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Chair: Mr. Manongi. (United Republic of Tanzania)
later: Mr. Pašić (Vice-Chair). (Bosnia and Herzegovina)

Contents

Agenda item 107: Measures to eliminate international terrorism (*continued*)

Agenda item 82: The rule of law at the national and international levels


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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Agenda item 107: Measures to eliminate international terrorism (*continued*) (A/69/209)

1. **Mr. Albogami** (Saudi Arabia) said that further international cooperation was needed in the face of the significant expansion of terrorist and criminal organizations and the evolution of their methods and recruitment strategies. The United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre had emerged as one of the most important international forums established to coordinate the international response; Saudi Arabia had contributed US\$110 million to support its successful initiatives, which included studies on violent extremist ideology and border control. It was hoped that the Centre would increase its cooperation with regional counter-terrorism centres in the future. In that regard, it was important to note that Governments contributed to the Centre's work not only through the provision of voluntary contributions, but also by sharing their expertise, staff and working methods.

2. Saudi Arabia had been a victim of terrorist attacks and his Government would continue taking measures at the national, regional and international levels in response. That included implementation of the provisions of international law and Security Council resolutions, in particular those relating to criminalizing incitement to terrorism and the protection of victims. His delegation called on Member States to condemn all acts of terrorism, which violated the purposes and principles of the United Nations and threatened peace, security and cooperation among States.

3. The rise of the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), which had taken over large areas of land Syria and Iraq and threatened to expand even further, was a matter of great concern. The problem was compounded by the international community's failure to agree on a definition of terrorism and its security-focused approach, which ignored the causes of terrorism. A number of factors facilitated the recruitment of young people: the rule of law, justice and the right to self-determination were often denied. Many peoples in the region, particularly the Palestinian people, suffered under a brutal occupation. Criminal regimes had massacred their own people and used chemical weapons against them merely for demanding their most basic rights.

4. His Government supported a moderate stance on religion and stressed the need to educate youth to reject violence from an early age. The emergence of foreign terrorist fighters, who committed crimes against humanity on a daily basis, was a testament to the spread of a destructive ideology and required a comprehensive analysis. That development posed an unprecedented danger, as such fighters had joined well-funded groups with a broad reach. He underscored the need for Member States to stem the financing of such groups.

5. **Mr. Tanin** (Afghanistan) said that Afghanistan condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. The country had been at the forefront of the global counter-terrorism campaign over the past decade. Thousands of Afghan people, many of them women and children, had been killed while countless others had been maimed or wounded. In recent months, terrorists and extremist armed groups had taken advantage of the protracted political crisis in the country and launched swarm attacks on district administrative centres and security checkpoints, resulting in considerable casualties. The use of improvised explosive devices, suicide attacks in residential areas and cross-border shelling by terrorists had made 2014 one of the deadliest years in Afghanistan since 2001. Nevertheless, the Government would continue its pursuit of lasting peace. The national army and police had killed or captured scores of terrorists and enemy combatants and averted many terrorist plots.

6. His Government was concerned about the increase in violence in the region and called for enhanced regional cooperation and a comprehensive strategy to address the threats. Efforts to bring Afghan legislation in line with the international legal counter-terrorism framework included the adoption of laws to combat the financing of terrorism and money-laundering. Afghanistan was a party to 13 international instruments on terrorism and was committed to their implementation. Regional cooperation efforts included bilateral and trilateral initiatives on issues such as border controls, inter-agency coordination and confidence-building measures. Regional organizations also played an important role in those efforts. His Government hoped that more concrete efforts would be made to eliminate terrorist support centres located outside of Afghanistan, which harboured most of those perpetrating violence in the country.

7. A holistic counter-terrorism approach should include measures to promote good governance, encourage socioeconomic development, ensure respect for human rights and strengthen regional cooperation. The continued use of the Internet and other communications technology to disseminate information for terrorist purposes and to recruit, finance and train individuals to commit violent acts was a matter of great concern. His delegation called on the international community to address such use of technology and stressed the need for further capacity-building efforts in that regard. His Government had sponsored Security Council resolution 2178 (2014) on foreign terrorist fighters and welcomed its adoption, as the number of such fighters who had joined the Taliban and Al-Qaida in Afghanistan had increased substantially. Further regional and international cooperation was needed to address that problem.

8. His delegation welcomed the outcome of the fourth biennial review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and underscored the importance of giving balanced and due consideration to all four pillars of the Global Strategy. It strongly supported the role played by United Nations agencies in coordinating the international counter-terrorism effort as well as the support provided by the Global Counterterrorism Forum. Lastly, he stressed the need to conclude the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism in a timely manner.

9. **Mr. AlMowazri** (Kuwait) said that Kuwait rejected terrorism in all of its forms and manifestations. Terrorism should not be linked to any religious, civilian or ethnic group. Governments must cooperate in the international counter-terrorism effort and aim to establish measures that promoted the rule of law and respect for human rights; address the root causes of terrorism, such as poverty; support good governance, sustainable development and coexistence among religions; ensure respect for religious symbols and holy sites; and prevent incitement to hatred, extremism and violence.

10. Kuwait was a party to all the international counter-terrorism instruments as well as a number of bilateral agreements. His delegation attached great importance to the finalization of the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism. The final text should include a clear and comprehensive definition of terrorism, including State terrorism, and should distinguish it from the right of

peoples to resist aggression and struggle for self-determination. It welcomed the adoption of Security Council resolution 2178 (2014), which was consistent with the international counter-terrorism effort.

11. His Government condemned the terrorist attacks and activities in violation of humanitarian law perpetrated by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) in Syria and Iraq. It supported the peaceful settlement of disputes under the aegis of the United Nations and sought to promote respect for human rights, the right of people to self-determination and the right to sovereignty.

