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## Sixth Committee

### Summary record of the 5th meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Friday, 9 October 2009, at 10 a.m.

*Chairman:* Mr. Benmehidi ..... (Algeria)

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Agenda item 108: Measures to eliminate international terrorism (*continued*)

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*The meeting was called to order at 11.20 a.m.*

**Agenda item 106: Measures to eliminate international terrorism** (*continued*) (A/64/37, A/64/161 and Add.1)

1. **Mr. Tchatchouwo** (Cameroon) said that terrorism, which fed on hatreds of all kinds, necessitated stronger solidarity and international cooperation. Terrorism ran counter to the principles and purposes of the United Nations and was unacceptable regardless of motivation. The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, which should be implemented through a mechanism negotiated openly, and the instruments adopted under the auspices of the United Nations were useful tools, but other means of combating terrorism should be explored. Cooperation should be further developed, especially in the form of preventive measures, technical assistance and exchange of information. Adequate funding of monitoring mechanisms and of the means of implementing the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in the developing countries, together with training of personnel, would assist them in their preventive measures. Regional and subregional mechanisms for fighting terrorism should be encouraged and should be adequately supported by the developed countries. They, and the international financial institutions, should increase the resources allocated to supporting counter-terrorism efforts. International, regional and subregional organizations with relevant expertise could play a crucial role in strengthening national capacities.

2. A draft comprehensive convention on terrorism should be finalized as a matter of urgency in order to fill the gaps left by the sectoral instruments. His country was committed to working with all other delegations to negotiate an agreed text. However, the adoption of the convention was not an end in itself. Lasting solutions must be found for the poverty, injustice and conflict which formed the breeding ground for terrorist groups.

3. Cameroon was fully committed to fighting terrorism. Since 2005 it had had a national financial investigation agency in charge of ascertaining the source of funds implicated in money-laundering or the financing of terrorism. It was a party to most of the international instruments on terrorism and cooperated with the Security Council through its three Committees established pursuant to Security Council resolutions

1267 (1999), 1373 (2001) and 1540 (2004). Cameroon was in favour of enhanced cooperation among those three Committees. Special attention should be paid to the victims of terrorism. In that regard his delegation welcomed the Symposium on Supporting Victims of Terrorism, held in September 2008.

4. It was essential to ensure that all counter-terrorism measures were in conformity with the United Nations Charter and with international law, especially human rights law, refugee law and international humanitarian law. The international community must also avoid associating terrorism with any particular culture, religion, race or ethnic group and should promote a dialogue among civilizations and religions. In view of the need for a global coalition as broad as possible to combat terrorism, Cameroon was in favour of convening a high-level conference, under the auspices of the United Nations, to frame a coordinated response to terrorism.

5. **Mr. Schuldt** (Ecuador) said that his country condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, wherever and by whomever committed, including States. Not only did terrorism threaten international peace and security and undermine the stability, democracy and socio-economic development, it also constituted an attack on human life and dignity and on fundamental human rights.

6. Ecuador had ratified almost all the international conventions related to terrorism, including the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism, and was continuing to develop its domestic law to facilitate compliance with its international obligations under those instruments. It had begun the internal procedures to ratify the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings and the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism. It took an active part in implementing its regional and subregional obligations, through the Inter-American Committee Against Terrorism, the Financial Action Task Force of South America Against Money Laundering, and the Andean Community. It had reformed its criminal code in line with the principles laid down in the international conventions against terrorism, and was adopting a special law against the financing of terrorism. Since 2005 it had had a law against money-laundering, a national council on money-laundering and a financial intelligence unit. Ecuador's efforts against illegal organized groups had

earned it recognition from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

7. His delegation welcomed the extent of the international cooperation in combating terrorism described in the report of the Secretary-General (A/64/161 and Add.1), and urged that it be further stepped up. All counter-terrorism activities, however, must comply strictly with international law, especially human rights law, refugee law and international humanitarian law, and must respect State sovereignty and the principle of non-interference in internal affairs. The United Nations, and especially its most representative organ, the General Assembly, should be the principal forum for framing the political and legal framework of the international fight against terrorism, and for dealing in an integrated fashion with all its aspects. Ecuador supported the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, and commended the events held at the United Nations to highlight one of the most neglected aspects of terrorism: the fate of its victims. His delegation was anxious for progress to be made in finalizing a draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism and emphasized the need for political will to bring it about.

