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Statement

by

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**Ministerial Meeting on “Threats to international peace and security caused by
terrorist acts: International cooperation in combatting terrorism 20 years
after the adoption of resolution 1373”**

United Nations Security Council

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Thank you, Mr. President for convening today's Ministerial Open Debate on the important issue of countering terrorism and violent extremism. I would also like to thank Under Secretary General for Counter-Terrorism, Vladimir Voronkov and CTED Executive Director Michèle Coninx, and Executive Director of Neem Foundation, Fatima Akilu, for their invaluable and informative briefings.

Two decades ago, the Security Council's adoption of resolution 1373 directed all states to take a range of measures against terrorism. Today, terrorism and violent extremism, in all their forms and manifestations, continue to threaten international peace and security. The recent attack on 2 January 2021 that claimed over one hundred lives in Niger serves as a painful reminder of the devastating impact of terrorism.

Today, I will focus my remarks on the approach needed to combat violent extremism and terrorism; the importance of our responsible cooperation as Member States to this end; and the crucial role of the existing counter-terrorism frameworks.

First, to successfully mitigate the threat of terrorism, we must look far beyond the domain of military strategy. While offensive operations can be, at times, required to protect civilian populations, long-term developmental solutions that enhance the capacities of states to address poverty, social inequality, political exclusion, and radicalisation provide the surest pathway to promote stability and to counter terrorism. As we highlighted at last week's open debate on maintaining peace and security in fragile contexts, greater efforts are needed to address the root causes of fragility which leave states and their populations vulnerable to a range of security threats, including terrorism.

All States have a duty to take sensible actions to combat terrorism and violent extremism. Irresponsible arms sales, persistent conflicts fuelled by geopolitical rivalries, and other counter-productive actions should be avoided by all Member States. Selective condemnation of terrorist acts depending on which side of the border they are committed or by whom, only undermines our collective efforts to address this scourge. In addition, we must all ensure that any measures taken to combat terrorism comply with obligations under international law, in particular international human rights, refugee, and humanitarian law. Further, initiatives to combat financing of terrorism must be designed in such a way that they bolster, rather than undermine legitimate socioeconomic activity.

Today, as countries work to counter terrorism, the COVID-19 pandemic presents additional challenges. In this context, we welcome the measures adopted by the Counter-Terrorism Committee (the “CTC”), to continue the implementation of its mandates. Equally, strong coordination and collaboration between the Committee, CTED and UNOCT must continue and we encourage the Committee to enhance collaboration, information-sharing, and coordination with Member States.

Indeed, international, regional and subregional cooperation remains vital in combating terrorism and bringing terrorists to justice. The UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy is a useful tool to further this cooperation between States. Building capacity and enabling technical cooperation between all countries to counter the terrorist threat must be a top priority of the international community.

In conclusion, Mr. President, I would like to welcome the adoption of the presidential statement as an outcome of our deliberations today. Not only does the presidential statement provide an important basis for reinforcing the Council's engagement in countering terrorism, but it also builds on the Council's consistent, unequivocal and strong condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. Saint Vincent and the Grenadines joins all other responsible States in condemning this scourge and we reaffirm our commitment to the fight against terrorism and violent extremism.