12. **Ms. Zarrouk Boumiza** (Tunisia) said that the rise of terrorist groups such as the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) in the Middle East had introduced an unprecedented level of brutality to the terrorist threat. Their violent extremism, which had led to atrocities such as decapitations, violent acts against women and girls, and the massacre of religious minorities, including Christian minorities, was a major threat to international security. Further, the recruitment of foreign terrorist fighters by such groups constituted a transnational issue that required a strong response from the international community. In that regard, her delegation welcomed the adoption of Security Council resolution 2178 (2014). Tunisia condemned terrorism in all of its forms and manifestations and reaffirmed its commitment to the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

13. At the national level, her Government had criminalized acts that abetted terrorism and amended the counter-terrorism and anti-money-laundering legislation to guarantee due process and respect for the physical integrity of suspects, in accordance with international human rights law. In line with the new Constitution, which enshrined the principles of non-violence and intercultural and interfaith dialogue, an institute to train imams and preachers had been established. Measures had also been taken to suspend the activities of non-governmental organizations suspected of having ties to terrorist activities; to enact legal proceedings against those promoting a *takfirist* ideology; to investigate the administrators of websites with ties to terrorism; and to strengthen army and security forces.

14. At the regional level, Tunisia had concluded a number of bilateral agreements on issues such as assessing threats and stemming terrorist financing. It

had ratified all relevant regional conventions, including the Arab Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism, the Organization of African Unity Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism and the Convention of the Organization of the Islamic Conference on Combating International Terrorism. It was also a party to most of the international counter-terrorism instruments and was working to fulfil its obligations under the Global Strategy. In 2014, her Government had participated in regional counter-terrorism workshops organized by United Nations entities on freezing terrorist assets and ensuring respect for human rights and the rule of law.

15. Terrorism was not exclusive to any one race, religion or nationality. All counter-terrorism strategies must take into account terrorists' use of new communication technologies and their involvement in transnational organized crime. In addition, security measures alone were not sufficient. The persistence of political injustice, the failure to resolve certain conflicts, economic disparities, social exclusion and the defamation of religions helped to feed extremism and encouraged the recruitment of terrorists. Greater global efforts that included the participation of Governments, international and regional organizations, civil society and the media were required to implement the Global Strategy in a balanced manner. Member States also needed assistance in the form of training and resources in order to build capacity to monitor borders, combat money-laundering and the proliferation of arms, and respond to the use of communications technologies for terrorist purposes.

16. **Mr. Kyaw** (Myanmar) said that his Government recognized the important role of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED) in providing technical assistance to Member States. It had promulgated significant counter-terrorism legislation over the past year, including an anti-money-laundering law, and would continue to cooperate with United Nations bodies to improve the legal framework. Myanmar was a party to 11 international counter-terrorism instruments. The Government was also considering signing or acceding to additional international and regional instruments.

17. Myanmar condemned terrorism in all of its forms and manifestations. In particular, ruthless killings and atrocities in the name of religion must not be tolerated. His delegation reiterated its support for the statement issued by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations

(ASEAN) foreign ministers on 26 September 2014 in support of Security Council resolutions 2170 (2014) and 2178 (2014) and recalled that measures to combat terrorism should be consistent with the Charter of the United Nations and international law.

18. His delegation called for the timely conclusion by consensus of the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism, which, once finalized, would further strengthen international cooperation. It also urged United Nations counter-terrorism bodies and other partners to scale up capacity-building assistance in developing countries. His Government would welcome in particular technical assistance to support the work of law enforcement, immigration and border control officials.

19. **Ms. Mammadova** (Azerbaijan) said that terrorism continued to threaten the political independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of all States. It also undermined States' efforts to safeguard the rule of law, protect human rights and foster socioeconomic development. Azerbaijan strongly condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and considered all terrorist attacks to be serious crimes, regardless of the motivations behind them. All perpetrators must be held accountable and respect for the rule of law should be a central aspect of both protection and response measures.

20. Areas of armed conflict, in particular territories under foreign military occupation, often created conditions conducive to exploitation by terrorists, separatists and other non-State actors. Furthermore, the accumulation of armaments and munitions in places outside international control, and the danger of weapons of mass destruction falling into the hands of non-State actors, posed a serious threat to international peace and security. States were therefore required to comply strictly with their international obligations, including by ensuring that their respective territories were not used for terrorist activities.

21. Collective and sustainable action against terrorism had become critical in the light of emerging challenges. In that regard, greater priority should be given to the implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in all its aspects and relevant Security Council resolutions, including through the prompt and effective enforcement of sanctions measures. The work of the subsidiary bodies of the Security Council with a counter-terrorism mandate was of great importance. Other relevant

United Nations agencies should continue to provide Member States with capacity-building support in areas such as law enforcement, border protection and exchange of information. Terrorism recruitment and incitement to violence should be countered by initiatives that promoted a human-centred approach and ensured that the voices of victims were heard.

22. Azerbaijan had been consistent in its efforts to implement its international obligations. At the regional level, it was involved in initiatives carried out within the framework of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) and the Committee of Experts on the Evaluation of Anti-Money Laundering Measures and the Financing of Terrorism (MONEYVAL) of the Council of Europe. As a result of that participation, the Government had enacted comprehensive legislation to counter money-laundering and terrorist financing and launched a national financial intelligence unit.

23. Member States must enhance collaboration at the regional and subregional levels and foster mutual trust across societies. In particular, they should promote initiatives on intercultural and interfaith dialogue which helped to prevent the abuse of religion and advance a culture of tolerance, peace and reconciliation, for example through the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations. In that context, Azerbaijan would be hosting the Alliance's Global Forum in Baku in 2016.

24. **Ms. Randrianarivony** (Madagascar) said that terrorist acts and related drug trafficking constituted a real threat to international security and to basic human rights. Madagascar strongly condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and supported regional and bilateral cooperation in the counter-terrorism effort, in particular in the areas of law enforcement cooperation and technical exchange. The country was in a national reconstruction process following five years of crisis. It had recently adopted a law on countering terrorism and transnational organized crime which criminalized the financing of terrorism. Legislation was being finalized on international judicial cooperation and a law on mutual legal assistance was being drafted. The Government welcomed the follow-up visit to be conducted by the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED) to assess Madagascars's progress in the implementation of Security Council resolutions 1373 (2001) and 1624 (2005) and the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy since its 2008 visit.

