



International Virtual Seminar 2020 on Joint Response to Terrorism under the New Circumstances

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Opening Remarks by H.E. Luo Zhaohui, Vice Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, China

Dear Colleagues,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good afternoon. It is a great pleasure to attend this seminar hosted by the China Institute of International Studies (CIIS). On behalf of the Foreign Ministry of China, I wish to express congratulations on the opening of the seminar and appreciation for all the preparations made by the CIIS.

Next year will mark the 30th anniversary of the end of the Cold War and the 20th anniversary of the 9/11 attacks. As we review the non-traditional security threats the international community faced in the past three decades, we may come to a few conclusions.

First, since the end of the Cold War, especially after 9/11, non-traditional security threats have grown in number and frequency, and increasingly become a major threat to humanity. The 9/11 terror attacks, the SARS outbreak, the Indian Ocean tsunami, the global financial crisis and the ongoing pandemic have proved this point time and again.

Second, non-traditional security threats require transnational responses. In a global village, we live in a community with a shared future and no one is immune to common threats. Therefore, working in solidarity like passengers in the same boat is the only right way to address non-traditional security threats. This was how we dealt with the SARS outbreak, the Indian Ocean tsunami and the global financial crisis. 9/11 brought the international community together on counter-terrorism. Our experience so far with COVID-19 also underlines the need for a collective response.

Third, response to non-traditional security issues should be based on a coherent and sustainable approach; we need a long-term view instead of knee-jerk reaction. While crisis management is necessary, sustained efforts are imperative. Otherwise, previous threats may reemerge, and all hard-won gains may be lost. The SARS outbreak in 2003, the Ebola outbreak in 2014 and COVID-19 this year all show that global public health security demands our sustained attention.

Fourth, reflection on international counter-terrorism cooperation is needed. The global fight against terrorism has made important progress. However, terrorist activities remain rampant, the breeding ground is yet to be eradicated, international common understanding needs strengthening, and a sustainable strategy is yet to take form. Opting for unilateralist and bullying practices, a certain country has politicized counter-terrorism and turned it into a convenient tool. This has caused serious disruption to international counter-terrorism cooperation, and we all need to be on high alert.

Friends,

As Georg W. F. Hegel noted, the only thing we learn from history is that we learn nothing from history.

Frequent terrorist attacks around the world remind us that terrorism has never gone away. International counter-terrorism cooperation still has a long way to go, and must be strengthened, not weakened. In fighting terrorism, we must uphold multilateralism, adopt a comprehensive approach, follow a unified standard, and embrace openness and inclusiveness.

China is an important member of the international fight against terrorism and an active participant in and contributor to counter-terrorism cooperation. We have engaged in productive exchanges with other countries on counter-terrorism and deradicalization policies, and contributed useful experience to the international effort. A few years ago, China's Xinjiang region suffered greatly from terrorism and radical ideologies. Violent terrorists plotted and executed several thousand attacks, leading to the loss of many innocent lives and injuries. To protect the lives of people of all ethnic groups in Xinjiang, the region has cracked down on violent terrorism according to law, and at the same time, endeavored to remove the root causes of terrorism. Local governments have worked hard to raise people's living standards, enhance legal literacy, and provide education and general awareness-raising against extremism and terrorism. These efforts have made a difference. Over the past four years, Xinjiang has been free from terrorist attacks; people there enjoy a tranquil and harmonious social environment. It is a concrete proof that the counter-terrorism and deradicalization measures taken in Xinjiang are effective. They offer useful

experience to global deradicalization efforts and represent China's contribution to the international counter-terrorism endeavor.

The Eastern Turkistan Islamic Movement (ETIM) is a terrorist group listed by the UN Security Council. Combating ETIM is a core concern in China's counter-terrorism efforts and an integral part of the global counter-terrorism endeavor. Regrettably, a certain country, in a blatant act of double standards, has revoked the designation of ETIM as a terrorist organization, which will only whitewash and embolden ETIM, breach international consensus and undermine counter-terrorism cooperation. We trust and expect that the international community will be clear-eyed about the violent, terrorist nature of ETIM and its grave danger, oppose the delisting of the group, and continue to work together to curtail the terrorist group until this security tumor is uprooted.

Here I wish to share China's propositions on counter-terrorism.

First, it is important to uphold international consensus. The international consensus on counter-terrorism is a valuable lesson we draw from numerous tragedies humanity has gone through. We need to keep our faith in unity and cooperation as the most powerful weapon against terrorism, rise above exclusive-block or zero-sum mentality, stand on the side of international justice, make decisions based on the merits of matters, and resolutely reject unilateral, selfish and bullying acts that only jeopardize and erode international consensus on terrorism. Only when our consensus is kept intact can we ensure that the counter-terrorism endeavor stay in the right direction.

Second, it is important to adopt effective measures. In view of the new trends and new features of terrorist activities, we need to support the UN in playing a central coordinating role, support more coordination of positions and actions, and support creative and multi-pronged solutions to tackle cyber-terrorism, foreign terrorist fighters, radicalization, terrorist financing and other outstanding issues. More attention should be paid to the impact of COVID-19 so that terrorist organizations will not be able to use the pandemic to instigate and execute attacks.

Third, it is important to follow a unified standard. There is no "good" or "bad" terrorism, but just terrorism. History has proven time and again that abetting terrorism

will ultimately backfire. We must adopt a zero-tolerance, indiscriminate approach and resolutely crack down upon terrorists wherever they are and on whatever ground. We should reject ideological biases or double standards, and avoid linking terrorism with any particular country, ethnicity or religion.

Fourth, it is important to deny terrorism its breeding ground. Development holds the master key to all problems. We need to address both the symptoms and root causes of terrorism, facilitate economic and social development in developing countries, and effectively alleviate and eradicate poverty. Developing countries, particularly those at the forefront of combating terrorism, should receive strong support, in the form of material assistance, personnel training and others, to help them build capacity in counter-terrorism and deradicalization and reinforce every link in the battle against terrorism. Expert and academic exchanges should be encouraged to provide intellectual input to international counter-terrorism efforts.

Last but not least, I suggest that this seminar be held on a regular basis to build consensus and keep up the momentum of counter-terrorism. Next time, we may consider issuing a press release and inviting more countries. Finally, I wish the seminar a full success.

Thank you.

Remarks by H.E. Syromolotov Oleg Vladimirovich, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Russia

Mr. Chair, participants to the Conference, allow me to express the gratitude to the Chinese partners to invite me to the Virtual Conference on Joint Response to Terrorism under the New Circumstances organized by the China Institute of International Studies (CIIS). Due to my busy schedule, I address you today via a prerecorded video.

International terrorism remains a most serious threat to peace and security. This situation has not changed in the context of the Covid-19 spread, which has transformed the threat of terrorism into a new state. I mean terrorists' rapid "retreat" into international and social networks, use of non-contact methods of disseminating fake information and calls for violence of various ideology. We should not exclude the prospect that social and economic consequences of the Covid-19 crisis in a number of countries could turn into radicalization of the population and create additional opportunities for terrorist organizations to recruit new allies and carry out terrorist attacks and outreach and propaganda activities.

I am convinced that focus on solving current large-scale problems, including in healthcare, should not weaken collective efforts to counter the threat of international terrorism. Unfortunately, we have to state that, today, the international community demonstrates its inability to respond to new global security challenges effectively and as a united front. We believe that the current situation is caused by certain countries' increasing loss of realism, and their ignoring of calls for an open de-politicized dialogue and avoidance of so-called double standards. An illustration of this are persistent attempts of Western counterparts to advance controversial non-consensus concepts, such as "countering violent extremism", which shatter today's international legal anti-terrorism system.

At the same time, we witness refocusing of counter-terrorism to artificially overemphasized gender and human rights aspects, whose significance is absolutized. This poses serious obstacles to an effective inter-State counter-terrorism work. Unlike such a non-constructive approach, Russia and its partners have consistently upheld the

policy of strict compliance with the principles of the UN Charter, UN SC resolutions, and universal counter-terrorism conventions and the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, as well as of recognition of the main role of States and their competent bodies in countering terrorism and extremism. Examples of an effective international work in the area include the BRICS Counter-Terrorism Strategy and the Statement by the Council of Heads of State of the SCO Member States on Countering the Spread of Terrorist, Separatist and Extremist Ideology, including online, adopted during the Russian Chairmanship in these organizations this year.

Mr. Chair, colleagues, I am convinced that only together we will be able to inflict a serious defeat on international terrorism re-emerging amid the pandemic. I hope that a realistic approach oriented to achieve this goal will finally prevail in the near future. Russia is ready to contribute constructively to the common fight against terrorism without politicization and “double standards”. In the current realities characterized by escalation of challenges and threats, the role of the academic and expert community in strengthening international counter-terrorism cooperation increases. I am certain that today’s Conference and the forthcoming exchange of views between practitioners and experts will help better coordinate shared positions and outline ways of further interaction to promote a constructive and result-oriented anti-terrorism agenda. I will successful work to all participants in the Conference!

Remarks by Nabeel Muneer, Additional Secretary from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Pakistan

Honorable Chair,

Distinguished Guest Speakers

Ladies and Gentlemen

Good Afternoon

At the outset, I would like to convey our deep appreciation for the initiative undertaken by the China Institute of the International Studies & the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs of holding a virtual conference on “Responses to Terrorism under the New Circumstances.”

As the world grapples with the Covid-19 Pandemic, it is indeed a timely initiative.

The year 2020 has proven to be an extraordinary one in more aspects than one. The world is in the grip of a pandemic that has tested every aspect of human life. As more than one third of the world was literally brought to a standstill by Covid-19, all nations have been compelled to think about the global implications of this “new normal” and to respond to it accordingly.

Ladies and Gentlemen

Terrorism and its ideology continue to be a challenge with global impact. No region, country or territory has remained immune to this scourge.

The pandemic may have curtailed the operational ability of terrorists to move, recruit, finance or launch attacks in the short term. But as governments across the globe remain engaged in addressing public health challenges, it could, in the long term, allow terrorist organizations to regroup, consolidate and expand their operations.

In addition to expanding their operational capabilities, this new normal may also be used by terrorist organizations to broaden their ideological base, reinvigorating their recruitment and possibly furthering the roots of radicalization and extremism.

Increase in time being spent on the internet during the lockdowns could also be a potential threat in this regard.

Distinguished Guests

Pakistan has been at the forefront of the fight against terrorism over the last two decades. We have lost 100,000 lives, with the economic impact in billions of dollars.

Yet we have, through our strong resolve, unwavering commitment, valor and sacrifice of our people, the government and the courageous security forces, managed to turn the tide.

Pakistan has been able to achieve this by adopting a coherent strategy, comprising of both kinetic operations, and a well-integrated “National Action Plan”, aimed at mainstreaming the marginalized sections of the society through development.

Pakistan’s efforts in the fight against terrorism have been widely acknowledged by the world.

Ladies and Gentlemen

I would like to reiterate that Pakistan has also been a victim of terrorism thrust upon us from across our borders. It is unfortunate that certain countries in our neighborhood have resorted to supporting terrorist groups and using them as proxies to launch terrorist attacks against Pakistan and development projects like CPEC. We condemn this in the strongest terms, and, through this forum, urge the international community to take notice of these malicious designs.

Ladies and Gentlemen

I would like to take this opportunity to also express our concern at blaming any religion for terrorism and extremism. We believe such myopic view of this intricate and complex issue is not only unwarranted but also extremely counterproductive in mounting a formidable challenge to terrorism.

In the end I would like to reiterate the commitment of my country to eradicate terrorism and extremism and to continue to support all international and regional efforts towards this end.

I Thank You All

Remarks by Mohamed Fouad Ahmed, Assistant Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Egypt

Your Excellency Luo Zhaohui

Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China

Your Excellency Xu Bu

President of China Institute of International Studies

Excellencies

Ladies and Gentlemen

Allow me first to thank the China Institute of International Studies, for organizing this important conference.

It is quite pertinent to brainstorm on the emerging trends of terrorist threats, and the impact of COVID-19 on countering terrorism and extremism. You may agree that the trans-boundary pattern of terrorist threats and the current international Counter-terrorism context require more coordinated joint efforts at national, regional and international levels to enhance our responses in this regard.

While the international community is overwhelmed with addressing the impact of COVID-19, terrorist groups are swiftly re-building their operational and financial capacities.

Therefore, it is crucial today more than ever for all relevant actors to redouble their efforts to effectively and collectively address the root causes of this global threat.

We believe that the complexity of the precipitating factors that provide fertile ground for terrorist groups compel us to pursue a comprehensive multifaceted approach to combat terrorism.

