



SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 32nd MEETING

Chairman: Mr. AZZAPOUK (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)

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STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN

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The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 126: MEASURES TO PREVENT INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM WHICH ENDANGERS OR TAKES INNOCENT HUMAN LIVES OR JEOPARDIZES FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS AND STUDY OF THE UNDERLYING CAUSES OF THOSE FORMS OF TERRORISM AND ACTS OF VIOLENCE WHICH LIE IN MISERY, FRUSTRATION, GRIEVANCE AND DESPAIR AND WHICH CAUSE SOME PEOPLE TO SACRIFICE HUMAN LIVES, INCLUDING THEIR OWN, IN AN ATTEMPT TO EFFECT RADICAL CHANGES
(continued) (A/42/564; A/C.6/42/L.2 (see also A/C.6/42/L.1, pp. 2 and 3))

- (a) REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL **(continued)** (A/42/519 and Corr.1 and Add.1)
- (b) CONVENING, UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE UNITED NATIONS, OF AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE TO DEFINE TERRORISM AND TO DIFFERENTIATE IT FROM THE STRUGGLE OF PEOPLES FOR NATIONAL LIBERATION **(continued)** (A/42/193 and Add.1-3)

1. Mr. DJOKIC (Yugoslavia) said that General Assembly resolution 40/61, together with other relevant texts, continued to be of great importance where the international community's efforts to put an end to international terrorism were concerned. All those texts, which laid down the generally accepted norms relating to international terrorism, would enable the international community not only to take measures to control international terrorism, but also to study the underlying causes of terrorism and determine the relationship between terrorism and other similar negative phenomena. It would be inappropriate to attempt to reinterpret the relevant existing texts at the current stage of consideration of questions relating to international terrorism. Instead, the international community should proceed to work out, on the basis of what had been achieved so far, a concrete programme of action with a view to combating international terrorism and eliminating its underlying causes.

2. Yugoslavia condemned all acts, methods and practices of international terrorism, wherever and by whomever committed, and was an advocate of appropriate measures to strengthen international co-operation with a view to ensuring more effective prosecution, punishment and extradition of terrorists. Action designed to prevent conditions conducive to international terrorism from developing was an important aspect of the struggle against terrorism, and it was important to recognize that the policies pursued by States were one of the most direct forms of promotion of such conditions.

3. At the recent meeting of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of non-aligned countries held at the United Nations, emphasis had been placed on the need to fight terrorism by every possible legal means. The Ministers had also emphasized that the legitimate struggle of peoples under colonial and racist régimes or under foreign domination and occupation, and the legitimate struggle of the national liberation movements could in no way be regarded as or equated with terrorism. The struggle of such peoples for liberation and equality was in fact a negation of terrorism, violence and enslavement. It was therefore natural that the non-aligned countries had supported the convening of an international conference, under the auspices of the United Nations, to define terrorism and to differentiate it from the struggle of peoples for national liberation.

(Mr. Djokic, Yugoslavia)

4. A certain amount of progress had been achieved in respect of the legal regulation of some aspects of international terrorism. However, States must adopt effective measures to prohibit in their territories illegal activities, including subversive activities, carried out by individuals, groups or organization that instigated, organized or engaged in acts of terrorism, including acts directed against other States and their citizens. The interpretation by some States of terrorist activities as political activities served to encourage terrorism. In the past year, a number of ideas and initiatives that could contribute to greater involvement of the international community in the elimination of international terrorism had emerged, which should be seen as a sign of growing confidence in the United Nations.

5. Mr. NOGUES (Paraguay) said that international terrorism, which, together with the nuclear threat, would appear to be the price that had to be paid for progress in the world, had become a particular problem in the twentieth century. The General Assembly had been considering the question of terrorism since its twenty-seventh session, and in the 15 years that had elapsed, it had unfortunately not proved possible to put an end to the phenomenon of terrorism, which was a threat to international peace and friendly relations between States.

