



Statement

by

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to the United Nations**

**at the
Sixth Committee**

Item 108: “Measures to eliminate International Terrorism”

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Mr. Chairman,

I wish to congratulate you as well as the members of the Bureau on your election to steer the work of the sixth committee for this historic 70th session. Rest assured of my delegation's full cooperation and support to help you conduct fruitful and successful deliberations.

As we meet today to discuss one of the most debated topics in the sixth committee, we can all agree on the firm and unequivocal condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, as well as we can all concur when we recall that terrorism has no religious, ethnic, or national identity, but the one of barbarism. However, it seems that we are still struggling to overcome our political divergences and come up with a clear and unified definition of terrorism. This, Mr. Chairman, is not a matter of rhetoric or academic discussion, but rather an essential one, as it has a serious impact on our international efforts and responses to adequately prevent and counter this threat.

Too often for instance, the legitimate right to resist foreign occupation is associated with terrorism;

Too often, an act is labeled terrorism only when perpetrated under the so-called guise of Islam;

Too often, Israeli settlers' violence committed against Palestinian civilians is not assimilated with terrorism, while there is no ground for either a factual or a conceptual doubt over the matter.

Mr. Chairman,

Lebanon, tragically and continuously affected by terrorist acts, is at the forefront of the multifaceted fight to eradicate this plague.

Today more than ever, our military and security forces remain tirelessly and relentlessly committed to free the 25 members of our armed forces, who have been held hostages by Daesh and Al Nusra for over a year.

The cooperation of the Lebanese Armed Forces and Internal Security Forces with international partners has led in the past year to the disruption of terrorist cells, and to the arrest of major terrorist figures.

My delegation remains deeply committed to a complete cutoff of terrorism financing. In this regard, Lebanon cosponsored Security Council Resolution 2199.

In the same vein, Lebanon joined the Counter-ISIL Finance Group, consisting of 25 members, and which came up with a plan of action to enhance coordination among the members and develop a common and comprehensive approach to defeat ISIL,

Let me also draw your attention to the work of the Special Investigation Commission, Lebanon's Financial Intelligence Unit. Suffice to mention its work within the Middle East and North Africa Financial Action Task Force, whose objective is to adopt and implement recommendations on combating money laundering and financing of terrorism.

Furthermore, the collaboration of the Lebanese authorities, in particular security forces and customs, with Interpol, has been beefed up. This led to a significant decrease in the antiquities trafficking, whose profits are used to fund terrorist activities.

This last example brings me to the next point I would like to mention, the protection of cultural heritage. Lebanon attaches paramount importance to it and has been proactive on this matter.

It co-sponsored General Assembly Resolution (*A/RES/69/281*) “Saving the cultural heritage in Iraq.”

Lebanon participated in the two-day Cairo Conference held in May of this year, and which resulted in a Declaration outlining practical recommendations to strengthen collaboration, such as the establishment of a high-level MENA task force to coordinate regional and international efforts against cultural racketeering.

Mr. Chairman,

Consistent with Pillar I of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, Lebanon continues to insist on the crucial need to address root causes of violent extremism, such as flashpoints of tension, poverty, social exclusion and marginalization, impunity and double standards in the compliance with international law. Terrorist groups exploit these inconsistencies, frustrations and injustices to lure men and women, into the path of violent extremism.

We should also strive to prevent radicalization through education; an education that would disseminate values of tolerance, understanding of the other, critical thinking, dialogue as well as the ability to foster solutions together, and reject bigotry and essentialism.

In the same way, upholding human rights standards and the rule of law while countering terrorism, is indispensable. These principles, deeply enshrined in the Charter and relevant human rights treaties Lebanon abides by, have been severely tested during these times of turmoil. We must be up for this challenge.

Thank you.