This approach is the most effective recipe for states to address this constantly evolving challenge. It implies addressing the underlying root causes of terrorism, while targeting all terrorist groups. This includes in addition to security measures, economic, social, cultural, educational, developmental and ideological dimensions.

In this regard, it is important to be consistent, and avoid making any distinction between different terrorist groups. Terrorists in all their labels and shades must be condemned without any exception or justification. The experience of the past years has shown that all terrorist groups, regardless of their names, stem from the same

deviant creed.

On its part, Egypt has strongly contributed to the global counter terrorism agenda. The courageous initiative of H.E. President El-Sisi to address the deviant interpretation of religious texts and to refute the extreme religious discourse launched in 2014 was a major catalyst. Key Egyptian religious institutions, led by “Al-Azhar” have relentlessly refuted online and offline extremist narratives propagated by terrorist organizations and their supporters, and developed a counter-narrative based on the true essence of Islam.

Furthermore, Egypt has repeatedly called upon the international community to implement the UNSC resolution 2354 (2017) and “the comprehensive framework to counter terrorist narratives”. There is a significant need to counter the extremist ideology propagated by the 4 terrorist groups and their affiliates, which is based upon fallacies and twisted religious interpretations in order to suppress the ability of terrorist groups to recruit new followers.

This requires enhancing international cooperation among governments and with social media companies to suppress the ability of terrorist groups to exploit new technologies and social media platforms to disseminate their deviant ideologies and hate speech through which new terrorists, including FTFs, are recruited especially among youth.

It is crucial to stop the vicious cycle, which allows terrorism to flourish. This can only be done by suppressing the ability of terrorist groups to recruit new followers and to fund their activities.

Another essential prerequisite for our counter terrorism efforts to succeed is for the international community to hold accountable any State providing any form of support, directly or indirectly, to facilitate the movement of terrorists, including FTFs, across its borders or offering them safe havens or by supplying them with weapons or financial, logistical facilities or political and media support in clear violation of relevant UNSC resolutions.

Moreover, firm actions should be taken against States and entities that conduct any financial transactions or use civil society and charitable organizations as a front to raise funds for terrorist purposes.

In conclusion, we look forward to further strengthening international and regional cooperation on counter- terrorism related issues, building on the excellent work conducted over the past years with the aim of ridding the world of this scourge and building a more secure and prosperous future.

Thank you.

Speech of Kozhirova Svetlana, Director, Center for Chinese and Asian Studies, Eurasia National University, Kazakhstan

Terrorism issues during a pandemic (Kazakhstan's experience)

Amid the pandemic, the classic security threats in Central Asia have changed. Coronavirus has affected the activities of terrorist groups and the measures to address terrorism. Experts note a significant decrease in terrorist incidents due to the closure of borders and increased control within states. In terms of the restrictive measures in place, terrorist groups have become more active in Internet space. The groups started to use actively media to recruit mercenaries and spread terrorist and extremist ideology. Due to the rise in unemployment and stress, people have become more susceptible, and therefore it has become easier for terrorists to recruit new members.

Unstable Afghanistan, located in the southern direction and engulfed in war and opium plantations, remains the main source of danger for the countries of Central Asia. Anarchy, uncontrolled market for drugs and weapons, increase in crime resulted in the appearance of the international terrorist organizations, like Al-Qaeda, Jamaat Ansarullah, the Islamic Movement of East Turkestan and the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, and the criminal groups involved in drug trafficking at the borders of Central Asian countries. Besides, both terrorist organizations and criminal groups are merging into cartels and trying to export their influence on the territory of neighboring states.

At least 100 members of Katibat al-Tawhid wal-Jihad have been arrested in the summer of 2020 in Uzbekistan. Katibat al-Tawhid wal-Jihad is the terrorist group responsible for the bombing metro in St. Petersburg and the Chinese Embassy in Bishkek. In Tajikistan, terrorist attacks by IS have become more frequent in recent years: the attack on the Ishkobod outpost with many dead, the murder of a group of foreign tourists in the south of the country, and the preparation of terrorist attacks against the Russian military base are among them. In Turkmenistan, the officials try to hide any acts of terrorism, but events like the bloody attack on the Tagtabazar border detachment and the Islamist conspiracy in the 22nd Infantry Division, in which at least 70 soldiers and officers participated, are widely known.

The terrorists based in Afghanistan are expressing interest in Central Asia due to their origins. Many people from Central Asia are recruited by the Taliban and the Islamic State. For these gunmen, Afghanistan is a springboard for penetration into Central Asia countries either through terrorist raids or jointly with criminal structures involved in drug and weapon smuggling.

The gunmen are trying to control the region's shadow markets. The extremists have extended their influence to places of detention in Central Asia. Almost all prisons and colonies have "prison jamaats", with their cash register and a system of support for prisoners. However, their activities are gradually moving beyond prisons, and their influence is growing. In places of detention, terrorists are also gaining enormous strength.

Earlier in the global ranking of the fight against terrorism, Kazakhstan was classified as a country with an average risk index. Now, the state belongs to countries with a minor threat of terrorism. Objective statistics show a downward trend in cases in this category. In 2020, the courts of the state considered 33 criminal cases on terrorist crimes. In the mid-2000s, a significant number of criminal cases were considered against individuals who traveled to terrorist training centers in Dhaka, Ogru, Bangladesh, and several other countries. They also participated and recruited citizens of Kazakhstan. Having fallen under the influence of such individuals, adhering to the views of an unconventional branch of Islam – jihadist-Salafi – these citizens went to war zones.

The international community assessed Kazakhstan's efforts to return its citizens from conflict zones as a commendable act and example to follow for other states. Within the special operation, 595 Kazakh citizens have been returned to their homeland from Syria, most of whom were children. More than 400 children have been provided with possibilities to integrate into normal life through receiving education, communication, and other skills. The international organizations recommend certain improvements to be adopted to Kazakhstan's legislation on combating terrorism and extremism. It is also recommended to study the experience of other countries in the appropriate area. The anti-terrorism law of the People's Republic of China, for example, makes a great emphasis on the concept of

“extremism”. The current legislation of China regulates the work of the media to cover terrorist acts.

The full-fledged legislative framework on counter-terrorism has expanded the Chinese government's ability to establish appropriate international cooperation, information exchange, interagency contacts, and cooperation between law enforcement agencies.

Kazakhstan has a program on combating religious extremism and terrorism for 2018-2022 years. It is designed to strengthen the methods of combating destructive organizations, structure the actions of special services, and increase the effectiveness of the work carried out, including educational and informational ones. It is worth noting that the fight against terrorism and extremism is carried out by the special services and within the Network. According to the National Security Committee, in 2019, more than 620 thousand materials were blocked on the Kazakh Internet, which is of the nature of terrorist propaganda and inciting inter-religious strife. Since the beginning of the year, 1,295 accounts have been found distributing destructive materials, of which 1,056 have been blocked.

In Kazakhstan, almost all terrorist attacks are directed to the representatives of law enforcement agencies – 85% of the total number of victims are police, military, and special services. In this regard, special emphasis in the fight against extremism and terrorism is placed on training professional personnel in the National Security Committee and the Ministry of Internal Affairs, improving their skills and strengthening their methods of conducting counter-terrorism operations both on a national and local scale. For example, in October 2020, the operational headquarters for combating terrorism of Nur-Sultan held a planned anti-terrorist exercise “Nur – Sultan-Anti-Terror-2020”. The purpose of the training special operation was to work out the practical skills of the security forces in conditions as close to reality as possible.

The methodology for countering destructive religious organizations has four principles:

- * improving the system of response to acts of violence by destructive religious groups and minimizing their consequences;

* study of new methods for detecting and suppressing terrorist attacks and other terrorist and extremist activities;

* minimizing the impact of external factors on the radicalization of the population in Kazakhstan;

* educational and informational activities among the population of Kazakhstan, including the explanation of controversial points in religious writings, culture and terminology, the formation of immunity in society concerning destructive organizations.

Speech of Xing Guangcheng, Director, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, China

Global Counter-Terrorism under COVID-19 Calls for Multilateral Cooperation

COVID-19 is ravaging the world, and becomes a major challenge that the world should work together to deal with. However, while we are serious about the pandemic, we cannot relax our vigilance against terrorism worldwide. The terrorist incidents in France have already sounded the alarm and blown the whistle. Governments all over the world need to focus on prevention and containment against international terrorism, which is the public enemy of humanity. Therefore, international action against terrorism is a shared responsibility of all countries. Owing to the grim situation of global counter-terrorism in the pandemic and post-pandemic period, terrorism poses greater threats to us and we have to maintain a high level of vigilance and continue counter-terrorism efforts. We must take counter-terrorism as our main task for the future.

Countries Face Real Challenges of Terrorism under COVID-19

First, all the international terrorist forces and organizations are taking advantage of the unfavorable conditions created by the pandemic to advance their terrorist goals. Al-Qaida, the Islamic State, white supremacists and hate groups operate frequently around the world, taking advantage of local conflicts and governance failures in some countries and regions that lead to popular discontent to create chaos, spread extremist ideas and carry out terrorist acts.

Second, international terrorist forces have used digital technology, cyber-attacks and bioterrorism to wage many so-called "propaganda wars" during the pandemic, incite communal hatred and discontent against the governments, and wait for opportunities to launch terrorist attacks.

Third, as a result of the pandemic, people all over the world spend a lot of time online. Young people in particular regard the Internet as an important platform and means of socialization. This provides opportunities for terrorist organizations to inculcate extremes and violent thoughts through the Internet, and lure young people

into their fold. The social media, encrypted communications and dark web are being used by extremist and terrorist organizations to advance propaganda, by which they recruit new personnel, implement extremism education and plan terrorist attacks.

Fourth, the spread of COVID-19 has severely hit the economies of all countries and has heavily affected young people who work in temporary jobs and struggle to make ends meet. According to data released by the United Nations, nearly 77 percent of young people worldwide are engaged in temporary jobs. Once this huge population is hit and left without a livelihood, they are vulnerable to the influence of terrorists. The world economic crisis due to COVID-19 could bring new social and political discontent to the world and provide a breeding ground for terrorism.

Fifth, global terrorism has shown several new trends and characteristics: an increase in terrorist attacks with religious and ethnic overtones; an increase in cases of individual terrorism and lone wolf terrorism; a rapid expansion of new technological threats such as drones; and repeated terrorist attacks on civilian facilities.

Sixth, the Islamic State is still an international terrorist organization posing a global threat because the spillover effect that some terrorists have relocated to other countries. The treatment of those terrorists and their families, the reintegration of released individuals are complex and difficult to manage.

Global Counter-Terrorism Requires Multilateral Cooperation

Facing the new challenges of terrorism, the international community needs to work together. We must balance the fight against the epidemic and against terrorism, both require preventive policies, and international multilateral cooperation.

It is clear to say that no country can effectively deal with international terrorism on its own. The United States faces a real threat of terrorism, so does the Europe. The United Nations report shows that there were 119 terrorist attacks and thwarted attacks in the EU in 2019, most of which were stopped early. 1004 people were arrested on suspicion of involvement in terrorist attacks. 2020 is even less promising. In addition, the Middle East, Eurasia and Africa are also unsettled. China is also facing the real threat from international terrorism and extremism.

In the face of these situations, no country is immune to the threat of international terrorism, nor can any government or organization respond efficiently to these threats

on its own. Terrorism, like a virus, knows no borders. It needs multilateralism to find practical solutions to fight against the terrorism. All countries need to act jointly.

First, counter-terrorism operations should cooperate under the guidance of the relevant resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly and the Security Council.

Second, the international community needs to work closely to monitor evolving terrorist threats and trends.

Third, the international community needs to find an effective way to closely integrate the containment of the spread of COVID-19 with global counter-terrorism by a pragmatic approach, to effectively respond to the spread and impact of COVID-19 and terrorism worldwide.

Fourth, the international community needs to address the root causes of terrorism, achieve social-economic development through the promotion of employment, education, and health.

Fifth, the international community must abandon "double standards" in the fight against terrorism, and oppose the use of counter-terrorism under false slogans of human rights and democracy. This is not conducive to counter-terrorism cooperation, but only provides room for terrorist acts.

Sixth, China is a victim of international terrorism. Some of China's counter-terrorism practices and measures are worthy of emulation by other countries. At the same time, China will actively learn from effective counter-terrorism experiences of other countries.

Speech of Imtiaz Gul, Executive Director, Center for Research and Security Studies, Pakistan

Joint CT Challenges in the Post-Covid-19 Era

Year 2020 has been both remarkable as well as devastating because of COVID-19. The pandemic emerged as the existential threat to the entire world. Even the most modern, well-equipped economies are struggling to offset the fallout of the pandemic.

