

Statement by Switzerland

18.10.2010

Mr. Chairman,

At the outset I would like to express our sincere hope that during the 65th session of the General Assembly Member States will be able to finalize the text of the Comprehensive Convention on Terrorism which we are about to continue to negotiate in the Working Group. Your continued presence as the Chair reassures us that our hopes rest on solid ground.

Mr. Chairman

Please allow me a personal remark to start my intervention with: I began my international career almost at the same time the first draft of the Convention was born. Like an infant the draft Convention made its biggest progress in its two first years. In the following years the child slowed down growing. Despite the able hands of various coordinators, I'd like to mention here in particular the remarkable work of our current coordinator, Ms. Maria Telalian from Greece, in the following years we Member States, custodians of the draft Convention, made little progress. The Convention kept aging without growing. Having accompanied the Convention from the very inception of its first draft, it is my humble opinion that the child is grown up by now. Having reached its 10th anniversary, the draft Convention should be given a chance to leave our hands and become an efficient means in the hands of counter-terrorism practitioners all over the world.

However, my delegation has come to the conclusion that despite all our common and honest efforts during the past years to find consensus, in particular on article 18, the odds are little that the Coordinator's proposal of (either 2002 or) 2007 can at this stage be further improved. Therefore we would like to invite, through you Mr. Chairman, all delegations to explore in a common effort the possibility to overcome this stalemate by expanding our views on the matter. We should not only look at the adoption of the Convention in an isolated manner, but reflect on the idea how the adoption of the Convention could be placed in a larger context.

Such a larger context could be provided by a high-level conference under the auspices of the United Nations to formulate a joint organized response of the international community to terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, along the lines of what has been originally proposed by the Government of Egypt.

As we all know both the Convention and the Conference are in the mandate of the Ad hoc Committee.

Providing such a larger context would acknowledge that the criminal law aspect of the Convention alone does not do justice to all the facets and challenges linked with the phenomenon of terrorism.

Therefore, we propose to you to reflect on the idea to engage in a two-step process. A first step would entail the adoption of the Convention, a second step the convening of a High-level Conference. This package would be concluded on the binding understanding that the Conference will definitely take place once the draft Convention was finalized within

the General Assembly, using the coordinator's proposal either of (the year 2002 or) the year 2007.

The advantage of such a process is that it is foreseeable, binding and transparent. It would give a strong sign to the people and peoples of the world that Member States have agreed to tackle terrorism as a complex phenomenon. At the same time it would give international cooperation a strong push in implementing all four pillars of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

We would like to invite Member States through you Mr. Chairman, to share with us their thoughts informally on this idea and to indicate to us their interest in further elaborating the individual steps of this process. This work will be done with all interested Member States and in full cooperation with your Mr. Chairman as well as the Coordinator, Ms. Maria Telalian.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.