Mr. President,

At the outset, please accept my felicitations on your assumption of the Presidency of the Security Council for this month. We are happy to participate in today’s joint debate on three Security Council agenda items, whose implementation not only requires the fullest collective effort by the entire membership, but also their fullest participation in processes that affect the collective security of all nations equally. I will limit my remarks to a few comments, proceeding from my last statement on this subject in March this year, before this august body.

Mr. President,

To begin with, let me reiterate India’s abiding determination to work towards concluding the long-pending effort to finalize a Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism (CCIT), moving beyond debates that essentially miss the larger point. A CCIT must be agreed upon to create a strong interlocking network of member states, international organizations and specialized agencies working in unison to counter terrorism. The adoption of a CCIT, through exercising the law-making powers of the General Assembly, is in the interests of all member States and would reinvigorate the multi-lateral and collective dimensions of counter-terrorism efforts. India continues to call upon the world to act as one in denying terrorists, their ideologues and financiers access to arms, funds, means of transportation of their deadly goods, as well as safe havens.

For these overarching goals to be achieved there is also need for a more genuinely inclusive approach to be adopted by the Security Council taking along the larger membership of the General Assembly. While India remains committed to fully cooperating with all existing counter-terrorism mechanisms, as a State with a long experience of dealing with terrorism, we are of the view that better cooperation between the Council and the General Assembly will provide our collective efforts greater
legitimacy and ownership. There are also operational benefits to be achieved from
greater collective pragmatism in tackling terrorism through multilateral mechanisms.
Not the least of these potential benefits are better implementation of resolutions
relating to counter-terrorism, namely UNSCRs 1267, 1373 and 1540, and their
successor resolutions.

However, to reach that stage of pragmatic, goal-based cooperation, we need to
do much more than we have done thus far. It is also unclear whether better
implementation of these resolutions can be secured by “upgrading” their existing
mandates, as in the recent case of the UNSCR 1810, or by working to identify genuine
barriers to better implementation, and promoting a more collaborative system of
extending assistance, utilizing available regional expertise and appropriate technologies.
Implementation of UNSCR 1540, including reporting, remains a national responsibility
on the basis of national legislation, arrangements and regulations. There may also be
merit in an approach that ‘incentivizes’ cooperation rather than the current effort to
continually raise the bar for implementation, by adding newer and more intrusive
reporting obligations, irrespective of whether these are currently described as voluntary
tasks. That apart, however, I also wish to reiterate at this juncture, India’s continuing
emphasis on the need for closer and more comprehensive international cooperation to
root out the phenomenon of illicit activities, such as clandestine proliferation of sensitive
technologies which could contribute to the manufacture of WMDs.

The Security Council should also consider whether its existing procedures need
some overhauling, in particular, with regard to the sanctions regime imposed upon Al-
Qaeda and Taliban operatives, entities and their supporters. While at one level the
effort to improve review and delisting modalities are to be welcomed, there is also a
need for the Council to examine its own practice of selectively evaluating the provision
of information that it seeks from Member States, which is sometimes not utilized for
unrelated and procedural reasons.

With regard to the Counter Terrorism Committee (CTC) and the CTED, we are
encouraged by the positive efforts of the dynamic new Executive Director. Greater
dialogue and consultation with all member States, and better operational coordination
with the CTITF is the correct way forward for a mechanism that eventually has a larger
responsibility to the entire membership of the UN. Ultimately, we will collectively benefit
from the furtherance of the ongoing process of making the CTED a completely
professional, apolitical body that goes beyond analysis of reports. However, the CTED
can only transcend the minutiae of examining reports and PIAs once it is no longer
perceived as a largely political body, but as an apolitical, professional organization.

In conclusion, Mr. President, I would venture the following suggestions:

- Better coordination between the various arms of the Council’s counter-terrorism
  mechanism must begin at home; in other words, inter-related aspects of the
work of the 1267 Committee, the 1540 Committee and the CTC should be dovetailed with those of the CTITF. These tasks should also be more closely linked with the core tasks of UNODC, Interpol, ICAO, IMO and others.

- While supporting the greater emphasis on the extension of technical assistance bilaterally, regionally and internationally, we should keep in mind the primary task of ensuring the fullest implementation of the relevant UNSCRs, before we take the process forward to more technical and potentially intrusive areas of implementation that may add to the sense of report fatigue among many member states.

- India remains willing to provide all assistance in the larger effort to counter the threat of terrorism. Our commitment to do so is already on record, in India’s Fifth Report submitted to the CTC in March 2007; and we are willing to share information with other relevant UN mechanisms that work in these fields. Such assistance can be provided by India bilaterally or multilaterally, especially to countries that are themselves not directly threatened by terrorism, but whose participation is vital to the success of the larger international effort.

Mr President,

Our comments here today are in the spirit of pressing for further forward movement in bringing existing mechanisms to deal with terrorism closer together in operational terms. We welcome more efforts to use such open dialogues as a mechanism to build closer cooperation within the international system. Therefore we look forward to working in a pragmatic manner to alter the regrettable perception outside these walls that the UN’s role in combating terrorism is limited to statements and speeches, but not to concrete measures. For this, we must not only work to foster better institutional cooperation and “jointedness” within the international system, we must also focus on implementing goals that can be achieved before mandating new and potentially challenging new commitments.

I thank you Mr. President.