



The United Nations General Assembly Addresses the Effects of Terrorism on the Enjoyment of Human Rights

Resolution of United Nations General Assembly in the Seventy-second session

The General Assembly tackled, in its seventy-second session, December 2017 resolution no. 21 on the effect of terrorism on the enjoyment of human rights. 95 countries, including Egypt, have voted for the resolution, one country against the resolution, while 58 countries refrained.

The resolution came on the back drop of the United Nations' strong and unequivocal condemnation of all acts, methods and practices of terrorism and violent extremism as and when conducive to terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, wherever and by whomsoever committed, regardless of their motivation. It also recognizes that terrorism has a grave impact on the full enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms and that it potentially hampers development, including but not limited to destroying infrastructure, harming the tourism industry, diverting foreign direct investment, impeding economic growth and increasing security costs.

Besides, the United Nations strongly condemned the systematic recruitment and use of children to perpetrate terrorist attacks, as well as the violations and abuses committed by terrorist groups against children, including killing and maiming, abduction and rape and other forms of sexual violence, and noting that such violations and abuses may amount to war crimes or crimes against humanity.

The resolution expressed deep concern over acts of sexual and gender-based violence that are known to be part of the strategic objectives and ideology of certain terrorist groups and are used as an in-



strument to increase their power through supporting finance and recruitment and through the destruction of communities.

Moreover, it emphasized that all human rights are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated, reaffirming on the fundamental importance of respecting all human rights and fundamental freedoms and the rule of law, and reiterating that all States have an obligation to promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms and to ensure implementation of their obligations under international human rights law and international humanitarian law.

The Member States asserted the need for the promotion and the protection of human rights for all and the rule of law for being essential to the fight against terrorism, recognizing that effective counter-terrorism measures and the protection of human rights are not conflicting goals, but are complementary and mutually reinforcing, and stressing the need to promote and protect the rights of victims of terrorism.

Furthermore, the resolution stressed that States have a responsibility to strengthen international cooperation to prevent and combat terrorism and violent extremism as and when conducive to terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, and reaffirming that any acts of terrorism are criminal and unjustifiable, regardless of their motivation, wherever, whenever and by whomsoever committed. It, also, reaffirmed on the absolute need of the commitment to the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy as well as a balanced and integrated implementation of its four pillars.

The United Nations emphasized that terrorism cannot and should not be associated with any religion, nationality, civilization or ethnic group, and that tolerance, pluralism, inclusion and respect for diversity, dialogue among civilizations and the enhancement of interfaith and intercultural understanding and respect among people at the national, regional and global levels, while avoiding the escalation of hatred, are among the most important elements in promoting cooperation and success in preventing and combating terrorism, and welcoming the various initiatives to that end.

The resolution reaffirmed the commitment of the Member States to take measures aimed at addressing the conditions conducive to the



spread of terrorism, including but not limited to prolonged unresolved conflicts, the dehumanization of victims of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, lack of the rule of law and violations and abuses of human rights, ethnic, national and religious discrimination, political exclusion, socioeconomic marginalization and lack of good governance, while recognizing that none of these conditions can excuse or justify acts of terrorism.

The Member States shall be aware that there are a number of drivers underlying radicalization to terrorism and that development process based on the principles of social justice, inclusion and equal opportunities can contribute to the prevention of terrorism and violent extremism as and when conducive to terrorism, as well as to the promotion of inclusive, open and resilient societies, notably through education, and affirming the determination of States to work towards conflict resolution, to confront oppression, to eradicate poverty, to promote sustained economic growth, sustainable development, global prosperity, good governance, human rights and fundamental freedoms for all and the rule of law, to improve intercultural understanding and to promote respect for all.

The resolution calls upon Member States to remain alert to the use of information and communication technology for terrorist purposes and to cooperate to counter violent extremist propaganda and incitement to violence on the Internet and social media, including by developing effective counter-narratives, and to prevent terrorists from recruiting and raising funds online for terrorist purposes, while stressing the importance of cooperation with civil society and the private sector in this endeavour.

Meanwhile, the General Assembly expressed concern at the increasing use, by terrorists and their supporters, of information and communication technology, in particular the Internet and other media, to advocate, commit, incite, recruit for, fund or plan terrorist acts, urges States to take appropriate preventive measures in this regard while acting in full compliance with their obligations under international law, and reiterates that such technologies can be powerful tools in countering the spread of terrorism, including by promoting tolerance, dialogue among peoples and peace.

In the meantime, the resolution emphasized the importance of cooperation among stakeholders, including through technical cooperation, capacity-building and the exchange of good practices, information and intelligence



on preventing and countering terrorism, and in this regard calls upon States and relevant regional and sub-regional organizations, to continue to implement the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and its four pillars in a balanced and integrated manner.

Finally, the resolution requested the Secretary-General to submit a report on following-up the implementation of the present resolution to the General Assembly at its seventy-third session.