25. At the regional level, in 2013, Madagascar had hosted the annual meeting of Indian Ocean countries on legal cooperation to counter terrorism and transnational organized crime. Madagascar would also participate in the workshops on counter-terrorism strategies for experts from Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries, organized by the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre, SADC and the African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism, to be held in November 2014 and in 2015. The Government was in the process of ratifying the Convention on Extradition and Mutual Legal Assistance in Counter-terrorism, adopted in 2008 as part of the Rabat Declaration (A/62/939-S/2008/567). The Government was also concluding bilateral agreements with several States in order to address Madagascar's vulnerability to large-scale trafficking operations and had strengthened the national anti-corruption and anti-money-laundering regime.

26. **Mr. Gharibi** (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that his country had long been a victim of terrorism. Over the past year, a number of guards along the south-eastern border had been killed or abducted; terrorists had also targeted Iranian diplomats and diplomatic premises in Beirut, Sana'a and Peshawar, resulting in loss of life and injury.

27. State terrorism continued to endanger peace, security and human rights. Acts of State terrorism included the assassination of highly trained individuals in developing countries, which in turn had hindered scientific and technological development, and attacks on civilian populations in recognized shelters in order to advance repressive policies. Double standards and selectivity in the international counter-terrorism effort undermined trust and cooperation worldwide.

28. His delegation welcomed the adoption of General Assembly resolution 68/127, entitled "A world against violence and violent extremism". The recent escalation of violent extremism in Syria and Iraq had made the resolution more pertinent than ever, as it sought to promote a comprehensive plan to counter extremism and terrorism and to advance respectful, mutual dialogue. A non-inclusive approach to counter-terrorism would only fuel the fire of extremism.

29. Measures to counter terrorism should be taken in full conformity with the Charter of the United Nations and international law, in particular human rights and humanitarian law. The unilateral elaboration of lists that accused certain States of sponsoring terrorism was

a violation of that principle; the lists were used by certain States as a political tool to advance their agendas. Fact-based criteria should guide the listing and de-listing of terrorist organizations. In recent years, a notorious organization responsible for attacks against Iranian civilians had been removed from a sanctions list, demonstrating the politicization of terrorism, which ultimately led to the impunity of terrorists.

30. In response to the statement delivered by the representative of Israel on the agenda item under discussion, his delegation noted that a dialogue on the legal aspects of terrorism should not allow for false accusations by a State that had been known as a terrorist regime since its inception. The State that Israel accused of terrorism had in fact lost over 17,000 of its citizens to Israeli terrorist elements over the past 35 years. Furthermore, in violation of international law, Israel had killed more than 2,000 Palestinians in Gaza, most of them women and children, demolished the civilian infrastructure and rendered homeless half a million people already suffering from an eight-year blockade. It was ironic that a regime that was infamous for its war crimes and apartheid policies — well-documented by various United Nations bodies — should accuse other States of terrorist acts. The international community should take action against State terrorism and other illegal activities sponsored by the Israeli regime.

31. His Government opposed any attempts to equate terrorism with the legitimate struggle of peoples under foreign occupation for self-determination and national liberation. Such activities were a bid to prolong the occupation of a territory and the oppression of its people. Member States must condemn the use of State power to commit violence against peoples exercising their inalienable right to self-determination, including in any definition of terrorism to be included in international legal instruments.

32. His Government had serious concerns regarding the fairness and impartiality of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), which ranked Member States based on their efforts to counter the financing of terrorism and money-laundering. While FATF capacity-building initiatives were to be commended, no entity was entitled to rank States, which only served to impede mutual cooperation. The issue of terrorist financing should be addressed in an impartial, objective, technical and non-political way.

33. The 53rd annual session of the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization, held in Tehran in September 2014, had focused on legal aspects of countering violent extremism and terrorism. Its outcome resolution, reached by consensus, reaffirmed that violent extremism constituted a serious concern for all Member States, threatened the security and well-being of their societies, and was never justified. It also urged action at the international, regional and bilateral levels to fight impunity against acts of violent extremism through the adoption of relevant legislation and instruments. Iran was fully committed to countering violent extremism and terrorism and stood ready to cooperate with other partners in that regard.

34. **Mr. Essa** (Libya) said that Libya condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, regardless of its source or motives. Terrorism should not be associated with any particular religion, race or society and a clear distinction should be drawn between acts of terrorism punishable by law and the legitimate struggle of peoples under foreign occupation for self-determination. Member States must intensify their cooperation to eliminate the increasing global threat of terrorism, which undermined human rights, destroyed economic structures and impeded development. In that regard, technical assistance was required, in particular to support comprehensive and balanced implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

35. Libya had acceded to international and regional counter-terrorism instruments and had concluded a number of bilateral agreements. The Parliament had passed a counter-terrorism law in 2014, which called for the establishment of a national committee to coordinate efforts to stem the financing of terrorism, update legislation, assist victims, implement United Nations resolutions and cooperate with other States and actors. The Parliament had declared Ansar al-Sharia, which espoused the ideology of Al-Qaida, to be a terrorist organization. Ansar al-Sharia did not recognize the authority of the State and had killed innocent people. In Benghazi and Derna, it had established training camps that hosted terrorists from various countries, and thus posed a threat to Libya and its neighbouring States. He hoped that the Libyan authorities would receive counter-terrorism assistance in order to build the capacity of the Army and police and stem the proliferation of that organization. The interim Government was intensifying efforts to monitor

borders and combat transnational crimes, including trafficking of arms, drugs and human beings.

36. The adoption of Security Council resolution 2178 (2014) emphasized the urgent need to tackle the issue of foreign fighters, in particular by tightening border controls and identifying their sources of financing. There was also a serious need to address hostage-taking and kidnapping for ransom by terrorist groups. His delegation reiterated its call for a high-level conference on international terrorism to be convened under the auspices of the United Nations and hoped that Member States would redouble their efforts to conclude the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism, which should provide a clear definition of terrorism and address its root causes.

37. **Mr. Kihurani** (Kenya) said that his Government continued its fight against terrorism, recognizing it as one of the most serious threats to peace and security. Kenya had suffered serious terrorist attacks over the past several decades, which had led to loss of life and taken a toll on the national economy and communal harmony. The attacks were largely perpetrated by Al-Shabaab which radicalized and recruited young people to carry out its murderous activities. Another major security challenge was the return of youths who had been indoctrinated and fought in Somalia; those young people often joined criminal networks and secessionist groups in Kenya.

