

Delegation of the Republic of Tunisia

Position Paper for the United Nations Security Council

The topics before the United Nations (UN) Security Council (SC) are I. Youth, Peace and Security; II. Threats to International Peace and Security Caused by Terrorist Acts and III. The Situation in Myanmar. The Republic of Tunisia acknowledges the great importance of these topics and looks forward to working with the other Member States.

I. Youth, Peace and Security

As there has been the alarming trend that youth is becoming more susceptible to extremism, the international community has to react to this development as youth is the key to inclusiveness, stability and security in situations that threaten peace. This, however, can only happen through integration and inclusion of the youth in the peace processes and prevention of spreading extremism. The Republic of Tunisia emphasizes the fundamental importance of this issue, therefore, we welcome all the resolutions the UN has passed so far regarding youth and their inclusion into peace building and maintaining processes and particularly recalls and reaffirms the SC resolution 2250 (2015) which advances the agenda of youth inclusion in peace and security and identifies five areas of action: participation, protection, prevention, partnerships, and disengagement. Tunisia moreover asserts that international cooperation is crucial, therefore, we further welcome the SC Resolution 2457 (2019) to foster the cooperation with the African Union in all fields of peacebuilding. In order to gain profound knowledge on how eradication of extremism could be achieved, in June 2017, the Tunisian Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research initiated a study of the roots of radicalization among young people and how to combat it, in a partnership between research centers in several Tunisian cities and the interior, defense, and health ministries. A counter-narrative campaign "We are Islam," aimed towards youth on social media platforms, was further initiated. Moreover, in order to tackle radicalization more effectively, Tunisia has attended a regional conference for Arab League Countries of the UN Office of Counter Terrorism in Abu Dhabi in December 2019 with the focus on youth empowerment and tolerance to prevent violent extremism conducive to terrorism. In order to prevent early radicalization, combat isolationist thinking as well as perceived marginalization and promote active youth inclusion in containing and limiting extremist ideas, Tunisia recommends a global UN Youth social media awareness campaign against extremism to promote a culture of dialogue and common interests and reduce prejudice. The objective of this campaign should be the quick recognition and safe countering of extremist rhetoric, narratives and ideas. To increase the involvement of young people in this campaign, and therefore its efficiency, an accompanying educational program in schools or other institutions, which focuses specifically on countering extremist thinking on social media as well as promoting inclusion in peace processes, would be useful. This initiative should be implemented by Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development which could help with the coordination of the campaign and program as well as be supported by the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. However, particularly for the educational programs, strong cooperation with national governments is needed to ensure success. The prevention of radicalization through early exposure of extremist ideas, especially concealed ones, will help to ensure peace and security in the long term. In conclusion, even though the Republic of Tunisia is well aware of the challenges, we will strongly continue to work on including youth in peace and security matters.

II. Threats to International Peace and Security Caused by Terrorist Acts

Terrorist acts pose a serious and severe challenge which the entire international community has to face. As a country that understands the grief and impact of terrorism on society, as there were several terrorist attacks in past years which killed more than a hundred innocent people, Tunisia urges the Member States to continue pursuing precautionary measures as this issue requires multilateral actions. Tunisia has been active in the fight against terrorism on the international level as we ratified several related conventions such as the *Organization for African Unity Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism* as well as the *UN International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism (2003)* and the *UN International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombing (2005)*. Tunisia moreover has been in close cooperation with other Member States through the Trans-Saharan Counterterrorism Initiative to prevent the growth of terrorist organizations. A collaboration with the UN

Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED) and UNESCO on a youth project in the North African states, provided training on countering online hate speech and recruiting. Furthermore, in order to combat terrorism more effectively, the Tunisian National Commission on Counterterrorism has introduced a new strategy in 2016, which was built upon four major pillars: prevention, protection, judicial proceedings and retaliation. Further, in 2019, the Tunisian government continued to strengthen anti-terrorism laws as well as promoted civil society inclusion in the matter. With a particular focus on youth involvement, projects and campaigns to counter extremist narratives and hate speech were initiated. As terrorism is a multifaceted problem, Tunisia proposes a comprehensive three step approach: prevention, action, aftermath. The first point consists of prevention which is the most efficient measure to counter terrorism as limiting radicalization means limiting potential threats. Therefore, educational projects as well as awareness campaigns aimed towards youth but also communities and families can be an important measure. As social media has become a popular place to spread extremist ideas, national as well as global campaigns, which focus on inclusion, send a strong signal against extremism. However, providing and strengthening communities and families with abilities to detect, intervene and successfully counter potential and early warning signs ensures further the continuing inclusion in society and prevents isolationist thinking. The second point involves immediate action through increased and facilitated cooperation between different countries to detect and raid hiding areas and training camps fostering extremism and undermine recruitment strategies used by terrorists. The last point, aftermath, consists of how to handle the after-effects, especially dealing with the offenders, through more decisive, transparent and efficient judicial proceedings as well as strategies and plans to reintegrate them into society to further prevent transfer of extremist thoughts onto others. The responsibility of implementation will lie with the CTED, however, in order to successfully achieve this plan, close cooperation with national governments is essential. While the Republic of Tunisia understands the complexity and the underlying problems of terrorism, we remain fully committed to combat the issue of radicalization as well as terrorist acts.

III. The Situation in Myanmar

According to Zeid Ra'ad al-Hussein, the former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, the situation in Myanmar is "a textbook example of ethnic cleansing". Tens of thousands of Rohingya Muslims were killed, oftentimes arbitrary, and the survivors became victims of rape, torture and other crimes. The extent of this crisis is immense, with more than 900,000 people whose living conditions in refugee camps are alarming as they are overcrowded, undersupplied and further vulnerable to human rights abuses. With no one held accountable until now, the Republic of Tunisia deems that there still is a constant threat to the 600,000 lives of the Rohingya that remained in Rakhine region. Tunisia is gravely concerned about and fully committed to end these atrocious crimes. Recalling the *Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (1956)*, Tunisia reiterates the importance of a strong condemnation of and stance against genocidal actions. Therefore, Tunisia supports the lawsuit The Gambia filed in November 2019 through the *Organization for Islamic Cooperation* against Myanmar with the International Court of Justice (ICJ). In January 2020, the ICJ ordered Myanmar's government to take responsibility for the wellbeing of the Rohingya minority. Tunisia is determined to ensure that Myanmar's government fulfills their obligations, especially those regarding human rights and security. The UN has already taken up important measures to handle the situation such as the commission by the Human Rights Council for an Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on Myanmar (IIFMM) to gather information and assess the scale of the situation which gave profound insight in the current circumstances. Furthermore, a special envoy, appointed by the Secretary General, was sent to Myanmar who further voiced their concerns about the situation. However, to ensure peace and security in the region and prevent further attacks and human rights abuses, the next crucial step must be taken. Therefore, Tunisia proposes to send a Technical Assessment Mission (TAM) to Myanmar, established under Article 34 in Chapter VI of the UN Charter, in order to assess whether a peacekeeping operation would be useful and further consider the short- and long-term implications of such a mission. Further, the circumstances such as the overall security, humanitarian and political situation as well as the abundance to human rights in the Rakhine region need to be analyzed. Based on the recommendations and findings in the Secretary General's report, the SC will be able to make a substantial decision on the matter. The Republic of Tunisia is certain that now is the right time to act and that it will be a significant step towards the right direction to ensure peace and security for all parties involved.