

(A/42/336 and S/18913), are also in this category. Apparently the problem of terrorism continues to be a source of deep concern to world governments, as illustrated by the final communique of the Conference of Commonwealth Member States that just ended in Vancouver.

Against this backdrop of past achievements that must be preserved and present efforts that must be continued, we are today faced with a new proposal as we review the agenda point concerning terrorism. This proposal was submitted yesterday in plenary by the distinguished permanent representative of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya on behalf of the group of Arab countries, and is set forth in Document A/42/193 of August 17, issued by the Syrian Arab Republic. It calls for the convening of an international conference to define terrorism and to differentiate it from the struggles of peoples for national liberation. If we properly understood the presentation made yesterday, the groundwork for this conference would be laid by a resumption of the activities of the Committee on International Terrorism. The Canadian delegation has examined this proposal carefully, to determine whether accepting it would prove to be beneficial. Our examination, Mr. President, has caused us to have serious doubts about the usefulness of such an initiative. Perhaps we should explain our reasons here.

It must be borne in mind that resolution 40/61 adopted by the General Assembly two years ago was part of a long succession of vain attempts that began with the General Assembly decision of 1972 (resolution 32/47) to establish a special Committee on International Terrorism. Recall the difficult circumstances in which the General Assembly was caused to make this decision, the ambiguous and controversial mandate of the Committee and the extreme difficulties it experienced in the course of its work.