6. Paraguay had consistently and unequivocally condemned terrorism both within countries and at the international level. There was no justification whatsoever for terrorism, and the countries that encouraged it on the grounds that there were underlying causes should reconsider their positions. It was unjustifiable that certain territories should be used as training-grounds and places of refuge for terrorists. Paraguay was a party to most of the relevant international conventions, and was fulfilling its obligations under the instruments in question. Accordingly, it did not permit either the preparation or the organization in its territory of any acts directed against other States, and it complied fully with the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of States, while at the same time scrupulously observing the right of peoples to self-determination. Moreover, it fully endorsed General Assembly resolution 40/61 and would continue to support any initiatives that would contribute to the elimination of all acts of international terrorism and their underlying causes.

7. Mr. MAYNARD (Bahamas) said that his delegation had repeatedly and unequivocally condemned all acts, methods and practices associated with terrorism, wherever and by whomever committed, and had, at every opportunity, deplored terrorist outrages, including those instigated or supported by States. At the same time, it was important to differentiate terrorism from the struggle of peoples for national liberation. The resurgence of terrorism was one of the most serious international phenomena of recent decades, and one of the most disturbing aspects of terrorism was that people were prepared to give their lives for a political cause. Such suicides were an expression of frustration and an indication that there was something fundamentally wrong with the international system.

8. The Bahamas had taken a keen interest in the item under discussion at every stage and, as a tourist resort, was aware that terrorist acts could bring untold hardship to its economy. Owing to the pressing nature of the problem, it believed

(Mr. Maynard, Bahamas)

that the time had come for a new impetus to eliminate terrorism. The Bahamas had acceded to all the major conventions dealing with terrorism, and its Penal Code prohibited the acts that were the hallmarks of terrorism. It was also a party to many bilateral extradition treaties that covered a great number of acts associated with terrorism. A more detailed account of the internal legislation of The Bahamas was given in the reply from his Government reproduced in document A/42/519. The offences listed by The Bahamas in its reply could be regarded as elements of the definition of terrorism.

9. His delegation supported the convening of an international conference to define terrorism and to differentiate it from the struggle of peoples for national liberation. Such a conference should be a joint endeavour by States to produce a broader consensus and to achieve the progressive development of international law in the area in question. The Bahamas was sensitive to the reservations that had been expressed by a number of countries, including some of the developed countries that had sponsored draft resolution A/C.6/42/L.2. However, it hoped that those countries would continue to see the value of keeping open and expanding the channels of communication with all States, including those that they would regard as sponsors of terrorists. The question of terrorism raised immense problems of perception that could only be dealt with through dialogue. A conference would afford a further opportunity for a thorough dialogue in a legal setting, with a view to strengthening international peace and security. There should be general agreement on the agenda, and both the preparations for the conference and the conference documentation must be adequate. The conference would provide an opportunity to re-examine the underlying causes of terrorism and, most of all, to improve the means at the international community's disposal for preventing and eradicating all acts of terrorism.

10. Mr. RANA (Nepal) noted that, although the spectre of terrorism had not diminished, there was a greater international awareness of the need to eradicate the scourge. The General Assembly had adopted by consensus resolution 40/61, which underlined the international community's determination to eliminate all acts of terrorism, and the Security Council had unanimously adopted resolution 579 (1985), condemning all acts of hostage-taking and abduction and calling for the release of all hostages and abducted persons. There had also been a number of national and regional initiatives. In his own region, the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation had prepared a draft convention, to be adopted in Kathmandu in November 1987, which not only would help to combat terrorism at the regional level, but also would complement the overall effort to prepare an international treaty against terrorism.

11. The progress on certain fronts should not, however, be grounds for complacency, but should rather act as a spur for further progress in the prevention of wanton killings, kidnappings and offences involving explosives and firearms. Nepal therefore urged all Member States to implement the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Committee on International Terrorism, as set forth in its report to the General Assembly at its thirty-fourth session, and in particular to comply with their obligation under international law to refrain from aiding and abetting terrorist acts. It also appealed to all States to co-operate in the exchange of information on the prevention of international terrorism.

(Mr. Rana, Nepal)

12. Nepal had always supported the struggle for freedom and justice, but considered that it should, so far as possible, be peaceful and non-violent. Where liberation movements had no other option but to resort to violence, caution should be exercised to avoid harming the innocent. Nepal could not accept the deliberate killing and kidnapping of innocent people, and damage to, or destruction of, property outside the line of battle merely for publicity or bargaining purposes. Indeed, such tactics could only be counter-productive in terms of the cause of freedom and justice.

