

Statement by Ambassador Munir Akram, Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations in the Open meeting of the United Nations Security Council on Threats to International Peace and Security Caused by Terrorist Acts Joint Briefing by the three Chairmen (CTC, 1267 Sanctions Committee, 1540 Committee)

Mr. President,

Let me first express our felicitations to you on the assumption of the Presidency of the Security Council for the present month. We are confident that this will not only be an eventful but also a fruitful month for the Council.

2. We also wish to express our admiration to Ambassador Baja and the Philippines delegation on their very successful Presidency last month.

3. I wish to join other delegations in thanking the Chairmen of the Counter Terrorism Committee, the 1267 Sanctions Committee and the 1540 Committee for their briefing today. We appreciate the practice of these briefings.

4. We have noted the reports of the three Chairmen and we would wish to offer some comments on this issue.

5. The threat of terrorism knows no boundaries. It poses a challenge to entire humanity. Terrorism has no faith and is abhorrent to all religions and beliefs.

6. Pakistan has been a victim of terrorism for over two decades including cross border and State-sponsored terrorism. We remain in the forefront of counter terrorism efforts. We have strengthened our legal, administrative and financial controls. We have signed or are a party to 11 out of the thirteen UN conventions and protocols on terrorism. Our armed forces, moreover, continue their search and interdiction operations against terrorists in the border regions with Afghanistan. We have captured more than seven hundred Al Qaida operatives.

7. With regard to the work of the three Committees, let me say that we have noted the efforts of the 1267 Sanctions Committee to bring clarity to its working methods and that the Committee is engaged in the process of improving its guidelines. We believe a more credible process for listing and de-listing needs to be evolved. We hope that the Committee would continue to bring greater transparency in its work to ensure full cooperation from all States.

8. We welcome the Counter Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate which has become finally operational and is assisting the Committee in its work. We hope this Committee will become an instrument to promote a more comprehensive counter terrorism approach in the future.

9. We welcome the increased level of reporting by member states on the steps they have taken or plan to take to implement the provisions of resolution 1540 whose scope is clear and unambiguously focused on preventing non-State actors from acquiring Weapons of Mass Destruction. A significant number of reports have been

examined by the 1540 Committee. Yet, as Ambassador Motoc has informed, 67 member States have not been able to report. This underlines some of the challenges of capacity and the need for assistance. We hope the Committee would draw appropriate attention to these aspects in its outreach activities.

10. Consistent with our strong commitment to prevent non-State actors from acquiring weapons of mass destruction, we have provided to the Committee perhaps the most extensive information on a range of measures which we have in place to implement resolution 1540. We hope that other States would also be able to share with the Committee the steps they have taken or envisage to take to implement this resolution.

11. Pakistan has consistently urged the Security Council to evolve a mechanism to associate the larger membership of the UN with the Council's work, especially in the field of terrorism since global cooperation is so essential in this field. This could be done, for example, by opening the membership of counter terrorism committees to other UN Member States through elections. The ultimate decision making would, of course, remain with the Security Council. This would promote inclusiveness, provide alternate perspectives and views, enhance transparency and accountability in the work of these three Committees.

12. The 2005 Summit has unequivocally condemned terrorism "in all its forms and manifestations, committed by whomsoever, wherever and for whatever purposes..." It sought the adoption and implementation of a comprehensive strategy. It agreed to consider convening a high-level UN Conference. It recognized the UN's "important role" in combating terrorism. And, it stressed "the need to make efforts to reach agreement and to conclude a comprehensive convention on international terrorism" during the present of the General Assembly.

13. The conclusion of the convention is held up due to the unjustified efforts to exclude from the purview of the convention the activities of armed forces in situations of armed conflict. Granting such a blanket exemption could imply that armed or military forces of a State enjoy impunity for acts that are terrorist in nature. Indeed, armed forces, especially those engaged in foreign occupation and suppression of self-determination, have often been involved in acts that are terrorist in nature. Various proposals are under consideration to resolve this important issue.

14. The September Outcome Document calls on the General Assembly to develop and adopt such a comprehensive strategy. We believe that such a strategy should include both short term and long term measures at the national, regional and international levels.

15. The short term measures should be aimed at providing support for and enhancing the effectiveness of ongoing efforts to counter terrorism including by the three Committees of the Security Council.

16. The long term measures should aim at addressing the underlying causes of terrorism. Let me reiterate that root causes do not justify terrorism, but they do explain it. In this regard, the need to win the hearts and minds of potential terrorists cannot be over-emphasized.

17. Domestically, religious bigotry, hate campaigns, and confrontational tendencies have to be curbed. This has to be done through bold, determined, well thought out and indigenously applicable strategies. The misuse of religion to spread militancy, hatred and violence has to be suppressed. And an international discourse as well as a national debate in affected societies must be conducted on religious harmony. President Musharraf of Pakistan has outlined such a strategy in what he terms as the strategy of Enlightened Moderation at the global and international level.

18. Besides developing a comprehensive strategy, we also need to focus our attention on developing an institutional mechanism to implement it. One proposal in this regard could be the development of an international counter terrorism centre which has already been proposed by His Majesty King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia.

19. We trust that the General Assembly will take decisive and early actions to develop a comprehensive approach to ensure sustained success against terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. The work of the Security Council's three Committees will remain an integral and essential part of this endeavour.

I thank you, Mr. President.