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Provisional

President: Mr. Zhang Jun/Geng Shuang (China)

Members:

Albania	Ms. Dautllari
Brazil	Mr. De Almeida Filho
France	Mrs. Gasri
Gabon	Mr. Biang
Ghana	Mr. Agyeman
India	Mrs. Kamboj
Ireland	Ms. Moran
Kenya	Mr. Kiboino
Mexico	Mr. De la Fuente Ramírez
Norway	Mr. Kvalheim
Russian Federation	Mr. Nebenzia
United Arab Emirates	Mr. Abushahab
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Ms. Jacobs
United States of America	Mr. DeLaurentis

Agenda

Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts

Fifteenth report of the Secretary-General on the threat posed by ISIL (Da'esh) to international peace and security and the range of United Nations efforts in support of Member States in countering the threat (S/2022/576)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts

Fifteenth report of the Secretary-General on the threat posed by ISIL (Da'esh) to international peace and security and the range of United Nations efforts in support of Member States in countering the threat (S/2022/576)

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following briefers to participate in this meeting: Mr. Vladimir Voronkov, Under-Secretary-General, United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism; Mr. Weixiong Chen, Acting Executive Director, Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate; and Mr. Martin Ewi, Senior Researcher, Institute for Security Studies.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2022/576, which contains the fifteenth report of the Secretary-General on the threat posed by ISIL (Da'esh) to international peace and security and the range of United Nations efforts in support of Member States in countering the threat.

I now give the floor to Mr. Voronkov.

Mr. Voronkov: As we approach the International Day of Remembrance of and Tribute to the Victims of Terrorism on 21 August, allow me to start by expressing my heartfelt condolences to the Government and the people of States Members that have suffered from terrorist attacks. Regrettably, the scourge of terrorism remains a significant threat, affecting the lives of innocent civilians across the globe. My personal thoughts and sympathies go to the survivors and the bereaved.

I thank the Security Council for the opportunity to present the fifteenth report of the Secretary-General (S/2022/576) on the threat posed by Da'esh to international peace and security and the range of United Nations efforts in support of Member

States in countering the threat, as mandated by resolution 2610 (2021).

It seems as though, every time I appear before the Council to present the Secretary-General's report, something big happens just prior to my appearance. This time it is the death of Al-Zawahiri. This past winter (see S/PV.8963), it was the Da'esh attack in Al-Hasakah, and, in August 2021 (see S/PV.8839), it was the Taliban takeover in Afghanistan.

I am pleased that Mr. Chen, Acting Executive Director of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, is joining me to present the report (see S/2022/547) that our office prepared jointly with the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team under the leadership of Mr. Edmund Fitton-Brown. Following the completion of his term, I wish to express my sincere appreciation for Mr Fitton-Brown's dedicated service and constructive collaboration with my Office over the past five years.

Despite its territorial defeat and subsequent losses among its leaders, Da'esh has continued to pose a threat to international peace and security that has been rising ever since the onset of the coronavirus disease pandemic. Da'esh and its affiliates continue to exploit conflict dynamics, governance fragilities and inequality to incite, plan and organize terrorist attacks. Its members continue to exploit pandemic-related restrictions and misuse digital spaces to intensify their efforts to recruit sympathizers and attract resources.

The group has also significantly increased the use of unmanned aerial systems in the past year, including those reported in northern Iraq. Da'esh has managed to do so partially by resorting to a largely decentralized internal structure, which is mentioned in the present report thanks to the information provided by Member States to the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team. That structure is centred around a so-called general directorate of provinces and associated offices and seeks to manage terrorist operations and finances across the globe. Such offices operate not only in Iraq and Syria but also outside the core conflict zone, with the most active ones being reported in Afghanistan, Somalia and the Lake Chad basin. Through that structure, Da'esh leadership incites followers to carry out attacks and retains the ability to direct and maintain control over the flow of funds to affiliates worldwide.

While the existence of such structures may not be surprising, it provides a worrisome reminder that Da'esh has long-term goals and aspirations. Better understanding and continued monitoring of that structure are indispensable for countering and preventing the threat posed by Da'esh. Strengthened international and regional cooperation, including through information-sharing mechanisms, remain crucial in that regard.

The threat posed by Da'esh and its affiliates remains higher in societies affected by conflict. The border between Iraq and Syria remains highly vulnerable, with up to 10,000 fighters estimated to be operating in the area. From there, the group launched a global campaign of enhanced operational activity in April to avenge senior leaders killed in counter-terrorism operations.

In Afghanistan, the number of attacks claimed by or attributed to the local Da'esh affiliate has decreased. However, the number has increased considerably since the Taliban took control last year. Its presence has expanded to the north-eastern and eastern parts of the country.

In Africa, the situation has deteriorated further since the Secretary-General's previous report (S/2022/576), with the expansion of Da'esh in Central, South and West Africa. From Uganda, a Da'esh affiliate has widened its area of operations into the Democratic Republic of the Congo, while another affiliated group, after being knocked out by military action last year, has intensified small-scale attacks in Mozambique's Cabo Delgado province. That expansion also affects countries that had until recently largely been spared from attacks, such as littoral countries in the Gulf of Guinea.

The potential impact of climate-related challenges and global food insecurity are of particular concern in West Africa, notably in the Sahel, where they may exacerbate fragilities and further fuel local conflict dynamics that could catalyse the spread of terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism.

Although their active presence and activity are observed mostly in societies affected by violent conflict, Da'esh and its affiliates also seek to inspire or direct attacks in non-conflict zones to incite fear and project strength. In Europe, Da'esh has called on sympathizers to carry out attacks by exploiting the easing of pandemic-related restrictions and the conflict in Ukraine.

Despite the persistent threat, joint efforts by Member States continue to yield positive results. Da'esh and its affiliates have continued to suffer significant losses in leadership, including the loss of the Da'esh leader in February, as noted in my previous briefing (see S/PV.8963). Moreover, while the Da'esh leadership still manages between \$25 million and \$50 million in assets, that amount is significantly less than the estimates of three years ago. The diversity of sources, both licit and illicit, that are used by Da'esh to finance terrorist activities and exert control over affiliated groups and fighters, underlines the importance of sustained efforts to counter the financing of terrorism. In that regard, I am most pleased that the Financial Action Task Force and the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant joined the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact in April this year.