Another transborder threat that still looms large for countries such as China and Pakistan is proxy terrorism. The reason is simple: these two countries refuse to bend to the dictation by the United States. Secondly, these two countries also refuse to give in to the high-handed attitude of India – a common neighbor to both. And since both joined hands in the landmark CPEC under the promising Belt and Road Initiative, the two have become a specific target of both the US and India. Officials in Washington and New Delhi have regularly questioned the CPEC partnership and raised unnecessary and misplaced alarm. Even during the world's months of the pandemic both countries remained busy in anti-China propaganda. The US against China and India against Pakistan. President Donald Trump upped the ante by indulging in a tariffs' war against China. He also attempted to, and denigrated China for COVID-19 outbreak. But much more alarming was what was playing out behind the scenes. And this is what represents a joint challenge to us all.

On November 5, US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo made an unusual, though not unexpected announcement:

“I hereby revoke the designation of the Eastern Turkistan Islamic Movement, also known as ETIM, as a terrorist organization”, Pompeo said in a brief October 20 directive that was made public on Thursday, a week after he signed new strategic security cooperation deals with India that coincided with the 2+2 Indo-US dialogue at New Delhi.

Quite strange that the delisting – came about a week after the October 29 2+2 US-India Dialogue at New Delhi, where US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and Defense secretary Mark Esper minced no words on who the Indo-US cooperation was directed at. “Our leaders and citizens see with increasing clarity that Chinese

Communist Party is no friend to democracy, rule of law, transparency... I'm glad to say India and US are taking all steps to strengthen cooperation against all threats and not just those posed by CCP," he said.

Ironically, the George W. Bush administration had designated ETIM as a terror outfit in 2003, and also co-sponsored a UN resolution on the same subject. On the occasion, US officials had used the official Chinese literature to justify the designation, and had blamed ALL the violence in Xinjiang in previous ten years on ETIM.

Pompeo's announcement carried two important messages: Regardless of who the US president of the US is, the deep state within the US – CIA – would continue its dirty geo-political games beyond the US borders as part of block politics. And hence Pompeo made the announcement, although such policy decisions are not made by an outgoing administration.

James Millward, a US multiple author of books on Xinjiang and China, called the delisting a good move but quipped that by "sneaking the de-listing out today, when US is preoccupied with election, is no coincidence," Pompeo has sent a clear message to Beijing.

Second important element was about proxy terrorist groups. The fact that the East Turkistan Islamic Movement (ETIM) was removed from the list of designated terrorist organizations sent out a strong indication on the beginning of a new phase of intense cold war with China via Afghanistan with ETIM as an instrument of this proxy war.

A recent UN security council report speaks of at least 500 ETIM terrorists of the group operating in Afghanistan, primarily in Badakhshan, while US officials estimated those numbers at around 100.

"Weaponization of the counterterrorism designations in the "new cold war era" as an instrument of instability in target countries.

Pakistan has also faced similar weaponization of proxy groups for violence in its territory.

On December 9, 2020 the EU-based watchdog DisinfoLab uncovered an Indian disinformation network, operating since 2005, tasked solely with promoting India and damaging the reputations of nations such as Pakistan and China.

EU DisinfoLab's investigation unearthed several websites and UN-accredited NGOs either belonging or tied directly to the Delhi-based Srivastava Group. Using this network of fake NGOs and news sites this operation vociferously lobbied in favor of India and against Pakistan, holding demonstrations, courting European politicians, and holding press conferences and delivering speeches – often before the UN itself – on behalf of the several UN-accredited NGOs it concealed itself behind.

Latest information from the Pakistani and Afghan border areas suggests that following the reunion of a number of terrorist groups under the Tehreek Taliban Pakistan umbrella in eastern Afghan provinces of Paktia and Paktika, a number of Al-Qaeda, Daesh, IMU and ETIM terrorists have also taken refuge with these TTP terrorists.

ETIM's presence in northern Afghanistan as well as in Eastern Afghanistan should be a huge worry for all of us because all these terrorist outfits constitute the primary element of sponsored proxy wars in the region.

This makes the anti-terrorism into our common goal and necessitates regional security and intelligence cooperation. All victims of proxy war must join hands and share big data intelligence cooperation to defeat terrorists and the designs of their sponsors. It is a war that needs to be fought not only on ground through intelligence-based operations but also through the cyber space.

China and Pakistan must brace for a new round of intense proxy war in the region. Pompeo made it quite obvious (in the aforementioned statement) without uttering a single word in support of Kashmiris under Indian occupation or the raging wave of discrimination against Muslims in Europe.

Speech of Ansyad Mbai, Former Head of the National Counter-Terrorism Agency, Indonesia

A. The Terrorism Situation in Indonesia

Since the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center in 2001, Indonesia has been victim to numerous terrorist attacks. Some of the major attacks were: the first Bali bombing in 2002, the J.W. Marriott Hotel bombing in 2003, the Australian Embassy bombing in 2004, and the second Bali bombing in 2005. These terrorist atrocities killed hundreds and injured many more. Even earlier, in 1999 and 2000, a series of attacks and church bombings took place in Indonesia during the Christmas holiday season. There have also been religious and communal conflicts in Ambon and Poso, in which radical groups exacerbated the conflict through provocation, by using extremist religious ideology.

There is no doubt that the group responsible for those terrorist attacks was the al Jamaah al Islamiyah (JI), a group motivated by radical religious ideology. The JI group was inspired by and linked to the Al-Qaidah terrorist organization. However, their radical religious conviction comes from a narrow-minded and shallow interpretation of Islam. By using this sort of radical religious ideology, extremist groups propagate hate and animosity among religions and among nations in order to attract followers. At the same time, they call for revenge for perceived injustices, employing force and terror. Their calls to action are the opposite of the tenets of all religions that resist violence, including Islam.

A string of investigations and court proceedings have proven that many of these terrorist attacks in Indonesia bear the hallmarks of the JI group. When police investigation exposed the JI network, it reorganized itself into to small cells, such as Jamaah Ansharud Tauhid (JAT), Jamaah Ansharud Daulah (JAD), and some other small cells. These cells operated autonomously, but they were still affiliated with Al-Qaidah. Since 2018 the police have been able to arrest about 1,500 terrorist suspects. Of the 1,044 suspects which have been convicted since the time of the first Bali bombing until now, 618 have served out their sentences and been released, and 210 are still facing trial.

When Al-Qaidah was decimated around the time of the death of Osama bin Laden in 2011, these terrorist groups continued their recruiting, training and fundraising activities. After this came the rise of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), led by Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. All those terrorist groups linked to Al-Qaidah shifted to ISIS, and the frequency of their operations increased. About 1,000 Indonesians traveled to Iraq and Syria and joined ISIS as foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs). About 80 of them died during fighting there. About 70 of those FTFs returned to Indonesia. Turkey deported 539 of them back to Indonesia because they were planning to join ISIS forces. This situation created a second wave for terrorist groups in Indonesia, enabling them to carry out more attacks.

During the pandemic, on November 27, 2020, in Sigi Regency of Central Sulawesi, a terrorist group, beheaded a family of four and set fire to six houses and a local worship facility. It is believed that their motive was revenge for the recent arrest and shooting of two MIT members by the police, as well as to restock their supplies.

The East Indonesia Mujahidin (MIT) group in the Poso area is believed to be responsible for the attack, and their leader, Ali Kalora, was identified by one witness. The extreme nature of the attack is similar to the violent tactics used by ISIS. The most recent development of 2020 is the capture of Zulkarnaen, a Commander of the Jamaah Islamiyah who had been a fugitive since the first Bali Bombing. He had been recruiting and training young militants to become foreign fighters, sending them to fight in Syria with Jabat Al Nusra. He has sent 65 fighters to Syria since 2014. Fifteen of them died there, while the other fifty returned to Indonesia.

Twenty of those fifty returning fighters have been arrested. They have been recruiting and training militants in Indonesia in order to carry out more terrorist acts. The police's counter-terrorism unit has been able to expose their plans. They have confiscated firearms which they were planning to use, discovered their weapons-making facility and bomb-making materials, and detected their attack preparations, including the surveying of their targets.

Zulkarnaen and 22 members of his group were arrested at their hideout in East Lampung on December 10, 2020. They were flown to Jakarta on December 17, 2020,

and placed into custody at a special terrorist detention facility, to await further processing for court trials.

A. Objective of the Terrorists

Their objective is to establish this caliphate in Indonesia and replace the current national government and political system with one based on Islamic law. As Indonesia does not recognize such a system, they consider the country to be run by an un-Islamic system. To reach this goal, they plan to eliminate the government and those groups which disagree with them.

B. Countermeasures

The Indonesian government has set two policies in order to deal with terrorism. The first is the use of law enforcement strategies, because terrorism is a crime which must be taken up through the legal justice system. We do not take a military approach in this regard. To support these measures, Indonesia has amended the 2003 Anti-Terrorism Law to carry out more effective law enforcement activity and to be more proactive in preventing terrorist activity.

The second policy consists of prevention measures. Terrorist ideology is counteracted through deradicalization and counter-radicalization efforts. Deradicalization efforts focus on terrorists who are in police custody or have been imprisoned, as well as ex-terrorists and their families, with the aim of getting them to stop committing acts of violence. The goal of counter-radicalization efforts is to address the broader community so that the public is not influenced by radical terrorist ideology. Counter-radicalization efforts require a long-term strategy, because it is not easy to affect people's thinking. This needs a comprehensive government approach and efforts to work with Islamic-based civil society and religious teachers, preachers, and propagators. All countries need to cooperate to overcome radical ideology through soft approaches. This is because the hard approach, especially through the use of military force, is not a good response to the problem.

A large measure of our success has been the result of international and regional cooperation between law enforcement, intelligence and security agencies. We have benefited from training and effective capacity building programs, strengthened networking, and established excellent intelligence exchanges. Such cooperation has

led to our being able to stop plans of the JI group, arrest suspects, and capture its key masterminds.

Thank you.

Speech of Ammar Awad, Deputy Director of the Department of International Organization and Conferences, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Syria

Thank you, Mr. President, for giving me the floor,

At the outset, I would like to thank the President and the Team of the China Institute of International Studies for organizing this timely and important webinar on "Joint Responses to Terrorism under the New Circumstances", and I also would like to thank the Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs, and all Officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the people's Republic of China, and previous speakers from our friendly countries.

As all of you already mentioned, we have to admit that The International Community is facing a crisis like no other since the second world war. Despite the changes due to COVID-19, the threats posed by terrorism still exist throughout the world. COVID-19 has caused severe disruptions to health systems, economies around the world, and laid bare profound fragilities in our world today.

The international community has responded to fight this virus including The General Assembly of United Nations which adopted resolution on Global solidarity to fight COVID-19, and announcing a day 27/12 to highlight the importance, and partnerships against epidemics. Security Council of UN, WHO, and most of the regional groups (G77 and china and NAM) are going at the same line. Mr. Guterres, the SG of UN, said in July 2020 in virtual meeting on "the requirements of COVID-19 on the efforts of combating terrorism": *It is too early to fully assess the implications of COVID-19 on terrorism landscape. But we know that ISIL, Al-Qaida their regional affiliates seek to exploit divisions, local conflicts, governance failures and grievances to advance their objectives. ISIL is continuing its efforts to reassert itself in Iraq and the S.A.R While thousands of foreign terrorist fighters battle in the region seek to engage in conflict elsewhere, or linger in temporary detention while their family members remain stranded.*

Counter terrorism Executive Directorate published an analytical report on the possible short and long -tem effects of Covid-19 on combating terrorism.

Mr. Voronkov, Under Secretary General of Un-the head of UN Office for

Countering-Terrorism, said "*COVID-19 is the biggest threat to the world, and a test for the international solidarity. Terrorists will take advantage of this situation, so we cannot stop our efforts to combat terrorism*".

The Pandemic has also highlighted vulnerabilities to new and emerging forms of terrorism, such as misuse of digital technology, cyber attacks and bioterrorism.

With all respect to what has been already mentioned above, we still believe the weakness of the UN efforts on combating terrorism in general due to the double standards and polarizing policies imposed by the Governments of certain countries that wield political and financial influence at the UN.

Mr. President,

Since the beginning of the pandemic, all preventive measures have been undertaken in Syria to respond adequately to its impact on Syrian citizens, including through cooperation with several international organizations. However, humanitarian challenges caused by terrorism and unilateral coercive measures, were negatively impacted my Government's ability to respond to the pandemic and the implementation of national response plans.

Allow me, Mr. President, to set out some of national comments of Syria on this issue:

1. Despite the tragic situation resulting from the virus, and after 10 years of the crisis in my country, we continue to suffer from crimes that have been committed by terrorist groups supported by some countries in flagrant violation of the UN Charter, International Law, and the security Council resolutions on combating Terrorism . These terrorist groups have hindered the right of civilians to health, they blocked access to medicine and medical technologies, equipment, and supplies which are extremely needed during the COVID-19 time.

