

STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR HARDEEP SINGH PURI, PERMANENT
REPRESENTATIVE, OPEN DEBATE ON THREATS TO INTERNATIONAL PEACE
AND SECURITY CAUSED BY TERRORIST ACTS: COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH TO
COUNTER-TERRORISM AT THE UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL ON
JANUARY 15, 2013

At the outset, Mr. President, I would like to congratulate you on assuming the Presidency of the Security Council for this month. We would also like to express our appreciation to you for organizing today's meeting on this important subject.

Mr. President,

Terrorism today constitutes the most pressing challenge to international peace and security. It is a scourge that undermines peace, democracy and freedom and endangers the foundations of democratic societies. It is a global threat that recognizes no border, nationality, ethnicity or religion and there is hardly any region of the world that has not been scarred by terrorism.

My own country, India, has faced the scourge of terrorism for over two-and-a-half decades. And, indeed, our entire region, South Asia, has been wracked by the activities of the biggest terrorist actors in the world, be they Al Qaida, Lashkar-e-Taiba, Jamat-ud Daawa, elements of Taliban and others. Terrorism, extremism and radicalization continue to pose a serious challenge to peace, progress and prosperity in the region.

Over the years, the visible landscape of international terrorism has vastly changed. In our globalized world, terrorists are also globalized in their outreach and activities. They recruit in one country, raise funds in another and operate in others and are waging an asymmetric warfare against the international community.

Terrorist's veritable nexus with transnational organized crime, drug and arms trafficking is now well established. Terrorist financing, illicit money laundering, drug trafficking, piracy and illicit arms trade remain intertwined in a complex web of toxic relationship.

There is also a growing risk of weapons of mass destruction of different kinds falling into the hands of terrorists. The misuse of cyberspace and related technologies by terrorists and their supporters is a matter of increasing concern.

Mr. President,

India condemns terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. No cause or grievance can justify taking recourse to terrorism. India has been in the forefront of global counter-terrorism efforts and is part of all major global initiatives against international terrorism, including the FATF.

I had the privilege to Chair the Counter-terrorism Committee during 2011-12. Our endeavour had been to provide a renewed momentum to global counter-terrorism effort and to promote a culture of 'zero tolerance' towards terrorism. During this period, three Special Meetings of the Committee were held with participation of the wider UN membership and international, regional and sub-regional organizations.

The Committee in its Special Meeting in New York in September, 2011 to commemorate the tenth anniversary of adoption of Security Council resolution 1373 (2001) and establishment of the Committee, unanimously endorsed a zero tolerance approach towards terrorism in its Outcome Document.

The Committee further organized a Special Meeting in New York last November that focussed on prevention and suppression of terrorist financing with participation of the expert bodies - FATF, FATF Style Regional Bodies (FSRBs), IMF and the World Bank. The Meeting was immensely helpful in putting a spotlight on the issue of terrorist financing, which lies at the heart of Security Council resolution 1373 (2001).

We fully support all efforts, which strengthen international and regional cooperation, and most importantly, help ensure the effective implementation of relevant Security Council resolutions, including 1373 (2001) and 1624 (2005). We also support the implementation of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in an integrated manner in all its four pillars.

We believe that apart from law enforcement measures, the preventive aspect is equally important. Focus on development, education, social integration, tolerance, rule of law and respect for human rights are the integral components of such an approach.

The UN has played a seminal role in combating terrorism, facilitating technical assistance and capacity building of member States. The success in the fight against terrorism goes hand-in-hand with progress in strengthening counter-terrorism cooperation and exchange of information at the international, regional and sub-regional level. A large number of terrorist plots can be neutralized by sharing of information and effective international cooperation.

We have witnessed important progress at the international and regional levels including the recently established Global Counter Terrorism Forum (GCTF). We would need a scaling up of some of the concrete ideas emerging from these processes.

Mr. President,

Despite the progress achieved so far, the efforts of the international community continue to face many challenges. Foremost is the need to remove the moral and legal ambiguities that allow terrorists to gain succour and legitimacy. Progress under mutual legal assistance and extradition cases is still sketchy and is yet to be fully mainstreamed as part of regional and international counter-terrorism efforts. We need to strengthen enforcement efforts to destroy safe havens for terrorists, their financial flows and their support networks. The mechanisms that have been developed to pool the resources and the knowledge of the international community needs to be augmented and made more effective.

India has long held the belief that the UN also needs to strengthen the normative framework for its counter-terrorism strategy through the adoption of a Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism (CCIT). I could not agree more with my friend Gert Rosenthal, PR of Guatemala on his emphasis earlier today on the need and added value through an early adoption of the CCIT. I can only echo the call of the Secretary General made earlier that the time has come for the CCIT to be adopted.

Mr. President,

The fight against terrorism has to be unrelenting and fought across all fronts. The international community cannot afford selective approaches in dealing with terrorist groups or in dismantling the infrastructure of terrorism. Terrorism is a Frankenstein monster. Resort to the use of terrorism as an instrument of State Policy is short-sighted. Indeed, those who have taken recourse to it have invariably themselves suffered immensely from it proving the age old dictum that those who play with the sword, shall also perish by it.

Thank you.

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