Statement

by

Mr. Bachir Azzam
Deputy Permanent Representative of Lebanon
to the United Nations

at the
General Assembly

Item 118: “The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy”

New York, Tuesday, June 26, 2018

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Mr. President,

Terrorism is sadly often associated with my region, which has suffered from heinous terrorist acts throughout the years. It is for instance unfortunate to observe that not all terrorist attacks and incidents make the headlines or even the news anymore, as it has become the gloomy reality of some of our peoples.

However, this plague spares no other part of the world; and it continues to pose a grave threat that aims at creating chaos, and that affects the basic human rights and fundamental freedoms of people.

Mr. President,

As Lebanon reiterates its firm condemnation of terrorism, it rejects any attempts to associate it with a religion, nationality or ethnic group. If anything, it should be associated with sheer cruelty.

We also reject the attempts to label the right to resist foreign occupation – rooted in international law – with terrorism, with the aim of serving a political purpose and distorting the reality.

Mr. President,

The adoption by consensus of this resolution today stresses the importance of the multidimensional approach in preventing and combating terrorism. Here, I wish to thank Ambassadors Sima Bahous of Jordan and Kai Sauer of Finland, as well as their teams for the tireless efforts and valuable work in co-facilitating this Sixth Biennial Review of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

My country, at the forefront of the fight against terrorism, remains committed to the implementation of the four pillars of the Strategy.

Our armed forces succeeded in defeating Daesh militarily and disrupting terrorist cells. We have engaged on countering the financing of terrorism, and marked notable achievements. Nonetheless, we all know that to eradicate this source of evil, we have to address the deep and structural causes, both internal and external, that create and feed into an environment conducive for such radicalism turning into terrorism. They range from prolonged conflicts, foreign occupation, double standards to inequality and exclusion.

Youth has to be at the frontline of those efforts, as they represent our present and our future. Not all individuals facing these situations of injustice and despair will follow the terrorist path, but all of them can be susceptible, to a certain degree, to falling prey to terrorist recruiters.

My country spares no efforts on the preventive front. In March of this year, we have adopted a National Strategy to prevent violent extremism. It is the result of a lengthy and inclusive process of consultations that brought together my government, civil society, relevant UN entities and other key actors. The plan is in line with relevant international standards, such as UN resolutions, in particular the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.
Mr. President,

The creation of the Office of Counter Terrorism is a step forward to better assist Member States in implementing the Strategy in a more coherent and coordinated manner, notably through enhanced capacity-building activities. The signing of the Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact also represents another positive addition in this regard.

Furthermore, Lebanon looks forward to the High-Level Conference of Heads of Counter-Terrorism Agencies that will take place in two days. We believe it is a very useful step in operationalizing and advancing the key objectives of the Strategy.

In concluding, Mr. President, we must remember that our ability to uphold the rule of law and human rights are mainly tested in times of turmoil, of great disturbance. Yet, overlooking or compromising on human rights when responding to the terrorist threat can never be an option.

Thank you.