



## **STATEMENT OF MEXICO DURING THE SECURITY COUNCIL ARRIA FORMULA ON THE IMPACT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON THE INTERNATIONAL EFFORTS TO PREVENT AND COUNTER TERRORISM AND VIOLENT EXTREMISM**

**New York, 16 June, 2021**

We thank Tunisia and all the cosponsors for organizing this Arria Formula meeting, as well as the briefers for their excellent presentations. We must understand how the threat of terrorism has evolved during the pandemic and, most importantly, the role that pandemic-related stressors such as economic pressure and social isolation will play in further exacerbating existing grievances and pushing individuals towards radicalization.

The current complex global situation that we are living as a result of COVID-19 has reminded us that global crises know no borders. In the case of global efforts to prevent and counter terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism, the pandemic has also represented an understandable overhaul of Member States' priorities in order to address the urgent health, humanitarian and economic impact of the virus. It must be stressed out that the spaces for humanitarian and health services cannot be overtaken by security and military forces.

This has allowed terrorist organizations to consolidate and expand their operations and influence in certain regions. Where a state's presence is already weak, or contested, there is an opportunity for terrorist groups to try to become alternate service providers in order to gain favor and political legitimacy among local populations through the delivery of essential services.

Terrorist organizations have also sought to capitalize the increased use of the internet and social isolation to promote disinformation and conspiracy theories that fit their racially and ethnically motivated narratives surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic and global vaccination efforts.

According to CTED, in 2020 there was a 320% increase in acts of terrorism by the extreme-right. This is a concerning trend that must be addressed by both Member States and the United Nations. When individuals are self-radicalized due to easy access to violent extremist content online and they have access to high-powered weapons, the results can be devastating.



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COVID-19 has once again highlighted that our collective attention should be placed not only on the security aspects of terrorism, but on preventing and addressing the underlying social, political and economic grievances that lead to radicalization. Holistic and comprehensive approaches that ensure respect for International Law, IHL and International Human Rights are required. We must continue to work on peacebuilding, creating and strengthening community resilience, fostering gender equality and promoting tolerance and pluralism at a global level.

Thank you very much.