8. **Mr. Eriksen** (Norway) said that his delegation was appalled by the recent terrorist attack on the office of the World Food Programme in Islamabad and wished to express its sympathy for the victims and their families. The Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy was an important tool in combating terrorism, in particular because it had broad support, and comprised a wide range of short-term and long-term measures. There was a need for a coordinated, sustained engagement by the various parts of the United Nations system. The Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force had an important role to play in coordinating efforts within the United Nations system and in mobilizing support among Member States and should be placed on a secure financial footing. Norway had provided financial support for the establishment of its Working Group on Integrated Assistance for Countering Terrorism (I-ACT). It fully supported the Security Council Committees mandated to contribute to the fight against terrorism. The Committee established pursuant to resolution 1267 (1999) had taken steps to improve respect for procedural rights and due process in relation to the sanctions specified in the resolution. However, the Committee must continue

its efforts to ensure the fundamental rights of listed persons.

9. His delegation attached great importance to the adoption of a comprehensive convention on international terrorism to fill the gaps left by the sectoral conventions and provide a framework for assistance and cooperation. The Coordinator's proposal merited careful consideration, as a possible basis for consensus. A high-level conference on terrorism could provide an excellent opportunity to take stock, identify priority needs and enhance cooperation and could be convened as soon as a comprehensive convention had been adopted. Norway was co-sponsoring the Workshop for National Counter-Terrorism Focal Points, to be held in Vienna on 12 and 13 October 2009, and encouraged wide participation in the workshop.

10. **Mr. Ramafole** (Lesotho) said that terrorism constituted the most serious threat to peace and security and required collective effort to combat. Member States must make every effort to implement the Security Council resolutions against terrorism, and to cooperate with the Security Council Committees responsible. The Council should be in a position to provide technical assistance, through the appropriate bodies, to Member States in need of it for the purpose of implementing its resolutions. Such assistance went a long way towards developing the capacity of States to prevent and combat terrorism. Meanwhile, Member States must take steps to tackle the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism, while the United Nations should undertake initiatives to promote dialogue, tolerance and understanding among civilizations, cultures, peoples and religions.

11. All Member States should ratify all the international conventions and protocols against terrorism, while fulfilling their obligations under international law and international humanitarian law. International cooperation in combating terrorism must be in conformity with international law, including the United Nations Charter and international human rights law, refugee law and international humanitarian law.

12. **Mr. Gouider** (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) said that the eradication of terrorism and its root causes was a vital goal shared by his country, which had itself been the victim of terrorist acts, but that the means of achieving that goal remained an open question and required re-examination. There was a need for real

cooperation and unity of means that went beyond partial measures and ad hoc political alignments, and hence a need for a serious revision of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and completion of a draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism that met the aspirations of peoples and the requirements of peace.

13. Since the outset, his delegation had supported the idea of a comprehensive convention and the efforts to finalize a draft. It hoped that all the outstanding issues would be resolved, including that of an objective definition of terrorism that clearly distinguished it from the right to resist occupation and foreign domination, for lumping the exercise of that right together with terrorist acts could only perpetuate those wrongs.

14. His delegation considered the United Nations the right place to achieve the international community's objective of ending terrorism. For that reason it had called, both in the General Assembly and elsewhere, for the holding of an international conference to define the concept of terrorism in a way that dealt with both the symptoms and the causes and provided a legal framework that covered all aspects of the matter. It wished to reiterate that call and all the proposals aimed at guaranteeing comprehensiveness and balance in a draft convention.

