



**Statement by the Permanent Representative Ambassador Hatun Demirer  
“Sixth anniversary of the attempted coup d’état in Türkiye on 15 July 2016”  
(1382<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the Permanent Council, 14 July 2022)**

Mr. Chair,

In the 1990 Paris Charter, the participating States have committed to “undertake to build, consolidate and strengthen democracy as the only system of government of [their] nations”. They have emphasized that “democratic government is based on the will of the people, expressed regularly through free and fair elections.”

Six years have passed since the Turkish democracy came under severe attack. The July 15 coup attempt was carried out by the FETO terrorist organization, which was portraying itself as a benign civic movement running schools and organizing charity events. Its’ goal was to subvert the democratic foundations of Türkiye. It aimed at establishing an anti-democratic order under the absolute rule of the ringleader Fetullah Gülen who -most unfortunately- continues to reside in impunity in one participating State.

FETO is a clandestine terrorist organization which is unprecedented in terms of its global reach, ambitions and methods.

On the night of 15 July 2016, two hundred and fifty-one innocent people were killed and more than two thousand people were injured. That night, the Turkish people stood against this heinous coup attempt. They demonstrated to the world that they did not recognize any power over their will. They stood ready to protect the democracy.

We once again stress that coup attempts must be condemned unequivocally.

Mr. Chair,

In the past six years, the fight against FETO both in Türkiye and abroad has constituted one of the main priorities of our country.

Despite facing extraordinary security challenges, we have been able to successfully conduct our fight at home in compliance with the principles of the rule of law and fundamental rights and freedoms. FETO lost its backbone in Türkiye. However, it is trying to survive by making use of its structures abroad. Most unfortunately, they still have schools, businesses, so-called NGOs and media houses abroad, including some OSCE participating States.

FETO-affiliated organizations are masters of unlawful and deceptive methods. Their expertise of criminal activities ranges from tax evasion, money laundering and illegal transfers of cash to bribery and passport/visa frauds. Their criminal capacity to produce fake documents including diplomas and certificates and their methods of cheating in exam systems are time bombs for the countries that they still operate. They constitute a direct threat to the law and order of any country they operate.

The international community is gradually understanding that, actually it is not a social movement that engages with education and charity, but rather a dark and insidious organization.



Mr. Chair,

No state has the luxury to differentiate between terrorists and no terrorist organization can be classified as “useful” according to preferences. FETO is responsible for the loss of hundreds of lives as well as other grave crimes against the Turkish people. Six years after July 15, 2016, Türkiye continues its resolute fight against FETO, just as it continues its fight against other terrorist organizations such as the PKK, PYD-YPG and ISIS (DAESH).

We expect the international community to stand in solidarity with Türkiye in the fight against terrorism.

Mr. Chair,

I would like to conclude my statement by highlighting the relevant commitment from the 1990 Paris Charter:

“[The participating States] recognize their responsibility to defend and protect, in accordance with their laws, their international human rights obligations and their international commitments, the democratic order freely established through the will of the people against the activities of persons, groups or organizations that engage in or refuse to renounce terrorism or violence aimed at the overthrow of that order or of that of another participating State.”

Allowing the participation of FETO-linked so-called NGOs in the human dimension meetings and events constitutes a failure of upholding this commitment.

This also contradicts with standing in solidarity with Türkiye in its fight against terrorism.

Mr. Chair,

When we distribute my statement in the written format, we’ll also attach a recent article of H.E. Minister Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu on this matter.

I kindly ask my statement be attached to the journal of the day.

Thank you.

**Annex:** *Article of H.E. Minister Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu*



**“Terrorism has no nationality, ethnicity nor religion. FETO threatens humanity as a whole”**

On the evening of July 15, 2016, the “Fethullahist Terrorist Organization” (FETO) launched a bloody coup attempt against the people and the government of my country. Their aim was to establish a radical, fundamentalist regime, loyal only to their ringleader Fetullah Gülen.

As FETO affiliated army units left their barracks to occupy key locations, such as the Bosphorus Bridge in Istanbul and fighter jets and attack helicopters bombed strategic targets including the Parliament, Presidential compound, army and police headquarters; thousands of civilians took to the streets to stop this unprecedented heinous coup attempt. The plotters killed 251 innocent civilians and left thousands injured. On that night the Turkish people defended democracy with their lives. This heroic response was something the conspirators did not foresee.

To understand what transpired, one has to understand the true nature of FETO. FETO was established in the late 1960’s as a so-called “religious movement”. In the guise of promoting education and inter-religious dialogue, it managed to cover its malign intentions.

The well-planned and wide-spread infiltration by FETO members and converts into the army, law enforcement, judiciary and numerous government institutions, including my Ministry, was carried out for decades clandestinely for an overarching plan, of which the final phase was unleashed on July 15, 2016.

Had the coup attempt succeeded, there would have been a very different Türkiye today. Democracy would not have existed and fundamental rights and freedoms would have been suspended indefinitely. The nation would have fallen in the hands of an extremist government.

FETO not only controlled a significant portion of educational institutions, but also owned numerous financial institutions. Their bank accounts were fed by prominent FETO members in industry and commerce, as well as by officials and members of the public. Many innocent civilians were also lured into contributing to FETO’s finances as their piety was manipulated. The enormous income driven from their schools around the globe was channeled into these accounts clandestinely waiting for their ultimate move.

Following the bloody coup attempt of July 15, 2016, a resolute cleansing of the public sector, including government institutions and the military, as well

as of the private sector from all FETO affiliated persons and companies was initiated. Some prominent conspirators have been apprehended. Others escaped justice and found refuge in foreign countries. The head of the FETO terrorist organization, Fethullah Gülen, still resides in the United States. Our government has been requesting the extradition of Gülen to Türkiye from the United States as well as that of FETO members from European countries for years. Unfortunately, these requests have not been fulfilled yet.

On the other hand, elsewhere in the world, an increasing number of governments understand the danger this terrorist organization also poses to them and are taking the necessary steps. FETO is also engaged in illegal activities such as visa fraud, money laundering and arms trafficking. Consequently, FETO members are being cleared from public and private sectors in many countries. Many schools affiliated with this terrorist organization abroad have been transferred to the Turkish Maarif Foundation after 2016. Today, Maarif Schools are functioning in many countries and are providing excellent education worldwide.

The nature and scope of Türkiye's fight against FETO is no different than that exercised by other countries against organizations which had terrorized officials and civilians alike, and endangered democratic values, fundamental rights and freedoms. Türkiye is doing what the respective countries in their fight against terrorism have done in the past. All procedures are in compliance with law.

Terrorism does not have a nationality, ethnicity or religion. This menace threatens humanity as a whole. Therefore, the response to this threat must be united and determined. No state has the luxury to differentiate between terrorists and no terrorist organization can be classified as "useful" according to preferences. FETO is responsible for the loss of hundreds of lives as well as other grave crimes against the Turkish people. Six years after July 15, 2016, Türkiye continues its resolute fight against FETO, just as it continues its fight against other terrorist organizations such as the PKK, PYD-YPG, DHKP-C and DAESH.

We expect the international community to stand in solidarity with Türkiye in the fight against terrorism.