13. Nepal favoured the early conclusion of an international convention to combat terrorism, and had already acceded to the Tokyo Convention on Offences and Certain Other Acts Committed on Board Aircraft, the Hague Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Seizure of Aircraft and the Montreal Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts Against the Safety of Civil Aviation. The Nepalese Parliament had enacted legislation defining the various acts of violence which constituted terrorism and providing for the prosecution or extradition of those guilty of such crimes.

14. Nepal continued to encourage the peaceful settlement of disputes between States, and had co-operated in the extradition of persons found guilty of terrorist acts. It had never allowed its territory to be used as a base for the planning or execution of such acts against any other State. It pledged not to do so in the future and trusted that it would receive reciprocal treatment.

15. It was vital to build upon international co-operation since it was the key to stamping out terrorism. His delegation trusted that, at the current session, the Sixth Committee would expand the existing area of understanding on the issue and ensure that the item was included on the agenda of future sessions until such time as an international treaty against terrorism was concluded.

16. Mr. VONGSAY (Lao People's Democratic Republic), stressing the need for international co-operation in the prevention of international terrorism, said that, in keeping with paragraph 1 of General Assembly resolution 40/61, his delegation unequivocally condemned, as criminal, all acts and practices of terrorism wherever and by whomever committed. It welcomed the continuing efforts of the international community and, in particular, of the United Nations and certain specialized agencies, to co-ordinate measures to prevent and combat international terrorism. It was giving serious consideration to acceding to the Conventions concluded in the 1960s and 1970s at Tokyo, The Hague, Montreal and New York. Its new criminal legislation would have to be brought into line with the instruments in question. It fully agreed that success in eradicating terrorism and punishing those responsible depended on co-operation among the members of the international community, particularly those that had ratified or acceded to the relevant international legal instruments. Unfortunately, such co-operation often left much to be desired, especially with respect to the hijacking of aircraft.

17. Another, and no less pernicious, form of terrorism was State terrorism, to which many small, sovereign countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America had been subjected by the imperialist Powers and their allies. The people of his country,

(Mr. Vongsay, Lao People's Democratic Republic)

for their part, would redouble their vigilance to prevent and punish all terrorist acts from outside aimed at destabilizing and sabotaging the new régime. At the beginning of 1987, a number of foreign criminal elements had been arrested and severely punished under the law of the land.

18. His delegation supported the Syrian proposal for the convening, under the auspices of the United Nation, of an international conference to define terrorism and to differentiate it from the struggle of peoples for liberation. An attempt to produce such a definition must be made even though it would be no easy matter, as was apparent from the work already undertaken and from the report of the International Seminar on the Phenomenon of Terrorism in the Contemporary World and its Impact on Individual Security, Political Stability and International Peace, held in Geneva in June 1987. His Government considered it essential to distinguish terrorism from the struggle of peoples for national liberation, and reaffirmed its condemnation of those who sought to equate such struggles with acts of terrorism. It likewise condemned all those who, on the pretext of combating international terrorism, resorted to illegal methods for the purpose of undermining the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of States. His Government recognized the legality of the struggle of peoples under colonialist, racist and other forms of foreign domination to exercise their inalienable rights to self-determination and independence. International co-operation in the fight against terrorism must be based on full respect for the sovereign right of all peoples freely to choose their own manner and form of development.

19. In view of the need to tackle the underlying causes of terrorism, his delegation welcomed the initiatives of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and the International Maritime Organization (IMO), and also supported the proposals set forth in the letter addressed by a group of socialist countries to the Secretary-General in July 1987 (A/42/416). The adoption of new and more effective international legal instruments was essential, and the United Nations potential in that regard should be harnessed. The Socialist countries' proposal that the preparation of such instruments should be discussed by the Ad Hoc Committee on International Terrorism was to be welcomed, as was the Soviet proposal for the establishment of an international court to try offences involving international terrorism. The Lao People's Democratic Republic would support all similar ideas and initiatives.

20. Mr. TURKMEN (Turkey) noted that the incidence of terrorism had not abated since the General Assembly had last considered the matter, in 1985. No country or region was immune to terrorism, which was a violation of the basic right to life and security.