38. Al-Shabaab had been linked to other transnational crimes, including poaching and commodity smuggling. Since identifying with Al-Qaida, Al-Shabaab had also strengthened its ties to the group's affiliates, including Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula, which Al-Shabaab supported by facilitating the movement of fighters and weapons between Yemen and Somalia. Many Al-Shabaab members had travelled to Syria and Iraq to join the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) as foreign terrorist fighters. West African terrorist gangs, such as Boko Haram, were also seeking to link their ideology to Al-Shabaab as they pursued the establishment of an Islamic caliphate in the region.

39. Terrorists groups were cooperating across the region in order to maximize their impact, crossing borders to train, raise funds or seek haven in various countries. Although their leadership was being neutralized and their territories and financing were under threat, groups like Al-Shabaab continued to inspire like-minded extremists to engage in terrorist

acts. In response, Governments worldwide must share intelligence, resources and expertise. The Kenyan Government regularly reviewed its homeland security policies and was investing heavily to combat extremists, terrorists and foreign terrorist fighters. Those efforts must be reinforced by global partners. As long as international terrorism exploited democratic, multicultural and multi-religious societies, progress towards implementing a transformative post-2015 development agenda would be slowed.

40. Kenya's counter-terrorism strategies were in line with the four pillars of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. For example, the Constitution, adopted in 2010, had provisions aimed at promoting ethnic and religious tolerance and a culture of peace, justice and human development. Kenya's national development plan, called Vision 2030, set out measures to promote development and social inclusion, including gainful employment opportunities that would decrease the marginalization and sense of victimization that fomented violent extremism. Indeed, countering radicalization and violent extremism among young people was critical to enhancing Kenya's security. The Government was developing initiatives to arrest those who sought to indoctrinate youth and deter those at risk of radicalization from becoming terrorists. Community leaders in the areas affected by radicalization were also encouraged to take responsibility for young people's actions; in particular, moderate religious leaders had increased the number of interdenominational consultative meetings in order to delegitimize the extremist narrative. There had also been efforts to engage the media and civil society and enhance cooperation with countries facing similar security challenges. A programme to rehabilitate and reintegrate youth returning from Somalia recognized the need to ensure fairness, observe the rule of law and prevent activities that could provide extremists the base they needed to incite potential recruits to violence.

41. His Government and its partner States continued efforts to prevent radical extremism from becoming entrenched in Somalia, which, owing to its fragile security situation, afforded international terrorists a safe haven. Kenya was part of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) which was conducting operations with the Somali National Army to help bring peace and stability to the country and prevent it from reverting into a training ground for Al-Shabaab and affiliated terrorist organizations. His Government welcomed the Mission's recent successful efforts to

recover the port city of Barawe, which had been a major supply route for Al-Shabaab fighters. The city was under the control of the Somali Government for the first time in two decades. Sufficient assistance to AMISOM, particularly in the form of air and marine support, was an urgent need and would expedite the elimination of Al-Shabaab.

42. The African Union Peace and Security Council meeting on terrorism and violent extremism in Africa, held in Nairobi in September 2014, had enhanced coordination of regional counter-terrorism efforts. The event had followed a regional meeting of security chiefs concerning the need for African leaders to work together to curtail Al-Qaida's influence.

43. His Government had taken measures to strengthen the role of the United Nations system in its counter-terrorism efforts, in line with the Global Strategy. It had also continued to work with the Counter-Terrorism Committee to bolster State capacity to prevent terrorist acts both within Kenya and in other regions. In that respect, Kenya had hosted and participated in a number of national and regional workshops organized in concert with the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED), bringing together law enforcement officials, prosecutors, the judiciary and members of civil society. The workshops had helped participants to better understand the drivers of extremism in the region; identify ways to counter violent extremism; strengthen the resilience of local communities; and build law enforcement and prosecution capacity. His Government would continue to support the work of the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force in helping States to implement the Global Strategy as well as international cooperation efforts within the framework of the Counter-Terrorism Committee and the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004).

44. **Mr. Nkoloji** (Botswana) said that over the past year, violent extremist groups and foreign terrorist fighters had perpetrated murders, bombings and beheadings with frightening regularity. His Government condemned the atrocious acts of terrorist groups, including the so-called Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL).

45. His delegation welcomed the Secretary-General's commitment to galvanizing efforts to fight terrorism at the national and international level as well as the

adoption of Security Council resolution 2178 (2014), which Botswana had sponsored. Every State had the duty to contribute to preventive measures by sharing information concerning the infiltration by armed militias and terrorist fighters into its territory. In addition, Member States must prevent foreign fighters from crossing international borders; enact laws to criminalize such fighters; and sanction those who financed them. Governments must also make it illegal for their nationals to join, sponsor or take part in activities of terrorist groups anywhere in the world. His delegation pledged to join the international community in mobilizing United Nations counter-terrorism bodies to monitor terrorist tendencies.

46. **Mr. Albsoul** (Jordan) said that terrorism had become the greatest threat to human security and political and social structures. Terrorist groups benefited from conflicts and the absence of peace and justice, had access to increased financing and greater military capabilities, and committed atrocities against civilians. The international community must intensify its efforts to respond to that threat. In that regard, his Government welcomed the adoption of Security Council resolutions 2170 (2014), 2171 (2014) and 2178 (2014) and urged Member States to implement their provisions. It condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and stressed that terrorism must not be linked to any creed, race or religion, which only served the interests of terrorists groups.

47. New counter-terrorism provisions had been added to Jordan's penal code; legislation had been passed to counter money-laundering and the financing of terrorism; and the definition of terrorism had been clarified in the main counter-terrorism law. In addition, measures had been taken to improve implementation of Security Council resolutions and to criminalize membership in and recruitment to terrorism groups both in the country and abroad. A definition of terrorism had also been added to the national counter-terrorism law. The Amman Message was an important statement that called for the rejection of blind extremism, conflict among religions and the use of violence for political ends. He also recalled that the General Assembly had expressed its support for World Interfaith Harmony Week, which was celebrated in the first week of February.

