Dear Co-Chairs, Dear Colleagues,

—It is my pleasure to address another Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF) Ministerial Meeting.

-Allow me first to congratulate Canada on its new role as the incoming Co-Chair. I wish them success.

-I would like to thank the Netherlands, as the outgoing Co-Chair, for its invaluable contributions over the course of last four years.

-Likewise, Morocco has our full support in steering the Forum in the coming years.

-The Forum was established to find practical, result-oriented and sustainable solutions in the struggle against terrorism.

-The Forum proved itself to be highly beneficial for all stakeholders (governments, international institutions and civil society) in many ways.

-It acted as a facilitator to involve governments, societies, and international community on uniting around a common goal.

-The addition of four new good practices documents today to the Forum’s existing body of recommendations is important.

Distinguished colleagues,

- My country has been attacked by multiple terrorist organizations with different ideologies, including DEASH, Al Qaida, PKK-PYD, and FETO.

-One lesson we learned is that we cannot defeat terrorism unless we address the root causes.

-To win this battle, we must do better than fighting the groups and individuals, which are in fact symptoms of a wider problem.

-We need to make sure that terrorist ideologies become meaningless. The best way to do so is to focus our efforts to build a just, tolerant and equitable international order.

-To stop the terrorist threat from PYD/YPG and DEASH, Turkey plays an active role in bringing about peace and stability in Syria. We will continue our efforts within Astana Process. The recent formation of the Constitution Committee is an important achievement.

-On the other hand, the issue of foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs) remaining in Syria cannot be resolved by few countries.
We need burden-sharing, and not over-burdening the already overwhelmed partners.

In this respect, I would like to reiterate our appeal to the countries of origin to take back the FTFs and put them on trial in their courts.

Resorting to such measures as revoking citizenship or applying temporary exclusion orders (cancelling residency permits) only lead to new gaps in our counterterrorism cooperation.

Let me also highlight the need to address the plight of children under the control of the terrorist organizations.

Recently, the families, mothers and fathers of the children abducted by the PKK started a silent protest in Diyarbakır, Turkey. These mothers simply want their children back.

Unlike the sensitivity shown to terror suspects, international media and community have so far disregarded that protest.

We need to show empathy and consistency against all sorts of terrorism regardless of its form and manifestation.

Dear Colleagues,

We are deeply alarmed on the surge of attacks coming from anti-Islamic and anti-Semitic worldview of right-wing extremism.

Over the course of last nine months, a number of places of worship, including mosques in Christchurch (New Zealand) and Baerum (Norway) as well as synagogues in Pittsburg and Poway (U.S.) were targeted.

With the new challenges ahead, we need this Forum more than ever.

Turkey will continue to provide financial and in-kind support to the Forum’s Administrative Unit and the inspired institutions.

That’s why we will be hosting another workshop with the IIJ (International Institute for Justice and Rule of Law) in Istanbul later this year (11-13 December 2019).

The workshop aims to strengthen the judicial capacity of Eastern African countries on collection, use and sharing of evidence for purposes of criminal prosecution of terrorist suspects.

Before I conclude, let me once again share my best wishes to the Forum’s Co-Chairs.
-As a founding-member and a long-time leading partner of the Forum, you can count on Turkey’s support and contributions. Thank you.