



STATEMENT  
ON BEHALF OF THE  
**ARAB GROUP**

DELIVERED BY

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**to the United Nations**

BEFORE

**The Sixth Committee (legal affairs) of the sixty-sixth  
session of the United Nations General Assembly**

ON

**Agenda item 109:**  
**Measures to eliminate international terrorism**

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**Mr. Chairman,**

I have the honor to address the Sixth Committee on behalf of the Arab Group. I would like to begin by congratulating you and the other members of the Bureau on your election and on assuming the leadership of this Committee. I wish you every success in fulfilling the difficult tasks entrusted to your office, and assure you of our full cooperation with you. I also thank Ms. Rodriguez-Piñeda for her presentation of the report of the Ad Hoc Committee established by General Assembly resolution 51/210.

It is fairly appropriate that the Committee, in the current session, started its work by considering one of the most important items on its agenda—one that has attracted international attention, namely, the item on “measures to eliminate international terrorism”.

**Mr. Chairman,**

I would like, at the outset, to highlight that the Arab States stress and continue to stress their condemnation and denunciation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, regardless of its source and its motives and justifications. The Arab States seek individually and collectively to combat this odious scourge.

**Mr. Chairman,**

Two prominent meetings on terrorism were organized over the past few days: the high-level symposium hosted by the Secretary-General on the sidelines of the general debate of the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly, and the special meeting on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the establishment of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1373 (2001). Participants at these two meetings were unanimous to point out two findings: on the one hand, great progress has been made in combating terrorism over the past decade, both in terms of national legislation and the sharing of experiences; on the other hand, persisting challenges face the international community in its endeavors to rid the world of this dangerous phenomenon.

**Mr. Chairman,**

It is a truism to highlight the need for collective action to counter terrorism, since no single state can address the phenomenon that transcends national boundaries. Therefore, there should be coordination and cooperation among States, both at the regional or sub-regional levels. Stemming from the Arab States' belief in the importance of collective action, they adopted the Arab Convention for the Suppression of Terrorism of 1998. They also continue to coordinate their efforts to combat terrorism at the regional level through the mechanisms of the Arab League, in

addition to coordination at the sub-regional level through workshops and communication between national entities in this field.

Like other countries, Arab States believe that international efforts to combat terrorism should be conducted in a manner consistent with the principles of international law and international legitimacy and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms since the observance of these principles does not conflict with the fight against terrorism, but rather strengthen it and enhance it.

**Mr. Chairman,**

The United Nations should play a central role in international efforts to combat terrorism and the adoption of the Global Counter-terrorism Strategy is a significant step in this regard. In this connection, we stress the need to activate all aspects of this strategy and its four pillars. The coordination of the work of the United Nations in this field should also be developed, following on the steps of the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force.

The efforts aimed at combating terrorism need to be supported by political will. It is also necessary to facilitate the exchange of best practices and lessons learned between countries and provide technical assistance to countries that needs it. These efforts should be guided by the principles of cooperation, transparency and equitable treatment among different countries.

On the other hand, it is unfortunate that a large part of international efforts to combat terrorism is limited to reactions to terrorism and its symptoms, rather than discussing and addressing its root causes and eliminating the factors that feed it. For international efforts to eliminate terrorism to succeed, it is imperative to address its root causes, as recognized by the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, and the relevant resolutions of the Security Council. This includes several aspects, including improving the living conditions of the poor and unemployed youth and people living under political and historical oppression and foreign occupation. We must also prevent the incitement to hatred, including incitement to violence and hatred of minorities of ethnic groups, religions and foreigners. In this connection, we note that attempts to link terrorism with any particular religion or a particular ethnic group are themselves provocative and contributes to the spread of terrorism.

**Mr. Chairman,**

An important step to combat terrorism would be to find a clear and realistic definition to this phenomenon. In this regard, we must distinguish between terrorism and legitimate resistance movements against foreign occupation. As we have stressed during the review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in September 2010, it is also important to refrain from politicizing the term "terrorism" and using it to serve specific purposes. Reaching consensus on the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism during the ongoing negotiation

in the framework of the Ad Hoc Committee and the Working Group of the Sixth Committee of the General Assembly, would be an important step in the process of developing criteria for measures to eliminate international terrorism.

**Mr. Chairman,**

The global strategy to combat terrorism was an important step. Therefore, we must now develop the next step, which is no less important, namely the adoption of the comprehensive convention on international terrorism. The latter should take into account the following elements:

First: the broad differences regarding the definition of terrorism and the legitimate right of occupied peoples in their struggle to achieve freedom from occupation and self-determination.

Second: determination of the legal means to identify terrorists, and the laws that punish them since many countries have their own laws and concepts in this regard.

Third: avoiding unfair and wrong linkage between terrorism and Islam or Muslims, especially as reality proves that this linkage is false.

Fourth: cultural differences between peoples, the importance of constructive dialogue between cultures and the promotion of a culture of understanding and acceptance of others.

In this regard, the Arab countries will cooperate and work wholeheartedly so as the work of the Ad Hoc Committee and the Working Group will bear its fruit, to resolve outstanding issues on the draft Convention, as well as in consultation on the proposal of convening 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.

**Mr. Chairman,**

This year saw the activation of an initiative that will have significant effect in supporting international efforts to eliminate international terrorism, namely the initiative to establish the United Nations Centre for Counter-terrorism, launched by the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques the King of Saudi Arabia. This initiative has been widely welcomed by the international community. We invite everyone to participate in supporting this Centre and the Fund that will contribute to its financing, as well as to benefit from the expertise it will provide.

**Thank you.**