



STATEMENT

BY

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AMBASSADOR

**PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE GAMBIA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

**ON BEHALF OF THE AFRICAN GROUP
ON THE AGENDA ITEM 100 :**

Measures to eliminate international terrorism

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African Group statement on terrorism

Mr. Chairman,

This year is a landmark in the field of combating international terrorism. The tremendous efforts invested in order to reach agreement on the United Nations Global Strategy are a testimony to our commitment to cooperate in the global fight against terrorism and a response to the call by our Heads of State and Government in the Outcome Document of the September 2005 summit.

The Global Counter Terrorism Strategy is a step forward in re-asserting the key role of the General Assembly in combating terrorism.

Mr. Chairman,

Africa has long recognized the need to embark on concrete measures to counter the phenomenon of terrorism. The Organization of African Unity (OAU) adopted the Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism in 1999, which came into force in December 2002. This was followed up by a Plan of Action by the Inter-Governmental High Level Meeting in September 2002. In addition, the African Center for the Study and Research on Terrorism (ACSRT) was established in Algiers. This is demonstrative of the commitment by African Member States to address terrorism.

African states strongly and unequivocally condemn terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, as well as all acts, methods and practices of terrorism wherever, by whomever, against whomsoever committed, including State terrorism. There is no justification for terrorism.

The African Group believes that terrorism is not endemic to any particular region, people or religion and our efforts to combat terrorism will only be successful if we adopt a comprehensive approach which deals not only with its symptoms but also with its root causes.

The United Nations must, therefore, play a central role in setting international counter terrorism standards and take measures to address the root causes of this phenomenon.

Mr. Chairman,

The African Group deeply appreciates the work done so far by the ad hoc committee in drafting a comprehensive Convention on international terrorism, which should in no way violate the right of peoples to self-determination or militate against the just cause. The proposed international legal instrument should reflect the distinction between terrorism and the right of peoples under foreign occupation to seek their freedom and independence, as reflected in many relevant General Assembly resolutions, in particular resolution 46/51 of 09 December 1992.

The legitimate struggles of people under colonial or foreign occupation for self-determination and national liberation, does not constitute terrorism.

Mr. Chairman,

African states made huge efforts to meet their obligations according to international conventions to combat terrorism as well as relevant Security Council resolutions. Yet, a number of African States are faced with increasingly onerous responsibilities of meeting all their obligations established by abovementioned international instruments and many States continue to require assistance in the implementation of these instruments. We urge that commitments made to offer assistance will be translated into concrete actions. The United Nations system has a major role to play in guiding and providing support and assistance to States requiring it, as decided by our Heads of State and Government during the September 2005 summit.

Mr. Chairman,

We commend the Secretary General for his report on measures to eliminate international terrorism. It gives us an overview of activities undertaken by member States to combat and suppress international terrorism, as well as the efforts made by international organization and UN bodies to give assistance to those states in need.

The African Group also welcomes the new approach of the Counter Terrorism Committee (CTC) to encourage cooperation initiatives with regional organizations in fighting terrorism.

As a step forward in enhancing cooperation with Africa, we appreciate the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Initiative (TSCTI) discussed in a seminar organized by the African Center for the Study and Research on Terrorism and the United States' Africa Center for Strategic Studies, held in Algiers on February, 2006. About 80 participants, primarily representatives from African states joined a number of participants from African sub-regional organizations, European states, relevant organs of the United Nations, and concerned US government agencies.

We also welcome the Madrid Declaration and Plan of Action on strengthening the legal regime against terrorism in West and Central Africa, adopted in Madrid by the Ministerial Round Table of West and Central African Countries on a Counter-Terrorism Legal Framework in May 2006.

Such initiatives are important to strengthening the capacity of African countries to co-ordinate their actions in fighting terrorism and doing so in the global context.

Mr. Chairman,

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.

Finally, African States acknowledge that the question of convening a high-level conference under the auspices of the United Nations to formulate an international response to terrorism in all its forms and manifestations could be considered.

Thank you.