2. The Governments of certain countries bear the total responsibility for the crimes that have been committed by Terrorist Armed Groups, which persistently invest, arms, and fund terrorists groups such as "Islamic Turkistan party", al-Qaida and "ISIL" and other associated groups, entities and Individuals designated as terrorist groups according the list of security, with view to intervening in the internal affairs of Syria and occupied part of its territory.

3. The negative role played by the governments of some countries that have perpetuated the suffering of the Syrian people, including women and children. Many of these people remain stranded in overcrowded camps in Syria specially in "al hol" and al "rukban" with lack of basic needs and services, and you can imagine the situation of this people at the COVID-19 time.

4. The issue of the Foreign military forces remain present in Syria under the pretext of combating terrorism, without resolution from Security Council. They were not invited by, and have not cooperated with the government of Syria. That situation constitutes an open act of aggression and occupation, from namely "Israel", Turkey, United states of America and a violation of the resolutions of the SC concerning counter-terrorism and the situation in Syria, all of which reaffirm the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of the Syrian Arab republic.

5. The American Administration and its partners in the European Union continue the policies of Economic terrorism and collective punishment of the Syrian people through the unilateral coercive measures that they impose on my country. These measures aim to suffocate civilians and deprive them of food, medicine, basic medical equipment and fuel, and to prevent reconstruction and return of the refugees and displaced persons "IDPs", in great disregard for international law and the charter of the UN, and the calls made by SG and senior officials of the UN and human rights Council about the need to lift these measures, especially in light of the challenges posed by the COVID-19 and the need to respond to it.

Mr. President,

Like the virus, terrorism doesn't respect national borders. It affects all nations and can only be defeated collectively. So, we must harness the power of multilateralism to find practical solutions for combating terrorism at the COVID-19 time. We need to keep up the momentum in the fight against terrorism. This includes continuing to invest in national, regional and Global counter terrorism capabilities. We need to closely monitor evolving terrorist threats and evolving trends and be innovative in our responses, that means ensuring the technology tools and concepts to stay ahead of terrorists. we need to tackle the spread of terrorist narratives through pandemic sensitive, holistic approaches. Psycho-social, economic and political stresses

associated with COVID-19 have risen dramatically.

Mr. President,

I conclude by highlighting that the task and prerogative of National Governments whether or of concerted UN action. And to ensure that the S.A.R remain fully committed to advancing our common struggle against terrorism and upholding our common values according to the UN charter. SC resolutions on combating terrorism, global compact on combating terrorism, as well as the global strategy, in the context of national sovereignty.

I trust that this webinar and this interactive discussions are vital for preventing terrorism and it will provide a valuable platform to discuss the strategic and practical challenges of countering terrorism in a global pandemic environment.

Thank you.

Speech of Gu Liyan, Research Fellow, Department of Central-Asia Studies, Academy of Social Sciences of Xinjiang, China

Achievements and Reflections of Counter-Terrorism and De-Radicalization in Xinjiang

I am from the Academy of Social Sciences in Xinjiang. Today I would like to introduce some results of counter-terrorism and de-radicalization in Xinjiang, and share my thoughts on this issue.

Since 1990, violent and terrorist activities have been sporadic in Xinjiang and entered a period of high frequency in 2014, causing a large number of innocent casualties and serious damage to the basic human rights, including the lives, property, and freedom of religion of all ethnic groups in Xinjiang.

In the face of the severe situation, to maintain social stability and protect the lives and property of the people of all ethnic groups, Xinjiang has taken resolute actions to fight terrorism and extremism, and achieved certain results:

First, since 2014, Xinjiang has knocked down 1,588 terrorist groups, arrested 12,995 violent terrorists, seized 2,052 explosive devices, and investigated 4,858 cases of illegal religious activities involving 30,645 people. Violent and terrorist activities in Xinjiang have been effectively curbed and have not occurred for four consecutive years. In the past, when we went to Xinjiang for grassroots investigation, we encountered many strange phenomena, such as weddings without singing and dancing, and funerals without crying. But now when we go there again, the situation is completely different. If you encounter a wedding convoy, you may stand still and watch the lively scene of singing and dancing. On holidays, the village will hold some activities, for example, young people may wear their self-designed clothes and walk the runway to give people a fashion show. People may also get together, singing, dancing Maxrap, and playing the instruments. The life there has returned to what it should be.

Second, "Xinjiang is a good place," and this is also my personal feelings. In

recent years, as the situation in Xinjiang becomes more stable, more tourists come there. In 2016, Xinjiang received 81.02 million tourists, and in 2019, this number exceeded 200 million for the first time, reaching 213 million. This rapid growth stems from people's confidence in Xinjiang's stability and the yearning for Xinjiang's beautiful scenery. I went to Hetian at the end of October. It was already 11 p.m. when I was wandering around the crowded pedestrian mall and eating in a small roadside restaurant. The night markets in Hetian are very lively. Various local specialties make you linger. The graceful singing and dancing performances were mind-blowing. The enthusiasm of local people has ignited tourists' passion. Many people have come to Xinjiang several times and never feel bored.

Third, while effectively containing and combating terrorism and extremism, Xinjiang has witnessed considerable progress in economic and social development. From 2014 to 2019, the GDP of Xinjiang increased from 919.59 billion yuan to 135.71 billion yuan, with an average annual growth rate of 7.2 percent. During the same period, the per capita disposable income of Xinjiang residents increased by 9.1 percent annually. The outstanding problems of "two no worries and three guarantees" are fundamentally resolved. In recent years, through various studies and training, many farmers have changed their fate with knowledge and created a better future with skills. After training, Atawula in Hetian City opened a ramen restaurant named "Hope" and recruited 16 local people who had received training. The ramen shop mainly sells ramen at 12 yuan each, and 400-500 bowls are sold every day, plus other operating income, so the monthly income of the employees there is between 2000-3500 yuan. Ayinisha Tuerxun and her husband Kuerban Kasimu in Yutian County are now working in a local tea factory. The couple earns about 6000 yuan a month, and they have completely got rid of poverty.

There are many such examples in Xinjiang. More and more people there have received education and training and become self-supporting entrepreneurs and business operators, some of which have even obtained technology patents and become well-known senior professionals.

Fourth, Xinjiang has got fruitful achievements in cooperation with countries along the Belt and Road. Although the economic growth rate of 2020 slows down due

to COVID-19, the traffic volume of China-Europe Railway Express has witnessed significant growth. By November 5, 2020, China-Europe Railway Express has run more than 10,000 trips this year, reaching 10,180, and carried 927,000 TEUs of containers, an increase of approximately 94 percent year-on-year. The smooth operation of the China-Europe Railway Express indicates that in the new international economic and trade environment, we can still strengthen regional security and economic cooperation by relying on infrastructure and transportation networks, and by which we can even provide strength for both the fight against the pandemic and the economic cooperation.

With the help of regional cooperation projects such as China-Europe Railway Express, from January to October 2020, the trade volume of import and export between China's Xinjiang and Kazakhstan achieved a positive growth of 5.4 percent, of which Xinjiang's imports from Kazakhstan increased by 20.6 percent year-on-year. Economic and trade cooperation has created conditions for the stability and recovery of the regional economy. Earlier this month, China set up a key pilot zone for development and opening-up in Tacheng, Xinjiang. China's determination and confidence in strengthening the opening up of border regions are very much clear. We hope that through high-quality opening up, we can boost cooperation among countries along the Belt and Road, achieve the goal of stable development and win-win cooperation, and contribute to the building of a community with a shared future.

In the past two decades, Xinjiang has suffered a lot from terrorism. Fighting against terrorism and extremism is not only a global issue but also a tough problem for the whole world. Carrying out de-radicalization in accordance with the law and effectively curbing the growth and spread of religious extremism are important measures taken by Xinjiang to fight against terrorism and extremism. Through years of efforts, the public's awareness of the danger of religious extremism has increased significantly. While fighting against extremism in accordance with the law, Xinjiang has also increased its efforts to protect legitimate religious activities.

Combating terrorism and maintaining long-term social stability are in the interests of the people in Xinjiang, the region and even the international community. Xinjiang's counter-terrorism operation is an important part of international

counter-terrorism. Xinjiang has contributed its strength and wisdom to the international counter-terrorism efforts. In the future, Xinjiang will continue to take the fight against terrorism and extremism as an important task and keep working on it with great perseverance.

Speech of Sayed Ghoneim, Chairman of Institute for Global Security and Defense Affairs, UAE

Introduction

It is doubtless that the most important regional rivalry in the Middle East is between the two regional powers: Turkey and Iran. Each of the two countries has a major regional strategy which extends out other regions. Significant activities of both countries are traced in the Middle East, North Africa, Horn of Africa, the Balkans, Central Asia besides others; not to mention the Iranian incursion into South America which is the backyard of the United States.

There is no doubt that terrorism is a threat to any society as it undermines peace, security and the most basic human rights of secured life and sustainable development. No country or region is immune to its impact. It is neither a new phenomenon nor limited to a particular region, nationality, or ideology. Terrorist groups, such as the Islamic State of Iraq and Sham (ISIS), al-Qaeda, the Boko Haram group and others, are composed of many nationalities and sects. Nothing justifies terrorism, but we also have to acknowledge that it does not occur in a vacuum. Unstable societies contribute to its causes.

Definitions and concepts of terrorism

There are many definitions of terrorism including Oxford dictionary which defines it as follows: “The unlawful use of violence and intimidation, especially against civilians, in the pursuit of political aims”.

Although the United Nations has not yet reached an internationally recognized definition, it continues its attempts until the Security Council passed resolution 1566 (2004) on terrorism, which reads as follows criminal acts, including against civilians, committed with the intent to cause death or serious bodily injury, or taking of hostages, with the purpose to provoke a state of terror among the general public or a group of persons or individuals, or to intimidate a population in order to compel a Government or an international organization to do or to abstain from doing any act.

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) has defined terrorism as "The unlawful use or threatened use of force or violence, instilling fear and terror, against individuals or property in an attempt to coerce or intimidate governments or societies,

or to gain control over a population, to achieve political, religious or ideological objectives”.

Main root causes of the challenges confronting the Arab region societies

1. Internal Causes:

- a. Bad governments, including failed governments, corrupt governments, or both.
- b. Neglecting scientific standards in all fields because of the inability of the nation, government and people, to understand and apply international social, institutional, scientific and ethical standards, systems and laws, or to crystallize them in proportion to its conditions, culture and society. Instead, it applies arbitrary interpretations of those norms and concepts in keeping with prevailing cultures.

2. Regional Reasons:

- a. Regional conspiracy.
- b. Negative regional impact.

3. External Causes:

- a. Foreign intervention in the internal affairs of the countries of the region, whether without their will to achieve specific interests and goals, or with their will to change or develop their political, economic, security and social situations without counting the cultural nature of those countries and their capabilities for these changes.
- b. Regional isolation.

Main root causes of terrorism

Despite the multiplicity and the overlap of the root causes of extremism and terrorism, it can be summed up in social, economic, political and security reasons, as well as international and regional external causes.

From my point of view, the social causes are the increasing demographic pressures, severe deterioration in the provision of public services, the hostile legacy of injustice, the political and institutional marginalization, the deterioration of education and scientific research, the improper understanding and application of religion and its teachings, the spread of extremist ideas in prisons; as a result of violations, torture and deliberate humiliation, the wrong and false inherited cultures and ideologies. Other causes include misusing the social media which expose young people to messages of incitement and extremism, the illegal migration, the movement of displaced persons

and refugees in an unorganized or controlled manner, the growing media platforms that incite extremism and terrorism, and the breadth of cultural and civilizational gap between the western countries and other countries in general, and the Arab and Islamic countries in particular.

Economic causes can be summed up in the lack of economic and social opportunities, the variation of economic development rates, the continuous and random flight of creators and productive individuals, poverty and severe economic decline, concentrating the state's resources in certain institutions and the widespread of unemployment.

The political and security causes include bad governments, the violation of human rights, absence of rule of law, arbitrary and unjust enforcement of laws against the weak, with the exception of special interest groups and businessmen, empowering the security agency to become a state within a state, the growing divisions among elites, leading to a split between ruling elites and the institutions. They also include the intervention of other countries or external political actors, and their insistence to apply freedoms and democracy mechanisms holistically in societies suffering from conflicts and inherited misconceptions using the same thought and mechanisms applied in stable and culturally aware communities, loss of the state legitimacy, proliferation of weapons and world trafficking, as well as civil wars and extended disputes.