15. **Ms. Valenzuela Díaz** (El Salvador) said that her Government firmly supported all the measures taken within the United Nations to combat international terrorism. However, all such measures must be carried out in conformity with the principles of the Charter, international law and international conventions and agreements on the subject. The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy should be pursued on the basis of its four pillars. It was also important to take steps to promote the necessary coordination among the various agencies concerned. Combating terrorism required a proper legal framework. The executive and operational aspects of international cooperation must also be stepped up, as a key element in the prevention and suppression of terrorist acts. Judicial cooperation and information exchange between financial bodies and the police intelligence services should also be improved.

16. El Salvador condemned all forms of terrorism and the financing of terrorism. It was a party to the 13 international sectoral instruments against terrorism and was continuing to update its own legislation on the

subject. It provided reports to the Security Council as required by the Council's resolutions, including resolution 1373 (2001), with the assistance of the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force.

17. To eliminate terrorism, it was also necessary to work for the elimination of conditions conducive to terrorism, such as political, ethnic, racial and religious intolerance and social and economic disparities, and to promote dialogue among the national focal points responsible for combating terrorism, bearing in mind that terrorism could go hand in hand with other phenomena such as drug trafficking and transnational organized crime. All counter-terrorism activities must be conducted in conformity with human rights standards, international humanitarian law and international refugee law.

18. Her delegation would cooperate fully in the work of completing a draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism and was hoping for substantial progress on the draft during the current session.

19. **Mr. Stastoli** (Albania) said that terrorism, which posed a direct threat to peace and security for all mankind, required a global response, which the United Nations should lead. His delegation unconditionally condemned all terrorist acts committed by whomever, for whatever reason and in whatever situation. It also wished to emphasize that the phenomenon must be thoroughly analysed in order to address and eliminate conditions conducive to radicalization and terrorist acts.

20. His delegation fully supported the efforts to overcome obstacles to a consensus in order to finalize a draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism. Such a convention should build upon the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy adopted in 2006 and the review of the Strategy in 2008 and provide the necessary legal framework for more effective, unified action.

21. Respect for international law in the fight against terrorism not only enhanced the effectiveness of that fight but also eliminated excuses for justifying terrorist activities. His delegation attached great importance to the role of the United Nations in that regard. Albania fully implemented the recommendations of the Security Council Committees established pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1373 (2001) and 1540 (2004) and had joined international efforts to fight terrorism in various parts of the world, as it currently was doing in

the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan.

22. Shallow judgements and narrow political interests should not be allowed to divert attention from the fight against terrorism. Only international and, in particular, regional cooperation would succeed in countering that dangerous phenomenon. His Government cooperated closely with all its neighbouring countries to combat terrorism, with excellent results.

23. **Mr. Al Nafisee** (Saudi Arabia) said that his country rejected terrorism in all its forms, irrespective of motivation, and took every measure to prevent and combat it. It had instituted a highly successful programme for the rehabilitation of extremists and prisoners who had been involved in security issues. The programme, based on dialogue and the offering of friendly advice, had received worldwide acclaim and had been implemented in a number of the world's major countries. It involved over 200 legal counsellors, sociologists and psychologists who explained the proper interpretation of principles of the sharia and provided counselling to prisoners, engaging them in an intensive, all-encompassing dialogue. Many of the prisoners recognized that they had been wrong and changed their behaviour. Indeed, 90 per cent of those who had participated in the programme had given up their deviant views and left prison, only a small minority returning to their old ways.

24. In 2005 the Kingdom had organized the Counter-Terrorism International Conference, which had been attended by experts from 60 States and international and regional organizations. The Conference had issued the Riyadh Declaration, which contained practical recommendations on combating terrorism, preventing its financing and achieving greater multilateral cooperation in that sphere. At the Conference, King Abdullah had called for the establishment of an international counter-terrorism centre under United Nations auspices. The centre would link national and regional centres to a unified database whose information, especially on the tracking and interception of terrorists' movements, could be rapidly exchanged and updated via a secure connection. The centre would also make it possible to exchange counter-terrorism technology and training programmes and to counter and prevent terrorist activities.

