

12 June 2007

**Statement of H.E. Ms. Sheikha Haya Rashed Al Khalifa,
President of the 61st Session of the General Assembly,
at the Conference on the Implementation of the UN Global Counter-
Terrorism Strategy organized by the Stanley Foundation**

Good morning Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a pleasure for me to be invited once again to participate in a conference organized by the Stanley Foundation. I commend the Foundation for addressing a timely subject of discussion – “the Implementation of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy”

Combating international terrorism is a topic closely linked to the work of the United Nations with all its relevant organs; and is closely monitored by the world at large. Terrorism harms peace and security, as well as violates human rights and the rule of law – the core values that the United Nations stands for.

This responsibility is shouldered by all Member States equally.

On 8 September 2006, the General Assembly collectively adopted the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. The adoption of the Strategy was a message of courage and cooperation. It reflects the ability of the entire membership to deal with the current political challenges of the world.

Since the launch of the Strategy on 19 September 2006, I have occasionally been informed of the progress made on the implementation of the Strategy. In this regard, I commend everyone who has taken the implementation of the Strategy seriously. This is indeed an encouraging trend. One that I hope continues to further our advancement to adopt a comprehensive convention on international terrorism. It is imperative that we work together and build momentum to conclude the negotiations on this convention as soon as possible.

We are all aware that terrorism cannot be defeated through law enforcement alone. Deep-rooted resentments arising from poverty, social inequality, political problems, and extremism serve as fuel to terrorism propaganda. And, they must be tackled through greater economic competitiveness, education and equality. They are the most effective long-term and sustainable measures against terrorism.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The threat of terrorism has created fear in us all. Fear is the most basic human emotion in response to danger. However, there is a fine line between heeding dangers and acting out of fear. We should not allow irrational fears to control us.

We must be mindful that in our quest to protect all nations and peoples of the world we should not undermine the core values such as equality and opportunity for all, as well as freedom of speech and religion. This is why initiatives that promote dialogue among and within cultures and religions are so important and are one of the main priorities of the General Assembly.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As the world progresses, we need to develop effective tools that are in-line and responsive to these advances. The rich discussions over the past few days have addressed some important contemporary issues that must be taken into account in implementing the Strategy. They have also reflected that much remains to be done.

In this regard, we must offer our support to the Counter-terrorism Task Force and ensure that it has the necessary resources to be able to undertake its important task, including enhancing capacity of Member States to implement the Strategy.

We must harness the potential of the internet as a preventative measure to combat terrorism. But we must also be mindful that it is a double-edged sword – it can also be abused by terrorists to incite terrorist acts. Thus we certainly need to explore options of dealing with such abuse as soon as possible.

We must ensure that the media carries-out their responsibility in reporting news as accurately and as balanced as possible.

We must also ensure that civil society and the private sector are more involved in the process of implementation of the Strategy.

It is essential that we examine these key issues among others to ensure that we make serious progress in the implementation of the Strategy.

Let me conclude by thanking the Stanley Foundation for organizing this meeting. And, I trust that this conference will outline effective recommendations to help promote the implementation of the Strategy. I commend all of you that participated throughout these past few days to help further our cooperative efforts in the fight against terrorism.

We need to continue to act towards fighting this evil; for whatever dangers arise in the actions we take, the dangers of in-action are far greater.

Thank you.