I also welcome the Government of Iraq's repatriation of more than 2,500 Iraqi nationals who had been stranded in camps and other facilities in the north-east of Syria, as well as the repatriations by Tajikistan and France last month of, respectively, 146 women and 51 children. However, I remain deeply concerned about the fact that the limited progress achieved so far in repatriating foreign terrorist fighters and their family members from those camps is far overshadowed by the number of individuals still facing a precarious and deteriorating situation.

Tens of thousands of individuals, including more than 27,000 children from Iraq and some 60 other countries, remain subject to enormous security challenges and humanitarian hardship, which are further compounded by recent reports of increased violence, including dozens of assassinations. Those individuals, many of whom are children who did not choose to be there, also remain deprived of basic rights and are at the very real risk of radicalization and recruitment.

It is imperative that Member States urgently consider the long-lasting implications of not taking prompt action to address that dangerous situation. I reiterate the Secretary-General's repeated calls for Member States to further their efforts in facilitating the safe, voluntary and dignified repatriation of all individuals who remain stuck in those camps and other facilities. My Office, together with UNICEF, lead the Global Framework for United Nations Support on Syrian Arab Republic and Iraq Third Country National

Returnees, made up of 15 entities organized to support Member States' efforts regarding the accountability, protection, rehabilitation and reintegration of nationals returned from Syria and Iraq. We would welcome contributions to the multi-partner trust fund that allows that work to go forward.

The persistent threat posed by Da'esh, as well as the magnitude of the challenges it presents, underlines the importance of non-military measures to counter terrorism and address its consequences. Resolving the conflicts in which Da'esh and its Al-Qaida forebearer thrive is necessary for creating the conditions to bring about their defeat. However, if we are to rid ourselves of that scourge, we must also address the vulnerabilities, societal grievances and inequality exploited by the group in the first place, and promote and protect human rights and the rule of law.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Mr. Voronkov for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Chen.

Mr. Chen (*spoke in Chinese*): Allow me to begin by thanking the Security Council for the opportunity to brief its members on the fifteenth report of the Secretary-General on the threat posed by Da'esh and the efforts of the United Nations to assist Member States in countering the threat (S/2022/576).

I would also like to thank Under-Secretary-General Voronkov for his overview of the report, as well as both the Office of Counter-Terrorism and the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team for their invaluable collaboration in preparing the report.

The threat posed by Da'esh and its affiliates remains both global and evolving. Despite its recent leadership losses, Da'esh continues to take advantage of conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism to recruit as well as to organize and execute complex attacks. The exploitation of conflict-related fragilities remains at the heart of that strategy, notably in Iraq, the Syrian Arab Republic and across the African continent. The situation in Africa, notably in West and Central Africa and in Mozambique, has become more concerning.

Terrorism does not exist in a vacuum. We face a range of overlapping global challenges that risk complicating our counter-terrorism responses and exacerbating the threat posed by Da'esh and other terrorist groups. As referenced by the Secretary-General in his report (S/2022/576), the connected global food crisis could

act as a further catalyst for the spread of terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism.

The Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED) has continued to implement its mandate in accordance with resolution 2617 (2021), while supporting Member States in their implementation of the relevant Council resolutions. Following two years of virtual and hybrid assessment formats due to the coronavirus disease pandemic, CTED was able to resume its on-site assessment visits on behalf of the Counter-Terrorism Committee this year.

We have also continued to analyse emerging issues, trends and developments and issued several analytical and research products in that regard. Those included a report synthesizing our extensive consultations with African civil society organizations on key trends and developments in relation to Da'esh in Africa; a study on the interrelationship between counter-terrorism frameworks and international humanitarian law; a joint report with the International Peace Institute on the relationship between masculinities and violent extremism conducive to terrorism; and, most recently, a study of the links between the exploitation, trade and trafficking of natural resources and terrorism financing.

CTED, in close coordination and cooperation with the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism and other key partners, has also worked to support a range of capacity-building activities based on the Counter-Terrorism Committee's recommendations.

Enhanced multilateralism, international cooperation and global solidarity are the only way to counter a global terrorist threat such as Da'esh. A comprehensive, coordinated, whole-of-United Nations approach remains crucial to developing and implementing effective counter-terrorism measures. Those strategies and measures must be tailored, age- and gender-sensitive and human-rights compliant. CTED remains committed to assisting the Council, the Committee and Member States in those efforts while accelerating cooperation and collaboration with stakeholders.

In conclusion, I would like to inform the Council of the forthcoming special meeting of the Counter-Terrorism Committee on the use of emerging technologies for counter-terrorism purposes, to be held from 28 to 30 October in New Delhi and Mumbai, India. It is my hope that the event will serve as a forum

to further enhance and strengthen our multilateral and multidimensional counter-terrorism efforts.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Mr. Chen for his briefing.

I am very pleased to note that the Secretariat is able to accommodate a briefing in Chinese.

I now give the floor to Mr. Ewi.

Mr. Ewi: I thank you very much, Mr. President,, for this opportunity to address the Security Council on such an important issue as the threat posed by Da'esh to the international community. On behalf of the Institute for Security Studies, one of the leading think tanks on human security in Africa, I wish to congratulate you and your Government on your dynamic leadership of the Council.

I also join you and other members of the Council in congratulating the Secretary-General on an excellent report (S/2022/576), presented by the Under-Secretary-General for Counter-Terrorism. We generally agree with the analysis contained in the report, which has truly highlighted some of the vexing issues on the continuous threat posed by Da'esh to the international community.

I would, however, like to use the next several minutes of my time to step outside of the frame of the report to offer some perspectives on why the threat posed by Da'esh to Africa is growing day by day and why the continent is not only a hub, but could also well be the future of the caliphate.

The presence of the Islamic State in Africa today is deep and concerning. The group has expanded its influence beyond measure. At least 20 countries in Africa have directly experienced Islamic State activity. More than 20 others are being used for logistics and to mobilize funds and other resources. There are now regional hubs, which have become corridors of instability in Africa.

