



MALDIVES

**Statement by His Excellency Mr. Ahmed Sareer, Permanent Representative
of the Republic of Maldives at the Sixth Committee Agenda Item 110: Measures to Eliminate
International Terrorism
New York, 7 October 2013**

Mr Chairman,

At the outset, let me congratulate you on your election and express our confidence that this Committee will make outstanding contribution and progress under your leadership.

The act of terrorism inflict pain and suffering on people around the world. It endangers and takes innocent lives, disrupts the peace and fundamental freedoms, impairs the dignity of human beings and threatens territorial integrity and security of States. My delegation joins others in condemning terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. The Maldives believes that terrorism should not be associated with any religion, race, faith, theology, values, culture, society or group. Nor can it be localized to one nation. We condemn the acts of terrorism being inflicted across the globe, the most recent being the heinous terrorist attack at the Westgate shopping mall in Nairobi, Kenya, where over 70 people were killed and hundreds injured. We extend our deepest sympathies to the families of those that were affected.

The Maldives commends the work of the various UN bodies and agencies towards combating global terrorism, including the recently issued Report from the Ad Hoc Committee established under resolution 51/210 (date). We also welcome the report of the Secretary General on Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism. The Maldives reiterates its call for the full implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy unanimously agreed and adopted by States in 2008. My Delegation wishes to convey its continued support to the work of the United Nations Centre for Counter Terrorism. We hope that the work undertaken to fully implement these resolutions and strategies will be completed in a timely manner.

Mr Chairman,

The Maldives firmly believes that a way forward is through a renewed focus on the application and implementation of the universal instruments and the resolutions adopted by the Security Council and the General Assembly. The Maldives has signed 8 major international counter-terrorism instruments and is working to accede to the remaining ones.

Terrorism can only be addressed by complementing international activities with regional and bilateral initiatives, in addition to national ones. Although the current counter-terrorism measures are encouraging, we believe that these measures need to be more streamlined and defined. This is why the Maldives supports the creation of a comprehensive convention on Terrorism. It is our hope that efforts to do so, will gain traction during this year.

At the regional level, the Maldives is working through the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) for capacity building and technical cooperation. The Maldives is also a member of the Asia Pacific Group on Money Laundering, a Financial Action Taskforce-style regional body and has thus submitted annual status reports. Bilaterally, the Maldives cooperates closely with the neighbouring countries and many other strategic partners in combating terrorism.

Nationally, the Anti-Terrorism Act of 1990 and the more recent National Security Policy of 2012 is a clear guide to combat counter-terrorism, in order to streamline and update the country's efforts against terrorism, a new Anti-Terrorism Bill is currently being formulated. It is our hope that this bill along with other measures would help the Maldives more effectively to punish the perpetrators as well as help the victims of terrorism.

Mr Chairman,

The Maldives has a traditionally moderate Muslim population that rejects ideologies that breed extremism. Maldives, though a homogenous country in terms of race, religion, language and culture, face emerging threats from extremists both religious and political, who believe they can advance their aims by committing acts of terror. With the existence of these radical political and religious elements in the society, there is a potential threat of terrorism. The Maldives does not believe that use of violence to achieve religious or political goals is justifiable.

We do not condone the use of the veil of religion as a pretext for inflicting terror, tearing countries, families and the entire world apart. We reject the calls by radical preachers and militant groups to turn civil conflicts into religious wars. Our religion condemns violence: it condemns suicide, unjust war and retribution by force. Islam promotes peace, the protection and preservation of life and unity. My Delegation condemns the use of terrorism to achieve political goals around the world.

In the recent past, the Maldives has witnessed a wave of violent activities associated with political tension. These include attacks on personalities, institutions, media and private property. Less than 24 hours ago, a private TV station was torched. This attack has resulted in further heightening tensions in the country. The Government of Maldives condemns this attack on the private Television channel and commit to a full and thorough investigation in order to bring the perpetrators of this timid and cowardly attack to justice.

Mr. Chairman,

As the smallest state in the region, the Maldives is susceptible to any instability in the region. And its strategic location in Indian Ocean, cross cutting the major trade routes, has attracted the eye of pirates operating in the region. The Maldives is working together with countries/partners in the region to enhance maritime security. Given the importance of information sharing in this regard, the Maldives welcomes the establishment by INTERPOL of a global piracy database. We are also thankful for the support of the United Nations Trust Fund for the Fight against Piracy that approved a package of projects, worth \$ 2 million in support of anti-piracy efforts off the coast of Somalia and other affected States in the region, including the Maldives.

Mr Chairman,

Terrorism is not an isolated phenomenon. It is a product of the linkages between fundamental and cultural antagonisms, domestic and international politics, national and international conflicts that are beyond our national boundaries. Terrorism also has to be viewed in the context of radicalization and extremism, social discrimination, economic disparities, restrictions on rights and civil liberties and power politics.

The Maldives in recent years, has faced significant economic hardships. Graduation from LDC status resulting in loss of access to concessionary finance, preferential market access, and ODA, coupled with the global economic downturn and the existing inherent vulnerabilities associated with being a small island developing state, have posed economic challenges. Social indicators such as a high youth population and high youth unemployment, loss in economic opportunities and the pains of a democracy in transition have exacerbated the grievances of the people. This has caused a potential for radicalization among poor and grieved segments of our populous.

The Maldives is also worried about the spillover effects of conflicts, civil wars and threats within the region and around the globe. Thus, it is equally important to address the root causes of terrorism, such as poverty, destitution, unemployment, civil unrest and lack of education, as it is to address the crime itself.

Mr Chairman,

Countries working alone, cannot address a behemoth of an issue such as terrorism. Especially for a country like the Maldives, with limited capacity but a vast geographical area, international assistance and coordination is of paramount importance. The Maldives believes that the United Nations with possible use of its capacities could contribute successfully in prevention and peaceful resolution of unsolved conflicts. The Maldives supports the peaceful resolution of conflicts and is confident that this would lead to strengthening the global fight against terrorism while protecting rights of the victims. The Maldives recognises counter radicalization efforts as a long-term success against violent extremism. We also believe that this fight is collective and global and we reiterate our unequivocal support for the fulfillment of pillars of the Global Counter- Terrorism Strategy and look forward to working with your Excellency and the members of the Bureau.

Thank you.