

the need to condemn it unequivocally and to organize a concerted struggle against it. The second conclusion, which is related to the first, is that the international community is also demonstrating a growing concern that action in this area be taken on the basis of a general agreement. The third conclusion, however, is that the resurrection of problems which for the moment seem insoluble because of factors well outside the realm of terrorism, could both weaken the grounds on which our action is now based and the unity that we have finally, after a considerable struggle, been able to attain. It is not a matter of denying the existence or importance of these problems, most of which are brought up regularly before various UN agencies. For us--for the UN Legal Committee --it is simply a matter of continuing to build on the progress made to date by minimizing the risks of confusion, controversy and dispersal.

To return specifically to the proposal of the Syrian Arab Republic that a conference be convened, we feel, in light of the above, that there is an acute danger of taking a step backward, of losing the unity of purpose we were finally able to attain. We feel that this approach will inevitably reopen wounds that have barely had time to heal and provoke a controversy that will jeopardize our objectives, however good the intentions of its authors might be. We do not believe that it will be possible to reach a consensus on the definition of terrorism, and we fear that a conference aimed at differentiating terrorism from the struggle of peoples for national liberation, in the general context of a definition of terrorism, will simply reinforce the false impression that there is an unavowed but inherent link between these two issues. We feel that the grounds for such a link are shaky and we assume that it would be rejected by the other States and by the liberation movements themselves.