The Lake Chad basin continues to serve as the group's biggest area of operations; the Sahel, particularly the Liptako-Gourma region, has become ungovernable; and Somalia remains the hotspot for the Horn of Africa. There have been recent attempts to take over Uganda and destabilize the country — although they failed, the threat posed by Da'esh through its affiliate, the Allied Democratic Forces, remains serious. Islamic State Central Africa Province has turned some regions of the

Democratic Republic of the Congo and Mozambique into human slaughterhouses.

As it stands, none of the five geopolitical regions as defined by the African Union has been spared. The use of local affiliates remains the most successful Da'esh model in Africa. But what are the factors that have made Da'esh so successful in Africa? There are several factors responsible but, for the sake of time, I will highlight just a few.

The first is the presence of natural resources. Terrorism in Africa is more or less a battle over Africa's natural resources. That is clearly evident in the strategic locations of terrorist groups in Africa. Da'esh is no exception: those groups are located at borderlands whereby countries intersect and mostly where natural resources can be found. The Secretary-General's report has highlighted the sources of funding for Da'esh. What we are seeing in Africa is that those groups practically have self-financing capabilities, either through the direct extraction of natural resources — especially through illicit artisanal gold mining — or through the use of extensive networks.

I would like to cite a recent report published in May in South Africa by investigative journalists. The report details some of the informal methods and networks used to mobilize huge sums of money. It describes how more than 6 billion rands — about \$400 million — was mobilized through a range of methods, including the use of spaza shops and the hawala system in South Africa to finance Da'esh groups in Mozambique, Kenya, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and elsewhere.

The lingering grievances about global injustices and the lack of political will to deal with the Palestinian problem remains a rallying cry for many young people in Africa. It is the main source of radicalization and why many young people join the Islamic State. Despite the tendency of Western scholars to dismiss the role of poverty, our studies in Africa show irrefutable empirical evidence that many of the young people who have joined Da'esh and other terror groups in Africa have done so because of poverty and unemployment. Da'esh has exploited poor communities for recruitment and support.

The third factor, which serves to highlight this point, is the ability of Da'esh to work with other terror and criminal groups on the continent. We are seeing something that rarely happens elsewhere — collaboration, especially joint operations

between Da'esh and Al-Qaida. The splintering of terror groups that we saw in the post-9/11 era is now being replaced with alliances, amalgamation and regrouping of terror groups, irrespective of their ideological creed. The coming together of Al-Qaida groups under the umbrella of Jama'a Nusrat ul-Islam waal-Muslimin in 2017 marked a new era for jihadist terrorism in Africa. Jama'a Nusrat ul-Islam waal-Muslimin has been able to team up with Da'esh groups, such as the Islamic State in the Greater Sahara, to carry out some of the largest and most gruesome terror attacks in West Africa and the Sahel. The concentration of those attacks in Burkina Faso and Mali illustrate the impact on governance. Boko Haram or the Islamic State West Africa Province has demonstrated the potency of such nexus or cross-fertilization schemes of terror organizations in Africa. The group has benefited enormously, both materially and financially, and in terms of recruitment through support and operational collaboration with herders, bandits, kidnappers and artisanal miners.

The fourth factor is the inconsistency in State responses, or what I call international double standards. That is seen in the upstream-downstream effect. After the declaration of the caliphate in Syria and Iraq, the international community mounted what was referred to as the Global Coalition against Da'esh. Terrorism was driven out from upstream to downstream in Africa. The continent bore the brunt of the activities taking place upstream in Syria and Iraq, but no similar coalition was mounted to defeat Da'esh in Africa or to deal with the threat downstream. In other words, Africa was left to bear the consequences of those who were fleeing Syria and finding safe haven on the continent.

The fifth factor is related to the ailing war on terrorism in Africa. These days, we no longer hear about conferences or new initiatives taken by African countries to fight terrorism, even at the level of the African Union, where such efforts are declining. The momentum that was generated by 9/11 with regard to the fight against terrorism is rapidly declining.

The sixth factor is an approach taken by African countries in response to terrorism, which I refer to as the ostrich approach. It is particularly true in cases of early warning regarding terrorism. In many countries, when terrorism erupts, there is a tendency to ignore it, to not recognize it, to not call it terrorism and to claim that there is nothing happening. We have also seen that even if countries say that something is happening, they

tend to believe that it is a threat that can be eliminated by local means.

But we have all seen the fallacy of the ostrich approach. The lack of early response to early warning about terrorism in Africa is one of the factors that continues to nourish Da'esh and Al-Qaida. Sovereignty is used to shield the threat until it incubates and becomes uncontrollable. Once the threat gets out of hand, the international community is then called upon to help. We are seeing this phenomenon play out in Benin and Togo, which are the latest coastal countries in Africa to experience concentrated attacks carried out by Da'esh and other terror groups. We also saw this phenomenon in Mozambique when terrorism erupted. We saw it in Nigeria, in Cameroon and many other countries, where the threat was misdiagnosed and the responses were also inadequate.

The seventh factor is the overwhelming reliance on narrow-minded militaristic strategies that are not well-equipped. The multiplicity of peace support operations to fight terrorism in Somalia, the Lake Chad basin, the Sahel and now in Mozambique have yet to show concrete results. These strategies have produced untold human suffering and human rights abuses. They also lack the resources and funding they need in order to do effective work. There is a need for military and security strategies, but they must be part of a broader strategy that addresses the root causes of terrorism, especially the political, economic, social and ideological roots of the phenomenon. The marginalization of civil society means that there is no one to speak to those in the communities and no one to hold States accountable.

The eighth factor is the divorce between the fight against transnational organized crime and counter-terrorism in Africa. Despite the increasing linkages and convergence between terrorism and organized crime, those who are fighting them in Africa do not speak to one another. The lack of a political centre for counter-terrorism in Africa has led to fragmented and disjointed responses. In the past, the Organization of African Unity provided a political centre for the anti-colonial struggle, which ultimately was won. We need a similar political centre in the fight against terrorism.

