

Mr. Chairman:

I would first like to express my delegation's thanks to Mr Fleischhauer, the Organization's legal advisor, for his very useful presentation of the Secretary-General's report (A/42/519). Among the many items of information provided by Mr Fleischhauer, we shall refer to his update of the status of ratifications of conventions designed to combat terrorism. It is encouraging to note that the number of States party to these conventions has continued to increase. Since the Sixth Committee last considered this matter, Canada has added its name to the list of States party to the UN Convention against Hostage-taking.

Again this year, the General Assembly should encourage the States that have not yet done so to become parties to these conventions. It is important that we have universal adherence to these instruments in our common struggle against terrorist activity.

Mr. Chairman:

The way in which the Sixth Committee deals with the issue of international terrorism this year is extremely important. In 1987, the international community attained a degree of mutual cooperation and understanding that would have been inconceivable fifteen years ago and that absolutely must be preserved. In spite of serious problems that I shall examine shortly, remarkable progress has been made by taking a pragmatic approach, designed to combat specific manifestations of terrorism by means of specific instruments. We are all familiar with these instruments, and I shall not spend a long time on them. This "piecemeal" approach, which began in the early '70s with the conventions of Tokyo, the Hague and Montreal, negotiated in the context of the ICAO, was also used successfully in 1973 with the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Crimes against Internationally