

**SAARC Ministerial Declaration on
Cooperation in Combating Terrorism**

We, the Foreign Ministers of Member States of SAARC, are deeply concerned about the continuing scourge of terrorism afflicting the region which has caused extensive social disharmony, loss of human life, destruction and damage to property.

Terrorism poses a serious threat to peace and cooperation, and friendly and good neighbourly relations. It jeopardises the sovereignty and the territorial integrity of States, while constituting a serious violation of fundamental human rights.

We renew our commitment to strengthening comprehensive region-wide cooperation among SAARC Member States to combat and eliminate all forms and manifestations of terrorism and in this context affirm the need to reinforce further the regional legal regime and instituting pragmatic cooperation to address this issue effectively.

We also recognise that our cooperation shall proceed on the basis of sovereign equality, mutual respect and the principles of non-intervention and non-interference in the internal affairs of Member States consistent with the SAARC Charter.

As we meet in Colombo, at the Thirty-first Session of the Council of Ministers, we solemnly declare and agree to undertake the following measures of cooperation:

1. We reiterate our commitment to implement measures against organising, instigating, facilitating, financing, fund raising, encouraging, tolerating and providing training for or otherwise supporting terrorist activities. We will take appropriate practical measures, administrative and legal, to ensure that our respective territories are not used for terrorist installations or training camps, or for the preparation or organisation of terrorist acts intended to be committed against other States or their citizens.
2. We are committed to ensure the apprehension and prosecution or extradition of persons connected, directly or indirectly, with the commission of terrorist acts, subject to the provisions of our national laws and our international commitments towards this end, to extend cooperation, *inter-alia*, through rendering mutual legal assistance.

3. We resolve to ensure that our nationals or other persons and entities within our territories that commit or attempt to commit, facilitate or participate in the commission of terrorist acts are appropriately punished.
4. We support the promotion of cooperation and exchange of information, consistent with our respective domestic legal and administrative regimes, improve immigration and customs control measures to detect and prevent the international movement of terrorists and their accomplices, and trafficking in arms, narcotics and psychotropic substances or other materials, intended to support terrorism. And in this context, we agree to consider the development of an integrated border management mechanism.
5. We reiterate our commitment to take steps, to share expertise and information about terrorists, their movements, their support facilities and their weapons, bearing in mind in particular, the threats posed to maritime and coastal security and to share information regarding the investigation and prosecution of terrorist acts.
6. We shall contribute to the efforts in the UN General Assembly for the early adoption of the UN draft Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism.
7. We agree to urgently ratify and effectively implement the SAARC Convention on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters, signed at the Fifteenth SAARC Summit in Colombo.
8. We reiterate our commitment to strengthening the SAARC and the global regime against terrorism and decide to establish a High-Level Group of Eminent Experts to review and make proposals to further strengthen SAARC anti-terrorism mechanisms, including for pragmatic cooperation.