What can the Security Council do? I want to conclude by highlighting that, to defeat Da'esh in Africa, the strategy must extend beyond the group and include its alliances with Al-Qaida and the nexus

with other criminal groups, including bandits, herders, gangs and various organized crime groups.

The Council can mobilize support for counter-terrorism in Africa, particularly equipment and funds for the many ongoing peace support operations in various regions.

The Council would need to be closer and more involved. There is a feeling in Africa that the Security Council, in New York, is too far away. As a result, many Council decisions are not implemented. I believe that situations like the one that escalated in Cabo Delgado merited a visit of the Council to Mozambique to show solidarity and enforce international law. The absence of the Council means that even sanctions are not implemented. Most blacklisted terrorists do not know that they are blacklisted because, apart from the Council, no one else tells them anything. The Council must find a way to ensure that the resolutions that it adopts are communicated to those concerned on the ground, particularly at the community level.

I also believe that the solution lies at the community level, where terrorists obtain support by manipulating the people. The Council must therefore work closely with the African Union and regional economic communities to provide the political centre and generate the necessary momentum for revitalizing the fight against terrorism on the continent.

In conclusion, I believe that the Council can do more to mobilize support for civil society in Africa so that it can be the interlocutors between the Council and the people. To this end, the Council may wish to consider convening a meeting with civil society organizations to empower them and strengthen their role in the implementation of Security Council resolutions.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Mr. Ewi for his briefing. We appreciate his analysis and the information provided, as well as the practical recommendations set forth in his remarks. I believe that all that information is of great value to the Security Council's work.

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements.

Mr. DeLaurentis (United States of America): Thank you, Mr. President, for hosting today's meeting. We thank Under-Secretary-General Voronkov, Acting Executive Director of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate Chen and Mr. Ewi for their

briefings. The United States also thanks Secretary-General Guterres for the combined efforts of the United Nations system and other international organizations that contributed to his useful report (S/2022/576) and to today's briefing.

The Islamic State in Iraq and the Sham (ISIS) and others continue to take advantage of conflict, governance failure, political turmoil, socioeconomic inequalities and grievances to attract followers and resources as well as to incite and organize terrorist attacks. The international community must augment the efforts of vulnerable populations to reject these appeals to violent extremism.

We agree with the Secretary-General that the human tragedy resulting from ISIS' so-called caliphate includes the tens of thousands of foreign nationals, mostly women and children, currently residing in displaced persons camps. The situation is an unacceptable humanitarian human rights and security crisis.

The repatriation of foreign terrorist fighters and their associated family members and their subsequent prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration, as appropriate, is the best way to hold individuals accountable for their crimes. Repatriation also prevents further radicalization to violent extremism and uncontrolled movements of foreign terrorist fighters and their associated family members.

We applaud the efforts of Iraq and other States Members of the United Nations that have repatriated nationals over the last six months. We urge Member States to utilize or contribute to the Global Framework for United Nations Support on Syrian Arab Republic and Iraq Third Country National Returnees. The United States remains ready to support Member States that wish to bring their nationals home.

We are also concerned about the increasing terrorist threat across various areas of Africa outlined in the Secretary-General's assessment. ISIS and Al-Qaida affiliates continue to exploit Africa's long-simmering conflicts to bolster their illicit activities, providing themselves with heightened lethality. ISIS West Africa merits particular focus as the group that has become the largest and one of the most lethal ISIS affiliates outside the core region. The United States continues to provide its African partners critical counter-terrorism assistance to disrupt and degrade ISIS and Al-Qaida affiliates, underscoring that capable law-enforcement

and broader security-service responses are essential to preventing and countering terrorism.

As the Secretary General's report highlights, it is critical that the international community extend the fight to deny safe haven for Al-Qaida and its affiliates to include Afghanistan. As Secretary Blinken recently noted, by hosting and sheltering the leader of Al-Qaida, Ayman Al-Zawahiri, in Kabul, the Taliban grossly violated the Doha agreement and their repeated assurances to the world that they would not allow Afghan territory to be used by terrorists to threaten the security of other countries. In addition to Al-Qaida, ISIS-Khorasan remains a threat and continues to orchestrate sophisticated attacks that target civilians, including vulnerable ethnic and religious minorities.

Finally, as the Secretary General's report correctly notes, effective counter-terrorism requires an understanding of power structures and gendered practices in society. Therefore, references to gender in Council documents related to counter-terrorism are critically important.

The Secretary General's report provides a stark reminder of the evolving ISIS threat and summons all of us to more collaborative, balanced efforts in countering that threat. Moving forward, we must utilize the report to inform what actions we can take to ensure that the Secretary-General's next report on ISIS reflects the fact that our collective pressure is having a greater impact on the group.

Mr. Kvalheim (Norway): I thank Under-Secretary-General Voronkov, Acting Executive Director Chen and Mr. Ewi for their informative briefings today.

We remain concerned that the threat from the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and its affiliates remains high, particularly in conflict zones and that this negative trend continues despite the significant leadership attrition that the group has suffered in recent months. While the group remains territorially defeated in Syria and Iraq, it retains the ability to conduct attacks in that region, and its presence elsewhere continues to grow, particularly in Afghanistan and across Africa.

As the report of the Secretary-General (S/2022/576) reminds us yet again, ISIL sustains itself by deliberately exploiting a range of vulnerabilities, including armed conflict, political instability, economic inequality and human rights abuses, in order to radicalize and attract recruits. Accordingly, it is crucial that counter-terrorism

efforts form part of a broader political strategy, one that responds to this context.

The international community must therefore pay close attention to the potential effects of the current geopolitical climate on underlying drivers of radicalization. Russia's war against Ukraine, following the devastation already wrought by the coronavirus disease pandemic, has further destabilized global supply chains, exacerbating inflation, energy shortages and food insecurity. This is fertile ground for ISIL to further spread its hateful ideology.

Norway takes note of the United Nations support to the counter-terrorism efforts of Member States, as outlined in the Secretary General's report, and we commend the Organization for its comprehensive work in this area, guided by the four pillars of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

However, the report also highlights the need for a more robust monitoring and evaluation framework to better assess the impact of United Nations counter-terrorism activities on the ground. Indeed, there is a tonal discrepancy between the concern that the report details about the current threat posed by ISIL and the confidence with which it describes the United Nations capacity-building measures. A clearer analytical connection between the two is necessary to ensure coherence and demonstrate impact.