48. The global counter-terrorism effort required concerted, comprehensive strategies that addressed the root causes of terrorism, such as poverty, ignorance

and oppression. In that regard, the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy was a step in the right direction. His delegation supported efforts to reach a consensus on a draft comprehensive treaty on international terrorism. There was a serious need for a comprehensive legal framework that regulated international cooperation without politicizing terrorism or confusing it with activities that were not in violation of international human rights law. His delegation also supported the holding of a high-level conference under the auspices of the United Nations in order to agree on a definition of terrorism. His Government welcomed the contribution made by the Government of Saudi Arabia to launch the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre and stood ready to cooperate with United Nations entities to fulfil the Centre's objectives.

49. *Mr. Pašić (Bosnia and Herzegovina), Vice-Chair, took the Chair.*

50. **Mr. Zinsou** (Benin) said that terrorism was a serious concern for the entire international community. Benin supported collective efforts to counter terrorism, including those of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force, as part of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. His delegation welcomed the historic Security Council high-level meeting on the threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts, held in New York on 24 September 2014, and the resulting adoption of resolution 2178 (2014). It would urge all States to mobilize against the threat of foreign terrorist fighters, in particular by preventing their entry into or transit through their territory and blocking the flow of financial assistance to them.

51. The international community should further promote regional cooperation and the establishment of reliable networks for exchanging information on terrorist activities. Since 2013, with the support of the European Union, Benin had been involved in the development of a police information system for West Africa. He called on the international community to cooperate closely with the countries of the Lake Chad subregion with a view to rapidly neutralizing the Boko Haram branch of Al-Qaida.

52. In order to effectively counter terrorism, it was crucial to combat corruption and to stop the payment of ransoms to terrorists. Likewise, States should rigorously monitor the creation of so-called charitable organizations, which could be used to circumvent

financial counter-terrorism measures. The United Nations and the international community more broadly should boost capacity-building assistance to States with scant resources. The rapid and coordinated implementation of the United Nations integrated strategy for the Sahel would strengthen communities and help them reject appeals from terrorist networks. It was imperative to fight against poverty, unemployment, exclusion and other situations that led to the radicalization of young people and facilitated their recruitment and indoctrination by terrorists. More than ever, international peace and security were linked to sustainable development and shared prosperity.

53. **Mr. Suárez Moreno** (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) said that his Government condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, including acts in which States were directly or indirectly involved. The General Assembly should continue to play a pivotal role in coordinating international counter-terrorism efforts, which themselves must adhere strictly to the Charter of the United Nations. Terrorism could not be equated with the legitimate struggle for self-determination of peoples under colonial domination or foreign occupation. An effective international response must also address the conditions that led to the spread of terrorism. While no terrorist act was justifiable, foreign occupation and military aggression against sovereign countries and peoples tended to breed violence, extremism and intolerance. As parties to the Charter of the United Nations, all Member States had taken on the responsibility of negotiating a political solution to persistent armed conflicts, which undermined international peace and security.

54. His delegation condemned the kidnapping and hostage-taking by terrorist groups in an attempt to obtain political concessions and funds to continue perpetrating cruel acts. In that connection, it called for the release of the victims of such acts and expressed solidarity with their families.

55. Extradition was an essential counter-terrorism tool; his Government called on those States which had received requests for the extradition of terrorists to duly consider them, in line with the applicable legal framework. Specifically, it once again called on the United States of America to fulfil its request for extradition to Venezuela of the terrorist, Luis Posada Carriles, who had been directly responsible for planning the explosion of a Cubana de Aviación

airliner on 6 October 1976 that killed 73 innocent people. Likewise, he reiterated his Government's request to extradite Venezuelan citizens Raúl Díaz Peña, José Antonio Colina and Germán Rodolfo Varela, who had been accused and sentenced to prison for perpetrating terrorist acts in Venezuela in 2003.

56. The illegal practices of certain States in combating terrorism, such as the unilateral elaboration of lists of countries allegedly linked to terrorist activities, violated international law and consequently undermined multilateral counter-terrorism efforts. Adherence to the international legal order, based on the principles of non-interference and respect for the sovereignty, and territorial integrity of States, was essential for maintaining international peace and security.

57. His delegation attached particular importance to the finalization of a comprehensive counter-terrorism convention, including a definition of terrorism, as a step towards strengthening the political and legal framework for counter-terrorism efforts and welcomed the establishment of the working group to that end. It also supported the proposal to convene an international conference on terrorism under the auspices of the United Nations, with a view to devising a coordinated response to combat international terrorism in all its manifestations, including its root causes.

58. **Mr. Waheed** (Maldives) said that his delegation joined others in condemning terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, which took innocent lives, impaired human dignity, destabilized societies and threatened territorial integrity and the security of States. Terrorism should not be associated with any particular religion or culture. To face the terrorist threat, which had recently grown in volume and severity, the international community must together formulate decisive actions to defeat extremist ideologies. The so-called Islamic State and other similar organizations were not religious groups, but terrorist organizations, whose ideology ran counter to the Islamic principles of peace, compassion and tolerance. His delegation strongly condemned such groups and their activities.

59. There should be a renewed focus on the implementation of the international counter-terrorism instruments. Additionally, the Maldives welcomed initiatives to address the challenge of foreign terrorist fighters, including Security Council resolutions 2170

(2014) and 2178 (2014). However, international activities must be complemented by regional, bilateral and national initiatives to combat terrorism. At the same time, in order to streamline those activities, the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism should be finalized.

60. At the regional level, his Government was working on capacity-building and technical cooperation through the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC). The Maldives was also a member of the Asia/Pacific Group on Money Laundering and cooperated closely with neighbouring countries and many other strategic partners in combating terrorism. At the national level, the Anti-Terrorism Act of 1990 and the National Security Policy of 2012 provided clear guidance on counter-terrorism measures. The national Counter-Terrorism office conducted inter-agency training programmes for policymakers and operational staff and an updated Anti-Terrorism Bill was currently being formulated to more effectively target and prosecute those who supported terrorist ideologies and actions.

