

ISRAEL

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CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Statement by:

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Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism

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Thank you Mr. Chairman.

As this is the first time my delegation is taking the floor, allow me to congratulate you on your election as the Chairman of the Sixth Committee. We welcome this opportunity to engage in a meaningful exchange of views and cannot overstate the importance of the topic being addressed.

In Israel, the threat of terrorism is unfortunately far from theoretical - it is widespread and persistent. This past summer, Israel was once again compelled to take action in Gaza in order to protect its citizens against both Hamas rocket attacks and terror tunnels.

The international community has realized the need for a robust strategy in order to contain the threat posed by radical terrorist groups like ISIS. The same thinking is needed with state sponsors of terror like Iran as they pose a far greater danger to international peace and security.

Iran's fingerprints can be found on hundreds of terror campaigns that have claimed thousands of innocent lives in Africa, Europe, and Latin America. In Syria, Iran has sent its Revolutionary Guard forces under the command of Qassem Suleimani to fight alongside Assad's forces and spent billions sustaining the bloody civil war that has taken almost 200,000 lives.

In Lebanon, the Iranian-backed Hezbollah terrorist group has built military capabilities considerably stronger than those of the Lebanese Army. In Gaza, Tehran helped Hamas acquiring thousands of rockets that are deliberately and systematically fired against the Israeli population.

This is why it is our duty to prevent Iran from getting the capability to produce nuclear weapon.

While Hamas clearly states in its Charter that its primary objective is to wipe out Israel of the map, it also shares the global ambition and fanatic ideology of the most radical terrorist organizations such as ISIS in Iraq and Syria, Boko Haram in Nigeria, Al-Shabab in Somalia, Hezbollah in Lebanon, Al-Nusra in Syria, and al-Qaeda.

It should be painfully clear that terror knows no borders. Its victims come from all religions, cultures, and nationalities. Against this backdrop, Israel wishes to reaffirm its strong commitment to counter terrorism and its uncompromising condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, irrespective of its motivations.

Mr. Chairman,

Israel recognizes and supports the central role of the United Nations in countering terrorism worldwide. In this regard, we were glad to fully engage in the fruitful negotiations earlier this year which were concluded with the adoption of the Counter Terrorism Global Strategy. Ensuring that this strategy is relevant and up to date is critical to identifying and addressing the emerging threats that we face.

In particular, we welcome the call for renewed efforts to implement all four pillars of the strategy in an integrated and balanced manner. We believe that such an implementation is vital to the success of the international community's counter terrorism efforts.

Further, Israel welcomes the recent adoption of the Chapter VII Security Council Resolution on Foreign Terrorist Fighters. This resolution offers a strong example of how existing mechanisms, such as those can be utilized to counter new and emerging threats. Israel was proud to co-sponsor this important resolution and believes that while this resolution constitutes a significant first step, much more must be done to confront the growing numbers of foreign terrorist fighters.

Mr. Chairman,

Israel does its utmost to ensure that any measure taken to combat terrorism complies with its obligations under international law.

At the national level, we have matched our commitment to respect the rule of law with our determination to combat terrorism. As former Israeli Chief Justice, Aharon Barak said, "...a democracy must sometimes fight with one hand tied behind its back. Even so, the democracy has the upper hand."

At the international level, Israel is a party to the core universal instruments on counter terrorism and is a dedicated partner in the global counter-terrorism effort. Israel fully implements Security Council resolution 1373 which constitutes the centerpiece of the UN's efforts to create a robust counter terrorism regime. It has also adapted its legislation to ensure compliance with Security Council resolution 1267 which established the important Al-Qaeda Sanctions Committee.

Israel is willing to provide assistance to other Member States in their efforts to combat terrorism, . in this regard, it shares its vast knowledge and expertise on a wide range of issues such as terrorism financing, forensic investigation, aviation security and border protection.

Mr. Chairman,

While many important counter terrorism instruments have been developed over the years, there is a great deal more that must be done. In this regard, Israel reiterates its support for a Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism - beginning with a clear definition of terrorism that includes all its forms and manifestations. The failure to do so would compromise our ability to effectively combat terrorism and might be perceived as a de facto victory by the terrorist organizations throughout the world. The message from this Chamber must be clear - there is no cause or grievance that justifies terrorism.

Terrorism and radical extremism are a threat to us all and it is a battle that we cannot afford to lose. As Winston Churchill said, "Victory in spite of all terror, victory however long and hard the road may be; for without victory, there is no survival."

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.