

10 July 2008

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Srgjan Kerim,
President of the 62nd Session of the General Assembly,
at the Final Workshop of the International Process on Global
Counter-Terrorism Cooperation**

Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen

It is my pleasure to welcome you today to the final workshop of the International Process on Global Counter-Terrorism Cooperation.

The International Process that is cosponsored by Switzerland, Costa Rica, Japan, Slovakia and Turkey and was launched last November has been a welcomed opportunity for Member States from all regions to evaluate the contributions of the United Nations in the fight against terrorism and to bring closer relevant UN actors with the ones at national and regional levels and from civil society.

The International Process has rightly recognized that while the primary responsibility for implementing the Strategy continues to rest with member states, the UN system can and must do more to assist states in operationalizing the vision embodied in the Strategy. Through workshops in Europe and Asia and here in New York, numerous ideas have been put forward that certainly merit discussion with the wider membership.

Excellencies,

The Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy was adopted unanimously by the General Assembly almost two years ago. We also pledged to review the progress made in implementation in two years time.

The General Assembly will meet for this purpose on 4 September 2008. Therefore, the final wrap-up workshop today is indeed very timely.

Several institutional issues that were discussed at these workshops have been also at the core of the General Assembly's meetings and consultations during this session. The Facilitator, Ambassador Gert Rosenthal has swiftly started his consultations with Member States on the outcome of the General Assembly plenary meeting in September and I would like to use this opportunity to thank him and delegations for their constructive engagement.

Questions such as resources for the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force, as well as the nature of its relationship and engagement with the Member States have been recurrent and need

to be resolved. Member States have voiced their desire to share responsibilities and to enhance the interaction with the UN system. Hopefully some of the proposals generated by the Independent Process will give a new impetus in finding solutions for those issues during upcoming consultations.

One of the essentials of the Strategy has been its integrated approach. In this regard, the workshops on the rule of law, good governance, education and dialogue, and capacity building have been well received. The International Process has also sought to clarify the role of and encourage different UN entities that traditionally have not had a role in countering terrorism to engage with the Task Force framework by putting forward ideas how these entities could contribute more without prejudicing their core mandates.

Many of the other proposals that have been and will be discussed here today are practical and could be implemented swiftly. For instance, I would like to highlight the proposal to raise awareness on the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy at the national and regional level and involve these actors more closely with the work of the UN organs. There is a clear need to work closely with regional organizations that have the special knowledge about the vulnerabilities and priorities of their regions. The UN should work with States to bolster those regional bodies that do not yet have sufficient counter-terrorism capacity.

The International Process has focused mainly on institutional and organizational aspects of strengthening the United Nations ability to implement the Global Strategy. But in addition to that, concrete ideas have emerged how Member States could improve their own efforts in the implementation process, such as appointing a national focal point for Strategy implementation or deepening internal interagency coordination and cooperation.

For its part, the UN could seek to convene these focal points, including at the regional or subregional levels. This would not only allow them to share Strategy-related best practices and other Strategy-related experiences and information, but to build the trust and relationships among the focal points that is needed to strengthen cross-border cooperation.

These suggestions are important in order to accentuate the role of States who are in the forefront of the implementation of the Global Strategy. While discussing the institutional arrangements of the UN, we should not forget that it is Member States that have the ultimate responsibility to ensure proper education and economic opportunities, secure borders, to curtail terrorist financing, make sure their territories are not used as safe havens for terrorists, or, that terrorists do not get hold on weapons of mass destruction, and to take these actions within the framework of relevant international norms such as human rights and the rule of law.

Excellencies,

I would also take this opportunity to emphasize some of the aspects of the upcoming General Assembly plenary meeting on the occasion of the review of the Strategy.

Since the Strategy does not foresee any formal reporting mechanism, I have invited the membership to use the opportunity during the meeting to share best practices they have identified and programmes undertaken that could be beneficial for all Member States.

In September, Member States may wish to discuss ways the Strategy can be used to attune the global, regional, sub-regional and national efforts to counter terrorism. The Strategy reflects the consensus and unity of all Member States and could be used as a tool to build further collaborative projects. The commitments undertaken by Member States are numerous and comprehensive, giving abundant opportunities to work together, which is so essential in countering international terrorism.

As to the outcome of the meeting of the General Assembly, I would like to reiterate my call on Member States to send a strong and unified message against terrorism, to rededicate to the commitments undertaken in the Global Strategy and to strengthen the co-operation between Member States and the United Nations. We must also decide on the appropriate follow-up to ensure the continuation of the Strategy's implementation after the current session.

Excellencies,

I am glad to say that the way the International process has unfolded is a good example of the joint endeavors called for in the Strategy. A lot of work has been done since its launch in November 2007. It is important to ensure it will be brought to the attention of the United Nations as a whole and that the recommendations that emerge from the Process are given due consideration. I invite the cosponsors to use the General Assembly review meeting to highlight some of the key findings of the International Process.

We have a limited amount of time from now till the September General Assembly meeting, but the cosponsors and others may wish to find ways how to go beyond the first review meeting and I certainly look forward to the outcome of your discussions.

I thank you for your attention.