61. Terrorism was not an isolated phenomenon but was the product of cultural and political antagonisms. His Government was also worried about the spillover effects of conflicts within the region and around the globe. It was as important to address the root causes of terrorism, such as poverty, unemployment, civil unrest and lack of education, as it was to address the crime itself. Counter-radicalization efforts were also important for long-term success against violent extremism. No one country could tackle terrorism alone; for a country like the Maldives, with a vast geographical area to monitor, international assistance was of paramount importance.

62. **Ms. Kanchaveli** (Georgia) said that combating international terrorism was a priority for maintaining peace and security in the world. Georgia had contributed to peace and development in Iraq and continued to do so in Afghanistan and in the Central African Republic. Her delegation had sponsored Security Council resolution 2178 (2014) and supported efforts to defeat the terrorist group, the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL).

63. Her Government had adopted a number of measures to prevent and suppress international terrorism, including signing international, regional and bilateral counter-terrorism instruments and incorporating them into domestic legislation; implementing the

recommendations of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) and relevant Security Council resolutions; and developing a national strategy for combating the financing of terrorism. Specifically, Georgia was a party to 14 international counter-terrorism instruments and two Council of Europe conventions relating to terrorism. At the regional level, Georgia was a party to the multilateral counter-terrorism instruments concluded with the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation and the Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Moldova (GUAM) Organization for Democracy and Economic Development.

64. Consistent with its obligations under various Security Council resolutions, Georgia maintained a list of persons suspected of terrorist activities or of being in relation with other persons or organizations involved in or suspected of being involved in terrorist activities. The list was regularly updated and shared with relevant State institutions and was checked against the lists maintained under Security Council resolution 1267 (1999). In December 2011, her Government had set up an inter-agency commission on the implementation of Security Council resolutions to comprehensively address the requirements of the relevant resolutions regarding the assets freeze, travel ban and arms embargo on individuals and entities associated with terrorist acts. It had also recently established a council for combating money-laundering and financing of terrorism.

65. It was important to note that currently 20 per cent of Georgia's territory remained under illegal military occupation by Russia. Under such circumstances, the Government of Georgia was denied de facto control over its regions, and the overall responsibility for the security situation rested solely with the State exercising effective control.

66. **Mr. Muhumuza** (Uganda) said that in order to combat terrorism successfully, hard decisions must be taken, including the formulation of a comprehensive definition of terrorism, which would serve to distinguish it from legitimate struggles. The root causes of terrorism, in particular poverty, must be addressed. His delegation supported ongoing efforts to refine the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, to achieve consensus on a draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism, and to convene a high-level conference to formulate a joint international response to terrorism.

67. Uganda had long been active in the fight against terrorist groups. While Ugandan forces had been successful at routing the Lord's Resistance Army from Uganda, the group continued to cause wanton suffering in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Central African Republic. International political will was needed to neutralize such bands of terrorists once and for all. Collective efforts should seek to deny terrorists safe haven, eradicate sources of terrorist financing, reduce State vulnerability and enhance emergency preparedness and response capabilities. Within Uganda itself, the mobilization of the public had been successful in leading to the capture of terrorists before they could carry out their evil acts. While recognizing that due process was essential, his Government would continue to exercise the military option to ensure the safety of its people.

68. It was regrettable that calls to address the dumping of toxic waste off the coast of Somalia had gone largely unheeded; there was a risk that such materials could be recycled by terrorists for use as weapons of mass destruction. Such actions must stop and those responsible must be held accountable.

69. **Mr. Mnatsakanyan** (Armenia) said his delegation was deeply concerned about the recent spate of terrorist acts in the world, including those targeting Armenians in Syria, where a church dedicated to the memory of Armenian victims of genocide had been mined and blown up by terrorists. Armenia had on many occasions voiced the need to defend the Armenian population of Syria and the Yazidi and Christian communities of north-western Iraq and was encouraged by the international community's unified stance in that regard. Armenia strongly condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, in particular mass executions, the persecution of entire communities on the basis of their beliefs, kidnapping for ransom, forced displacement of minority groups, attacks on schools and hospitals and destruction of cultural and religious sites. It therefore welcomed the recent adoption of Security Council resolutions 2133 (2014), 2170 (2014) and 2178 (2014) in that regard. The international community must step up efforts to strengthen the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

70. No country was immune to terrorism. Those who supported extremist groups or allowed them to cross their borders freely should be reminded that foreign terrorist fighters posed a serious threat not only to their States of destination but also to their States of origin

and transit. Encouraging widespread manifestations of intolerance and hate speech could lead to acts of extreme violence and breed terrorist ideology. It was important to implement the international counter-terrorism instruments, most of which required States to establish jurisdiction over terrorist offences committed by their nationals abroad. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force and the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED) played a crucial role in promoting and facilitating cooperation between multiple jurisdictions.

71. Armenia had taken major steps to counter terrorism, including by improving its border security through a new information system and the newly established Border and Customs Enforcement Operations Task Force, making significant changes to its export control laws, and holding or participating in international anti-terrorism workshops. After ratifying the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, his Government had participated in bilateral and multilateral assistance, security and training initiatives aimed at strengthening its ability to combat terrorism and the smuggling of illicit and hazardous materials. With the establishment of a financial intelligence unit within the Central Bank, considerable progress had also been made in combating money-laundering and terrorist financing. Armenia worked closely on counter-terrorism initiatives with organizations such as the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the European Union, the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Council of Europe.

72. **Mr. Ganbold** (Mongolia) said that Mongolia condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. It had joined international efforts to combat terrorism in Iraq, Afghanistan and Sudan and strongly denounced the heinous crimes perpetrated by terrorist groups such as ISIL and Boko Haram. His delegation supported the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, which should be updated regularly while maintaining balance among its four pillars; it also supported implementation of the resolutions relating to the first, second, and third biennial reviews of the Strategy. The Organization played a central role in coordinating counter-terrorism efforts, including the provision of technical assistance. His delegation was particularly grateful for the work of

the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre in that regard.