Moreover, **the external causes**, international and regional, include the conflicts of interest to become influential globally and regionally, the failure to reach fair and decisive solutions to conflicts and extended issues in the region, the insistence on the implementation of the policy of double standards mostly by the superpowers, the support of some countries to internationally banned terrorist groups, insisting on hosting, protecting and supporting extremists, as well as wrong strategies to combat violent extremism.

Ramifications

There is no doubt that extremism and terrorism have a profound impact on the countries of the region, the North Mediterranean countries and even all over the world. There are (67) terrorist organizations and groups that have been banned

internationally until the end of 2014, including (32) terrorist groups in the Middle East, of which (18) have been banned since 2014., Many of them have declared allegiance to “Dae’esh”; thus, undermining peace and security, sustainable development and brain influence by targeting modern education as a major threat to the ideologies of violent extremism, the increasing number of displaced persons and refugees, and illegal migration, and the spread of cross-border crimes.

On the other hand, terrorist attacks may randomly impact the European demographics due to illegal immigration and exodus of refugees, and the increasing freedom-restricting security measures both for residents of the Middle East and North Mediterranean countries, or for those coming to them, and thus threatening the values and principles of tolerance and freedom, the matter which may force the European countries to tighten measures against Muslim minority, paving the way for recruiting European and American Muslims by the terrorist groups.

Also, the terrorist attacks have an impact on the economic growth which is based on openness and freedom of movement in the European Union (EU) states, in addition to possible counter-reaction by some extreme rightists in Europe, which makes the matter worse, particularly that some countries have a tendency towards isolationism to avoid the negative impact of terrorism.

Main good practices to overcome the root cause and ramifications of terrorism

1. Social Practices:

a. Make sure that local communities have access to basic services, and bolster employment and development through launching economic initiatives.

b. Support and enhance rehabilitation and reintegration programs

c. Inculcate humanitarian values in the minds of all segments of society through education and media, paying efforts to development of a decent life among the most important priorities of the government.

d. Putting clear policies and procedures giving first priorities to education, health, research and creativity as pillars of the advancing civic society.

e. Integrating the marginalized minorities (ethnic, religious, etc.), allowing for their active participation in society by including them in governmental and security positions.

f. Establish an independent institute responsible for adopting innovators and talented artists giving them open opportunities of participation with creativity and arts.

g. Improve the means to empower women and youth in the society.

2. Economic Practices:

a. Implementation of combined educational, employment, and financial strategies to guarantee equity and equality in job opportunities, remuneration for work and jobs in accordance with credentials and expertise without exception.

b. Eradication of corruption within government institutions, elimination of bribery, nepotism and influence peddling through the application of strict measures of transparency.

c. Focusing on research and development and encouraging creativity, providing the outstanding opportunities for creatives and inventors in all fields.

3. Political and Security Practices:

a. The separation of powers in a democratic state (Legislative or Parliamentary, Judiciary and Executive Authorities), the purpose of the set constitutional separation of state power.

b. A strict automation imposing political transparency and accountability on the ruling faction to ban corruption, and to ensure that relatives and family members of the president and his government officials are not involved or interfering in their responsibilities or gaining benefits from exploiting their influence.

c. Eradication to the prevailing practice of inheritance of political jobs, government offices, influential diplomatic posts and joining the judiciary.

d. Reconstitution and reforming the security institutions such that they apply the rule of law and serve the citizens of the country.

e. Establishing/ Concentrating on intensive training to social police concerning human rights and dignity.

f. Administrative restructuring of independent regulatory bodies, improving their performance and suitability to ensure disproving of corruption and fair implementation of the justice and the rule of law.

g. Empowerment of women and youth by increasing their quotas in the

Parliament and higher governmental positions.

h. Putting prompt justice into force, with highest priorities to the cases of the mainly political and administrative corrupted figures, marginalizing them away from the political arena, keeping the experienced figures known with impartiality and integrity to support youth empowerment administratively and politically.

i. Encouraging people to practice their political rights; not allowing political abduction, violence and torture.

j. Ensure equality of all state intuitions; no privilege to any institution comparing with others.

k. Increase capacities to monitor the cyber space

4. Research and Information Sharing Practices:

a. Establish effective communication channels with the aim of encouraging and improving, where possible, information sharing and cooperation between government and non- government actors, including academics and private sector researchers that operate at a local and regional levels.

b. Encourage information sharing through the increased involvement of regional and international institutions.

c. Acknowledge and consult Non-Governmental Organizations or Civil Society Organizations as a relevant source of knowledge and on-the-ground expertise.

d. Intelligence sharing should be prioritized, encouraged and facilitated among national governmental agencies.

e. Encourage the creation, maintenance and use of regional and international databases.

f. Support the further development of private and public-sector partnerships to assist in combatting the nexus, including, but not limited to, the field of financial investigation.

Speech of Chuah Teong Ban, Director-General, Southeast Asia Regional Center of Counter-Terrorism, Malaysia

It is encouraging to see a number of concerns and issues being discussed in today's discussion. Prosecutorial and law enforcement initiatives must remain at the forefront of the struggle against terrorism and violent extremism.

However, I would like to use this opportunity to emphasize and stress the importance and need for collaborating on the 'soft approach' aspect of our efforts. By tackling their narratives and propaganda, we can prevent their damaging influence to reach vulnerable populations.

To this end, we must continue working at developing effective counter-narratives and empowering credible voices against violent extremism in tandem with hard approaches, to reach the hearts and minds. We must find new ways to strengthen and develop the strategies to push boundaries, something which violent extremist groups are constantly working on and improving.

My organization, Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism, or SEARCCT, was initially established in 2003 to help build capacity and conduct research as that can help to support Anti-Terrorism efforts in our region and beyond. Over the years, we began to see the increasing importance of confronting, disrupting and strengthening the resilience against the ideologies and influence of terrorist and violent extremist groups.

We have worked with bright, creative, and, most importantly, credible young people to help come up with positive messages. With messaging that are relevant to the culture of their generation, their words and ideas, it can resonate powerfully towards the youth who is, a significant target group that violent extremists aim to influence. This approach has the potential to be the most effective in countering violent extremist propaganda.

In the past few years, my organization has also started recognizing the value of working with civil society organizations (CSO), another group that is credible when speaking to those vulnerable to violent extremist propaganda. We have also advocated other public sector agencies to work closely with civil society, and not to mention the

private sector to provide relevant expertise to empower those involved in messaging against violent extremism.

Working with former extremists to develop uniquely credible narratives is also something that we have embarked on, our recent partnership with the Prison's Department of Malaysia. In the project, we documented interviews of those who have been, or even are still being, incarcerated for terrorism-related offences. It would have been such a shame if we left such valuable perspectives of remorse and repentance to remain untapped. The ex-terrorists were willing to share their experiences for a greater good.

Excellencies, distinguished participants, such soft approach is something that would benefit immensely by forging regional strategic cooperation. Not only that, our local and regional knowledge can help develop effective narratives, something that must always be tailored and contextualized.

But all these planning and strategies must be translated to action in order to have any real impact. We must act, carefully but decisively, in order to counter the messages and ideas that lead to terrorism and violent extremism. In this respect, my organization would like to cooperate and collaborate, especially with those within our region, to help us reach our goal of peace and security for all.

Speech of Khidoiatzoda Komroni Dzhamolidin, Deputy Head of the Department for the Study of Regional Security Problems, Center for Strategic Studies under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan

Security challenges and threats in Central Asian region

Dear colleagues,

Thanks a lot to organizers of this very important conference in such difficult for all of us time.

Today the entire world community faces global security challenges and threats, which prompts us to seek new ways and means of confronting them. Ensuring peace and stability and reliable security is one of the key factors and an important condition for advancing the creative process of sustainable development at the international and regional levels. We are convinced that our conference will become a platform that will allow us to coordinate the points of contact, which will bring practical results in the future.

In today's environment, no state alone can succeed in combating with terrorism, extremism and other threats to our common security and stability. In these conditions, cooperation and coordination of efforts within the framework of regional military-political blocs, including the SCO, CSTO and bilateral cooperation becomes especially relevant.

In our opinion, the key external challenges and threats to security in our region are attempts of external interference to the internal affairs, biological wars, ongoing military and political conflict of international scale in Afghanistan, international terrorism and extremism, illicit trafficking of drugs, psychotropic substances and weapons, organized transnational crime, illegal migration and others. In this case, it should be noted that challenges and threats are constantly changing and becoming more complex, which also complicates the task of ensuring collective security. In this context, it must be noted that challenges and threats are constantly changing and complex, which also complicates the challenges of collective security.

In this context, for a detailed analysis of the situation it is necessary to focus on the following important points.

1. Challenges and threats emanating from Afghanistan. The ongoing military-political conflict in Afghanistan and the hybrid war in this country, which has acquired an international dimension, threaten the security and stability of our countries. The complicated situation in Afghanistan serves as a hotbed of such challenges and threats as international terrorism and extremism, organized transnational crime, drug trafficking, illegal migration and others. Proceeding from this, our state in partnership with other members of SCO, CSTO, are interested in the stable and creative situation in Afghanistan. In this connection, it is necessary to activate a unified and coordinated policy in this direction, especially via “SCO-Afghanistan” Contact Group. The Afghan conflict, which continues more than 40 years, has not found its solution by military means. So, this conflict can be resolved only by political and diplomatic ways.

2. Activity of international extremist and terrorist groups. Undoubtedly, this threat causes concern of all countries of our region without exception and remains the main security challenges. The practice shows that despite the difficult situation, these groups continue their inhuman acts.

3. Without any doubt, the COVID-19 pandemic is the most dangerous modern problem. The events of the past year once again confirm the seriousness and relevance of biological security threats. The coronavirus pandemic calls into question the sustainable development of our countries.

4. Challenges and threats emanating from virtual space. Virtual space has opened up a new breeding ground for the recruitment of young people of Central Asian states into the ranks of destructive extremist and terrorist groups. The development of information technology, along with opportunities for political, economic and social progress, has also created a platform for various forces to act with a criminal element. Electronic resources can be used by terrorist and extremist groups to practically spread their criminal ideologies. Given the great importance of information and information technology in hybrid wars and attempts to destabilize countries and regions, it is necessary to intensify cooperation in this area. The coronavirus pandemic has accelerated the process of citizens turning to virtual space, especially social networks. It is necessary to correlate the legislation base of SCO member states in the

sphere of information and communication technologies for further improvement in order to transform them according to the requirements of rapidly changing modern realities.

5. As we know, various sources are used today to finance terrorism, including drug trafficking, human trafficking and smuggling of cultural and historical monuments and valuables. Money from drug trafficking is one of the main sources of financial support for terrorism. Realizing the global danger of drug trafficking, Tajikistan for a long period of time has been making efforts to combat this dangerous phenomenon and has gained a lot of experience in this field.

The challenges and threats we have indicated require constant monitoring. On the basis of the above, we propose:

1. Strengthen practical cooperation between scientific and research institutions of SCO states;

2. To develop a mechanism of cooperation between SCO member states in the field of biological security and complete withdrawal of foreign biological laboratories from the member states;

3. Establish a Cyber Security Academy to train national specialists in this field. At the same time, organize advanced training courses for specialists in this sphere in SCO states and third, partner countries;

4. Strengthen military and technical cooperation for reliable protection of the Tajik-Afghan border.

Thanks a lot for your attention!

Speech of Mohammed Abas Mohammad, Political Analyst, Ministry of Information, Syria

First of all, I would like to greet all participants and thank the China Institute of International Studies for hosting the conference.

If the **war is an extension of policy**, then terrorism is an extension of an aggressive policy aimed at forcing the opponent to submit to the will of the stronger party.

It is worth noting in context that terrorism is not a cause, but rather a result of investing extremist ideology produced by war-making laboratories and modern terror media outlets that adopt vile methods in order to destroy the moral controls of targeted societies within a framework of new generations of advanced zero-cost wars.

This is what Dwight David Eisenhower summed up in his directives to his Secretary of State, Jean Foster Dulles in 1957, saying *“we should do everything possible to stress the holy war aspects”*. With the beginning of the third millennium, it was believed that the next era would be free of wars, but the world was surprised by the events of 9/11, and then followed by a series of wars that suggest that there are those who are strengthening the war industry. Recently, American leaders exchanged accusations of forming terrorist organizations in the region, such as Al-Qaeda, ISIS, Al-Nusra and the Turkistan Party.

What happened in my country, Syria, and what it endured during the last ten years of the most heinous crimes under the name of the “peaceful revolution” and “moderate opposition” is the best evidence of that. In other words, the globalized terrorist is a terrorist in France, Nigeria, Libya or Nagorno-Karabakh, but such a terrorist in Syria is a “moderate opposition”. However, with all regret, and despite all the terrorist practices we have been suffering from, the states of the world still differ on a clear and specific definition of terrorism.