25. His country had been among the first to accede to most of the international counter-terrorism conventions

and looked forward to the completion of a draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism that included a clear definition of terrorism, distinguishing it from the right of peoples to resist occupation. He therefore supported the call for a high-level international conference to help complete the draft convention.

26. **Mr. Sharifov** (Azerbaijan) said that his country strongly condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and cooperated with the international community's efforts aimed at consistent, comprehensive and coordinated responses to prevent and combat terrorism. It was a party to all major universal counter-terrorism instruments and those of the Council of Europe, cooperated fully with the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1373 (2001) (Counter-Terrorism Committee), and collaborated on a bilateral and regional basis as well.

27. As terrorism increasingly became a global threat, it was imperative for the international community to adopt a unified approach to combating it. States should refrain from any action that provided direct or indirect support for terrorist activities. They should also take appropriate measures to ensure that their respective territories were not used for terrorism-related activities, particularly when such activities were obviously aimed at undermining the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Member States.

28. Terrorism was closely related to aggressive separatism. Armed conflict and foreign military occupation often created conditions conducive to exploitation by terrorists. More efficient measures should be taken to prevent terrorists from acquiring conventional weapons and to disclose attempts by those in military and political control of occupied territories to deny responsibility.

29. All terrorist acts constituted serious crimes, were unjustifiable and should be unequivocally condemned and prosecuted, especially when they indiscriminately targeted or injured civilians. The absence of a clear definition of terrorism in international law hampered the efforts of the international community to bring to account not only individual terrorists and organizations, but also States that promoted, supported or financed terrorist activities. The vagueness of legal formulations opened the way for a potential increase in criminal activities. His delegation was therefore determined to make every effort to reach an agreement

on a comprehensive convention on international terrorism. It agreed with the view that the time was propitious to reach a solution reflecting the common expectations and interests of all delegations and that the adoption of such a convention would strengthen both the existing legal framework for international counter-terrorism measures and the moral authority of the United Nations.

30. The war on terrorism should not be used to target any particular religion or culture. Joint efforts and dialogue were essential in order to counter attempts to fuel conflict on ethnic, religious or cultural grounds. Constructive interaction between different cultures and religions, including in the framework of such measures as the Culture of Peace Initiative and the Alliance of Civilizations, should continue to play a special role in fostering peace and mutual understanding and thus in facilitating the effective implementation of counter-terrorism measures. His country would continue to contribute to that process.

31. **Mr. Mohamed** (Maldives) said that his country, which had always condemned all forms of terrorism, had itself been the victim of terrorist attacks. As a small archipelago with limited resources and a long coastline stretching nearly 800 kilometres from north to south in the Indian Ocean, it was particularly vulnerable to seaborne terrorist attacks, like those on Mumbai. Maritime security was therefore of the utmost concern to his Government.

32. A strong supporter of enhanced regional cooperation, Maldives had ratified the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Regional Convention on Suppression of Terrorism and its Additional Protocol. His country also strongly supported all initiatives for the protection and security of small States. At the international level, it was a party to 12 counter-terrorism treaties. It strongly condemned the recent terrorist attack against the Indian Embassy in Kabul and the bombing of the office of the World Food Programme in Islamabad, both of which were reminders that terrorism transcended borders, religion, race and colour.

33. After years of delay, it was essential for the international community to attribute criminal accountability to the perpetrators of terrorists acts. It was therefore of the utmost urgency to adopt a draft comprehensive convention on terrorism at the current session of the General Assembly. In doing so, the

Committee would provide an overarching instrument that would supplement the existing legal regime addressing specific terrorist activities and bolster international coordination in the global fight against terrorism.

