

ISRAEL

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Statement by

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Measures to eliminate international terrorism

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Thank you Mr. Chairman,

As this is the first time my delegation is taking the floor in this Committee at the 68th Session of the General Assembly, allow me to congratulate you on your election as the Chairman of the Sixth Committee. Israel welcomes the opportunity to engage in a meaningful exchange of views on this issue, and its importance cannot be overstated.

Terrorism has, for many years, been the focus of discussion in a wide range of international fora, including in this committee.

Yet there remain several unresolved issues. Most notably, the international community has yet to devise effective mechanisms to prevent suicide attacks. There is abundant evidence showing that imprisonment and even death has no deterrent effect for such heinous crimes.

Beyond the different views and schools of thought that have developed around the study of terrorism, I am confident that we would all agree that terrorism is reprehensible, unjustifiable, and immoral.

Israelis have been the target of terror attacks for years resulting in the death and grievous injury of thousands of Israelis - both on Israeli soil and abroad. Today we know that these heinous terrorist acts, perpetrated by Hezbollah in particular, are part of a global terrorist campaign aimed at Israeli and Western targets. Iran and its Quds Force have been behind these terrorist attacks, from Cyprus to Thailand and from Kenya to Nigeria.

It is painfully clear that terrorism knows no borders and its victims are members of all cultures and religions. It is also clear that the dreadful results of terrorism cannot be justified on political grounds.

Therefore, it is imperative to unconditionally condemn terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, irrespective of its motivation. In this regard, some states find it convenient to condemn terrorism at home while condoning attacks outside their borders. This hypocrisy cannot be tolerated.

Israel wishes to reiterate its support for the 2006 United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and its satisfaction with its third review in 2012 which focused on the victims of terrorism.

Israel cooperates fully with Security Council Resolution 1267 and on January 2nd of this year, updated its list of foreign terrorist organizations and individuals involved in terrorism to align with the updated designations made by the Security Council.

Mr. Chairman,

The eyes of the world are all turned towards Syria and the crimes committed by the Assad regime against its own citizens. It is therefore not surprising that this country has decided to exploit this important debate and cynically divert attention from their appalling abuses, towards Israel.

The whole world now knows that the Syrian regime has been stockpiling chemical weapons. Israel is concerned that these weapons of mass destruction may fall into the hands of terrorist groups like Hezbollah.

This July, the European Union designated Hezbollah's military wing as a terror organization. Israel welcomes this important step and applauds its implementation and enforcement by the EU member states.

Mr. Chairman,

International terrorism cannot operate without the continuous flow of funds. The Security Council has recognized the danger of state-sponsored terrorism and has repeatedly called on all states to prevent the financing of terrorists and terrorist organization. This includes organizations claiming to have charitable, social or cultural goals.

Israel sees the targeting of financial resources that support terrorism as a major counter-terrorism tool available to states. Disrupting the funding can effectively interrupt the growth and activity of terrorist organizations around the world. In this respect, it has been our experience that financial measures such as designations and the freezing of assets can fulfill the goal of preventing the next deadly terror attack. These measures must be supported by intelligence sharing and cooperation by states.

Mr. Chairman,

The only way for the international community to combat the threat of terrorism is by implementing a "zero tolerance" approach. Terrorism cannot run without the fuel of incitement, intolerance, hatred and the glorification of deaths and martyrdom. Any plan to cultivate a culture of peace and co-existence must focus on education.

Israel is party to the core universal instruments on counter-terrorism and is a dedicated partner in the global counter-terrorism effort. For many years, Israel has contributed through both technical cooperation and support of such initiatives, whether bilaterally or through UN agencies and regional organizations.

Mr. Chairman,

Israel supports a Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism that would underscore the fact that - without exception - no cause or grievance justifies terrorism in any form or manifestation. The goal of achieving consensus must not undermine core principles including the clear and effective definition of terrorism.

Compromising the formulation would compromise our ability to create an effective legal regime. For this reason we cannot excuse terrorism under the guise of martyrdom, so called 'acts of liberation' or acts of terrorism committed in the name of certain causes or by certain groups.

In closing, we would like to emphasize that the Convention would not apply to state military action, which is already governed by an entirely different international legal framework.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.