21. Turkey had had bitter experience of terrorism for thousands of its people had been the innocent victims of a wave of terrorism in the late 1970s, and Turkish diplomats had for many years been a prime target for terrorists. Yet there were countries which were tolerant of or even implicated in terrorist acts directed against other countries. Only in recent years had many countries come to realize

(Mr. Turkmen, Turkey)

that individual acts of terrorism threatened the international community as a whole, and that a co-ordinated response was therefore required. Any significant modification of the policies of individual countries would, however, require constant international pressure.

22. His delegation, which favoured a determined stand against terrorism, had whole-heartedly welcomed General Assembly resolution 40/61. It considered that the Assembly should reaffirm that resolution and indicate that the international community was united in its unqualified condemnation of terrorist acts and in its determination to prevent such acts.

23. His delegation was pleased to note the progress achieved in promoting international co-operation, as attested to by a number of legal instruments, including the Convention on Offences and Certain Other Acts Committed on Board Aircraft, the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Seizure of Aircraft, the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Civil Aviation, the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Crimes against Internationally Protected Persons, including Diplomatic Agents, and the International Convention against the Taking of Hostages. It reiterated its support for the efforts of ICAO and IMO to draft legal instruments to prevent acts of violence against international airports and maritime navigation. It endorsed the declaration and resolutions adopted by the European Conference of Ministers responsible for combating terrorism held in Strasbourg in 1986, in which it had taken an active part, and regarded as important the reaffirmation of the principle that terrorism should be condemned irrespective of the motives advanced to justify it. It also noted with satisfaction the emphasis placed on the link between terrorism and drug trafficking.

24. All countries would have to fulfil their obligations in good faith if terrorism was to be wiped out. The success of government policies depended on the extent to which they enjoyed public support, in which connection the role of the media merited attention. Those who practised terrorism thrived on headlines and, if deprived of such exposure, would lose one of their main sources of strength, along with the opportunity to try to justify the use of terror. There was, however, a delicate balance to be maintained between the duty of the media to disseminate information and the need to avoid over-publicizing acts of terrorism. Also, in countries where the press enjoyed certain traditional freedoms, the means of influencing the media were limited.

25. Paragraph 9 of General Assembly resolution 40/61 urged all States to contribute to the progressive elimination of the causes underlying international terrorism. His delegation considered that the fight against terrorism could not be deferred until the underlying causes had been eliminated. Under national legislation, criminals were liable to punishment even though social injustice contributed to crime; the same should apply in the case of international terrorism. Some cause was always invoked in the case of terrorist acts, but a distinction should be made between underlying causes and contrived causes.

(Mr. Turkmen, Turkey)

26. His delegation did not think that an international conference to define terrorism and differentiate it from the struggle of peoples for national liberation, as proposed by the Syrian Arab Republic, would achieve any useful purpose. A legal definition of terrorism presented insuperable difficulties, and such a conference would revive the controversy that had in the past prevented a convergence of views within the United Nations and had undermined the strength of General Assembly resolution 40/61. It could also delay the efforts to mobilize international public opinion against terrorism.

27. Future action by the United Nations to combat terrorism should be based on resolution 40/61. In that spirit, his delegation was co-sponsoring draft resolution A/C.6/42/L.2, which reaffirmed the will to develop all forms of co-operation in the struggle against terrorism. It was a constructive step which deserved the support of the Sixth Committee and the General Assembly.

28. Mrs. ANDRIAMANARIVO (Madagascar) said that international terrorism, which constituted a permanent threat to international peace and security, had become a particularly acute problem of late. Its prevention and elimination represented one of the international community's major concerns and called for concerted efforts on the part of all States. Her delegation had participated in the adoption by consensus of General Assembly resolution 40/61, and wished to see the constructive elements of that text, as well as the balanced approach it reflected, maintained in the resolution that would be adopted at the current session.

29. Her country condemned all forms of terrorism, including State terrorism, and supported all United Nations efforts to solve the problem. The Syrian proposal for the convening, under the auspices of the United Nations, of an international conference to define terrorism and to differentiate it from the struggle of peoples for national liberation (A/42/193) enjoyed her delegation's support, because such a conference would help to identify the constituent elements of the concept of international terrorism. Only by facing the difficulties inherent in the issue could the international community hope to advance towards an adequate solution. The confusion deliberately created by certain Powers which, under the pretext of fighting terrorism, resorted to illicit acts contrary to the principles of the Charter - in particular, military attacks and economic sanctions against countries accused of supporting terrorist activities - provided a further reason for endorsing the Syrian proposal. Her country was a firm supporter of national liberation movements, the legitimacy of whose struggles was upheld in the Charter and in the Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Co-operation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.