To be effective, the counter-terrorism efforts of both Member States and the United Nations should be guided by a preventative, whole-of-society approach that is conflict-sensitive, gender-responsive and human rights-compliant. It is only through such a strategy that addresses the root causes of terrorism in a comprehensive and integrated manner that we will be successful in building true resilience and in defeating ISIL once and for all.

Mrs. Gasri (France) (*spoke in French*): I, in turn, would like to pay tribute to the victims of terrorism as we approach the International Day of Remembrance. I also thank the briefers, and I commend the coordinated work by the Office of Counter-Terrorism and the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, which is essential to ensuring the effectiveness of the United Nations response to terrorism. The involvement of civil society is also essential, and I welcome Mr. Martin Ewi's contribution and his concrete proposals.

The Secretary-General's report (S/2022/576) is clear. The threat from Da'esh is constantly increasing, particularly in Afghanistan and on the African continent. To eliminate that threat, we should maintain intense pressure on the ground militarily. We are determined to wage that battle alongside our regional and international partners within the Global Coalition against Da'esh and within the international coalition for the Sahel. Of course, our response cannot be only in terms of security. We must address the root causes of extremism and terrorism. That means a credible, viable and inclusive political solution in Syria, in line with the provisions of resolution 2254 (2015), and, in Iraq, the country's stabilization and reconstruction.

In Afghanistan, the recent neutralization of the Al-Qaida leader is a success for the fight against terrorism. It is also a confirmation of fears repeatedly expressed in this Chamber for more than a year. The Taliban continue to provide refuge and support to terrorist groups, in particular Al-Qaida, thereby betraying the commitments that they made to the international community and which the Security Council recalled in resolution 2593 (2021).

On the African continent, we are concerned about the expanding activities of the Allied Democratic Forces in Central Africa. France encourages the Office of Counter-Terrorism to continue its assistance efforts to strengthen State capacities, particularly in the Great Lakes region. To combat the terrorist threat in Cabo Delgado in Mozambique, France is committed, within the European Union Military Training Mission, to supporting the Mozambican armed forces. The European Union is considering additional support measures for Rwanda and the Southern African Development Community efforts to stabilize the region. In West Africa, France supports the International Counterterrorism Academy, which has been operating in Côte d'Ivoire since 2019. Nearly 940 trainees from 26 African countries have already been trained since 2019. France has invested €24 million since the donor conference of 12 July; more than €15 million is expected to be added in support of that training. We call on all Member States and the relevant United Nations agencies to support that institution.

Given the terrorist threat, our commitment is based on three priorities.

The first priority is the fight against the financing of terrorism. Given the strong capacity for innovation

of such groups and emerging forms of financing, such as cryptoassets and neobanks, we must be reactive to adapt the framework of our collective action. We call on all States to implement resolution 2462 (2019) and on the United Nations to support capacity-building in that area.

The second priority is to combat the misuse of the Internet by terrorist groups, which use it to disseminate their propaganda. France continues to strengthen the national, European and international responses, in conjunction with the private sector. We just adopted into national law rules that were drawn up with our European partners to enable the rapid removal of terrorist content from the Internet. We are also pleased that the Christchurch Appeal, which we launched with New Zealand, has so far brought together more than 55 States, the European Commission, two international organizations and 14 companies. We will meet in September to discuss the progress made and to study new avenues of action for that Appeal.

Furthermore, we must strengthen the fight against impunity for the crimes committed by Da'esh. In that spirit, together with Sweden, we formed a team to investigate the crimes committed against the Yezidi population in Syria and Iraq. We take this opportunity to reiterate our support for the work of the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant and the International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism. Terrorists must be tried as close as possible to where their crimes were committed, where evidence of their actions can be found and where victims can be granted reparation for the harm done to them. We also support the work of the Global Survivors Fund, established by Dr. Mukwege and Nadia Murad.

In conclusion, I would like to recall the importance that the fight against terrorism be carried out in compliance with international humanitarian law, refugee law and human rights.

Mr. Agyeman (Ghana): At the outset, I would like to thank the delegation of China for organizing this briefing on threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts. We welcome the Secretary-General's report (S/2022/576) on the subject, and we thank Under-Secretary-General Vladimir Voronkov and Acting Executive Director Weixiong Chen for the depth and clarity of their briefings. We also thank

Mr. Martin Ewi for his perspectives from a civil-society background.

The report that we received and information available to us confirm a surge in the incidence of terrorism by 17 per cent in 2021, particularly in Africa, Central and South Asia and the Levant. We are also concerned about the evolution of the Sahel as the epicentre of terrorism and the shift of focus of foreign terrorist groups, such as the Islamic State, towards the region. That has been accompanied by the creation of affiliations with local terrorist groups, which now threaten even coastal West Africa.

As highlighted by the Secretary-General's report and re-echoed by the 2022 Global Terrorism Index, terrorism remains a serious threat, with sub-Saharan Africa alone accounting for 48 per cent of the total global deaths from the menace. Disturbingly, four of the nine countries with the largest incidence of deaths from terrorism were also in sub-Saharan Africa, namely, the Niger, Mali, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Burkina Faso.

We recall the landmark resolution 1373 (2001), on counter-terrorism, which signalled the commitment to a global approach to addressing the menace of terrorism. While some progress has been made since the establishment of the Counter-Terrorism Committee, through the legal, operational and institutional responses developed to counter the threat of terrorism, considerable gaps still remain to be covered. That remains the case especially in response to terrorism in new situations, such as in Africa.

As terrorist groups have lost ground in other parts of the world, they have made common cause with local groups in Africa, taking advantage of insecurities caused by climate change, including the displacement of whole communities, religious tensions, weak development resilience, the spillover of militants and arms from conflicts and the absence of State presence in large areas of regions, to radicalize and recruit vulnerable individuals. As their territorial gains have expanded, so have their ambitions. As their networks have become more agile and globally connected, with an adapted leadership and disparate operational structures, it has become increasingly difficult to counter those terrorist organizations. The attendant impact on national economies and governance and the humanitarian impact on local populations should be of great concern to the world.

