

**Speech for the  
Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs**

**For the Global Counterterrorism Forum  
Tenth Ministerial Meeting**

**September 25, 2019  
New York**

First, let me express Canada's warmest thanks to Ministers Blok and Bourita for the leadership that the Kingdom of the Netherlands and the Kingdom of Morocco have provided to the Global Counterterrorism Forum, and to their representatives who have so ably co-chaired the GCTF over the last term.

In particular, I would like to thank the Kingdom of the Netherlands for their generous advice and guidance to Canada, as we prepare to step into its very large shoes. Likewise, allow me to reiterate our great appreciation to the Kingdom of Morocco for accepting to be our partner as GCTF Co-Chair based on the shared vision that our two governments circulated earlier this year. We are deeply honoured to have this opportunity to work together.

Canada assumes this role after co-chairing the West Africa Working Group for eight productive years, in an exceptional and highly collaborative partnership with Algeria. As we step away from that function, we remain deeply concerned that the terror situation in West Africa has not improved. If anything, it has worsened.

But we are confident that under Algeria's and Germany's leadership, the Working Group will face the challenge with determination, and will succeed in strengthening partnerships with the nations of West Africa, the United Nations, civil society, and the range of working groups and inspired institutions within the GCTF family. We are particularly pleased to see the energy and dedication that Germany is bringing to the Working Group and its new partnership with Algeria.

Our experience as Co-Chair of the West Africa Working Group helps ground Canada's approach to its role as incoming GCTF Co-Chair. We are deeply grateful to Algeria and others in West Africa for their generosity in sharing with us their experiences, both positive and negative.

Working with our Moroccan partners over the next two years, Canada will apply the lessons we learned from the West Africans with whom we worked so closely.

The first being that military action alone is not the solution. In West Africa, national governments continue to struggle to find an appropriate balance between military and non-military responses;

Second, that it is essential to address underlying economic factors and development needs, because poverty and inequality are where terrorism takes root.

Third, that it is equally important to address corruption and linkages between terrorism and organized crime, recognizing their distinctive manifestations in each region.

Fourth, that it is fundamental to involve civil society and civilian actors in cohesive, comprehensive actions that connect to everyone in society, in all corners of a state's territory.

And finally that strategies to address emerging security threats and to build resilience must always be synonymous with justice and the rule of law, grounded in human rights, and appropriately informed by gender considerations.

The fight against terrorism and violent extremism is neither simple nor easy. The threat is transnational, multifaceted, and ever changing. Canada's experience, at home and in the West Africa Working Group, reminds us that this threat is not linked to any religion, nationality or ethnic group. To be effective, our response must set aside any preconceived biases, in favour of evidence and gender based analyses and anchored in our universal respect for human rights.

Since the Ministerial Plenary last year, Canada has been fortunate not to have suffered a violent terrorist attack. Nevertheless, I can assure you that we are not complacent and remain active in efforts to combat violent extremism and terrorism.

For example, following the attack in New Zealand, Canada joined the Christchurch Call to Action, through which governments, civil society, and online service providers are delivering on voluntary, collective commitments to prevent terrorists and violent extremists from abusing the internet to promote and sensationalize acts of terrorism.

The attack in Christchurch was all too familiar for Canadians. In 2017, a terrorist killed six people in a Quebec City mosque.

When such violence occurs, in mosques, churches, synagogues, or on the streets of our major cities, we must not be afraid to specifically condemn it for what it is: neo-nazism, white supremacy, Islamophobia, anti-Semitism, terrorism.

We cannot hide behind euphemisms that distract from the truth. Doing so puts our citizens, especially those from religious minorities and racialized communities in greater danger.

The long-term threat of terrorism underscores the importance of GCTF support for the UN Global Counter Terrorism Strategy and the GCTF's broader engagement with the UN. Our experience in the West Africa Working Group also showed that a strong partnership with the United Nations can mutually reinforce our respective efforts to counter terrorism and violent extremism.

Canada clearly understands that none of our current global challenges can be solved by a single country working in isolation. That is why we invest so much in the GCTF and other multilateral initiatives. Inclusive dialog and collective effort is the only way.

Canada's decision to seek a new leadership role in the GCTF complements our bid for a non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council for 2021-22. Canada's Security Council candidacy, like our role as GCTF Co-Chair, reflects a commitment to working together with our international partners to build a just, inclusive and sustainable world.

In closing, let me emphasize that Canada is deeply honoured to have been a member of the GCTF from its inception and proud of what we have achieved together to date. In full partnership with the Kingdom of Morocco, we greatly look forward to working with all GCTF members to achieve our common goal of a safer and more secure world.

Thank you.