The development of the globalization of terrorism requires a parallel force to confront it. And with the sudden emergence of COVID-19, another serious threat has imposed on all countries of the world a kind of state regression into its national interior by closing borders and paralyzing its economic and social activity.

Here lies the real question: Is Syria capable of confronting terrorism in light of

these international changes? Is Syria capable of facing COVID-19 in light of the spread of terrorism in most of its geography? It is a difficult question that the Syrian state has successfully addressed so far.

But how can this be achieved when terrorism is still seeping across the borders and striking in some Syrian areas? How does the world actually plan to combat terrorism? While super powers support terrorism to thwart and destroy the Syrian state through the American, Israeli and Turkish military occupation of the Syrian lands, bans broadcast of Syrian TV channels, target journalists, in compliance with unfair sanctions imposed against the Syrian national media, as a part of unilateral coercive measures imposed by the United States on the Syrian people?!

Syria continues to successfully combat terrorism by:

1. Fighting terrorism in all its political, military and intellectual forms.
2. People have been embracing and defending the Syrian state.
3. Promoting the values of tolerance, issuing repeated amnesty decrees, and continuing national reconciliations.
4. Encouraging the repatriation of the displaced and enabling them to settle in by all possible means.
5. Modernizing legislation and laws, combating corruption and restructuring public bodies.

We meet today to cooperate in:

1. Finding a common definition of terrorism.
2. Strengthening the language of dialogue and combating extremist ideology via sound ideology.
3. Providing all means of support to limit the movement of terrorists between countries and cut off funding for them wherever they are.
4. Working on stopping the unilateral coercive measures taken against my country.
5. Supporting global economic development projects such as Belt and Road Initiative.

Syria is fighting terrorism on behalf of the world and it needs genuine cooperation from all its countries.

I wish all success to the honorable participants who are trying to achieve the aspiration of the free and resisting peoples of the earth in getting rid of the abomination of terrorism, extremism and intolerance in the four corners of earth.

Thank you very much.

Speech of Abdul Naser Noorzad, Research Fellow, Study Center for the Silk Road of Kabul University, Afghanistan

Ladies and gentlemen!

Good day to all of you.

I am glad to be with you and share my views on how to explore new approaches to deepen international cooperation on counter terrorism.

We all know very well that one of the major issues threatening international peace and security today is terrorism. Terrorism is considered one of the serious security challenges in the age of globalization, which has increased global insecurity. Also, due to its connection with new technologies, this phenomenon has become a strategic entanglement and has been able to turn small groups, but with complex structures, into prominent players in the international arena. Of course, in order to root out terrorism, in addition to strategic issues such as political violence, issues such as social injustice and inequality, economic, political and cultural spheres must also be considered. The fight against terrorism requires recognizing the contexts and factors in which terrorism is rooted, and in order to fully understand these factors and find a principled solution, it seems necessary to adopt a reasonable and universal approach. Also, the fight against terrorism from the point of view of international law is an action that should be pursued by the international community, and a government's resort to violent and belligerent actions is not only an example of terrorism itself, but also acceptable from the perspective of international law.

The experience of the fight against terrorism shows that terrorism is not destroyed or completely vanished, but move from one place to another, one day they are in Afghanistan, one day in Somalia, one day in Iraq and now they have no specific place to commit terrorism! The reason for this unsuccessful experience in the fight against terrorism is that the claimants of this issue have never confronted the root of terrorism, and terrorism as an ambiguous nature has always existed as a nightmare in the minds of the world.

Ladies and gentlemen!

Terrorism is a modern phenomenon whose activities have coincided with the formation of globalization. Globalization refers to three types of forces:

internationalization, technological revolution, and liberation in the world. In addition to good results, these forces have created new opportunities for criminal activity around the world.

Internationalization indicates an increase in economic interactions between countries and transnational corporations. The **technological** revolution has created many facilities for communication so that all companies and actors can operate globally, regardless of location, distance or borders. Finally, **liberalization** refers to a set of laws and institutions that have created a new level of transnational economic activity in specific sectors of the global economy.

These three forces have created a lot of facilities for terrorists in terms of financing, access to information, illegal trade, traveling around the world, and so on. These facilities, especially in third world countries with weak governance, have created more and freer opportunities for terrorist activities. In general, three important factors, such as criminal trade, religious fundamentalism and extremist ethnicity, play a role in terrorist activity in backward countries, which has led to the expansion of the scope of terrorist activities.

Ladies and gentlemen!

It is well understood that the new terrorism, in spite of the diversity and breadth of the concept and the area it attacks, needs areas that can organize its attacks and then carry them out. Unfortunately, the area of organization is outside the borders of Afghanistan and the area of its implementation is, unfortunately, our country, Afghanistan, where terrorism has experienced terrorist attacks over the past four decades. Given the fact that one of the ways to solve the fight against new terrorism is a serious and purposeful fight to destroy these nests. Our country Afghanistan, in spite of twenty years of breathtaking struggle, which has been accompanied by the sacrifice of the people of our country, has been considered by the world as a key and fundamental point in the fight against international terrorism. Efforts to support the Afghan government and stand with the Afghan people as the first victims of terrorism require the sincere support of the world, especially the powerful countries in the region and Afghanistan's neighbors, for the Afghan government and its armed forces. It is therefore well understood that the necessity or non-necessity of continuing world

cooperation with Afghanistan is directly related to the capabilities and capacities of the Afghan Armed Forces.

But since the Taliban, al-Qaeda, ISIS, and other terrorist groups pose a threat to world security and continue to pose a serious threat to regional and global security and stability, the available evidence suggests that regional and global players' cooperation is a must in this regard. The region and the world support are essential in the fight against terrorism. Therefore, these countries in the region and the world can work together in the fight against terrorism until the threats are completely eliminated and the threat from international terrorism no longer targets the security of the world community.

Another important issue that both the countries of the region and the international community must understand is that although in recent decades Afghanistan was the only country that suffered the most from extremism and terrorism, human and financial losses, millions of its citizens were killed, displaced and became homeless, and the most valuable assets and cultural and civilizational heritage of this land were destroyed or looted. Now, two decades after a fierce fight against extremism and terrorism, Afghanistan remains the most vulnerable country to extremist threats, but this vulnerability is not limited to Afghanistan and all of Afghanistan's neighbors and other countries in the region and the world are somehow faced with potential threats to terrorism. They fear the existence of terrorist groups in Afghanistan and the possibility of that they would regain power is an existential threat to the entire global community. In fact, the terrorists have terrified all the small and large powers in the region. The three major powers in the region, including The Russian federation, the people's republic of China and the republic of India, as well as Afghanistan's neighbors, are always worried that extremists will regain power in Afghanistan and once turn this country to their safe hideout. They are well aware that these terrorist organizations would also infiltrate and pose new threats to the security of the region and the entire world.

Ladies and gentlemen!

The high volume and the increasing rate of terrorist attacks show that the threat of terrorism is closer than what is being talked about, and we must think about

fighting terrorism in the world and drying up its roots. But the main question is that what is the solution to the fight against terrorism and how to start this campaign? The following is a series of important issues that we believe will be effective in the fight against international terrorism:

First: Attention to terrorist shelters and training centers as a breeding ground for terrorism:

As noted earlier, the problem of terrorism will not be resolved unless terrorist sanctuaries are targeted and the countries that support them, which use terrorism as their strategic target, must be subject to world economic and political sanctions. Terrorism today, in its current form, has seriously endangered relations between the countries of the region and the world, and has reduced the volume of regional and global cooperation for economic development and coordination to combat potential dangers in the future.

Second: Economic development and creating the ground for close economic cooperation:

The problem of terrorism as an ideological and economic problem will not be solved unless economic development is considered as the second counter-terrorism strategy, and an alternative source of income is sought for terrorism. These include super-projects such as a BRI, which holds good promise for the economic growth and development of the three continents. Close cooperation of neighboring countries and building an international consensus for the economic fight against terrorism can be considered as an appropriated solution.

Third, it is time to change the instrumental view of the phenomenon of extremism and terrorism, to consider terrorism as a serious and real threat to the development and stability of the region, and to launch a joint and comprehensive struggle against it:

Only then can the long road to the fight against terrorism be slowly paved with long-term global aid and support and a bright future for the nations of the region. Putting pressure on countries that support terrorism, which are themselves victims of terrorism, can be one of the most effective approaches in the fight against terrorism. The instrumental view and strategic use of the phenomenon of extremism by some

countries has deprived them of good opportunities in the fight against terrorism, which threatens the security of the region and the world.

Fourth: Creating an international consensus and developing a clear strategy to combat global terrorism.

Existence of regional and international consensus and clarifying further the existed ambiguity in defining the phenomenon of terrorism and the dangers that terrorism can pose to the security of the region and the world are among the other important approaches that pave the way for an effective fight against terrorism and religious extremism. Unless there is an effective regional and global consensus on a common, long-term strategic approach, there will be no chance of success in the fight against terrorism.

Ladies and gentlemen!

In view of the above, the main question is that what should be done to eliminate the roots of international terrorism and ensure international security? In response, it should be noted that in general, three important factors, such as criminal trade, religious fundamentalism, and extremist ethnicity, play a role in terrorist activity in backward countries, each of which must be addressed separately:

First, criminal trade: One of the most important problems in the world today is criminal trade. In this trade, goods and substances that are prohibited under international law and human rights are traded through criminal groups and traffickers. In general, human trafficking, arms trafficking, and narcotics are prohibited goods, but criminal and terrorist groups smuggle goods through routes and areas not controlled by the government and make large profits. In recent decades, especially with the emergence of various terrorist groups, the criminal trade in Afghanistan has expanded so much that the cultivation and trafficking of narcotics, kidnapping, trafficking in human organs and the arms trade has become widespread in the country and has become a major problem for regional and international community.

Criminal trade is still an important source of funding for terrorist groups in the region:

About 60 percent of the Taliban as terrorist group in the regional level is reportedly funded by the drug trade. The arms trade and its sale and purchase also

take place among the people, due to the security situation in Afghanistan, which is carried out through the Taliban and other terrorist groups. Likewise, kidnapping is another important source of funding for terrorist groups, through which they pocket large sums of money from the people and investors inside Afghanistan. Thus, criminal trade is an important source of funding for terrorist groups, which ensures their continued activity in the countries of the region and the world.

Second, religious fundamentalism: Another factor that contributes to the existence of terrorist groups is religious fundamentalism. Some political actors in the region have turned religious beliefs into active ideologies to exploit people's feelings. Some countries in the region and terrorists are still trying to produce and reproduce this ideology in line with their policy. The lack of formal education services and educational institutions in the region and the world creates a huge cultural gap in local and remote areas, which provides the ground for religious schools and extremist, deviant and radical education. To meet this challenge, regional governments and the international community must strengthen their control over these countries, which are considered to be the origins of terrorism, and prevent extremist and terrorist training.

Third, extremist nationalism: The third factor and force that contributes to the existence and survival of terrorist groups is extremist nationalism in countries. In ethnocentrism, people usually consider their race and culture superior to others and promote it among themselves. Lack of accurate acquaintance with neighboring cultures and severing ties with them causes cultures to remain in extreme narcissism. There are many instance, countries like Afghanistan wherever its position as a country between the various regional and international powers in recent centuries, in conflict and rivalry with each other, has used the Afghan soil in direct and proxy wars. These conflicts have continuously and over the years kept the fires of war and ethnic divisions open, which in itself can be considered as an effective approach to the struggle against terrorism at various regional and global levels.

As a result, it can be said that in order to eliminate and defeat terrorism in the region, the causative factors and the ground for their growth must be eliminated. As long as these factors exist in the countries of the region, fundamentalism and terrorism will continue to operate. The sources of terrorism must be considered, and the

common sources from which terrorists are funded, such as criminal trade, religious fundamentalism, and extremist ethnicity must be addressed and a concerted and purposeful effort must be made to contain them.

Thank you.

Speech of Fu Xiaoqiang, Director and Senior Research Fellow, Institute of International Security, CACIR

Adhering to the Right Course of International Counter-Terrorism

As a violent activity against humanity and civilization, terrorism is a freak in the development of human society. In today's world, terrorism has posed a serious threat to international security, social security and economic development. It has become one of the main non-traditional security threats that the international community is highly concerned about, which will not be changed by the so-called great power competition initiated by the United States.