Taking into account the dynamics of the threat posed to international peace and security by terrorism, we would make the following four points.

First, there is an urgent need for a reconceptualization of how the Security Council perceives the threat posed to international peace and security by terrorism. While, in the past, coordinated law enforcement action had proved adequate in countering terrorist organizations, today the scope and operations of terrorist groups require global actions that are intelligence-led and kinetic, balanced by a focus on sustainable peace. Law enforcement operations alone are no longer effective. The case for complimentary military capabilities against terrorist groups is clear, when one looks at conflict settings where national capacity for counter-terrorism has proven itself to be ineffectual, such as, for example, in Somalia, northern Mozambique, the Sahel, north-east Nigeria and the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The effects of terrorism are not national but global, and its planning, financing and organization transcend national borders. It is therefore important that, while taking into account the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, the Council find better ways of interlocking its decisions with regional efforts at countering terrorism in the field. One consideration would be for the Council to act in a unified manner whenever it deals with terrorist organizations and act against all terrorist groups, without discrimination. There is no such thing as good or bad terrorists; rather all terrorists are bad. And we must condemn terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

Secondly, in considering the ascendancy of terrorist threats in regions where conflicts are on the rise and the global networks that they operate, the Council must extend support for intraregional and cross-regional intelligence-sharing efforts to counter cross-border collaboration by terrorist groups. We urge the Council to therefore transition support for home-grown counter-terrorism mechanisms, such as the African Union's normative frameworks for preventing and combating terrorism, as well as the counter-terrorism strategy of Economic Community of West African States, the Accra Initiative and ongoing efforts to deploy regional counter-insurgency forces against terrorist and extremist groups. We are well aware of the stretched capacity of peacekeeping and must embrace the effective complementarity that regional forces can offer in addressing the threats caused by terrorist acts.

Such support should also be anchored on technical assistance for enhancing the national capacities of developing countries, including in the area of emerging technologies. In that regard, we encourage the continuing cooperation and capacity-building support of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, regional groups and friendly countries for Member States that have a need to strengthen their security and counter-terrorism strategies.

Thirdly, while we note the interplay between terrorist financing and transnational organized crime, we also note the continuing financing of terrorist groups by foreign elements. In that context, we reiterate the declaration of the sixteenth Extraordinary Session of the Assembly of the African Union, held in Malabo, calling, “upon all external actors to cease their support to terrorist groups in the Continent.”

In strengthening the fight against local and external financing of terrorism, we urge for genuine partnerships with regional institutions, such as the Intergovernmental Action Group against Money-Laundering in West Africa, which have been established to help fight against money-laundering in the region and break the links between the means and the capability to commit terrorist acts.

Sustaining and enhancing such regional initiatives is critical to help curtail the increasing use of cryptocurrency as a means of choice for financing terrorist activities. We also welcome the call for greater attention to be paid to the growing link between terrorists on land and pirates at sea, particularly in the Gulf of Guinea, as we work collaboratively to dry out their sources of funding and check any expansion of their operations. In that regard, in line with resolution 2634 (2022), on maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea, we look forward to the report of the Secretary-General in October and hope that the report, when released, will help identify ways to address the threat.

Fourthly, there is the need to promote a multidimensional and proactive approach to preventing and combating terrorism, including by empowering youth, reinforcing peace education and dedicating greater attention to, and investment in, addressing the root causes of terrorism, especially the governance and development deficits, as well as the improvement of the socioeconomic conditions of the people.

As the coronavirus disease pandemic and the ongoing aggression against Ukraine have degraded the fiscal capacity of many developing countries to address the growing demands of their populations, it is important that global support be enhanced to undercut the ideologies of violent extremist groups that exploit long-standing vulnerabilities. We urge appropriate global responses, such as debt cancellation and the restructuring of debt repayment, to enable the countries concerned to build back better and adequately overcome their security challenges.

In conclusion, it is important to underscore that terrorism constitutes an attack not only on innocent lives. It represents a full onslaught on our shared values and sense of justice and the inherent rights and dignity of every person. Terrorism, in essence, is an affront to humankind, and no country is immune. I therefore reiterate Ghana’s commitment to the objective of enhancing all available tools for counter-terrorism at the multilateral and regional levels and welcome efforts to effectively harness a robust response in a manner that helps to counter that menace.

Mr. Biang (Gabon) (*spoke in French*): I thank Mr. Vladimir Voronkov of the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism, Mr. Weixiong Chen of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate and Mr. Martin Ewi for their informative contributions, which provide us with an update on the operational activities carried out by Da’esh in an international context characterized by many global challenges.

We are deeply concerned about the scope of the terrorist threat, especially in Africa. In launching their terrorist activities by all means possible, including through the use of the Internet, in every corner of the world, especially in conflict areas, terrorist groups, including Da’esh, are primarily trying to destabilize nations by creating a climate of fear. My country’s position on this issue is unequivocal: Gabon opposes all terrorist ideologies and acts in all their forms. It is self-evident that no cause, ideology or religion can be used to justify appalling terrorist acts.

Gabon welcomes the joint efforts that have weakened the Da’esh movement. However, my country regrets that, since the most recent report of the Secretary-General (S/2022/576), the threat posed by the terrorist group and its affiliates remains high. There is a fear that the myriad challenges exacerbated by the impact of the coronavirus disease, which has plunged

many countries into economic recession, will weaken our ability to confront this scourge.

In that regard, the Secretary-General's report notes the correlation between the structural difficulties that certain countries are undergoing, particularly in Africa, in the security, social and economic areas and the gradual and dangerous increase in Da'esh's influence and activities. We must also be wary that Da'esh will try to take advantage of the current cracks in the international order to further entrench itself and spread its influence, above all wherever it can find fertile ground, including in conflict areas.

What continues to amaze us is the movement's ability to remain active and reinvent itself, including through its ability to channel considerable sums of money through criminal networks, thereby enabling it to carry out its recruitment efforts and contemplate realizing its sinister goals. In that regard, Da'esh's ability to obtain and deploy sensitive and highly lethal weapons is concerning. Effectively combating terrorism demands a peaceful world order and international solidarity. That is a fundamental requirement.

