



AUSTRALIA



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Sixth Committee

12 October 2006

Measures to eliminate international terrorism

**Statement by the Hon Duncan Kerr SC MP
Parliamentary Adviser
Australian Mission to the United Nations**

On behalf of Canada, Australia and New Zealand

(Check against delivery)

Mr Chairman,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of Canada and New Zealand in addition to Australia.

CANZ utterly condemns all acts of terrorism, committed wherever, whomever, and for whatever purpose. We have continued to witness the work of terrorists too often in the past year. Railway bombings in Mumbai this July killed nearly 200 people and injured hundreds more. Attacks in Afghanistan, Iraq, Somalia and Turkey killed scores of innocent civilians. A plot to blow up trans-Atlantic flights could have been catastrophic had it not been detected by UK authorities.

We must all remain vigilant against the threat of terrorism, and united in our unequivocal condemnation of it. This is a global phenomenon, which requires a global response. In its modern guise, terrorism is often committed, wrongly, in the name of religion. CANZ is committed to addressing the threat presented by terrorists such as Osama Bin Laden and Ayman Zawahiri, whose radical ideology has been taken up transnationally by others who find it compelling. We must work collectively to confront the threat posed by these extremists, or face a far less secure and stable world.

Mr Chairman,

The UN must continue to play a leading role in global counter-terrorism efforts. CANZ welcomes the adoption of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. The Strategy is the most comprehensive counter-terrorism statement ever adopted by the General Assembly. That all States united behind it is of fundamental importance.

The Strategy emphasises the need for action both by States and the UN system. We welcome this practical focus, and call on all States to implement the Strategy. In doing so, we would encourage States to refute extremist ideologies, which we regard as one of the conditions which may be conducive to the spread of terrorism.

The Strategy was based on the Secretary General's report 'Uniting Against Terrorism'. But not all of the report's recommendations were included. CANZ believes the report remains, therefore, a valuable contribution to UN counter-terrorism efforts.

Mr Chairman,

CANZ strongly supports the ongoing counter-terrorism work of the committees established by Security Council resolutions 1267, 1373 and 1540. We urge all States to meet their obligations under these and other relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolution 1624 on the incitement of terrorism.

These obligations can, however, place heavy burdens on smaller developing countries, including those of the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF). CANZ remains concerned about the heavy counter-terrorism reporting requirements imposed by subsidiary bodies of the Security Council. We call on the Security Council to consider ways to reduce this burden, in accordance with the Summit outcomes document.

It is for this reason that PIF members including Australia and New Zealand were particularly grateful for the attendance by the Chair of the Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC) at the PIF Working Group on Counter-Terrorism held in Auckland, New Zealand this April. The working group facilitated closer cooperation between the CTC and the PIF region, which we hope will lead to concrete UN efforts to improve further counter-terrorism capacity in this region.

Mr Chairman,

At the global level, the UN has been effective in establishing counter-terrorism norms. Closing the remaining gaps in the counter-terrorism legal framework remains important to prevent future terrorist attacks.

All States should become Parties to the existing 13 sectoral counter-terrorism conventions. CANZ stands ready to assist States in this endeavour. But States must also redouble their efforts to conclude a comprehensive convention on international terrorism. This would demonstrate an unambiguous commitment to criminalise all terrorist acts, and to cooperate in the prosecution of those responsible for such acts.

Mr Chairman,

At the regional level, CANZ is also actively engaged in countering the terrorist threat.

Canada's Counter-Terrorism Capacity Building Program provides training, funding, equipment, technical and legal assistance to States. This enables them to prevent and respond to terrorist activity, in a manner consistent with international counter-terrorism and human rights norms, standards and obligations. The Program focusses on seven

priority areas, being border security; transportation security; legislative, regulatory and legal policy development; law enforcement, security, military and intelligence training; chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and explosives terrorism prevention, response and recovery; combatting terrorist financing; and cyber security and critical infrastructure protection.

New Zealand, too, has dedicated funding to assist with counter-terrorism capacity building in the Pacific region. New Zealand's Pacific Security Fund has been active for some years now. New Zealand also convenes annually the PIF Working Group on Counter-Terrorism. More recently, New Zealand has established an Asia Security Fund to assist with security and counter-terrorism capacity building in Southeast Asia. New Zealand is a strong supporter of the Asia-Pacific Regional Interfaith Dialogue, which aims to address some of the underlying factors which can lead to terrorism. New Zealand will host the next meeting of this Dialogue in May next year in Waitangi.

For our part, Australia has adopted a comprehensive range of measures to build counter-terrorism capacity in South-East Asia and the Pacific. Over A\$400 million has been allocated in new initiatives in the past three years, including A\$92.6 million in the 2006-07 Budget. Australian agencies have developed extensive collaboration with regional counterparts in key counter-terrorism areas such as law enforcement, defence, border and transport security, financial monitoring, intelligence, and legal affairs. The new budget measures will enhance regional capacity for emergency response to terrorist attacks, promote tolerance, and counteract terrorist propaganda.

Mr Chairman,

Combatting terrorism requires a comprehensive, multi-faceted response at national, regional and global levels. CANZ will continue to work at all these levels, and in close cooperation with other States, to overcome the grave threat to our security posed by terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

Appropriate and effective action within the UN system will underpin our work, and help ensure that the international community's resources are focussed on priority areas where we can make the most difference. The continued support of CANZ for UN counter-terrorism efforts is assured.