

Statement by the Head of Pakistan Delegation Mr. Makhdoom Ali Khan, Attorney General in the Ad Hoc Committee established under General Assembly Resolution 51/210 (Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism), New York (28 June 2004)

Mr. Chairman,

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate you on your election as Chairman of this Ad Hoc Committee. I hope that you will be able to steward this Committee to reach a legal consensus, which will help the international community to effectively combat terrorism.

The statement by Turkey on behalf of the OIC (Organization of Islamic Conference) generally reflects the position of Pakistan. My delegation, however, emphasizes that Pakistan is not only a frontline state in the fight against terrorism but has also been a victim of terrorism. Many of our innocent civilians have lost their lives to acts of terrorism. But this does not deter us in our commitment to fight this menace.

We have taken effective measures to strengthen our domestic legal framework. Our law enforcement officials are in the forefront of the fight against terrorism. Pakistan has signed or ratified 11 out of 12 UN anti terrorism conventions. We have also signed the OIC Convention on Combating International Terrorism and the SAARC Regional Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism.

Pakistan, therefore, is keen that to provide focus to the efforts against terrorism, this Committee must reach consensus on the legal definition of terrorism, which must include state terrorism. The definition must also make a distinction between acts of terrorism and the struggle of a people for self-determination.

The Charter of the UN, the subsequent practice of its organs and members confirms the legally binding character of the right of self-determination. This practice has been expressed through many resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council including the resolution defining the prohibition of aggression, the Covenants on Human Rights and the jurisprudence of the International Court of Justice.

Pakistan, therefore, maintains that our fight against terrorism should not lead to the violation of human rights or undermine the right of a people to self-determination. It should strictly conform to the principles of international law and human rights.

All this, however, will have little meaning if efforts are not made immediately to provide technical assistance to states needing capacity building to allow them to fight terrorism effectively. Technical assistance to member states should be provided so that they could fulfill their obligations under international law and the Security Council resolutions.

Pakistan supports the need for convening a high level conference under the auspices of the UN to formulate a joint organized response of the international community to terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

Mr. Chairman,

Terrorism has no faith. Therefore we should not become party to efforts to link terrorism with any particular religion. On the contrary, greater efforts should be made to foster inter-cultural understanding and cooperation. That is the only way forward.

Thank you.