



STATEMENT BY MR. NIRUPAM SEN, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE, ON
AGENDA ITEM 108: MEASURES TO ELIMINATE INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM AT
THE SIXTH COMMITTEE OF THE 62ND SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS
GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON OCTOBER 11, 2007

Mr. Chairman

We take this opportunity to congratulate you on your election as Chairman of this Committee and also congratulate the Bureau members on their election. We assure you of our full cooperation and support.

We thank the Secretary General for his annual report on the implementation of Para 10 of the "Declaration on Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism" that presents measures taken at the national and international levels for the prevention and suppression of international terrorism as well as information on incidents caused by international terrorism. We would also like to thank Ambassador Rohan Perera for his report on the meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee established by General Assembly Resolution 51/210.

Mr. Chairman,

Terrorism continues to remain one of the major threats facing the international community. Since the last year when we met in this forum, terrorists have struck in India, United Kingdom, Yemen, Lebanon, Algeria, Turkey and many other places. This reinforces the fact that terrorism is a threat to all states, to all peoples, which can strike anyone, anytime, anywhere. It's a global threat that requires a global response.

Mr. Chairman, we continue to firmly reject the notion that any cause can justify terrorism. Nothing can ever justify the targeted killing of innocent men, women or children. The senseless slaughter of innocents reinforces the urgency

with which we need to unitedly and resolutely confront terrorism everywhere and at all levels and clearly proclaim that terrorism can never be accepted or justified. As a character in one of Schiller's plays says, one cannot create a fairer world through terror or establish justice through lawlessness. There is a wide and unbridgeable gulf between a freedom fighter on the one hand and a terrorist suicide bomber on the other. The former sacrifices his own life alone, the latter also sacrifices the lives of innocent civilians; the former gives up his life so that innocent people may live, the latter gives up his life so that innocent people may die. The former's action is life enhancing; the latter's is only a form of necrophilia. Democratic societies have the advantage of encouraging secular, democratic and progressive opposition forces which prevents fundamentalist forces from monopolizing political space.

The international community should send a clear signal to terrorists that their actions will not be tolerated, irrespective of the motivations underlying them. This principle was affirmed in the 1994 Declaration and various UNGA resolutions on measures to eliminate international terrorism that unequivocally assert that "criminal acts of terrorism intended or calculated to provoke a state of terror in the general public, a group of persons or particular persons for political purposes are, in any circumstances, unjustifiable, whatever the considerations of a political, philosophical, ideological, racial, ethnic, religious or other nature that may be invoked to justify them".

Mr. Chairman

The United Nations Global Counter Terrorism Strategy also condemns terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. It signals the will of the international community that it would no longer tolerate the actions of the sponsors and abettors of terrorism or of those who willfully fail to prevent terrorists from utilizing their territories.

A strong response to terrorism requires broad-based international cooperation, compressing the space available to terrorists, and increasing the capability of States to address terrorist threats. It requires sustained and specific cooperation by a variety of national, regional and global agencies. We hope that the Strategy would provide the impetus to unite the international community in its fight against terrorism via practical measures that facilitate cooperation by way of extradition, prosecution, information exchange, and capacity building.

Welcome as the strategy is, there is much more that needs to be done to combat the menace that international terrorism has become. Without the early adoption of the Comprehensive Convention against International Terrorism, the global struggle against terrorism will remain incomplete.

We continue to believe that agreement on it is attainable. The definitional issue is a red herring. The CCIT is not concerned with terrorism as a philosophical category but terrorist acts that are specific crimes and these have defined. We are encouraged by the fact that serious attempts are being made to resolve the outstanding issues. The new proposal submitted by the facilitator after extensive bilateral consultations is an attempt to narrow down differences. We thank her for all her efforts. Several other proposals also still remain on the table. We call on all delegations to seriously examine these proposals and work together to reach a compromise that will satisfy all parties and help in the finalization and adoption of the CCIT. We believe that when adopted, CCIT would provide a solid legal basis for the fight against terrorism. Most of these proposals make the CCIT perfectly consistent with international humanitarian law. And this is as it should be. After all it would be a dreadful paradox if democratic societies were to make civil liberties so precious as to curtail them. This central point of democratic societies has been cogently put by Hegel in his "Phenomenology of Spirit": the life of the spirit is not life that shrinks from death or keeps itself untouched by its devastation but that endures it and maintains itself in spite of it.

Mr. Chairman,

UN General Assembly has successfully established a comprehensive legal framework in the field of counter-terrorism. The 13 major UN instruments relating to specific terrorist activities remain fundamental tools in the fight against terrorism. India is a Party to all the 13 major legal instruments. India ratified the 2005 International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism in May this year. This Convention provides a legal basis for international cooperation to prevent terrorists from acquiring nuclear weapons. The effectiveness of this instrument depends on the degree to which States Parties respect, abide by and enforce its provisions. Key in this regard is strengthening the security of fissile materials stored in nuclear facilities. If governments fulfill their duties under this Convention, the agreement will work well and accomplish its purposes.

India also attaches utmost importance to the fulfillment of its obligations under the relevant counter terrorism resolutions of the United Nations. It has filed five National Reports to the Counter Terrorism Committee, giving a comprehensive picture of steps taken by India to counter terrorism. A 14 member composite delegation of UN counter-terrorism experts had visited India last year. A detailed presentation of India's counter-terrorism strategy was made to the Committee. India has also entered into several bilateral and multilateral agreements to cooperate with other States in curbing the scourge of terrorism.

The challenge of confronting terrorism is not new to us. India has been a victim of terrorism for more than two decades. As victims, we are committed to eradicating this threat from our societies.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman

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