



Statement

by

**Mr. Hassan Saleh
Counsellor,**

at the

**Sixth Committee
61st Session of the United Nations General Assembly**

on

**Agenda Item 100,
“Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism”**

New York, 12 October 2006

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Mr. Chairman,

My delegation congratulates you on your election to the Chairmanship of this Committee. We also would like to extend our congratulations to the members of the Bureau. We believe, Mr. Chairman, that under your able leadership and guidance, we will be able to make some substantive progress during the 61st Session of the General Assembly.

Lebanon considers that the work of the Sixth committee was instrumental in the codification of the international legal instruments related to the prevention and suppression of international terrorism. Lebanon condemns terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, as it represents one of the most serious threats to international peace and security.

Lebanon remains deeply committed to the international efforts intended to counter terrorism and considers that the fight against this scourge requires a concerted effort from all Member States. In this regard, cooperation is a key element for the success of this fight. Lebanon is actively cooperating with other partners in the fight against terrorism.

Lebanon has also ratified 12 out of the 13 United Nations Counter-terrorism Conventions and is in the process of ratifying the remaining ones.

Mr. Chairman,

The 60th Session of the General Assembly adopted the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. Lebanon joined the consensus during the adoption of the Strategy and considers it to be a good step forward. The Strategy includes certain

important elements that reflect some, but not all, of our concerns. Those elements are:

- 1- The Strategy recognizes the legitimate right of people to resist an occupying power, as it recalls, in preambular paragraph 4, General Assembly resolution 46/51 of 9 December 1991, which observes this right. Therefore, it clearly differentiates between terrorists and those practicing their legitimate right to resist the occupying power.
- 2- The Strategy also recognizes the need to address the root causes of terrorism including, but not limited to, prolonged unresolved conflicts. Lebanon considers injustices to be one the major and most important causes of terrorism and deems foreign occupation to be one of the worst injustices that could be inflicted over a whole population. Foreign occupation does not only lead to the seizure of one's territory, but also adversely affects one's livelihood, rendering it harsh to bear. Foreign occupation tries to wipe out one's past, imprison his present, and consequently destroy his future. It steals his days, oppresses his aspirations, and suppresses his hopes.
- 3- The Strategy also recognizes the existence of state terrorism, for it recalls General Assembly Resolution 46/51 of 9 December 1991 and reaffirms General Assembly Resolution 51/210 of 17 December 1996. Both resolutions include a clear mention of states which are directly or indirectly involved in terrorism. Also, the Strategy includes in its action plan a clear call for states to refrain from organizing and participating in terrorist activities which means a clear recognition of the long denied reality revealing that states could participate in terrorist activities. State terrorism is manifested by wanton violence against civilians — thus blatantly violating their sanctity — including the usage of internationally prohibited munitions such as cluster, vacuum, phosphoric, or uranium depleted bombs, or any combination of the latter.

This type of terrorism additionally includes acts perpetrated by states through resorting to the illegal practice of targeted killing or extra-judicial killing, collective punishment, and summary and arbitrary execution. It is intended to inculcate fear, terrorize, intimidate, coerce, and kill a civilian population. The principle of state responsibility stipulates that states should be held accountable for their acts, especially when those acts are of criminal nature and tantamount to genocides and war crimes. States, like individuals, should not be above the law, nor regard themselves as being immune to the extent that they can commit crimes with impunity. For an entire month, my country was subject to Israel's state terrorism. Our cities, towns, and villages were pounded with thousand of bombs of all kinds and sizes, all of which are internationally prohibited — cluster bombs, vacuum bombs, and phosphoric bombs. A Israeli commander lately recognized that the Israeli forces fired 1800 cluster rockets on Lebanon during the war, which contained over 1.2 million cluster bombs. The WHO report revealed that the number of casualties among the Lebanese civilian population equaled 1200, the number of injured were 4092, and the number of those who fell victim to unexploded ordnances after the cessation of hostilities was equal to 133. The reports of international human rights institutions further indicate that 40% of the victims were children. Also, those same reports indicate that during the first 3 days, the body limbs of 25 Lebanese children were amputated by the Israeli bombs and the children therefore were handicapped for life. The WHO report further revealed that 410 hospitals were targeted by the Israeli forces and some were severely damaged.

The Strategy failed to mention the necessity of defining terrorism, for the definition of terrorism saves us the burden of putting everyone in the same basket.

Lebanon supports a review of the Strategy on a periodic basis, because we believe that it should remain a living document to be adapted and updated in order to become comprehensive and respond to the emerging needs. Lebanon would like to reiterate the centrality of the role of the General Assembly in the fight against terrorism.

Lebanon supports every effort intended to push forward the negotiation on the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism and is ready to cooperate with all other partners. Also, Lebanon supports the creation of a working group that will dwell on the aforementioned convention.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, Lebanon supports every effort intended to promote mutual understanding and to foster the dialogue between culture and civilizations. Also, Lebanon supports the initiatives taken at the level of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, such as the alliance of civilizations and the interfaith dialogue. Lebanon further considers that such initiatives, together with the Anna Lindh Foundation for dialogue between cultures and civilizations, are quite promising. They prove once more that dialogue is the most appropriate way for bridging our differences, understanding each other, and promoting our interests.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman