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STATEMENT
BY
THE DELEGATION OF KENYA
ON BEHALF
OF THE AFRICAN GROUP
ON
AGENDA ITEM 99
MEASURES TO ELIMINATE INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM

63RD SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

SIXTH COMMITTEE

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Mr. Chairman,

I have the honor to speak on behalf of the African Group.

We would like to commend both the Secretary General and the Ad Hoc Committee established by General Assembly resolution 51/210 of 17 December 1996 for their reports A/63/173 and A/63/37 respectively.

Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, the African Group wishes to reiterate its previously stated position that terrorism should be condemned in all its forms and manifestations. Our primary concerns for combating terrorism is that terrorism violates basic human rights, particularly the right to life, freedom of expression, freedom from fear, right to development, the right to practice religion and the right to security.

The Group supports the need for early adoption of the draft Comprehensive Convention against terrorism and calls for the ratification and implementation of all relevant international instruments related to terrorism. We urge the international community to provide technical assistance to African states for the implementation of these relevant international instruments.

Further, the African Group stresses the imperative need to implement the African Union Plan of Action on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism. In this regard, the African Group recalls once again the establishment of the African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism located in Algiers, Algeria, as a novel achievement in Africa's collective efforts to outlaw and eradicate the scourge of terrorism from the Continent.

We appeal to Africa's partners, including international organizations, agencies, institutions and similar Centers around the world to provide support to the Centre and establish networks for information sharing, training, research, and investigative and joint activities.

Mr. Chairman,

In adopting the 1999 Algiers Convention, African leaders were convinced that terrorism constitutes a serious violation of human rights, such as the

right to life, physical integrity, freedom and security. States Parties to the Convention are committed to comply with African and international treaties relating to human rights, humanitarian law and other principles of international law, including the principles of State sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Apart from implementing concrete measures, more attention in the fight against terrorism needs to be paid to the further strengthening of inter-state cooperation. States should expand the range of assistance available in the apprehension of terrorists and in the investigation and prevention of terrorist acts.

In this light, the Group welcomes initiatives that encourage cooperation between the UN and regional organizations in the fight against terrorism. In this regard, we welcome the ongoing cooperation process between the African Center and the Global Counter Terrorism Strategy taskforce, as well as the Madrid Declaration and Plan of Action on combating terrorism in West and Central Africa. We also appreciate the Trans-Sahara Counter-terrorism Initiative (TSCTI) elaborated between the African Center and the United States' Africa Center for Strategic Studies. All these initiatives, and others, are important ways of strengthening the capacity of African countries to adopt coordinated approaches on countering terror.

Mr. Chairman,

In adopting the 1999 Algiers Convention, African leaders stated their awareness of the growing links between terrorism and organized crime, including illicit traffic of arms, drugs and money laundering. The noted linkages between terrorism and other scourges, such as poverty, long term conflicts, denial of people's basic rights, illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons, money laundering and drug trafficking, are as dangerous as terrorism itself. These linkages serve as vehicles for terrorism, and it is now widely believed that terrorism cannot be eradicated without eliminating these linkages.

The Plan of Action obligates Member States to take into consideration the intimate relationship between terrorism and related scourges such as drug trafficking, illicit proliferation and trafficking of small arms and light weapons, corruption, and money laundering. The Protocol further closes

the gaps by raising awareness of the link between terrorism and weapons of mass destruction.

Mr. Chairman,

The African Group appreciates the work done so far by the ad hoc committee in drafting a comprehensive Convention on international terrorism. Some progress towards a general definition has been made. In this regard, definitions in regional instruments may be useful.

The draft comprehensive Convention on international terrorism, should in no way deny people their right to self-determination but rather distinguish between terrorism and the legitimate struggle for freedom and independence, of people under foreign domination or colonial rule. Liberation struggles do not constitute terrorism, as is recognized in many relevant General Assembly resolutions, in particular resolution 46/51 of 9th December 1992.

Mr. Chairman,

The African Group reiterates its willingness to work actively with other delegations to continuously refine the Global Counter Terrorism Strategy as well as to achieve consensus regarding the draft comprehensive Convention on international terrorism. The proposal to convene a high-level conference under the auspices of the United Nations to formulate an international response to terrorism in all its forms and manifestations has been endorsed by the African Leaders and this Committee should give it serious consideration.

Thank You.