

The reason why the Committee was finally able to conclude its work with a relative measure of success in 1979 is a revealing one: it was only through a concerted effort on the part of its members, under the exceptionally enlightened leadership of its Chairman, Mr. Jaipal of India, to focus its conclusions on the elements that would bring unanimity. Conversely, the Committee felt it should omit the controversial elements which, by all appearances, would result only in continued deep divisions and therefore in failure.

Again in 1979, when the General Assembly decided to modify some of the Committee's recommendations and to reintroduce elements that had deliberately been set aside, it adopted a resolution that was doomed to fail in its design of achieving a general agreement. It was not by chance that resolution 40/61 of 1985 asked the States to observe the recommendations as adopted by the Special Committee in 1979, and not the conclusions of the General Assembly itself.

Let us consider this matter for a moment. What problems are so difficult that they will bar a general agreement from being reached whenever they are raised? First, there is the problem underlying the subject of our agenda point, namely the relationship between measures to counter international terrorism and the study of its root causes. There is also the question of the relationship between international terrorism and the national liberation movements. Added to this is the concept of State terrorism. And what about the issue of the legality of measures taken by States to resist international terrorism? Finally, there is the very definition of international terrorism, which is closely or distantly related to the other problems that I have raised.