

# Israeli-Palestinian conflict heightening terrorism, says UN official

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A senior UN official says the threat of terrorism will be diminished in the Middle East once the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is resolved. Jean Paul Laborde, adviser to the UN Under-Secretary General for Political Affairs, said on Thursday that terrorism has deteriorated since the September 11 attacks and will not diminish unless the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is resolved.

He rejected the idea that the Islamic Resistance Movement of Hamas is a terrorist organization and called for talks and dialogue with this Palestinian entity.

“Hamas is not a terrorist organization in the United Nations...we should talk to Hamas because once the Israeli-Palestinian issue is resolved, the threat of terrorism will diminish.”

In a speech in Chatham House in London on the strategy of the United Nations on combating terrorism, Laborde also said that the international organization has provided a platform for counter-terrorism measures across the world.

“The UN sets universal norms and has many mechanisms to fight terrorism...Some 30 UN agencies work together to implement the UN counter-terrorism strategy...which is based on preventing and resolving conflicts and supporting victims of terrorism,” he said.

Laborde added that the UN strategy against terrorism is a “unique and golden” opportunity for member states to help tackle the problem of terrorism globally.

“The bilateral approach to counter-terrorism does not work anymore. We should have a global framework based on law and international legitimacy,” he said, adding that participation of all nations is “indispensable” in the

global fight against terrorism.

The UN official said there should be no root cause for terrorism while state capacities “should be improved to combat and prevent terrorism”.

Laborde added that all UN members should combine “institutional and operational strengths” to combat terrorism.

He said the United Nations has set up various capacities to “respond to possible WMD attacks” and tackle the use of internet for terrorist purposes. He also said non-state actors are resorting to terrorism more than any time, urging governments to contribute to the global fight against terrorism.