

Statement by Ambassador Majed Bamyá, Political Coordinator and Legal Adviser at the Mission of the State of Palestine to the UN, before the meeting of the 6th Committee on measures to eliminate international terrorism, 8 October 2020

Mr. President,

Allow me at the outset to congratulate you for your election and wish you success in leading our work for this session.

The state of Palestine aligns itself with the statements delivered by Iran on behalf of NAM and Saudi Arabia on behalf of OIC

We welcome the SG and UN's commitment to strengthen coordination towards an "All-of-UN Approach" in countering terrorism and preventing violent extremism. [We welcome the work of the United Nations Office of Counterterrorism (OCT) and the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED) in this respect.

Mr. President,

Many here represent nations that have experienced and continue to experience in their flesh the effects of terrorism. Terrorism is a common threat that requires a collective response. It is with this in mind that we stress the following

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We condemn all forms of terrorism committed by whomever wherever and for whatever purposes including state terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. The state of Palestine will continue to be actively engaged in efforts to eradicate international terrorism including through its cooperation agreements with over 80 states around the world and in fulfilling its obligations to implement relevant SC resolutions.

We all here concur that terrorism cannot and should not be associated with any religion, nationality, civilisation or ethnic group. But the reality is that one religion in particular has been the target of repeated and unacceptable attacks. Terrorists distort realities to justify their hatred. Accepting that distorted reality only feeds and fuels their narrative and plays into their hands. They may use and abuse a religion but they do not represent it. Look around you in this very room, how many Muslim majority countries here have been primary victims of terrorism. Muslims endure a double jeopardy, targeted because they are not Muslim enough for some, and because they are too Muslim for others. They are at the frontlines of this fight against terrorism and yet are subject of deplorable attacks for political gains in many countries around the world. This must end. When you have an enemy that represents a few thousands people you do not defeat it by alienating 2 billion people.

- We also reject that some are prompt to characterize an action as terrorist if the perpetrator has a certain color or faith, but are quick to dub actions by others, for example mass shootings or as we should name them massacres and terrorist attacks, as individual actions, or a result of mental illness, even when they are the result of an organized and articulated ideology
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- we warn against selective solidarity or delayed attention that only sees terrorism when it reaches certain countries instead of addressing it early on in areas around the world that do not enjoy the same media coverage
- We also condemn attempts to use the legitimate fight against terrorism to try and justify the illegitimate perpetuation of colonial occupation, oppression, and denial of rights notably of nations striving to achieve their right to self-determination. The brutalisation of peoples remaining under foreign occupation should continue to be denounced as the gravest form of terrorism, and the use of State power for the suppression and violence against peoples struggling against foreign occupation in exercising their inalienable right to self-determination should continue to be condemned.
- Priority should be given to the protection and promotion of the rights of victims of terrorism, including their right to justice and redress. Palestine has turned to the ICC in the hope that Palestinian victims will no longer be denied justice. We thank Afghanistan and Spain for their leadership of the group of friends of victims of terrorism in which we remain actively engaged
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- We reiterate the need for the finalisation of the draft Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism to strengthen the international legal framework aimed at combatting terrorism.

Ahead of the upcoming review of the counterterrorism strategy

We stress the need to address the uneven attention not to say the unbalance given to the four pillars of the Strategy. We must address roots causes of terrorism and support legitimate grievances and aspirations as the best way to uproot terrorism by denying it any fertile ground. We also must place more resources into ensuring that the fight against terrorism is led in conformity with the rules of international law and the UN charter and we stress once again that the fight against terrorism can not and does not justify violations of IHL, HR, and refugee law.

The law is not an obstacle to the fight against terrorism, it is what distinguishes us from the terrorists

Thank you