34. His country strongly supported the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. However, for Maldives and other small States, the economic cost of combating terrorist activities diverted substantial resources that could otherwise be directed towards economic and social development, and it was difficult for them to meet reporting deadlines under the relevant Security Council resolutions. It was therefore imperative further to strengthen international efforts against terrorism. His delegation commended the Terrorism Prevention Branch of the UNODC for its efforts to build State capacity to combat terrorism. Inasmuch as the fight against terrorism was a fight to defend fundamental freedoms and individual liberties, it was essential to respect international human rights law and international humanitarian law while countering terrorism. In conclusion, his delegation endorsed the proposal by Egypt calling for the convening of a high-level conference on combating terrorism.

35. **Mr. Ajawin** (Sudan) said his country continued to condemn terrorism in all its forms, including State terrorism, and was determined to support every effort to eradicate the phenomenon, which was unacceptable to the Sudan's multicultural, multireligious and multiethnic society. In consequence, the Sudan had ratified 12 counter-terrorism conventions and was studying the procedures for accession to the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism.

36. International cooperation was vital for combating terrorism, provided that such cooperation was guided by the principles of international law, including the Charter of the United Nations and the international instruments relating, in particular, to international humanitarian law and human rights. Every effort should be made also to arrive at a comprehensive convention on terrorism, the primary thrust of those efforts being on economic, social and political factors conducive to terrorism, first and foremost foreign occupation and the denial of the right of peoples to self-determination. Any effort that overlooked that reality was futile.

37. Moreover, intentionally confounding terrorism with the fight for liberation and independence, turning a blind eye to State terrorism and following the pernicious tendency to tie terrorism to a particular religion or culture could only drive a wedge into the international consensus and cast doubt on the motives behind the international counter-terrorism campaign. Despite Muslims' many calls for tolerance and dialogue, an organized campaign against them continued to grow, yet terrorism was not unique to any one religion, country or region.

38. The Sudan supported the holding of a high-level conference under the United Nations auspices as well as the generous Saudi Arabian initiative to establish an international counter-terrorism centre. In line with its active regional role, the Sudan had called a second regional counter-terrorism conference, whose final declaration contained an undertaking by the States of the region to combat terrorism, to welcome the support of friendly States and the international community towards that end and to strive earnestly to amend their national legislation accordingly.

39. The war against terrorism had in some respects become a holy war, no longer open to discussion. There was a need to pause and turn back to the United Nations, a need for the path being followed to be judged by intellect, logic and law, so as to prevent the lack of perspective from leading to the deterioration due to the danger of terrorism, the terrorizing of civilians and the trampling of human rights in the name of the war on terror that were being witnessed in many regions.

40. The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy lacked a definition of terrorism and therefore seemed aimed at combating an unknown enemy. It failed to distinguish between terrorism and the right of peoples to self-determination, contained no provision on State terrorism and did not adequately address the root causes of the problem. Unless it was revised, it would continue to lack the desired effectiveness and comprehensiveness.

41. **Mr. Sodnom** (Mongolia) said that his country was a Party to and fully implemented the 13 relevant conventions on combating terrorism. It supported the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and the efforts of the Secretary-General to implement all its aspects in an integrated manner. Mongolia remained committed to Security Council resolutions 1373 (2001)

and 1540 (2004) and met the reporting obligations they imposed.

42. His delegation vehemently condemned the recent terrorist attack on the World Food Programme office in Islamabad, and extended special sympathy to fellow Asian countries that continued to be the targets of such attacks. No country was immune to terrorism, and regional and global cooperation was required in order to eradicate the root causes and financing networks of terrorism. Dialogue among different religions, cultures and ethnic groups was also essential. Many developing countries required additional assistance owing to their lack of sufficient expertise, human capacity, modern technology and financial resources adequately to combat terrorism. Mongolia was one such country, given its vast territory and small, scattered population.

*The meeting rose at 12.40 p.m.*