Good morning Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

At the outset, on behalf of the Government of India, I would like to convey our sincere thanks to GCTF co-chairs for their excellent leadership and guidance in advancing GCTF’s work and objectives.

Excellencies,

2. Terrorism remains the most pervasive and serious threat facing the world today. It poses a grave challenge to international peace and security. It undermines the very foundations of the democratic political and social order. It is the worst violation of human rights and personal freedoms and those who abet, finance and support terrorism are the worst violators. Every day our collective conscience is being ravaged by terrorists in some or the other part of the world.

3. As a victim of state sponsored cross border terrorism from last many decades, India strongly condemns terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. We consider terrorist attacks to be attacks against entire humanity and a challenge for all established civilized institutions and entities. The latest challenge, however, is not just about the loss of innocent lives and valuable property, it also pertains to the seamless flow of online extremist propaganda and radicalization. Use by terrorist of the rapidly developing technologies such as Unmanned Aerial Systems, travel of foreign terrorist fighters from one territory to other territories, are other such counter terrorism challenges. It needs hardly a mention that terrorists threats are continuously evolving. Unfortunately, despite wide scale condemnation of this menace at the multilateral or bilateral level, some countries still render clandestine support to terrorism because of their narrow political objectives and use terrorism as an instrument of state policy. This must be eschewed. The world needs to adopt a policy of zero-tolerance towards terrorism. Politicization of forums such as FATF and UN listing mechanism must be avoided and responses to terrorism must be similar across geographies and cultures.

Excellencies,

4. As a founding member, India commends GCTF for all its initiatives on building more awareness about counter terrorism best practices and capacity building efforts. In this context, India welcome GCTF’s new non-binding good practices documents on mainstreaming gender, interdicting terrorist travel, countering terrorist use of unmanned aerial systems and use of administrative measures in counter terrorism context. These
documents would further help global community in devising fitting responses to the scourge of terrorism.

5. As GCTF is one of the most influential and committed multilateral groupings working in close coordination with the UN on the cause of terrorism, India strongly urges this forum to accord urgent focus on core issues. It is lamentable that despite years of debate, the world is still struggling on such rudimentary issues as the 'definition of terrorism'. The GCTF must, therefore, work towards ensuring early finalization of an international legal framework for addressing this issue under a Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism. As the menace of terrorism is an existential issue which severely impacts on the lives and well being of our future generations, this august assembly must facilitate development of complete unity of purpose and commitment by all countries to the cause of terrorism. We must step up our collective efforts to confront the scourge of terrorism squarely and decisively.

I, thank you, Excellencies for your kind attention.

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