For, while the terrorist threat remains global, the fact is that terrorist groups will continue to act opportunistically and try to establish themselves in visibly fragile regions. The counter-terrorism architecture must remain dynamic and matched by exemplary international cooperation, especially in the area of information-sharing. It is imperative to continue working towards strengthening and improving the effectiveness of the international response through the broadened and more effective application of existing international tools in compliance with the norms established to combat terrorism, of which there are many and which are regularly updated as the threat evolves.

As we are aware that, in combating terrorism, it takes only one weak link to weaken the international response as a whole, we must also strengthen the capacities of, and technical assistance to, the most vulnerable States. While the lack of commitment may be owing to insufficient political will, it also depends to a large extent on the financial, human and technical means available to States. The link between development and terrorism continues to be extremely relevant today, especially in fragile States, which are often facing political and security crises, poverty and the absence of prospects for young people, thereby

creating an environment conducive to the emergence of terrorist networks.

An effective fight against terrorism requires a holistic approach and an appropriate way to address the socioeconomic challenges facing the States affected, along with particular attention to issues of social justice and the improvement of living standards for their populations. That approach requires greater international solidarity. It is also important to strengthen the fight against transnational trafficking, which is used to finance terrorism. It is clear that given the proven links between the financing of terrorism and organized crime that can be seen in the various forms of illicit trade conducted by terrorist organizations, the international community should maintain and strengthen its efforts to combat such trafficking.

The issue of the return and resettlement of foreign fighters represents a new terrorism risk and is a real source of concern in Africa. It is fuelled by the capacity of terrorist organizations to organize attacks from afar, outside the areas where they are based.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate my country's support for the mandates of the various counter-terrorism bodies. We also welcome the spirit of unity demonstrated by the Council in the fight against terrorism. We must continue to build on our achievements and not allow divergent views to make us lose sight of the ultimate goal, which is eliminating the terrorist threat in whatever form it may take and wherever it may be in the world, especially in Africa, where the threat is looming with renewed urgency.

Mr. De Almeida Filho (Brazil): I would like to thank the Chinese presidency for organizing today's timely briefing. I also want to thank Mr. Voronkov, Under-Secretary-General for Counter-Terrorism, Mr. Chen, Acting Executive Director of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, and Mr. Ewi, Senior Researcher at the Institute for Security Studies, for their detailed and comprehensive briefings.

On one hand, the Secretary-General's report (S/2022/576) shows that the threat of terrorism is higher in conflict-affected settings, reminding us that terrorism and armed conflict mutually reinforce each other. That overlap can be addressed only by comprehensive strategies, which must take into account the root causes of both conflict and the radicalization that is conducive to terrorism. On the other hand, the report illustrates how terrorist groups may seek to resort to attacks

outside conflict zones, with a view to attracting greater attention and support. To fight terrorism effectively, we must also understand why some people are vulnerable to terrorist ideology.

The situation of foreign terrorist fighters and their family members in detention camps in the Syrian Arab Republic remains worrisome. The humanitarian and human rights implications affect international security, hinder deradicalization initiatives and risk feeding into terrorist narratives. Respect for international human rights, international humanitarian law and refugee law constitutes not only a legal and moral obligation but is the core of any strategy that aspires to succeed in combating terrorism. Radicalization in prisons and prison-based recruitment are key drivers of the threat, and precarious detention conditions only compound such tragic situations. The prospect of safe, voluntary and dignified repatriation for such individuals, particularly women and children, may save them from violent extremism. The fate of children in the families of foreign terrorist fighters is particularly worrying. They are victims, not criminals, and the spectre of statelessness only worsens their vulnerability.

Social exclusion, youth unemployment, xenophobia, discrimination and prejudice lie at the heart of terrorism. It is not a surprise, then, that the report cites examples of how Da'esh manages to swell its ranks by offering better pay to people in need. Terrorist narratives are more likely to attract people who feel alienated and dispossessed and are looking for a sense of purpose and means of survival. Furthermore, as the Secretary-General pointed out, food insecurity may exacerbate existing fragilities and catalyse the spread of terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism. It is therefore imperative that counter-terrorism activities address social, humanitarian and security concerns simultaneously. The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy provides important guidance in that respect. Providing support for the survivors of terrorism and their families must also be at the centre of any counter-terrorism policy. Brazil looks forward to the Global Congress of Victims of Terrorism, scheduled to take place in September. The international community must take advantage of this opportunity to evaluate how to provide better assistance to the victims of terrorism, uphold their rights and fulfil their needs.

It should be emphasized that any counter-terrorism action must be carried out within the strict limits of international law, including the Charter of the United

Nations, international human rights law, international humanitarian law and international refugee law. When the rule of law does not prevail, distrust of institutions prospers. Violent extremism conducive to terrorism may find a friendly environment when counter-terrorism fails in its ultimate goal of protecting people's lives and fundamental rights. Despite all of the Security Council resolutions with binding obligations on counter-terrorism, there is still no agreement on the exact parameters of what constitutes terrorism. I want to reiterate that the Security Council should not let a lack of clarity on issues with criminal repercussions be the norm in its work, nor should it circumvent due process when designating new terrorist individuals or entities. It is of paramount importance that decisions on listing terrorist individuals and entities be based on solid evidence.

Brazil is adamant in its condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and is alarmed by the continuing threat posed by Da'esh and its affiliates. Our Constitution enshrines the repudiation of terrorism as a guiding principle of our foreign policy. The international community must not waver in its resolve to counter terrorism, in the light of the undeniably serious risks that it entails for the maintenance of international peace and security.

Mr. Abushahab (United Arab Emirates): I thank Under-Secretary-General Voronkov and Acting Executive Director Chen for their valuable briefings. I also thank Mr. Ewi for his insights.

Despite the gains made in the elimination of the leadership of Da'esh, the transnational threat that the group and its affiliates pose to international peace and security is still growing, as the most recent report of the Secretary-General states (S/2022/576). That underscores the continued need for the Global Coalition Against Da'esh to maintain pressure on the terrorist group and ensure its enduring defeat.

