



MALDIVES

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Sixth Committee
Agenda Item 109: Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism

Statement by the Republic of Maldives

United Nations, New York, 13 October 2015

Thank you Chair,

As this is the first time the Maldives is taking the floor in this committee, I wish to offer sincere congratulations on your election to preside over the work of this Committee during this Session. We look forward to working with you and the Bureau and assure our full support towards ensuring a successful and productive session. Let me also thank the Secretary-General for the report submitted under this agenda item.

As we speak today, in various parts of the world, in different countries, violent extremism and its more sinister handmaiden, terrorism, is creating havoc. It is taking the lives of innocent people and destroying livelihoods, social harmony and inflicting terror. Terrorism is not a phenomenon restricted to one region, a single ethnicity or a particular religion. It destroys the very values we, as a modern society hold dear, the values of tolerance, compassion, rationality and the desire for peace.

Mr. Chair,

Maldives condemns all acts, methods and practices of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, wherever and by whomsoever it is committed. Maldives stands ready, along with our regional and international partners to work on a unified platform to contain, control and defeat terrorism. Terrorism knows no borders. It is pervasive and global. Terrorism, therefore, must be tackled as such, through a global unified strategy. For this we need to brace up national, regional and international initiatives to combat terrorism.

The Maldives firmly believes that a way forward is through a renewed focus on the application and implementation of universal instruments. Although the current counter-terrorism measures are encouraging, we believe that these measures need to be streamlined and defined.

The Maldives firmly supports and commends the work carried out by the working group on drafting a

comprehensive convention, and hopes that more progress could be made during the current session of the General Assembly. Therefore, we extend our full cooperation to the working group envisaged in resolution 68/119, and support its mandate to finalize the resolution at the earliest.

Additionally, the Maldives welcomes initiatives that emphasize the global will to jointly address the issue of foreign fighters, including UN Security Council Resolutions 2170 and 2178 (2014). These initiatives form a global strategy that acknowledges the fundamental hazards posed by foreign fighters and takes measures to address those challenges. In this regard, we support the United States' for holding a Leaders Summit on ISIL during the high level segment of the 70th session of the United Nations General Assembly.

As a country where Islam dominates its social fabric, societal values and culture, the Maldives can confidently assert that the so-called Islamic State and other such groups are not only un-Islamic, but are in fact anti-Islamic. They are not religious groups, but rather terrorist organizations.

Mr. Chair,

In the Maldives, terrorism poses a serious threat to our national security. It has the potential to undermine our economy which is predominantly dependent on foreign tourism. The extremist ideologies preached in the name of Islam by such groups can make irreparable gaps in our unified social fabric and foster deep and long-lasting societal disharmony. These are things we cannot, and would not tolerate. We have always maintained a policy of moderation and openness and continuously condemned terrorist activities in the name of Islam. The Government is actively implementing a strategy aimed at raising awareness on the core principles and values of Islam including moderation, tolerance, and peace. The Government is also targeting to combat other practices associated with radicalism, including the instances of limited under-age marriage, forced marriage, non-vaccination of infants and deprivation of school enrolment of girls and children.

As major policy priority, the Government is also addressing the needs of the large youth population of the country. To educate, empower and provide opportunity to realise their true potentials. The challenges of unemployment and social exclusion cannot be ignored. Our young generation needs to be saved from the global menace of radicalism. We remain committed to ensure a bright future for our future leaders, the youth.

The Maldives has also initiated several national strategies including legislative reforms to face the growing challenges of terrorism. The new Counter Terrorism and Prevention Bill submitted by the Government to the Parliament is currently under discussion. When enacted, this Act will provide a robust legal framework for stronger measures against Maldivians who travel outside with the intent of joining foreign terrorist organizations, as well as against those providing material support for such entities. Recently enacted Anti-Money Laundering and Terrorism Financing Act as well as the Amendments to the Religious Unity Act also serve to support in this regard.

The Maldives' strategy in the fight against terrorism includes the capacity and capability enhancement of the country's law enforcement agencies, civil society and the judiciary. Various programmes are underway in collaboration with United Nations Counter Terrorism Executive Committee Directorate C-

TED and the Global Centre as well as with United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). Just recently the Maldives hosted a National Workshop on Counter Radicalization and Addressing of Foreign Fighters in collaboration with the UNOCD.

Mr. Chair,

The terrorism we see today in the world defies all logic. Instead, it is mindless and vicious violence, perpetrated most often against the weak and the marginalized, against ethnic and religious minorities, and against defenceless societies. The Maldives believes that violent extremism and terrorism should have no place in our modern societies. We believe that the best and the strongest defence against terrorism would be to present a unified and cohesive front against this menace that threatens not only our co-existence, but all ethics of civilization. The Maldives stands committed and ready to work with the international community on this front.

Thank you.