From the series of terrorist attacks in China, Russia, and Central Asian countries in the past few years, to the recent lone wolf terrorist attacks in European countries such as France, Germany and Austria, there should be a consensus that coping with terrorism is about our future and world peace. All countries share in this struggle. Turmoil and wars in Afghanistan, Syria, Libya, Mali, and other African countries will bring problems of refugees, extremism, and terrorism. The international community should work hard to establish a global counter-terrorism front and strengthen a governance system for global security issues, to gradually address major issues of eliminating violence and managing chaos, and ultimately resolve the threat of terrorism at its root with a focus on source management and comprehensive implementation.

First of all, it requires further consensus building, no double standards, and the convergence of civilizations to address terrorism and build a community with a shared future for mankind. The international community still does not have a unified definition of terrorism that can be universally accepted by all countries, leading to multiple definitions of terrorism based on each country's understanding and self-interest, and multiple positions on counter-terrorism under different definitions. In particular, the United States has long pursued double standards, making false and irresponsible claims about the normal counter-terrorism operations in some countries, and even secretly supporting terrorism to disrupt other countries. Terrorism is the

enemy of all mankind and must be combated in whatever form it takes, whenever and wherever it occurs, and against whomever and whatever. Counter-terrorism cannot be subject to double standards, let alone linked to a specific ethnic group or religion. The consensus reached by SCO member states on the definition of terrorism in recent years has strongly promoted counter-terrorism cooperation among member states and provided vigorous experience for the international community to develop a broader consensus on terrorism.

In dealing with terrorism, it is necessary for the East and West to enhance mutual understanding and support, respect the diversity of civilizations, unify ideas, and cooperate in concrete practices of counter-terrorism and de-radicalization. Human rights, democracy, and religious beliefs can be discussed in a realistic manner, but they cannot be used as a cover to attack, discredit, or undermine other countries' counter-terrorism efforts. The East Turkestan Islamic Movement (ETIM), also known as Turkish Islamic Party (TIP) is an international terrorist organization recognized by the United Nations. It still collaborates with international terrorist forces such as Al Qaeda. The United States ignores the facts and revoked the designation of the ETIM as a terrorist organization, severely undermining China's interests and the security of the international community.

Second, a coordinated response to terrorism is needed and the UN-led counter-terrorism front should be established. All countries should stand for the common security and interests of human society, uphold the authority of the international rule of law, and establish fair and just rules for counter-terrorism governance. The United Nations and its Security Council should play a leading role and central position in the international fight against terrorism, make full use of the Global Counter-Terrorism Forum and other multilateral counter-terrorism mechanisms, and actively lead international counter-terrorism efforts toward the highest goal of building a community of a shared future for mankind. The counter-terrorism actions of all countries should conform to the purposes and principles of the UN Charter and other recognized norms of international law. International counter-terrorism should strengthen regional and global cooperation by improving cooperation mechanisms and establishing a united front. Past international

efforts to combat Al-Qaeda and the Islamic State have shown that it is precisely because the United States, Russia, Europe, and China coordinate and cooperate in regions of active terrorism such as South Asia and the Middle East, and fully understand the direction and nature of a new round of gang violence and terrorism, that a new mechanism for coordinated and effective response to regional terrorism has been formed and obvious results in counter-terrorism have been achieved. There can be competition among countries, but there should also be cooperation, especially on combating terrorism. Cooperation among major countries is in urgent need.

Third, it requires comprehensive measures and the handling of both the symptoms and the root causes in a targeted manner to address terrorism and build a community with a shared future for mankind. We must make comprehensive use of political, economic, social, cultural, diplomatic, and military means to strengthen source management, work to eradicate the root causes and breeding grounds of terrorism, and prevent problems before they occur. It is necessary to balance the use of hard and soft means, pay attention to reducing the negative effects of military means when adopting them. At the same time, we should focus on the political settlement of regional hotspot issues, economic and social development of developing countries, and the pursuit of a most durable and sustainable solution.

In addition, we should respect the diversity of civilizations. In handling relations among civilizations, let us replace estrangement with exchange, clashes with mutual learning, and superiority with coexistence. China successfully held the Conference on Dialogue of Asian Civilizations in 2019. In the future, various forms of such dialogues can be carried out among Asian, European and African countries to promote consensus on preventing extremism and combating terrorism.

Fourth, we must actively fight against cyber terrorism and keep pace with the times to properly respond to new threats that may be brought about by the development of new technologies. At present, cyber terrorist activities are becoming more rampant, and posing an urgent security challenge facing all countries. Countries should expose the harmfulness of extremist ideas and their deceptive nature, refute the distorted propaganda of terrorist organizations, and gradually make it a trend that counter-extremism is everyone's duty. The international community needs to escalate

its crackdown on the dissemination and proliferation of extremist thoughts on the internet, and formulate an international code of conduct for the Internet industry as soon as possible to resolutely block the spread of extremist thoughts on social media, especially the release of violent terrorist audio and video. In addition, for new terrorist threats that may be caused by drones, robots, artificial intelligence, and biotechnology, as well as by mass destruction terrorism and extremism, the international community needs to take into consideration the future generations, take precautions in advance to jointly escort the bright future of mankind.

Fifth, terrorism is one of many common challenges facing mankind. The international community needs to strengthen coordination and follow a vision of common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security, thus promoting the resolution of regional hotspot issues and conflicts, preventing the formation of new terrorism in the Middle East, South Asia and Africa. We need to promote community-wide counter-terrorism, establish a united global front, and work together to eliminate terrorist threats and seek common security for all mankind.

Speech of Pritchkin Stanislav, Senior Research Fellow, Institute of World Economy and International Relations, Russian Academy of Sciences

Security Cooperation Between China and Russia: Prospects and Opportunities

Russian-Chinese cooperation on the fight against terrorism is currently actively developing and has a tendency to further strengthen. The parties are developing a strategic partnership, an important aspect of which is cooperation between Russia and China to ensure global and regional security. This is not surprising, Russia and China have a long interstate border, and also have a common regional neighborhood with the countries of Central Asia.

Russia and China, as neighboring countries, seek to protect their borders from the infiltration of terrorist groups. The parties understand the importance of joint counteraction to international terrorism that meets their national interests.

According to **the Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation**, the most important direction of Russian foreign policy in Asia is the development of friendly relations with China. Russia will build up the Russian-Chinese strategic partnership in all areas based on the convergence of principled approaches to key issues of world politics as one of the basic components of regional and global stability.

The basic document of bilateral cooperation is the Treaty on good-neighborliness, friendship and cooperation signed in 2001. This document marks the transition to a comprehensive partnership of Russia and China. Article 20 of the Treaty is devoted to security cooperation, including the fight against international terrorism.

It is also important to note the Agreement between the Russian Federation and the People's Republic of China on **Cooperation in the fight against terrorism, separatism and extremism** which was signed in 2010. This document was adopted within the framework of the Shanghai Convention on Combating Terrorism, Separatism and Extremism, signed on June 15, 2001 in Shanghai and the Convention of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization against Terrorism, signed on June 16, 2009 in Yekaterinburg,

We will distinguish several levels of cooperation according to the goals and methods.

The first level of cooperation is on bilateral basis. At this level, the parties support each other in the fight against terrorism and separatism, without actually drawing a line between these phenomena. The common goal of Russia and China at this level is, first of all, the stable and predictable development of the states, the elimination of the threats of decentralization of the countries. In addition to supporting each other at the state level, the parties conduct a constant exchange of information and experience. Another effective, already forceful method of countering terrorism is the regular holding of joint anti-terrorist military exercises. Russia is the most frequent partner in China's bilateral and multilateral anti-terrorist exercises.

The second level of cooperation is regional, and the goals of the parties at this level are primarily to maintain stability in Central Asia, to protect their own borders from infiltration armed radical Islamist groups. Moscow and Beijing successfully cooperate within the framework of multilateral formats, primarily within the framework of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

The SCO member states are creating and improving the legal framework for anti-terrorist cooperation, developing counter-terrorism strategies, conducting joint operational search activities and counter-terrorism exercises. The parties also jointly search for persons suspected of terrorist, extremist and separatist activities.

One of the first documents published on behalf of the SCO was the Convention on combating international **terrorism, separatism and extremism**. Countering the "three forces of evil" has been a priority area of practical activity of the SCO for all years of its existence.

An important role in it belongs to the SCO Regional anti-terrorist structure with its headquarters in Tashkent, established in 2004.

An effective mechanism for working out the SCO member states' counteraction to the forces of terrorism, religious extremism and separatism was the 4th series of anti-terrorist exercises, most of which were called "Peace Mission". Army and special units of the SCO states numbering up to 10 thousand people were involved in their conduct.

The third level of cooperation is international. The goals of Moscow and Beijing at this level are to jointly counter terrorism in the international arena and support each other in developing a more just, multipolar world order. At the international level, the parties are in favor of the UN's leading role in the fight against terrorism and the formation of regimes to combat this phenomenon.

Also, the Russian Federation and the People's Republic of China act as defenders of the principle of national sovereignty of all countries. The parties seek to formulate and consolidate in international law the universal definition of "international terrorism" and to discuss this definition at the UN level. Supporting each other's decisions in various international intergovernmental organizations and structures is the most important method of cooperation.

Common space of responsibility

The process of activation of radical Islamists in **Central Asia**. A special place in the interaction of the Central Asian republics, Russia and China was occupied by the neutralization of threats emanating from neighboring Afghanistan, including the suppression of drug trafficking, preventing the penetration into the region of terrorist groups hostile to the legitimate authorities of the states of the region, and in the last year or two-and supporters of the so – called "Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant" (ISIS).

The problems of promoting Afghanistan's transition to peaceful development have been repeatedly discussed in the SCO format and at special conferences held under the auspices of this organization. In recent years, China's participation in solving problems related to Afghanistan has increased within the framework of the " Istanbul Process " (among its 14 participants are also Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan). During 2019, Russia and China continued to actively cooperate on the Afghan issue in both bilateral and multilateral formats.

Speech of May Salem, Scholar from Cairo International Center for Conflict Resolution, Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding, Egypt

Thank you excellencies, ladies and gentlemen and I'm happy to take part in this important and timely discussion.

We're all facing new circumstance specifically pertaining to the COVID-19 crisis. It had an impact on the lives and livelihoods of many, and specifically it has had an impact on the healthcare system, but also a more indirect but also long-lasting impact on the security, political or socioeconomic sectors. And it's important to note that while the fatalities and infections in Africa have been lower than any other continent, the implications and consequences of the covid-19 crisis is still very much affecting the continent.

So, my presentation today will look at the overlap between the covid-19 crisis and terrorism. And it's important to note here that the findings I'll be presenting and what in general the research has illuded to, are projections of the trends and patterns across different contexts or across different terrorist groups. But since we're still in the midst of the crisis, actual analysis and conclusions can only be drawn over a longer period of time as the situation unfolds further to provide sounding evidence.

The Shifting Global Terrorism Landscape

1. COVID-19 as a magnifier of preexisting peace and security threats but also of vulnerabilities and grievances, so we've seen an exacerbation in poverty, inequality and exclusion along with the feelings of isolation, fear and uncertainty, all of which are fertile grounds for terrorist groups to capitalize on whether in their recruitment methods or as a cause for their escalation of attacks.

2. With the loss of territorial gains in various contexts over the last years because of the counterterrorism efforts on the ground, terrorist groups viewing the pandemic as an opportunity to regain momentum through stepping up their operations and attacks.

3. Because of the diversion of attention of governments in an attempt to contain the pandemic and to provide relief and recovery assistance, terrorist groups have

exploited this diversion of both attention and resource to carry out attacks and increase their recruitment efforts. However, it's important to note that covid-19 has not only hit states and governments, but has also hit terrorist groups, and thus the sustainability of these attacks but also the funding stream to terrorist groups are yet to be seen.

4. Important to highlight that not all terrorist groups are responding to the pandemic in the same way, while some dismissed it completely, others have taken various stances as how to deal with it. For example, Somalia and Taliban have allowed humanitarian assistance to reach populations in need.

How Terrorist Groups are Responding to COVID-19?

The Islamic State's global reach has steadily expanded with attacks recorded across seven regions: Asia-Pacific, Europe, MENA, North America, Russia, Eurasia, South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. **Islamic State affiliates** expanded into sub-Saharan Africa led to a **surge in terrorism attacks** in many countries in the region. Seven of the ten countries with the largest increase in terrorism were in sub-Saharan Africa: Burkina Faso, Mozambique, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Mali, Niger, Cameroon and Ethiopia.

Al-Shabaab in Somalia exploited the pandemic to **position itself as a rival governance provider**. They saw the pandemic as an opportunity to boost its governance credentials by establishing isolation and healthcare facilities, and launching public awareness campaigns. And the Taliban gave access to humanitarian agencies to provide assistance to in need populations.

Boko Haram Exploiting the pandemic in their propaganda and fueling intercommunal violence, gaining more recruits and justifying their attacks. Especially with narratives revolving around the pandemic being a punishment to the West and to African governments, and now is the time to unite and fight more.

Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghrib (AQIM) while initially dismissing the pandemic in the pandemic, later on viewed the pandemic as an opportunity to **bolster recruitment** efforts and military operations.

Far-right terrorism has increased substantially in the West. In 2010, there was only one recorded far-right terrorist attack. In 2019, this increased to forty-nine.

COVID-19 Impact on Counter-terrorism Responses

It is still too early to assess the full-impact of COVID-19 on Counter-Terrorism responses, and individual states have responded differently to the onset of the pandemic. Still, there are a few key trends that must be considered:

- Some States announced the reallocation of resources, including the withdrawal (or planned withdrawal) of foreign armed forces involved in operations against ISIL and Al-Qaeda; while others such as France have pledged to redouble their efforts in supporting counter terrorism operations in the Sahel.
- Troop Contributing Countries have also decreased their military and police contributions outside their territories; most notably, the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) has seen a reduction in troops
- On the national Level, African countries closed their borders leading to postponement of some military operations and CT measures on the ground and have deployed their own militaries and security forces to enforce lockdowns and curfews
- Civil Society Organizations have also reported several projected impacts of COVID-19 on Countering Extremism Initiatives, including the ongoing absence of community activities (e.g., religion, education, sport and live entertainment) that are often critical to the success of longer-term prevention efforts.

Beyond COVID-19: Chartering the Way Forward

We need to look at counterterrorism as a comprehensive holistic approach that entails counterterrorist measures and operations as well as preventing and countering extremism conducive to terrorism.

1. The COVID-19 pandemic should be viewed, first and foremost, as a Governance challenge, we should not see it as only a health issue or a pandemic, but rather a governance challenge that lays bare the structural grievances and vulnerabilities of societies that terrorist groups manipulate for their benefit. Recognition of this by governments is essential for long term planning and execution of government responses in a manner that does not only respond to immediate needs, but also lays the ground for sustaining peace.

2. Imperative of Investing in Prevention and Shifting towards a Resilience Paradigm: By magnifying existing vulnerabilities and grievances, the pandemic serves

as a strong reminder of the imperative for a preventative approach based on good governance and inclusive sustainable development that addresses the root causes and structural drivers of extremism leading to terrorism. Preventive efforts at the local level need to focus on strengthening community cohesion and the social contract. In this regard, interventions must be context-specific and tailored to the specific needs of local communities.

3. A whole-of-government Approach: It is imperative that states undertake integrated, coherent and coordinated policy responses that leverage the complementary mandates, resources and expertise of various government institutions. This requires political will and leadership to bridge the institutional silos that hamper effective coordination across state institutions in their fight against terrorism, particularly with regards to the fragmentation between the military and criminal justice systems.

4. Existing regional tools and structures should be operationalized to support national efforts: African member states should make use of existing African instruments and tools, such as the AU transitional justice policy framework, which put forward the imperative for truth seeking and reparation to support national efforts in the fight against terrorism.

Strengthening International Cooperation on Counter-Terrorism in the Shadow of the Pandemic

The evolving terrorist threat, particularly as exacerbated by COVID-19, requires a multi-layered and collaborative approach to Counter-terrorism:

- Strengthening bilateral and multilateral coordination and cooperation in CT operations; including most-notably through partnering with regional and sub-regional organizations. This is imperative to translate global CT frameworks into context-specific responses.
- Engaging with diverse stakeholders and partners across the humanitarian, development, peace nexus, including Civil Society Organizations (CSOs). Security approaches are necessary but are alone insufficient, and COVID-19 has brought to the fore the importance of complementing security approaches with a focus on development.

- Fostering partnerships with the private sector, tech companies, as they play an integral role in countering the exploitation of new technologies and social media platforms by terrorist groups during COVID-19 and academia.

Speech of Asrul Daniel Ahmed, Analyst of Southeast Asia Regional Center for Counter-Terrorism, Malaysia

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen.

Terrorism may be a problem that is almost as old as history itself, but just as history flows and changes over the years, never standing still, so has terrorism evolved and shown its many faces from one era to the next. Some say the Sicarii, a sect in ancient Judea, should have the dubious honour of being regarded as among the earliest terrorists, stabbing the hapless in crowded spaces to inspire fear in the hearts of their Roman colonists. The anarchists of the 19th century advocated the “Propaganda of the Deed”, partly by bombing and assassinating members of the European ruling class in order to ignite the flames of revolution. And today, we face a new set of circumstances, in which ideologies of violent extremism have been given mighty wings by new media and mobile technologies, allowing some terrorists to punch above their weight and significantly disrupt the everyday lives of people living half a world away.

Today, the ideologies that inspire terrorism have been spreading on the very same channels that have helped bring the world closer together. It is increasingly difficult to deny that the growing popularity and ubiquity of the internet and social media has brought with it with numerous improvements to our quality of life and opened a great number of opportunities to both individuals and communities alike. But this development has also brought about varying degrees of undesirable consequences to our communities, the rise of interest in and support for violent extremist ideologies, movements and groups being of particular concern. A significant segment of the populace active on social media platforms, particularly from the younger demographic, have exhibited a worrying level of receptivity to elements involving violent extremism, and some have even become actively influenced by them.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen.

There is evidence to suggest that this development can, at least in part, be attributed to the inability among some, if not most, of social media users to critically evaluate, respond to and engage with online material they encounter in a positive, thoughtful and responsible manner. Some social media users may also lack the

capacity, the resources or the experience to adequately prepare and protect themselves, as well as their family and friends, from socially disruptive elements that come largely unfiltered through these new channels of communication and interactivity. The dynamics of communications and relationships are changing alongside these new technologies, and there are many that have had difficulties trying to catch up with the current circumstances. The frictions that come about as a result can create cognitive openings which are then exploited by terrorist and violent extremist groups in order to spread their influence and tighten their grip over a select but significant segment of the population that could prove useful for their purposes.

Today, we often hear of how young those that have been influenced by the ideologies of terrorism and violent extremism are, and those that are at risk of radicalizing into violent extremism are often the youth. While not necessarily inaccurate, taking this trend at face value can ultimately be misleading. I believe that young people can be quite impressionable, but whether it is for better or for worse it depends on how they are engaged. Many terrorist and violent extremist groups today have become very good at engaging with their target audience over the social media, especially among the youth. They know how to vary between broadcasting and narrowcasting their messages, how to strengthen relationships through repeated online interactions, how to raise the stakes by effectively using tailored narratives, and how to give them something to live (or die) for.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen.

This is why working with the youth as partners to develop solutions to reach other youths is essential when it comes to addressing terrorism and preventing and countering violent extremism. We will always need hard, security-based approaches to confront and defeat the operations carried out by terrorists and violent extremists, but without the softer, narrative based approaches to eradicate the influence of their ideologies, we will have difficulty in solving the problem in the long term. Youths have the enviable ability, as digital natives, to navigate through these shifting complexities of this new digital age and make sense of them better than most. This puts youth in a position to be effective, powerful, credible and passionate messengers that can significantly help counter the propaganda of terrorist and violent extremist

groups.

At my organization, SEARCCT, we have been engaging with young people for a while now, but from 2017 onwards we began actively encouraging young people to see themselves as our partners in working towards bringing about a more peaceful and secure environment by helping build more resilient communities and strengthening social cohesion. We started with workshops to encourage and empower youth to come up with their own messaging, and help build their capacity for storytelling with technologies like mobile phones and social media. Many times, we ended up learning more and more from the youths themselves, as they often come to the workshop with great ideas and their own knowledge and expertise to share.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen.

Today, I believe we all share the problem of terrorism as it is something that can affect us. And I believe we all have something to offer, as we all have bright and intelligent youth in our communities whom we can reach out to and work with to bring a better future for them to live in, if we can show them towards that better tomorrow to work towards. We all have our own knowledge and experience that can be shared towards bringing our mutual interests forward, and in this matter, we at SEARCCT look forward to possible collaboration with others, in the region and beyond, and help build strong relationships that can prevent and counter the ideologies and influence of terrorism and violent extremism together.

Closing Remarks by Bai Tian, Director-General, Department of External Security Affairs of Ministry of Foreign Affairs, China

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

First of all, I want to express my heartfelt thanks to China Institute of International Studies for hosting the international seminar and inviting me to deliver closing remarks. At the end of 2020, officials, experts and scholars from 13 countries held in-depth discussions under the theme of “Joint Response to Terrorism under the New Circumstances”, demonstrating our iron-clad resolve to combat terrorism, responsibilities to safeguard regional security and stability, and common aspirations to promote world peace and development. I appreciate your meaningful remarks and thought-provoking insights.

As President Xi Jinping pointed out, all countries are an indivisible community with a shared future. No one is immune to major crises. Solidarity and cooperation is the only way to confront the challenges. In the past two decades, non-traditional security threats, such as terrorism, public health crises and natural disasters, have risen one after another. With solidarity and cooperation as its most powerful weapon, humanity has overcome various difficulties and crises and realized growth and development. As Vice Foreign Minister Luo Zhaohui said in his opening remarks, we may draw the following important conclusions from history: non-traditional security threats require transnational responses; we need a long-term view instead of knee-jerk reaction.

During the seminar, speakers have engaged in candid and in-depth communication, accomplishing the goal of building up consensus, enhancing mutual learning, and promoting cooperation. After listening to all your speeches attentively, I want to share the following reflections:

First, we demonstrated the spirit of solidarity. All parties believed that mankind is a community with a shared future, sharing weal and woe. At present, the severe pandemic of the century is intertwined with the once-in-a-century transformation, and terrorism still poses great threats to global security. We need solidarity and

cooperation more than ever. Counter-terrorism is our common cause. We must follow the right path of multilateralism, and can't deviate from it. International counter-terrorism cooperation can only be enhanced, not weakened.

Second, we identified risks and challenges. All parties agreed that the global fight against terrorism faces a new situation and new tests amid the pandemic. Terrorist forces are waiting in the wings, stepping up propaganda and recruitment, and launching frequent terrorist attacks. The pandemic has had a severe impact on the economic and social stability of relevant countries, given rise to hatred and xenophobia, delayed the settlement of hotspot issues and regional conflicts, and intensified the medium-term and long-term threat of terrorism.

Third, we consolidated international consensus. The parties believed that there is no "good" or "bad" terrorism, and we must apply a unified standard and reject double standards unequivocally. We must defend international consensus and reject politicizing counter-terrorism or using it as a tool for selfish gains. We must adopt comprehensive measures to treat both the symptoms and the root causes, attach importance to preventive counter-terrorism and de-radicalization efforts, and eliminate the breeding ground of terrorism. We must be open and inclusive, and oppose linking terrorism with any particular country, ethnicity or religion.

Fourth, we shared useful experience and best practices. All parties introduced the security threats faced by their countries and counter-terrorism measures. Focusing on the new trends and features of terrorism, they put forth their views and suggestions on dealing with prominent problems such as cyber terrorism, foreign terrorist fighters, radicalization and terrorism financing. All parties held that there is no one-size-fits-all counter-terrorism model, and a country's counter-terrorism policies and measures should be formulated in light of its national conditions, cultural traditions, religious beliefs and other factors.

Fifth, we made plans for future cooperation. All parties held that we should always stick to the right direction and firmly oppose unilateral and self-serving actions against the international consensus on counter-terrorism. We should take active and effective actions, have in-depth communication about our positions, and strengthen coordination of our actions. We should pay more attention to capacity

building and build platforms for cooperation, such as holding more such international seminars. We should learn from each other's experience, improve the performance and effectiveness of our response to new threats and challenges, and continue to build a solid defense against terrorism.

I noticed in particular that during the discussion, participants from China, Pakistan, Kazakhstan and Afghanistan all mentioned that the Eastern Turkistan Islamic Movement (ETIM) terrorist forces have posed serious threats to the peace, security and people's welfare of China, relevant countries and the whole region. China is ready to enhance cooperation with all parties to fight ETIM and safeguard regional and global security.

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

China firmly opposes terrorism in all forms and manifestations and has always been an active participant and contributor in international counter-terrorism cooperation. China will continue to promote international counter-terrorism cooperation in a constructive way, contributing Chinese wisdom, offering Chinese solutions and injecting Chinese strength into the international counter-terrorism cause.

"A drop of water can't make the sea, nor can a single tree form a forest." We believe that as long as all members of the international community join hands and gather more strength, we will be able to defeat terrorism and safeguard international and regional peace and tranquility. To conclude, I would like to congratulate you once again on the great success of the seminar and look forward to having the opportunity to communicate with you again. Thank you very much!