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Statement of the United States of America
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Statement by Stephen Townley, Deputy Legal Adviser
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Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The United States reiterates its firm and longstanding opposition to terrorism in all its forms and manifestations as well as its commitment to the global fight against terrorism – by whomever committed – for the sake of international law, human rights, and justice, regardless of motivation. A coordinated and sustained effort by the international community is required if we are to succeed in preventing these heinous acts. In this regard, we recognize the critical role in minimizing the international community's vulnerability to terrorism, and in providing technical assistance to Member States in implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and relevant resolutions. We note in particular the Security Council's adoption of a number of recent resolutions: Resolution 2133 (on kidnapping for ransom), Resolutions 2170 and 2190 (on counter-terrorism in Iraq and against ISIL and its affiliates), and other al-Qa'ida-linked groups) imposed in 2006 and 2011; Resolution 2178 (on Foreign Terrorist Fighters (FTF) which established an important new policy and legal framework for international action in response to the FTF threat; Resolution 2195 to address the growing threat of terrorism working with transnational criminal organizations primarily in Africa and the Sahel region; Resolution 2214 to counter the rising terrorist threat in Libya.

With respect in particular to resolution 2178, we would highlight the important actions that the United Nations and Member States have taken and continue to take to enhance the global implementation. We are pleased that the Global Counter-Terrorism Centre (GCTC) with the support of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED) has been working to identify good practices in addressing the FTF phenomenon; that the 1267/1988 Al-Qa'ida Sanctions Team continues to conduct threat analyses and the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF) Office is creating a cadre of experts by offering subject-matter expertise to other CTITF entities are increasing their activities to assist Member States in identifying and preventing recruitment and radicalization of FTFs. It is this multifaceted and whole-of-UN approach that is critical to ensure a comprehensive approach to improve Member States' ability with any capacity to address not only the challenges posed by FTFs but also other transnational threats, and to

prevent their radicalization, support and recruitment in the first place, as well as assist with the rehabilitation and reintegration of returnees to better protect all of our homes.

We appreciate the steps that many states have taken to implement Resolution 2178, the 1267/1989 Monitoring Team has previously indicated, member states are relying on a variety of laws to implement the resolution, including laws that prohibit participation in terrorism or support to designated terrorist organizations, international law and without relation to participation in foreign conflicts, and new laws that specifically address ETT travel. We can all stand to learn from each other on this and we would welcome continued exchanges on the subject. In particular, one of the key areas in which 2178 was innovative was in addressing those attempting to travel with the goal of becoming an FTE. Attempt is a well-understood concept and one that is not overly broad. But it can also be difficult to prove, as demonstrated by the prosecutors' seminar held in Valletta last year under the auspices of the CTC. The report of that seminar rightly noted "[m]any individuals claim that the purpose of their travel is to provide humanitarian aid in destination countries." This is one area where further exchanges of views on best practices in making out triable cases, while not unduly inhibiting legitimate humanitarian travel, could be helpful. I would also stress another important feature of Resolution 2178, its emphasis on the organization or other facilitation, including acts of recruitment, of travel. In the United States, for instance, a number of defendants have recently pled guilty to conspiracy to provide material support to terrorist organizations based on their plans to travel overseas, and some material support defendants have also been charged with providing material support to consider how best to use laws to cover those who seek to become FTEs at the earliest possible stage, before they board aircraft or otherwise seek to commence their travel, and those who facilitate, including recruiting, training, travel.

These resolutions are strong evidence of the ongoing commitment of the UN to address new challenges that arise in the fight against terrorism. We express our full support for these UN efforts, as well as those of the Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF) and other multilateral bodies, civil society and non-governmental organizations, and regional and subregional organizations, aimed at developing practical tools to further the implementation of the UN counter-terrorism efforts. We also support the work of the UN Global Counterterrorism Centre and its external partners, including the GCTF and its related initiatives and platforms such as the International Institute for Counterterrorism (IICT), the Global Counterterrorism Centre (GCTC), the Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund (GGERF), which advance practical implementation of the UN Global Counterterrorism Strategy through training, capacity building and grant-making efforts for community-based CVE projects.

We look forward to the fifth review of the UN Global CT Strategy, which will mark an important 10th anniversary next June. The Strategy was a ground-breaking achievement of the General Assembly and our commitment to its implementation must not waver. We look forward to the Secretary General's release of a Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism in the coming months, which will be a major step in furthering the UN system's efforts to implement a comprehensive global approach to countering violent extremism. We will continue to work closely with all key actors and encourage all Member States to develop national strategies for countering violent extremism. We strongly welcome the efforts of the United Nations to facilitate the promotion and protection of human rights and the rule of law, central

to effectively counter terrorism in a sustainable manner. We also recognize the role that victims of terrorism can play in countering violent extremism. Finally, we stress the need to improve border management and to use financial measures to counter terrorism while addressing more effectively the conditions and drivers of terrorism.

To help achieve this comprehensive vision, we need all member states to better assist and sufficiently resource UN system actors and other relevant actors. We will continue to provide needed aid and generate more effective solutions. To do our part, we are pleased to continue to make voluntary contributions to the UN Counter-Terrorism Centre (UNCT), the UNODC Terrorism Prevention Branch, UNDP DARN, and UN Women. We will also continue to support the capacity of the UNCT to allow it to provide assistance to member states on a range of issues addressed in the UN Strategy, including CVE, and relevant UNSCRs, including 2178. We think that a growing pool of UNCT demand is also a helpful harbinger of its maximizing of our civilian counterterrorism assistance on a regular basis.

Focusing now on treaty developments, we recognize the great success of the United Nations, thanks in large part to our work for and with our partners, in developing a set of universal instruments that establish a robust legal framework for countering terrorism. These achievements are a testament to our shared values and a dramatic increase in the number of states that have become party to these international counterterrorism conventions. For example, 170 states have become party to the Convention on the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings. The international community has also come together in the last decade to conclude six of these counterterrorism instruments, including a Convention on the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings, a Convention on the Suppression of Terrorist Financing, and emerging threats to civil aviation, maritime navigation, and the protection of nuclear material.

The United States recognizes that while the accomplishments of the international community in developing a robust legal counterterrorism regime are significant, there remains much work to be done. The four universal counterterrorism instruments are only effective if they are widely ratified and implemented. In this regard, we fully support efforts to promote ratification and implementation of these instruments. We draw particular attention to the six instruments concluded over the past decade — the 2005 International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism (the Nuclear Terrorism Convention), the 2005 Amendment to the Convention on the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings (the 2005 Amendment), the 2005 Protocol to the Convention on the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings (the Safety of Maritime Navigation and the Prevention of the Unlawful Transfer of Funds), the 2005 Protocol to the Convention on the Suppression of Unlawful Acts Relating to International Civil Aviation and its Protocols. While the work of the international community began with the negotiation and conclusion of these instruments, that work will only be completed when those instruments are widely ratified and fully implemented.

The United States is advancing in its own efforts to ratify these instruments, and in recent months we have made significant progress. Having obtained the legislative necessary to implement the Nuclear Terrorism Convention, the Convention on the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings, and the 2005 Amendment, we have deposited our instruments of ratification and accession as appropriate for each of these