30. That legitimacy had also been confirmed by many United Nations resolutions. However, attempts had been made to place terrorist acts on the same footing as the national liberation struggle in order to discredit the latter. There was therefore a need to elaborate well-defined and widely approved norms to enable the international community to make the distinction between the two concepts. The struggle of oppressed peoples for freedom and equal rights was, in fact, the very opposite of terrorism, for its aim was to ensure respect for human rights and to establish a just legal order.

(Mrs. Andriamanarivo, Madagascar)

31. The efforts of the international community should be directed solely toward eliminating the scourge of terrorism. The existing legal instruments were not enough in themselves to eliminate terrorism, and would remain ineffective in the absence of a simultaneous effort to study its underlying causes, which were political, economic and social in nature. In that context, her delegation supported, in particular, recommendation 11 of the Ad Hoc Committee on International Terrorism.

32. The unsatisfactory results so far achieved in the struggle against international terrorism should encourage the international community to take a new approach to the problem; States should study it in all its real dimensions, without pre-conceived notions. Madagascar was willing to co-operate with all States in eliminating terrorism in accordance with the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Committee, and hoped that that Committee would resume its work with renewed vigour.

33. Mr. HAMPE (German Democratic Republic) said that the continued relevance of efforts to prevent international terrorism had been demonstrated by the great number of terrorist attacks which had occurred since the Sixth Committee had last met to discuss the item. Those attacks had claimed the lives of innocent people and were likely to destabilize the international situation and lead to conflicts.

34. The Permanent Representatives of Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, the German Democratic Republic, Poland, Romania and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics had set forth their position on international terrorism in the letter contained in document A/42/416, and had put forward proposals on how to develop international co-operation in combating terrorism, thereby reflecting their sense of responsibility towards their own peoples and the international community.

35. Efforts must be made to eliminate all phenomena which destabilized the international situation. The German Democratic Republic therefore unreservedly condemned any form of international terrorism wherever and by whomever committed. It felt most strongly about cases where that kind of force served as an instrument of the internal or external policy of States. Acts such as the use of armed force, overt or covert, and political and economic pressure in an attempt to destabilize or undermine the socio-political order of a State or to overthrow its lawful Government were incompatible with the United Nations Charter.

36. His delegation strongly opposed equating the national liberation struggle with terrorism. The German Democratic Republic upheld the legitimacy of the peoples' struggle for self-determination, in conformity with the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter and the Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Co-operation among States. The willingness expressed by many States to search for ways and means of preventing terrorist actions provided opportunities for strengthening the effectiveness of co-operation to that end. Encouraging progress had been made within the framework of IMO and ICAO in the drafting of new legal instruments to deal with terrorist acts directed against maritime navigation and civilian airports. His Government would continue to co-operate actively in efforts towards the speedy conclusion of work on those instruments.

(Mr. Hampe, German Democratic Republic)

37. Fuller use should be made of the potential of the United Nations in promoting co-operation among States in combating international terrorism. In that connection, the seven socialist States, in their letter contained in document A/42/416, had advocated the resumption of the activities of the Ad Hoc Committee on International Terrorism and the annual review of the question of international terrorism by the General Assembly. The Ad Hoc Committee might be given the task of drafting provisions to govern co-operation among States, including those suggested in document A/42/416. Co-operation was possible only on the basis of the generally accepted norms and principles of international law. Any action violating international law could not be justified under the pretext of combating international terrorism.

38. The key to the complete elimination of international terrorism lay in the eradication of its causes. In addition, the following concrete steps could be taken by States: ratification of or accession to the relevant international agreements, and strict compliance with the obligations deriving therefrom; strict compliance with international obligations under generally accepted international instruments, including refraining from organizing, aiding or carrying out terrorist acts in other States; expansion of treaty obligations on a mutually acceptable basis and without detriment to the rights of other States and peoples; and expansion of legal assistance for the prosecution of terrorist acts.

39. His delegation was open to any constructive proposal for promoting co-operation in combating terrorism. In its view, the proposal submitted by the Syrian Arab Republic on the convening of an international conference to define international terrorism (A/42/193) had the same aim. For such a conference to be successful, however, it was essential to elaborate a generally acceptable mandate.

