Sixth Committee

Agenda Item: Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism

Speech of Lebanon

October 5

LEBANON: Madame Chairperson, at the outset I wish to extend to you on behalf the delegation of Lebanon our warmest congratulations on your election as Chairman of the Sixth Committee. I would like to congratulate also other members of the bureau and to express our appreciation to the efforts of [NAME] [00:17:54] for his stewardship of the previous session.

My delegation would like to align itself with the statement made by the distinguished representative of Syria on behalf of the OIC and the statement made by the distinguished delegate of Iran on behalf of NAM. Madame Chair, the report of the Secretary General and the Ad Hoc Committee Report, established pursuant to the General Assembly Resolution 51/210 of 17 December 1996, that all states condemn terrorism and seek to combat it.

Terrorism strikes in many places all over the world leaving a trail of blood and destruction. And there is no unified definition for terrorism. Madame Chair, Lebanon, which exceeded to most international and regional conventions on combating terrorism suffered in its turn from the terrorist explosions that claimed the lives of many of its elite -- political elite, most prominent among them are martyr Prime Minister Rafiq Al-Hariri and top journalists, and many innocents over the past five years. Also, Lebanese Secret Forces fought against these terrorist groups and the Lebanese Army eliminated one of the most dangerous terrorist groups, namely the Fatah al-Islam, the Vanquishing Brigades of Islam in the refugee camp of Nahr el Bared in Northern Lebanon. This group does not have any association with the Fatah, the Palestine Liberation Organization nor it has any relationship with Islam.

In addition to that Lebanon suffered and continues to suffer from Israeli state-sponsored terrorism over the past decades. Here I would like to remind of thousands of Lebanese civilians who were killed by Israel and Israel's striking of civilian installations, power plants, hydraulic facilities, oil refineries, the airport, bridges, ... [?] [00:20:12] aircraft and even ambulances, as well as Lebanese Red Cross ambulances, also the United Nations subquarters in Khana [?] [00:20:20], while sheltering harmless men, women and children, who thought that the UN blue flag would provide some protection for them.

Lebanon condemns all acts of terrorism and Lebanon considers that terrorism has no religion, no sect, no nationality, and refuses to mix it up with any of the heavenly revealed religion, especially Islamic faith, which renounces terrorism which calls for dialogue as it is inscribed in the Holy Koran. I quote: "And argue with them in ways that are best and most gracious."

Also, Islam is not a religion of extremism. The Koran says, "Thus we have made you a nation justly balanced." In fact, terrorism also did not spare Muslims or Islam. Numerous Muslims were killed in the horrendous acts of terrorism which struck the United States on the 11th September 2001. Also, many Muslims lose their lives in terrorist explosion in Iraq, Afghanistan, Yemen and Somalia. Some acts of terrorism actually strike at mosques and there are attempts to distort this heavenly revealed religion. And also the phenomenon of Islamophobia is a result of what could be called "intellectual terrorism" or   
cultural terrorism."

Also, we would like to caution against the potential dangers of treating lightly with the provocative acts that denigrate the holy emblems of religion.

While we fully respect the freedom of expression, but these acts actually are not acts of freedom of expression, but more acts of instigation. Also, the ban complies with the human rights instruments and basic freedoms as set forth in international conventions.

Lebanon stresses its cooperation in order to achieve a comprehensive global convention that would provide a common framework to address terrorism effectively. Such a convention should include four points:

First, clear definition of terrorism.

Two, trying to address the root causes of terrorism by eliminating flash-points of tension and double-standards in applying international norms and putting an end to foreign occupation, oppression, poverty, and transgression of human rights and dignity.

Three, distinction between terrorism and legitimate right of peoples to resist foreign occupation as established in international norms and conventions.

Four, condemnation of state terrorism.

Madame Chair, the fact that we have managed to reach a unified global strategy to combat terrorism it is our hope that this would be culminated in a global comprehensive convention that would deal with terrorism from one perspective. In our view, this is possible if we decided to address this issue in an objective manner and in line with the principles and norms of international law.

Let me close by reiterating our call to establish an international center for combating terrorism under the auspices of the United Nations in response to the initiative launched by his Majesty, the Custodian of the Two Grand Mosques, King Abdullah Bin-Abd al-Aziz.