

Statement by Ambassador H.S. Puri, Permanent Representative of India and Chairman, CTC at the Opening Plenary of the 10th Meeting of the Heads of Special Services, Security Agencies and Law-Enforcement Organizations (6-7 July, Saint-Petersburg, Russian Federation)

Mr. A. Bortnikov, Director, FSB and Hon'ble Chairman,

Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great privilege for me to speak to this distinguished audience in my personal capacity as Chairman of the Counter-Terrorism Committee of the United Nations Security Council.

As Heads of Special Services, Security Agencies and Law Enforcement Organisations, you are the people at the cutting edge of the battle against terrorism. You and your organisations are at the front-lines. It is you who must battle daily to confront and vanquish the threat that is posed by terrorist violence.

Terrorist violence is currently the greatest threat to international peace and security. It kills more people, threatens more governments and destabilizes more societies than war. It is a battle in the shadows in which the traditional combatant and the methods of conflict have been replaced by the sudden violence of a 9/11 in New York, by a 26/11 in Mumbai and by the attack on Moscow's Domodedovo airport, by the remotely triggered explosion that kills and maims innocent civilians, and by assassinations. Governments today need to fear the suicide bomber and the improvised explosive device more than they fear conventional armies.

Terrorists are waging asymmetric warfare against the international community.

Conventional war was often about expanding borders. Today's terrorists have made borders irrelevant. It is globalised. Terrorists and terrorist organisations recruit in one country, raise funds in another and operate in others. They have global logistical and supply chains; they have developed transnational financial systems; they use the latest and most sophisticated technologies and have command and control mechanisms that are able to operate across continents on a real-time basis.

Terrorists might act locally, but their thinking and ambitions are global.

We are gathered here today because we recognize that this global threat requires a global response. The cooperation between you and your organizations will be amongst the most important determinants of success in this battle.

There is already a modicum of cooperation at the international level. The United Nations has created a normative framework of 13 international conventions and their protocols. The United Nations has adopted a Counter Terrorism Strategy in 2006. It also created a Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force in 2009.

The Security Council has also created a network of subsidiary bodies including the 1267 Committee, which has recently been split, the 1373 Committee (the CTC) and the 1540 Committee.

At the same time, it needs to be recognized that gaps continue to exist in the international legislative and normative framework in countering terrorism. A Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism is regrettably, yet to be finalized.

Mr. Chairman

The Counter-Terrorism Committee (which I head), assisted by the Counter Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, is responsible for monitoring the implementation by member States of Security Council resolutions 1373 (2001) and 1624 (2005). The obligations contained in these resolutions are wide-ranging and affect a broad swath of our lives, namely: financial and asset-based operations, movements of goods and people, identity and travel documents, communication, media, expression and association.

The Security Council resolution 1963 (2010) recognizes that terrorism will not be defeated by military means, law enforcement measures and intelligence operations alone. It also underscores the need to promote the rule of law, the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, good governance, tolerance and inclusiveness to offer a viable alternative to those who could be susceptible to terrorist recruitment and to radicalization leading to violence. It also encourages cooperation among CTC, CTED and the array of entities comprising the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF).

While combating terrorism, it is absolutely essential that any measures taken by States to combat terrorism comply with all their obligations under international law, in particular international human rights, refugee and humanitarian law.

At the same time, terrorists must not be allowed to misuse the freedoms and safeguards of liberal states and societies to weaken them from within. We must, in particular, be vigilant against efforts to hijack the human rights and humanitarian agendas to rationalize terrorist violence. Terrorists do not fight for human rights. They kill, maim and terrorize to further regressive social practices, promote intolerance, and advance narrow political objectives.

The international response also needs to synergize efforts with regional and sub-regional organizations. The CTC enjoys a close and symbiotic relationship with international, regional and sub-regional organizations. I am happy to note that the CTC has a regular and fruitful exchange of views with this organization.

Recently, the CTC co-organized with the Council of Europe a Special Meeting with International, Regional and Sub-regional Organizations on the Prevention of Terrorism, in Strasbourg from 19-21 April 2011 that deliberated upon some of these challenges.

Participants at the Special Meeting grappled with the phenomenon of the internet, which can be abused to promote radicalization, incitement and terrorist recruitment. The Special Meeting proposed an approach for co-opting religious and civil society groups, as well as law enforcement agencies, to provide counter-narratives to reach the same audience for which the internet propaganda is directed, who are often disaffected youth, alienated from mainstream society.

In counter-terrorism, the international response also needs to be placed in perspective. It is only effective as a complement to determined national efforts. National agencies dealing with security and law enforcement issues must share information and perceptions. They must where required, act in harmony. They must be able to pool resources. A good example of the type of cooperation that is required is the pivotal role that the Federal Security Service has played in developing the International Counter-Terrorism Database. Professionals in this field appreciate that information is power and this shared database could be an extremely effective instrument in counter-terrorism cooperation.

We are two months away from the 10th Anniversary of 9/11 and also of adoption of Security Council resolution 1373 (2001). The resolution 1963 (2010) directs the CTC to organize a Special Meeting, open to the wider membership, to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the adoption of that resolution. The Special Meeting will take place at UN Headquarters on 28 September 2011 and will consider such pertinent and topical themes as the impact and achievements resulting from resolution 1373 (2001) over this ten-year time-frame; the risks, challenges and shortfalls in implementation that remain to be addressed; and practical ways and means to improve implementation.

Mr. Chairman

Moving forward, we need to augment and make more effective the mechanisms that have been developed to pool the resources and the knowledge of the international community.

We need to remove the moral and legal ambiguities that allow terrorists and criminals to gain succor and even legitimacy. We need an international mechanism to ensure accountability and justice. We need concerted international efforts to expose and destroy the linkages that exist between terrorists and criminals and their State and non-State supporters. We need to expand the scope of the legal

instruments and expand enforcement efforts to destroy their safe havens, their financial flows and their support networks.

We would also argue that the need to squarely face the complicity of states is a central requirement if we are to succeed.

The Roman philosopher Seneca said that if we see wrong and do nothing to oppose it, we are guilty of encouraging it. The battle against terror will ultimately be won only if we are able to combine forces. We have the responsibility of ensuring that we do everything that is required of us in this common battle.

Thank You.

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