40. Mr. STEPANOV (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that his country shared the international community's profound concern at the increase in acts of international terrorism over the past few years. The concerted efforts of all States were urgently needed in order to fight the evil of terrorism. As a member of the Ad Hoc Committee on International Terrorism, the Ukrainian SSR had actively participated in drafting various recommendations, which, together with other provisions, were reflected in General Assembly resolution 40/61. His delegation regarded that resolution as a step forward in strengthening co-operation among States in combating terrorism. During its membership in the Security Council in 1984 and 1985, his country had consistently advocated the condemnation by the Council of all forms and manifestations of international terrorism. In that connection, he referred to the notes by the President of the Council on behalf of the members of the Council contained in documents S/17554 and S/17702, and to resolution 579 (1985), unanimously adopted by the Council, which contained an appeal for further measures to facilitate the prevention of terrorist acts, including hostage taking and abduction.

41. His Government's position on the problem of international terrorism was clearly stated in document A/42/519/Add.1. The Ukrainian SSR had always been and remained unreservedly opposed to all terrorist activities, whether performed by individuals, groups or States. There could be no justification for terrorist acts,

(Mr. Stepanov, Ukrainian SSK)

whatever the motive behind them. All forms of terrorism - hijacking of aircraft, hostage-taking, bomb attacks, or the sending of bombs or other explosive devices by mail or by other means - should be resolutely suppressed. The active co-operation of States in fighting terrorism was vital to the comprehensive system of international peace and security. It was extremely important to work out a unified set of legal principles to govern the prosecution of terrorists. His delegation was ready to participate in such work, and hoped that other countries would do everything in their power to prevent and suppress international terrorism.

42. His country was a party to the principal international agreements on the matter; as recently as May 1987, it had become a party to the International Convention against the Taking of Hostages. The accession of the largest possible number of States to existing instruments relating to various aspects of the problem, the full implementation of their provisions, and the adoption of new international instruments would create favourable conditions for the prevention and elimination of the phenomenon. In that connection, he expressed the hope that rapid progress would be made in the preparation of a convention against the recruitment, use, financing and training of mercenaries, and that the work being undertaken within ICAO and IMO would be completed in the near future.

43. It would be wrong to ignore the sources and underlying causes of international terrorism. Numerous decisions of the General Assembly and other United Nations organs listed colonialism, the violation of the political independence, national sovereignty and territorial integrity of States, interference in their internal affairs, racism, apartheid and genocide among the root causes of international terrorism. Unconditional respect for the right of every people to choose the course and form of its development, peaceful settlement of disputes and a general improvement of the international situation were therefore essential pre-conditions for the complete eradication of international terrorism. Actions designed, under the pretext of combating terrorism, to violate the sovereignty of States and to exert military, political or economic pressure on them were obviously inconsistent with that goal.

44. His delegation was resolutely opposed to equating international terrorism with the struggle of peoples for national liberation and against colonial domination, apartheid and racism. For that reason, it supported the Syrian proposal for the convening, under the auspices of the United Nations, of an international conference to define terrorism and to differentiate it from the struggle of peoples for national liberation (A/42/193). A clear legal definition of the concept of international terrorism would facilitate the drafting of international agreements and the adoption of appropriate measures to prevent and suppress all acts of international terrorism. Another useful step would be the establishment, under United Nations auspices, of a tribunal to investigate acts of international terrorism, as suggested by Mr. Gorbachev. Furthermore, his delegation advocated the reactivation of the Ad Hoc Committee on International Terrorism, the annual review of the question of international terrorism by the General Assembly, and the development of an agreed basis for inter-State co-operation in combating international terrorism. The Ukrainian SSR was ready to take an active part in such work.

45. Mr. GOUNDI (Central African Republic) said that, while his delegation welcomed the current discussion of the question of terrorism, it was concerned because the manifestations of terrorism had gone beyond the borders of individual States and had taken on unprecedented dimensions throughout the world. The Central African Republic had hoped that some progress would have been made in developing ways and means of eliminating the scourge of terrorism. By increasingly subtle and sophisticated methods, however, terrorism was striking everywhere, sometimes without discrimination, and often thwarting those who were combating it.

