Thank you Mr. President.

I take this opportunity to extend Pakistan’s facilitation to Mexico and to yourself and your delegation on the assumption of the Presidency of the Council at this crucial moment in global affairs. Your task would be challenging but we have no doubt that you will live up to the high expectations that we have all come to expect from you. I would also wish to convey our high appreciation to our brother Ambassador Mamady Traoré of Guinea for his excellent discharge of responsibilities at a critical period in the history of the United Nations.

Mr. President,

Today we join others in expressing our warm appreciation for the role played by the Counter Terrorism Committee and especially to Sir Jeremy Greenstock, the Ambassador of UK for his outstanding and pioneering contributions in this context. We are sure that Ambassador Arias of Spain will be able to fill these rather big shoes which Sir Jeremy has left behind.

Mr. President,

The phenomenon of terrorism has faced humanity in one form or another throughout history. But never before has the threat of terrorism possessed such vast potential and universal reach as it does today. The events of 9/11 have magnified both in reality and in perception the threat of terrorism for the world. No one can discount the danger of the use or threat of use of weapons of mass destruction, or other modern means of mass destruction by terrorism. This is indeed a challenge unparalleled in history.

Pakistan has suffered from terrorism for several decades from various sources—internal and external. This challenge has, however, only strengthened our resolve to combat terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. Pakistan is proud of the role it has played as a front line in the fight against terrorism since September 11. We continue to interdict terrorists on our borders with Afghanistan. Our successes in capturing over 500 suspected terrorists including some of the senior most members of Al-Qaeda, have not come easy. We owe it in large part to the heroic efforts of our military and our law enforcement officials many of whom have paid the ultimate sacrifice in this endeavour. We are grateful also for the international assistance and cooperation which has made it possible to apprehend some key suspects.

Mr. President,

Pakistan has noted carefully the report by Ambassador Greenstock on the work of the CTC since its creation 18 months ago. We have also reviewed the 7th 90-day work programme and have noted the increased attention the CTC is paying to practically help member States in receiving technical assistance to enhance their capacity for counter terrorism. May I underline, Mr. President that, what is important is that countries should take action against terrorism, and that they should be provided with the resources and the ability to do so. We must not get caught up on procedures, processes and reporting requirements which must be secondary to the actual action on the ground that is taken by States. The CTC has contributed by focusing on building the capacity of States to pursue the anti-terror goals. The signature contribution of Sir Jeremy Greenstock and his able team has been outstanding.
Mr. President,

Today, I would like to look a little bit at the future. We believe that the United Nations should pursue its counter-terrorism goals with a clear strategic vision and within a comprehensive framework. The Security Council's debate today can help in evolving both. A useful framework for the UN action is contained in the tripartite strategy proposed last year by the Secretary General's Policy Working Group on the United Nations and Terrorism. The strategy consisted of (i) dissuading disaffected groups from embracing terrorism; (ii) denying groups or individuals the means to carry out acts of terrorism; and (iii) sustaining broad based international cooperation in the struggle against terrorism. Also, we need to focus on both the operational measures and the structural mechanisms required to succeed in the counter-terrorism campaign.

Mr. President,

The work on Counter-Terrorism has proceeded with moral clarity, and despite legal ambiguity. The absence of an agreed definition of terrorism is an obvious impediment to both the operational and structural measures required to combat terrorism. In particular, in the campaign against terrorism we must not allow any erosion of the fundamental principles of the U.N. Charter, specially the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples. Nor should we exclude from the ambit of anti-terrorism, the phenomena of State terrorism, which is often the worst form of terrorism in the degree of suffering and destruction that is visited upon innocent people. In this context, we feel it is imperative for the Security Council to insist on the evolution of peaceful solutions to outstanding disputes and conflicts among States.

Mr. President,

The Philosopher Nietzsche once said: "He who fights against monsters should see to it that he does not become one himself". Therefore, we believe that the CTC must give further attention to the need to ensure the protection of human rights and the observance of international humanitarian law in the anti-terror campaign. The CTC could, for example, convene an informal working group, which includes the participation of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, members of the Human Rights Commission, and concerned NGOs, as a useful way to identify concerns and possible solutions in this context.

For the long-term, there is a need to address the underlying causes – the social and economic factors – which contribute to the most proximate causes of terrorism. The existence of poverty, of course, does not directly lead to terrorism; but poverty weakens States and communities, and creates the frustrations and desperation in which extremist beliefs and the proclivity to violence breeds best.

Mr. President,

Resolution 1373, noted in its preamble, acts of terrorism motivated by "intolerance or extremism". Pakistan has taken legal and political action against extremist groups within our society in order to combat extremism and manifestation of terrorism. We have noted and welcomed statements which say that the war against terrorism is not a war against Islam. This assurance must be given greater credibility at the political and operational level. There are at least three aspects which need to be addressed: Firstly, we need to promote greater mutual understanding between religions and cultures. Pakistan has made a proposal to this end in the General Assembly and we hope its adoption would contribute to this aspect. Two, we must focus not only on Islamic extremism but also on other forms of religious and ideological extremism which is manifested in various parts of the world.
Today I would like to draw attention to terrorism which is promoted by certain extremist political parties which have been responsible for the massacre of thousands of Muslims – women and children – in areas adjacent to Pakistan. These groups are presently busy raising funding through so-called charities in richer countries including this country. This funding, we are afraid, will be used to finance acts of extremism and terrorism. We must try and find ways to put a stop to this. Three, the focus so far on terrorism spawned by extremists in the Islamic world, should not be allowed to suppress the legitimate rights and aspirations of Muslim peoples and Islamic nations in various parts of the world.

This is clearly the case in the context of the legitimate aspirations of the people of Palestine and Jammu & Kashmir to exercise their right to self-determination in accordance with the prescriptions of the UN Security Council resolutions. The slogan of counter-terrorism used by the government in New Delhi as the most convenient stick with which to beat back the rising tide of the Kashmiris’ struggle for freedom, is unacceptable.

Mr. President,

The Secretary General in his statement at the Security Council’s Ministerial meeting on Combating Terrorism on 20 January 2003 had pointedly referred to this trend: “We are seeing too many cases where States living in tension with their neighbours make opportunistic use of the fight against terrorism to threaten or justify new military action on long-running disputes.”

Mr. President,

Last year witnessed the phenomenon of a terrorist incident being utilized by one State to justify a large-scale military mobilization and the threat of use of force. The resulting military confrontation almost led to a major war between two States which possessed nuclear weapons. It is essential to devise some safeguard mechanism to prevent terrorist incidents, and unsubstantiated allegations, from becoming the cassus belli for the use or threat of force contrary to the UN Charter.

One safeguard mechanism could be through the adoption of a decision by the Security Council that whenever one State makes an allegation against another State that the latter is responsible for a terrorist act or incident, such allegations must be investigated impartially – perhaps by a UN fact-finding mission or another UN mechanism. States should not be allowed to act as the judge, jury and executioner and to use allegations of terrorism for the purposes of propaganda or, worse, for the threat of use of force and worse still, the use of force.

I thank you, Mr. President