

16 February 2007

**Statement of H.E. Ms. Sheikha Haya Rashed Al Khalifa,
President of the 61st Session of the General Assembly,
at a Briefing on UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and the
Launch of the Online Counter-Terrorism Handbook**

Secretary-General,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thank you for coming to this informal briefing on the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

I believe that terrorism represents one of the most serious threats to international peace and security. Countering-Terrorism is a daunting challenge that we can only overcome by working together. If we do not act now, the magnitude of the threat could grow affecting many more innocent people.

As you may recall, last September the General Assembly took a significant step forward in the fight against terrorism by adopting, by consensus, the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. This was officially launched on 19 September 2006.

The Strategy is a unique document, which covers a wide range of issues relating to the fight against and protection from terrorist attacks.

It also addresses conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism; the relationship between counter-terrorism, and the protection of human rights and the rule of law.

Every one of us realizes the importance of the need for counter-terrorist measures to comply with international law, including the UN Charter and all international conventions and protocols.

The Strategy also identifies how the UN system can help enhance State capacity to counter the threat from terrorism; and, reaffirms the vital role of the General Assembly in the fight against the spread of terrorism.

Five months after its adoption, today provides the opportunity to take stock of the implementation of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. This exercise will let us see how much has been translated into practice and give us an indication of what is left to be done.

Let me emphasize, once again, that the Strategy must be implemented by all parties: governments, UN agencies, the private sector and civil society.

This is truly a collective effort for which everyone bears responsibility.

I am pleased to note that the Government of Austria has offered to host a Symposium on Advancing the Implementation of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in Vienna, during the week of the 14th to 18th of May 2007.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today, we will hear directly from the Secretary-General on the concrete steps taken so far by the United Nations to implement the Strategy.

We will also have an opportunity to hear from Mr. Robert Orr - Chairman of the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force - about the Online Handbook as well as from the four UN agencies on the Task Force.

I now like to give the floor to the Secretary-General Mr Ban Ki-moon.

Concluding Remarks

Secretary-General,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

This afternoon, we have heard the Secretary-General and others speakers update us on their progress on implementing the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

Member States will have an opportunity to exchange their views relating to the implementation of the Strategy in the future.

I will consult Member States on how best we can proceed in this regard.

While striving to implement the Strategy, we are also duty bound to continue our efforts to finalize the comprehensive convention on international terrorism, as soon as possible.

The Ad Hoc Committee established by General Assembly resolution 51/210, of 17 December 1996, under the Chairmanship of Ambassador Rohan Perera of Sri Lanka, concluded its eleventh session yesterday.

I am encouraged by the positive spirit displayed by delegations and the progress made during the current session on various outstanding issues concerning the draft comprehensive convention on

international terrorism. I commend Mrs. Maria Telalian of Greece, Vice-Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee, for her hard work and dedication in facilitating work in this regard.

We must remain steadfast in our commitment to finalize the convention. The General Assembly will provide the international community with a legal instrument that will enhance our efforts in countering the threat of terrorism and making the world a safer place for all.

Thank you very much again for coming.

This meeting is adjourned.