73. Mongolia was a party to most of the international counter-terrorism instruments and had strengthened its domestic regime, most recently through amendments to legislation on the combating of terrorism, money-laundering and terrorist financing and changes to its Criminal Code and Code of Criminal Procedure. It had also adopted legislation which criminalized terrorist financing and provided a terrorist designation mechanism with regard to asset-freezing under Security Council resolution 1373 (2001). As of June 2014, Mongolia was no longer subject to the monitoring process of the International Co-operation Review Group of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF). It had established an integrated border management system that relied on inter-agency cooperation and coordination. In May 2014, his Government had received the visit of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED), whose follow-up report and recommendations it welcomed and would seek to implement. However, it would need human, financial and physical resources to meet the related challenges.

74. It was important to safeguard human rights while fighting terrorism: with that in mind, Mongolia was a party to all the major United Nations human rights conventions and maintained a constructive dialogue with the Organization's human rights mechanisms. It had taken significant steps to address concerns about the criminal justice system and to guarantee the independence and integrity of the judiciary.

75. His delegation took note of the efforts of the Security Council sanctions committees to block the financial transactions and the movements of terrorist organizations and individuals. His Government stood ready to contribute to strengthening international cooperation to counter terrorism through projects and programmes at the regional and subregional levels, taking into account the special needs of developing countries, and through the provision of technical assistance to such countries for law enforcement capacity-building. In that connection, it enjoyed close collaboration with the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization and the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons.

76. His delegation looked forward to the outcome of the work of the working group tasked with finalizing the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism and discussing the convening of a high-level conference on international terrorism.

77. **Mr. Musikhin** (Russian Federation), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that his delegation took issue with the comments made by the representative of Georgia in respect of the Russian Federation, which did not have effective control over the territories in question. The current situation had nothing to do with occupation. As independent States, those territories had their own security policies, which they carried out independently in accordance with their international obligations.

78. **Ms. Kanchaveli** (Georgia), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that, while it was not the first time the Russian Federation had attempted to justify its illegal actions, it was especially cynical to do so in a meeting of the Sixth Committee. The territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of Member States, principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, must be respected. Numerous resolutions had been adopted by the General Assembly and the Security Council in support of the territorial integrity of Georgia, including Abkhazia and the Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia. Her Government had expressed concern in respect of those regions because the Russian occupying forces had prevented access to them, including through the use of fencing. A unified Georgia would be an even stronger partner of the international community in striving for peace and security throughout the world.

Agenda item 82: The rule of law at the national and international levels (A/68/213/Add.1 and A/69/181)

79. **The Chair** drew attention to the Secretary-General's 2014 report on strengthening and coordinating United Nations rule of law activities (A/69/181) and to the addendum to the Secretary-General's 2013 report on the same subject (A/68/213/Add.1), and recalled that the General Assembly, in its resolution 68/116, had invited Member States to focus their comments at the current session on the subtopic "Sharing States' national practices in strengthening the rule of law through access to justice".

80. **Mr. Dehghani** (Islamic Republic of Iran), speaking on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned

Countries, said that respect for the rule of law at the national and international levels was essential to maintaining international peace and security and achieving socioeconomic development. The high-level meeting of the sixty-seventh session of the General Assembly on the rule of law at the national and international levels had marked a milestone in the Assembly's discussions on the rule of law and its efforts to develop a common understanding among Member States, and the outcome Declaration was well-balanced. The Movement would spare no efforts in continuing those discussions in the Committee, in cooperation with other partners.

81. It was essential to maintain a balance between the national and international dimensions of the rule of law. The Non-Aligned Movement was of the view that the latter dimension needed greater attention on the part of the United Nations. The Charter provided normative guidance regarding the basis of the rule of law at the international level. Efforts to foster international relations based on the rule of law should be guided, in particular, by the principles of sovereign equality of States, prohibition of the threat or use of force in international relations and peaceful settlement of disputes. The principle of sovereign equality meant, *inter alia*, that all States should have an equal opportunity to participate in law-making processes at the international level. In addition, all States should comply with their obligations under treaties and customary international law. Selective application of international law must be avoided and the legitimate and legal rights of States under it respected.

82. The Non-Aligned Movement stood ready to engage with the Committee on the theme of the current year's debate. It also encouraged States to strive to settle disputes peacefully, using the mechanisms and tools established under international law, including the International Court of Justice, treaty-based courts, such as the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea, and arbitration. The Movement called upon the General Assembly and the Security Council to make use, whenever appropriate, of their right under Article 96 of the Charter to request advisory opinions on legal questions from the International Court of Justice.

83. Human rights, the rule of law and democracy were interdependent and mutually reinforcing. The purposes and principles of the Charter and the principles of international law were of paramount importance for peace and security, the rule of law,

economic development, social progress and human rights for all, and Member States should renew their commitment to uphold, preserve and promote them.

84. The Non-Aligned Movement remained concerned about the use of unilateral measures, which had a negative impact on the rule of law and international relations. No State or group of States had the authority to deprive other States of their legal rights for political reasons. The Movement condemned any attempt to destabilize the democratic and constitutional order in any of its member States.

85. The Non-Aligned Movement also wished to underscore the need for Member States to respect the functions and powers of the principal organs of the United Nations, particularly the General Assembly, and to maintain the balance among them. The continuing encroachment by the Security Council on the functions and powers of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council remained a matter of concern. The General Assembly should play a leading role in promoting and coordinating efforts to strengthen the rule of law. The international community should not, however, supplant national authorities in their task of establishing or strengthening the rule of law at the national level. National ownership in rule of law activities was important, as was strengthening the capacity of Member States to implement their international obligations, including through enhanced technical assistance and capacity-building. United Nations funds and programmes should provide such assistance, but only at the request of Governments and within their respective mandates. Account should be taken of the customs and the political and socioeconomic features of each country, and the imposition of pre-established models should be avoided.

86. Appropriate mechanisms should be established to enable Member States to keep abreast of the work of the Rule of Law Unit and to ensure regular interaction between the Unit and the General Assembly. The lack of an agreed definition of rule of law should be taken into account in the preparation of reports and in the collection, classification and evaluation of the quality of data on issues directly or indirectly related to the rule of law. The data-gathering activities of United Nations bodies should not lead to unilateral formulation of rule of law indicators or ranking of countries. Indicators should be agreed by Member States in an open and transparent manner.

