

**STATEMENT BY MR NARINDER SINGH, DIRECTOR (L&T), MINISTRY OF
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS, NEW DELHI ON WORKING GROUP ON
INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM AT SIXTH COMMITTEE OF THE 57TH
UNGA ON 15TH OCTOBER 2002**

Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, I would like to congratulate you and other members of the Bureau on your unanimous re-election. We are happy to see you once again presiding over our deliberations. We also sincerely thank the coordinator of informal consultations, Mr. Richard Rowe, for his invaluable efforts to resolve the outstanding issues.

Mr. Chairman,

The International community has recognized the need for cooperation among all States in efforts to eliminate the scourge of terrorism, and has engaged itself actively to fight and weed out this menace effectively. Toward that end all States under the aegis of the United Nations have so far very successfully developed a legal framework of twelve international conventions to address specific aspects of international terrorism. With a view to completing the legal framework of Conventions in this vital field, India proposed the conclusion of a Comprehensive Convention Against International Terrorism and submitted an initial draft to facilitate negotiations during the 51st UNGA session. The active consideration of the Draft

Convention began from the 55th session within this Working Group and the Ad-hoc Committee on International Terrorism established pursuant to UNGA Res.51/210 and my delegation sincerely thanks all delegations for their support and active participation in the consideration of the Draft Comprehensive Convention. Agreement has been reached on most of the provisions of the text of the Draft Convention, although some important provisions, namely Article 2 on definitions, Article 2 bis on scope of the Convention and Article 18 on exclusion of security forces are still outstanding.

Article 2 on definition of offences has been agreed in our discussions. However, some delegations have indicated that their agreement to this text was subject to agreement on Article 18.

Mr. Chairman,

On the question of relationship with the earlier Conventions, there is general agreement that the Comprehensive Convention should not supersede or override, but should add value to and supplement the sectoral Conventions. My delegation believes that this agreed objective is best achieved by not making any specific reference in the text, so that the question

is regulated by the general law of treaties.

The most important outstanding issue in the Draft Convention relates to Article 18, i.e. the proposal to exclude acts committed ruining struggles against foreign occupation. We are however, encouraged by the statements of delegations that it is not the intention to legitimize acts of terrorism which are, in any case, prohibited under IHL.

Mr. Chairman,

Further, the Declaration on Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism, adopted by UNGA Resolution 49/60 in 1994 also unequivocally condemns all acts, methods and practices of terrorism as criminal and unjustifiable wherever and by whoever committed. The Declaration also makes clear that no considerations of a political, philosophical, ideological, racial, ethnic, religious or any other nature could justify the commission of criminal acts intended or calculated to provoke a State of terror in the general public. International humanitarian law also does not permit acts of terrorism during armed conflicts.

Mr. Chairman,

Acts of international terrorism continue to occur worldwide with increasing regularity and take a terrible toll of human life everywhere. The recent terrorist attacks against innocent civilians in the Swaminarayan Temple in Gandhinagar, Gujarat, attacks against parliamentary institutions, and against

candidates and officials engaged in the conduct of democratic processes, and the most recent attack against civilians in Bali, Indonesia, represent a challenge to the established values of civilized society. International terrorism is a phenomenon that affects all countries and regions, and action to eradicate it requires the cooperation of the international community.

During the General Assembly's plenary debate on international terrorism during the 56th session, 1-5 October, 2001, as well as in the General Debate and in the Sixth Committee this year, the international community has emphasized the urgent need for concerted international action against terrorism and has also highlighted the importance of completing the international legal framework for combating this global menace by concluding the negotiations on the Comprehensive Convention.

The early conclusion of our negotiations and the adoption of the comprehensive Convention would send a clear signal that the international community was united in its determination to work together with a view to eradication of this scourge, and we urge all delegations to work together in a spirit of cooperation and accommodation toward achieving this objective, and thereby successfully carrying out our mandate of completing the legal framework of conventions aimed at combating international terrorism.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.