46. The Central African Republic, like many other States, had not been spared from terrorist acts. In July 1981, several persons had been killed and others wounded by a bomb which had exploded in a cinema at Bangui. In 1984, a bomb had destroyed a UTA aircraft on a stopover at N'Djamena, Chad, and one of the victims had been an official of the Central African Republic. Moreover, in July 1987, an Air Afrique aircraft had been hijacked; one passenger had been struck down in cold blood by the hijacker who had embarked at Bangui.

47. In each case, his Government had been severe in its response and had shown its willingness to co-operate with the other States concerned. The most basic way for all Member States to combat international terrorism was to take appropriate domestic measures and co-operate sincerely with one another. In that way, the international community could eliminate terrorism, which was nothing but indiscriminate violence. His delegation hoped that the Sixth Committee would reach agreement on proposals to put a definitive end to international terrorism.

48. Ms. NGUYEN BINH THANH (Viet Nam) said that her delegation wished to reiterate its unreserved condemnation of international terrorism in all its forms, wherever, by whomever and for whatever motive terrorist acts were committed. International terrorism had to be eliminated from the life of the international community. To that end, it was necessary to ascertain the underlying causes of the phenomenon and decide upon measures to prevent it. Although responsibility for such measures rested primarily with individual States, global efforts also had to be pursued. The adoption of a number of international conventions to all of which Viet Nam had become a party, represented important achievements in that field.

49. While the world community was endeavouring to discover the root causes of international terrorism with a view to seeking measures to eliminate that tragic phenomenon, attempts were being made in some quarters to conceal the truth and to divert public opinion by focusing on the reprehensible acts of a few irresponsible individuals. Her delegation supported the proposal for an international conference to define international terrorism and differentiate it from national liberation struggles, which was intended to counteract such attempts. In that connection it was appropriate to reiterate the point made by many countries at meetings of the Ad Hoc Committee on International Terrorism, and emphasized in the Harare Declaration of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries (A/41/697-S/18392) to the effect that the legitimate struggle of peoples under colonial and racist régimes and of their national liberation movements against their oppressors, and in particular that of the peoples of South Africa, Namibia and Palestine, could in no way be equated with terrorism. It was equally clear

(Ms. Nguyen Binh Thanh, Viet Nam)

that the struggle of the peoples of Nicaragua and the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya to defend their countries' sovereignty and territorial integrity were fundamentally different from the terrorist acts of Contra mercenaries and acts of aggression by foreign intruders.

50. While it was true that there had been no global war in the past 40 years, more than 150 local wars and armed conflicts had occurred all over the world, taking the lives of more than 20 million people and causing enormous material losses, the most tragic examples being the Korean War and the Viet Nam War. Yet the world community had not allowed international terrorism, whose most serious form was State terrorism, to manipulate world affairs. International efforts, including the national liberation struggle, had in large measure driven back State terrorism. Her delegation believed that the ongoing struggle of the peoples of the world for peace, national independence and development constituted the most decisive measure for the prevention of international terrorism. It therefore strongly supported the struggle for a world free from nuclear weapons and violence, and for a new international economic order.

51. Her delegation had welcomed the adoption of General Assembly resolution 40/61, which it regarded as a major milestone in strengthening international efforts to combat terrorism. It supported the proposals contained in the letter by seven socialist countries (A/42/416), in particular the proposal to reactivate the Ad Hoc Committee on International Terrorism. It was ready to participate actively in the consideration of any proposals on the subject of the prevention and eradication of international terrorism.

STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN

52. The CHAIRMAN said that he had received a letter from the Chairman of the Fifth Committee concerning agenda item 116, entitled "Programme planning", which had been allocated to the Fifth Committee. By that letter, the Sixth Committee was invited to express its views on the paper entitled "Some perspectives on the work of the United Nations in the 1990s", contained in the note by the Secretary-General on the preparation of the next medium-term plan (A/42/512). The invitation was aimed at ensuring the full participation of Member States in the preparation of the introduction to the next medium-term plan, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 41/213. Following the pattern established in the past, he proposed to communicate the letter to the Chairmen of the five regional groups in the Sixth Committee for comments, if any, and to return to the matter at a subsequent meeting of the Committee once the views of the regional groups had been formulated.

53. It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 5 10 p.m.