

**61<sup>st</sup> Session of the General Assembly  
The General Debate of the  
First Committee**

Statement by:

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Check against Delivery

Madam Ambassador and friend,

Allow me to begin by saying how pleased I am to see you chairing the first committee. Let me assure you of my delegation's full support and cooperation.

In its efforts to promote peace and security through multilateralism, the international community has taken two major approaches:

- The first is of a more ideological character and has the long term objective of creating a safer world.
- The second approach is of a more defensive and realistic character. It aims at discerning the most urgent and imminent threats to international security and stability, and finding for them the most appropriate and effective remedy.

For example, the question of nuclear disarmament and of identifying the root causes of terrorism belong to the first track, whereas the strict and responsible export control over sensitive technologies and a ban on transfer of weapons to terrorists belong to the second.

Israel believes that setting long term goals would contribute to international and regional stability and security. At the same time, it is clear that striving to achieve long term goals, without first identifying the real and present threats, would not be effective. It is only when those threats are properly addressed that we can seriously engage in dealing with the long term goals of creating a safer world for all.

Madam Chair,

The threats we face in our regional environment are unfortunately often of an existential character and therefore necessitate a realistic step by step approach. Once the threats are identified, modest and gradual measures should be proposed and applied in order to create a new reality based on dialogue and good neighborliness. Such a reality is vitally fundamental. Without it, effective regional disarmament and arms control discussions cannot take place.

Artificial attempts to ignore our regional reality cannot contribute to the achievement of long term goals and could be counter-productive.

To our understanding, two main issues must be placed as the highest priorities for international peace and stability. The issues are terrorism in all its dimensions, and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery.

This year, the risks to regional and global stability due to these two evils have reached unprecedented levels. Failure to find a suitable answer to these threats could, and probably will, result in a substantial deterioration to personal, regional and global security.

Madam Chair,

The Hizbullah, a terrorist organization armed with advanced and sophisticated weaponry, targeting towns and villages in a neighboring state, with the deliberate goal of killing as many civilians as possible, uses local villages as bases of operation and inhabited houses as launching sites, callously exploiting Lebanese civilians as human shields.

The Hizbullah has proven to be an immediate strategic threat not only to my country but to others as well. The intention of this terrorist organization and of the countries supporting it has been to destabilize the region.

Through their actions, they have been responsible for thousands of innocent casualties and have brought the region to the brink of full scale war.

Other terrorist organization will almost certainly follow suit. They will acquire MANPADS, rockets and sophisticated missiles from states supporting terrorism. They will create new bases inside inhabited areas and will hide weapons in houses and among civilian populations. They too will use populations as human shields.

The international community, including civil society, needs to find answers to these threats, rather than merely limiting the victim's rights to defend itself:

- A special effort should be invested in preventing and banning the transfer of any type of weapons and military equipment to terrorist groups.
- A cautious approach should be taken towards arms transactions with states supporting terrorism.

These states should be accountable for the assistance they have given to the Hizbullah. The full implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions, including Resolution 1701 should be a pre-requisite for future arms sales to these countries. Failing to properly address the issue of support to terrorism could create a dangerous precedent.

Terrorism puts at risk the stability of the region. Neither confidence building measures nor new regional security initiatives will be effective without a significant reduction of the level of this threat.

Madam Chair,

As I mentioned earlier, the second issue which needs strong and decisive action by the international community is the conduct of states developing weapons of mass destruction, with complete disregard for their international obligations. This has been coupled with an aggressive effort to concurrently develop means of delivery. Since the entry into force of the NPT, four significant cases of non-compliance have been formally acknowledged by the IAEA. Three of them took place in our region, in states that do not recognize Israel and one of them still calls openly for our elimination.

As clearly documented in the IAEA reports, that same country, Iran, continues, regardless of the Security Council resolutions, to develop its nuclear program and at the same time, develops means of medium and long range delivery.

For almost four years now, the international community has been striving first to reveal Iran's true nuclear activities, later to receive explanations to the findings and when such explanations were not forthcoming, has been striving to bring Iran's clandestine program to an end.. Unfortunately, until now, these efforts have not borne fruit.

Moreover, Iran is a source of proliferation for sensitive components of conventional and WMD programs. It also openly arms and supports terrorist organizations, first and foremost, Hizbullah. Note-worthy is the fact that Iran is assisted in this sponsorship by Syria.

Iran's policy dangerously combines a spectrum of threats for which a sober and clear-headed approach must be implemented. Attempts to disregard reality and to delay the implementation of the necessary measures have proven to be the wrong approach.

Madam Chair,  
Dear colleagues,

I have elaborated on the main threats and it is now my intention to say a few words about what can be done about them.

Since these threats are unfortunately not new to the international community, many attempts have been made to deal with them. Some measures have been developed by the Security Council, and others appear in different General Assembly programs and relevant regimes, among them:

- The UN program of action on illicit trade in small arms and light weapons has set out as one of its main objectives the prevention of arms transfers to terrorists. It has put in place specific recommendations on how to achieve this goal on the national, regional and global level.
- The First Committee of the General Assembly, this very body, has adopted by consensus for the last two years a resolution calling for the prevention of transfers of MANPADS to non state actors.
- Security Council Resolution 1540 requires member states to put in place robust export control, in order to prevent the transfer of sensitive weapon technologies to non state actors.
- Security Council Resolution 1373 establishes recommendations for bilateral, regional and multilateral cooperation, with a view to fighting international terrorism.

- Resolutions 1695 on the DPRK and resolution 1696 on Iran establish clear requirement from these two countries in the nuclear realm.
- Resolution 1559 calls for the disarmament of all armed militias in south Lebanon.
- And lately, following the latest conflict, Resolution 1701 prohibits the transfer of any type of weapon to actors other than the lawful government of Lebanon.

These are only a few examples of different resolutions and tools which are the fruit of long negotiations and delicate compromises. Had they been fully implemented, they could have prevented the latest conflict in our region and have the potential to prevent future ones as well.

We have the tools. It is our decision, as members of the international community, to see to their implementation. Developing tools and drafting resolutions cannot be a goal in itself. We all want to see stability in our troubled region. Likewise, we want to guarantee continued global safety and stability. To advance these goals we need not only to draft solutions, but, as difficult as it may be, we also need to guarantee implementation of what has been agreed upon.

Thank you Madam Chair