



Statement by

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**Agenda item 110: Measures To Eliminate International Terrorism**

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Mr. Chairman,

Since my delegation is taking the floor for the first time, let me congratulate you on your assumption of the Chair of the Sixth Committee.

My delegation aligns itself with the Statement delivered by Iran on behalf of the NAM.

Despite all our efforts to eliminate this scourge, terrorism continues to devastate community after community around the world. We express our heartfelt sympathies for the Kenyan people following the senseless massacre of innocents in the Nairobi Shopping Mall two weeks ago. We stand in solidarity with Kenya, a fellow member of NAM and the G77. The continuing carnage in Iraq and the senseless attacks in Pakistan are also grim reminders that we must re-dedicate ourselves to enhance all efforts for greater international co-operation to eradicate this menace.

Terrorism remains a complex challenge. It calls for coordinated and comprehensive approaches by the international community. The international community must combine its efforts. We should ask ourselves if the world has done all what it could to prevent acts of terror.

No country in the world, big or small, weak or powerful, rich or poor, is safe from the vicious brutality of terrorism. We in Sri Lanka experienced all the unmitigated horrors of terrorism for almost 3 decades.

Terrorism has no borders; it does not respect nationality and is oblivious of religion or cultural heritage. We wish to emphasize that the root causes of terrorism remain complex and countering terrorism should not be viewed primarily as a military challenge. Specifically, terrorism cannot be associated with any ethnicity or religion.

Mr. Chairman,

The Ad Hoc Committee on Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism established by the General Assembly has continued its efforts to strengthen the International Legal Framework to combat Terrorism. This is reflected in the series of 'new generation' Conventions it has successfully negotiated and concluded since its establishment, namely the International Conventions on Terrorist Bombings, Terrorist Financing and on Nuclear Terrorism.

The Draft Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism has however been on its Agenda for more than 10 years. Sri Lanka delegation shares the sense of disappointment expressed by many other delegations that it has not been possible for the Ad Hoc Committee to make progress when it met at its Sixteenth Session, in March this year. I can only repeat the question posed by the Chairman of the Committee at the conclusion of that Session "Are the issues at stake so insurmountable that it can take all these years without reaching any agreement?" He also expressed the hope that delegations should comeback when the Working Group meets at the 69th Session of the UNGA 'reinvigorated, to make a difference now'.

That process must start now at this 68th Session. The longer we delay, the message we send remains opaque. We should not tolerate the daily carnage that we are witnessing.

We welcome the fact that the Ad Hoc Committee has appended to its Report a consolidated set of Draft Articles, which reflect the progress made so far. This would be a convenient reference point for what has been achieved so far, when the work on the CCIT resumes. We also welcome the fact that the text of a draft Resolution to address some issues of concern to delegations has been included in the Report.

We believe with many other delegations, that the elements of the Coordinator's 2007 Package constitutes a viable option to reach consensus. We need to make use of the opportunity provided by this debate to generate the necessary momentum to bring this process to a successful conclusion.

Mr. Chairman,

Terror groups fund their activities through linkages to international organized crime. These linkages mean that terror groups and their front organizations profit from human and arms trafficking, money laundering, credit card fraud, and cyber-crime. Sri Lanka faced a 3 decade long terror campaign conducted by a brutal terrorist group, the LTTE. One of the main reasons for the LTTE's early success was its well developed extensive international network, with links to other terror groups and organized crime. Our conflict is now ended. But even in the post-conflict phase, LTTE related networks in transit and destination countries still continue to be active in a range of criminal activities.

Sri Lanka reaffirms its commitment to the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy that consolidates the activities of the Member States and presents a common strategic and operational framework to fight terrorism and protect the right to life. Sri Lanka is a party to 13 multilateral conventions countering terrorism and the SAARC instruments on mutual assistance on criminal matters. Sri Lanka is an active participant in the global efforts to counter the illegal movement of funds. We support the General Assembly's coordination of counter-terrorism efforts and legal norm-setting work. We note that the Security Council has also addressed this issue through various discussions and resolutions and by establishing several subsidiary bodies. We would like to extend our appreciation for the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate for organizing several regional workshops on countering terrorism and on strengthening criminal justice that benefit Police Officers, Prosecutors, and Judges in South Asia.

We continue to support the United Nations as the primary body to spearhead the global campaign against terror.

Thank You Mr. Chairman.