

9 September 2011

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Joseph Deiss,
President of the 65th Session of the General Assembly,
at the Commemoration of the 10th Anniversary of the 11 September
Attacks**

Madame Deputy Secretary-General,
Ambassador Rice,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Ten years have passed since the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001. Ten years since thousands of lives were obliterated, thousands of futures ruined by these outrageous acts. I have the difficult task today of opening this ceremony in remembrance of the victims and of all who were close to them, their families, friends and colleagues.

This is an anniversary that we would hope never to have to commemorate. Thus it is for all tragic events, for all the wounds of history. 11 September will mark our collective memory forever. We all remember what we were doing when we heard what was happening. Our shock and disbelief at this horror are indescribable.

We who represent the community of nations have a duty, a duty to express to the American people and to the City of New York that hosts us here our sorrow and our remembrance. But we also want to be here to express our compassion and solidarity for all the victims of terrorist acts who are attacked randomly and without respite throughout the world. We are here to express our indignation at the cowardice of terrorism, condemn it firmly and categorically, combat it and see that the guilty are punished.

The response to international terrorism requires global action. All must collaborate in order to be effective. To date, the international community through the United Nations has eighteen instruments to combat international terrorism. We have been working together here in this General Assembly on the prevention and elimination of international terrorism since 1972, and we have accelerated our efforts considerably since the attacks of 11 September 2001. The day after the tragedy, the Assembly unanimously adopted a resolution condemning those "heinous acts of terrorism" and calling for their perpetrators to be brought to justice and for those responsible for aiding, supporting or harbouring the perpetrators of those acts to be held accountable.

The 2005 World Summit marked the beginning of a new phase in the fight against terrorism. For the first time, all Member States condemned terrorism "in all its forms and manifestations, committed by whomever, wherever and for whatever purposes." This strong signal led to the 2006 adoption of the

Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy which provides a common strategic and operational framework to combat terrorism.

At the conclusion of the second biennial review of the strategy conducted at the 64th session, you, the Member States, reiterated your support for the strategy and its four pillars, in particular measures to address the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism. In this regard, it is extremely positive that progress has been made in achieving international development objectives, the Millennium Development Goals in particular. Our actions have been complemented and strengthened by the various resolutions and measures taken by the Security Council, which has also been very active in combating terrorism.

Despite these important steps to strengthen measures to combat this scourge, the perpetrators of terrorist acts continue to strike. The news of the 26 August attack on United Nations House in Abuja is still fresh in our minds.

Madame Deputy Secretary-General,
Ambassador Rice,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Terrorism is an intolerable violation of the purposes and principles of the United Nations and its ideals of peace, security and friendship among peoples. Given the proliferation of terrorist threats and actions, we must intensify our efforts without delay. It is urgent that we adopt the necessary complements to the existing instruments. I welcome and support the Secretary-General's initiative to hold a symposium on international counter-terrorism during the high-level week of the 66th session of the General Assembly.

I call on all Member States to use this opportunity to make significant progress towards the swift conclusion of a draft general convention on international terrorism. It is a matter of the credibility of our actions and our duty to remember the victims and the heroes of terrorist acts such as the tragedy of 11 September 2001.

Terrorism is simply unacceptable.