Plan will constitute an important reference document in efforts to prevent violent extremism both at national level and in international fora.

Turkey, as one of the Co-Chairs of the Global Counter Terrorism Forum (GCTF) with the Netherlands, actively contributes to the efforts of this global forum, and to GCTF-inspired Hedayah Center, aimed at addressing violent extremism. In this regard, let me mention the Ankara Memorandum on Good Practices for a Multi-Sectoral Approach to Countering Violent Extremism of the GCTF. Turkey is also co-leading, together with the United States, an initiative to address the life cycle of radicalization within the GCTF.

Mr. President,

I wish to underline that radicalization to violence is not limited to a specific ideology or system of belief, and cannot be associated with any country, religion or culture. There are different forms of radicalization which need to be addressed with equal determination. The United Nations is best placed to ensure such a balanced and comprehensive approach to this issue.

It is equally important to make an accurate diagnosis on the drivers of radicalization in order to produce effective policies to address them.

We are concerned about rising intolerance, discrimination and stigmatization on the basis of faith and ethnicity, which aggravate marginalization and alienation, thereby providing new grounds for terrorist groups to exploit. A resolute stance is needed in order to cut off this vicious cycle.

In conclusion, Mr. President,

My Government is ready to fully support the efforts of the Secretary-General. We will actively contribute to the ensuing discussions, beginning in the Global Counter Terrorism Strategy Review and other relevant fora.

Thank you.