87. Cognizant of the importance of the rule of law within the United Nations, the Non-Aligned Movement welcomed the new system of administration of justice in the United Nations and supported initiatives to hold United Nations personnel accountable for any instances of misconduct while serving in an official capacity. The Movement also welcomed the General Assembly's adoption of resolution 67/19, according to Palestine the status of non-member observer State in the United Nations and reflecting the international community's longstanding, principled support for the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including self-determination, independence, and a two-State solution based on the pre-1967 borders. The Movement reaffirmed its support of the State of Palestine's application for admission to full membership in the United Nations.

88. While the Movement underlined the importance of freedom of opinion and expression, as provided under article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, it wished to emphasize that morality, public order and the rights and freedoms of others must be recognized and respected in the exercise of that freedom. Freedom of expression was not absolute and it should be exercised with responsibility and in accordance with the relevant international human rights law and instruments.

89. **Mr. Phansourivong** (Lao People's Democratic Republic), speaking on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), said that the rule of law was an important basis for international cooperation among nations and was essential for ensuring justice, equality and sustainable economic development. The rule of law was relevant to all three pillars of the Charter of the United Nations, namely, peace and security, development and the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms and necessary for the fulfilment of the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and of international law — both indispensable to the sovereign equality of States, peaceful settlement of disputes and territorial integrity.

90. As a rule-based organization, the Association of the Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) attached great importance to enhancing the rule of law, especially in moving towards the establishment of the ASEAN Community by 2015. ASEAN countries also sought to further develop their national institutions and legal frameworks for fulfilling their obligations and commitments under the Charter of the United Nations.

The Declaration of the East Asia Summit on the Principles for Mutually Beneficial Relations had been adopted in 2011 to promote friendly relations among the signatories. Other countries had increasingly shown interest in acceding to key ASEAN legal documents, such as the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia. In addition, the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea had been adopted in 2002 and ASEAN member States were actively pursuing the adoption of a code of conduct in that region.

91. With regard to human rights, ASEAN had established the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights, which had overall responsibility for the promotion and protection of human rights in ASEAN countries. In addition, the ASEAN Human Rights Declaration, adopted in 2012, established a framework for human rights cooperation in the region and contributed to the building of the ASEAN Community.

92. **Mr. Joyini** (South Africa), speaking on behalf of the African Group, said that the theme of the current session was a topic of great importance to the African States and was in line with the United Nations Principles and Guidelines on Access to Legal Aid in Criminal Justice Systems (General Assembly resolution 67/187). Access to justice and the rule of law could be strengthened through the provision of legal aid. Well-functioning justice institutions were critical to building peace and consolidating development gains. Reform initiatives could draw on international commitments on promoting and protecting the rule of law, but should be evidence-based and take into account national and local realities and lessons from past experience.

93. Capacity-building, including enhanced technical assistance, was key to promoting the rule of law at the national level. In determining capacity-building needs and priorities, the concepts of effectiveness and local or national ownership should be prime considerations. Partnership and mutual respect between providers and recipients were essential, and the customs and national, political and socioeconomic realities of the recipient States must be taken into account. In that regard, the Rule of Law Unit should be encouraged to explore initiatives that would enable donors, recipients and other entities involved in financing rule of law activities to work in a more coordinated manner.

94. The African Group supported a balanced approach to both levels of the rule of law, the national

and the international. It called on States to ensure that the provisions of the international instruments they adopted were effectively implemented in domestic law. Although the multifaceted applications of the rule of law had led to its consideration in different forums and committees within the United Nations, the Sixth Committee was the most appropriate forum for considering all aspects of the rule of law in future, so as to ensure the coherent and continuous development of the principle.

95. **Ms. Aching** (Trinidad and Tobago), speaking on behalf of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), said that a rule-based international system that applied equally to all Member States was essential for achieving lasting peace and security, protection of human rights, sustained economic development and social progress and the advancement of all peoples. CARICOM continued to support the work of the United Nations in strengthening the rule of law by providing capacity-building and technical assistance in the area of international law, especially to developing countries. Specifically, it called for enhanced support of the United Nations Programme of Assistance in the Teaching, Study, Dissemination and Wider Appreciation of International Law through funding from the regular budget. It had never been intended that the Programme should be funded through voluntary contributions alone, and the current situation undermined its effectiveness.

96. CARICOM, founded on the principles of justice, democracy, liberty and the rule of law, strongly opposed impunity, which was contrary to the rule of law at the national and international levels. The fundamental rights and freedoms of individuals were enshrined in the constitutions of its member States, and provisions relating to equality before the law had been incorporated into their domestic legislation, which was further buttressed by various international treaties and conventions that promoted the rule of law.

97. As a region disproportionately affected by the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, CARICOM looked forward to the entry into force in December 2014 of the Arms Trade Treaty, the implementation of which was key to international efforts to end impunity through the promotion of the rule of law, in a manner consistent with its obligations to protect human rights and uphold international humanitarian law. In the same vein, CARICOM welcomed the growing number of ratifications of the Kampala amendments to the Rome Statute of the

International Criminal Court on the crime of aggression and called on all States parties to the Rome Statute to ratify the amendment to allow for its entry into force by 2017.

98. CARICOM looked forward to beginning work on an international instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the issue of the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction. The promotion of the rule of law internationally must lay the foundation for sustainable development and the protection and sustainable management of the common heritage of present and future generations. Representing a region that was highly vulnerable to the loss of marine biodiversity and the impacts of unsustainable practices on the marine environment beyond national jurisdictions, CARICOM stressed that the conclusion of a legally binding instrument to address those matters was crucial as a matter of justice and fairness.

99. CARICOM commended the Rule of Law Unit on its efforts to promote the rule of law at the international level and the Organization as a whole for its work in the areas of constitution-making and legal reform, strengthening of judicial systems, combating corruption and enhancing State capacity to implement their human rights commitments. Independent, unbiased and competent legal and judicial systems were the backbone of the rule of law. Implementation of the rule of law at the national and international levels was fundamental to peaceful coexistence and cooperation among States.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.