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Manama : Religion should not be a face of terror discrimination, and religion must be delinked from terrorism, was Minister of External Affairs Sushma Swaraj's voice of echo at the Arab-India Cooperation forum meet at Bahraini Capital of Manama. The Minister was addressing the first Ministerial Meeting of the forum, and had audience of equal caliber and governmental strength from varied parts of globe, which included Foreign Ministers from 14 nations, and Secretary General Nabil El Araby, all of who participated in the 22-member Arab League grouping interactive meet on Sunday.

India and the Arab World stood united against terror and chorused on finding out effective means and ways for handling militancy, and called for new strategy to combat terror. Together, India and the Arab League vowed to combat terrorism and called for developing a strategy to 'eliminate' its sources and extremism including its funding as External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj made a strong pitch for delinking religion from terrorism.

Swaraj, while addressing the 1st Ministerial Meeting of Arab-India Cooperation Forum, sternly warned that those who 'silently sponsor' terror groups could end up being used by them — which apparently stood directed to the neighbor in home soil who sponsors proxy war situations, and, Swaraj made this deliberate note of warning to Pakistan, without directly naming it.

Swaraj spoke in these exact words — Those who believe that silent sponsorship of such terrorist groups can bring rewards must realize that they have their own agenda... they are adept at using the benefactor more effectively than the sponsor has used them. Equally, we must delink religion from terror. The only distinction is between those who believe in humanity and those who do not. Terrorists use religion, but inflict harm on people of all faiths.....We in India have citizens who belong to every existing faith. Our Constitution is committed to the fundamental principle of faith-equality: the equality of all faiths not just before the law but also in daily behavior.

The two sides condemned terrorism of all sorts and rejected the approach of associating terrorism with any religion, culture or ethnic group. All voices spoke in support of counter measures and focused on the need for concerted regional and international efforts to combat terrorism. Agreeance was visible for addressing its root causes and a keen cohesiveness was witnessed on developing a strategy to eliminate the sources of terrorism and extremism including its funding, as well as combating organised cross-border crime.

In the 'Manama Declaration', all participating countries affirmed the need to achieve a 'comprehensive and permanent solution' to the Palestine issue and called for implementation of the two-state principle on the establishment of an independent and sovereign Palestine State with East Jerusalem as its capital, living peace side by side with Israel.

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