

4 December 2007

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Srgjan Kerim,
President of the 62nd Session of the General Assembly,
at the Informal Meeting of the Plenary on the Implementation of the
United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy**

Mr. Secretary-General
Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen:

May I welcome all of you to this informal meeting of the General Assembly to discuss the implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

The Strategy reflects the commitment of the whole United Nations membership to enhance the role of this organisation play in counter-terrorism. On many occasions I have reiterated the need for the implementation of the Strategy and made it one of the main priorities of the sixty-second session of the General Assembly.

I would like to express my gratitude to the two Vice-Presidents of the General Assembly, the Permanent Representative of Turkey, H.E. Ambassador İlkin, and the Permanent Representative of Uruguay H.E. Ambassador Rosselli for agreeing to chair today's sessions and for summarising our discussions.

Terrorism represents one of the most serious threats to international peace and security. It knows no borders and affects us all. The recent cowardly attacks serve as a terrible reminder of the threat posed by terrorism to all our societies and the values and principles on which this organisation was founded.

Countering terrorism is a daunting challenge that we can only overcome by working together in partnership. If we do not act now, the magnitude of the threat could grow and affect many more innocent people.

We must muster the full support of the international community to respond in unity and with determination. By doing so we honour the memory of the victims of such heinous acts and stand in solidarity with their loved ones.

Excellencies,

The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, adopted unanimously in September 2006, marks a historic achievement, fulfilling the recommendation of the world leaders at the

2005 summit. The General Assembly agreed a comprehensive and collective approach to countering terrorism at the national, regional and international levels.

The Strategy strongly and unequivocally condemns all terrorist acts, in all forms and manifestations, committed by whomever, wherever and for whatever purposes.

This universal agreement of this Assembly to condemn and take all necessary actions to counter terrorism is crucial in our global struggle to preserve international stability around the world.

The Strategy is a unique document, which covers a wide range of issues relating to the fight against and protection from terrorist attacks. It represents the first truly global and truly integrated approach to counter terrorism.

The Strategy, for the first time, addresses the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism. It sets out a broad range of preventive measures, areas where capacity building is required and the role of the United Nations system; it recognizes the importance of partnerships with regional organizations, civil society and private sector. Last, but not least, the Strategy reiterates the need to uphold the rule of law and to respect human rights in all our counter-terrorism activities.

Last week, I emphasised that together we could improve the international standing and authority of the Assembly by demonstrating our renewed leadership on priority issues. Today we have such an opportunity to reassert the role of the General Assembly in strengthening the United Nations system for the benefit of all.

I urge all Member States to make use of the opportunity to ensure the full and effective implementation of the General Assembly's will. This is an exercise that requires a sustained long-term commitment to have an impact, especially by you, the Member States the driving force of this Assembly.

Without putting the provisions into action, they remain only words. IN this regards, I welcome the meetings that have taken place during the past year in Vienna, Tunis and elsewhere that have discussed the substance of the Strategy.

Excellencies,

I would also like to highlight the important role that education and fostering greater dialogue among religions and cultures can play in countering terrorism.

The United Nations has a crucial role in promoting such a dialogue. The spirit of cooperation and mutual respect is something that the General Assembly promoted most recently during the High Level Dialogue on Inter-religious and Intercultural Understanding.

We must put a stop to the misuse of religion in contemporary society, and reject extremist ideologies that threaten peace and understanding among nations and peoples. As the Secretary-

General has noted, terrorists exploit these vulnerabilities and grievances to breed extremism at the local level.

This is why support for good governance, sustainable development human rights and the rule of law are such important aspects of the fight against terrorism.

Collectively we must strive to create a new culture of international relations based on these values to build greater mutual trust and understanding and counter the perception of injustice that has acted as a recruiting sergeant for many young extremists.

Excellencies,

When adopting the Strategy, you set a goal to examine progress made to implement it in September 2008. We must make every effort to ensure that when we reach the review point – that we can confidently say that real progress has been made. I am convinced that today’s meeting will help to achieve this goal.

In this regard, I would like to ask you to share with us, among other issues:

- the various measures you have undertaken to raise awareness in your country and your region of the Strategy;
- the initiatives and actions you have already embarked on;
- partnerships you have formed with other Member States, private sector and civil society and with the United Nations system;
- best practices you have developed that would be beneficial for the wider membership to know about; and,
- gaps you have identified to accelerate the implementation of the Strategy.

This information sharing and learning exercise will be valuable for further collaboration and cooperation.

I would like to commend Member States for engaging cooperatively with the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force, which brings together 24 United Nations entities.

I would welcome any further initiatives that Member States may take to give further support to the Task Force and strengthen the specific areas of the Strategy. We – the Member States and the Organisation – also have to ensure that there are sufficient resources available for the Task Force to effectively coordinate the system.

Excellencies,

I would like to take this opportunity to recall the pivotal role the General Assembly has played in adopting international legal instruments to counter terrorism. And also note that the United Nations system has provided technical cooperation to member States to help implement these

important instruments. These instruments now need to be complemented by a comprehensive convention on international terrorism to send a clear message to those that seek to undermine our human security and freedom.

I was encouraged by the constructive spirit of the work in the 6th Committee of the General Assembly when this issue was discussed. I urge Member States to use this time before the Ad Hoc Committee meets at the end of February 2008 to continue consultations to find a compromise on the remaining outstanding issues in the Convention.

Excellencies,

Meetings such as we are holding today not only highlight the importance and our commitment to fully implement the Strategy, but also enhance our understanding of it. Through an interactive exchange of views and ideas we can identify priorities and areas where each of us can add value. By finding gaps and identify where further assistance is needed we can build closer cooperation between Member States and the United Nations system.

Let us use this opportunity to strengthen our collective resolve to counter terrorism. Let us all work together to ensure that can show progress and deliver results when we approach the review of implementation next September.

We must be determined in this to achieve a better and safer world for all.

Thank you.