It is also important to remain cognizant of the terrorist threat that goes beyond Da'esh. Our fight against Al-Qaida remains a global priority, and as the organization enters a leadership vacuum following the death of Ayman Al-Zawahiri, it is vital that the international community maintain its momentum in the fight. It is critical that the Security Council consider pragmatic measures to effectively address the transnational threat posed by terrorist groups around the world. Bearing that in mind, the United

Arab Emirates would like to emphasize the following key points.

First, technology has the potential to considerably improve the quality of people's lives. However, it can also be a double-edged sword. Its rapid evolution and wide commercial availability challenge Member States' efforts to prevent its misuse by terrorist groups. Still, emerging technologies have tremendous potential to aid in efforts to prevent, counter and address terrorism. For instance, we have seen the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh employ artificial intelligence to analyse massive amounts of data in support of the prosecution of Da'esh members.

As underlined in the latest report of the Secretary-General, Da'esh has been able to substantially increase its use of remotely piloted aircraft systems acquired through a variety of means, including front companies and the conversion of commercial drones to lethal use. It is imperative that the international community take serious steps to address the acquisition of drones and their components by terrorist groups, including Da'esh, Al-Shabaab and the Houthis. Key gaps in the existing international framework must also be identified and addressed, while being mindful of the essential role that autonomous and remotely operated systems play in counter-terrorism efforts.

Secondly, we would like to take this opportunity to focus on the exploitation of Islam by terrorist groups to justify their acts of violence and hate through self-proclaimed Islamic appellations. We must not permit Da'esh and other groups to hijack a religion of tolerance and give credence to their pretences. I want to reiterate that there is nothing Islamic about terrorism. We therefore call on Member States and the United Nations system to put an end to the use of the words "Islamic State" in their references to Da'esh and to apply the same principles to prevent the exploitation of religion by other terrorist groups.

Thirdly, as an urgent priority, the Council should focus on preventing the emergence of the next generation of terrorists and extremists. As an example, at Al-Hol camp more than 25,000 children are potentially at risk of radicalization. Genuine efforts must be made to give those children hope for a more peaceful and prosperous future. In that regard, we appreciate the important work carried out by the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism, the Counter-Terrorism

Committee Executive Directorate and other relevant United Nations entities in support of gender-responsive prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration measures that also address the specific needs of children.

Finally, it is essential that the Council use all its available tools and instruments in addressing the gaps and emerging challenges in the current counter-terrorism architecture. That includes considering practical measures against all individuals, groups or entities involved in or associated with terrorist activities. Terrorism anywhere affects the security of everyone, everywhere. We must leverage the current momentum and double down on efforts to eliminate Da'esh and its affiliates and other terrorist groups. The international community must seize this opportunity and act now.

Ms. Jacobs (United Kingdom): I would like to thank Under-Secretary-General Voronkov, Acting Executive Director Chen and Mr. Ewi for their informative briefings.

We remain indebted to the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team, the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism and the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate for their important work in analysing the ever-changing terrorist threat. We heard today how Da'esh continues to pose a significant threat to global stability. Counter-terrorism pressure has constrained the group over the past few years, but the gains have been vulnerable and uneven, with the group still able to expand in sub-Saharan Africa in particular, as Mr. Ewi outlined today. Recent events in Afghanistan have demonstrated the very real security challenges that we face. Da'esh-Khorasan continues to target innocent Afghans, particularly minority communities, while Al-Qaida has caused the suffering of thousands. We all have a shared interest in using every lever at our disposal to counter Al-Qaida, Da'esh and other terrorist groups in Afghanistan.

Despite its territorial defeat and the recent successful operations against its leadership, Da'esh remain a serious threat in Iraq and Syria, its strategic heartland. That demonstrates the continuing importance of the Global Coalition against Da'esh and the need to work together to ensure Da'esh's lasting global defeat. The United Kingdom hosts the Global Coalition's counter-Da'esh communications cell, which is tackling Da'esh's propaganda and its destructive and hateful messages. In the month in which we mark the eighth anniversary

of Da'esh's crimes against the Yazidi community, the United Kingdom also underlines its support for the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh and for international efforts to bring the perpetrators of Da'esh violence to justice.

We continue to support the fight against Da'esh as it expands to new theatres. As we heard today, Da'esh's African affiliates continue to grow and account for an ever-increasing proportion of the violence for which Da'esh claims responsibility. Interconnectivity between branches also represents a worrying trend and amplifies the threat that they pose. Da'esh is opportunistic and will continue to take advantage of pre-existing grievances and target those most susceptible to joining their cause — the young, the marginalized and the disenfranchised. Hard security interventions will therefore only take us so far. We must work to build resilience within communities and in partnership with civil society against terrorist propaganda and other influencing efforts.

Finally, when countering terrorism, we must all ensure that we protect and promote human rights, fundamental freedoms and the rule of law through a gender-sensitive approach if our collective efforts are to be truly effective.

Mr. Kiboino (Kenya): I thank the Chinese presidency for convening this meeting. I also thank Under-Secretary-General Voronkov and Acting Executive Director Chen for their briefings, as well as Mr. Ewi for his insights, perspectives and recommendations.

We commend the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team, the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT) and the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact for their collaborative efforts in compiling the fifteenth report on the threat posed to international peace and security by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (S/2022/576). We also commend the continued efforts of the United Nations counter-terrorism entities in supporting Member States in countering the threat of terrorism globally.

The ongoing military campaigns and other strategies to weaken the operational capabilities of Da'esh's core, as well as its affiliates and networks globally, have shown that they can be effective. However, the group has shown the ability to adapt and

remain resilient by spreading its violent networks across the world, especially on the African continent. Kenya is particularly concerned about the fact that Da'esh continues to diversify its revenue streams, enabling it to sustainably recruit and radicalize, spread and manage networks, finance foreign fighters and plan and execute complex attacks in several regions of the continent. In the Sahel and in parts of West and Central Africa, the group seeks to exploit fragilities and conflict situations to expand its territory, thereby threatening the security of the region. In the Horn of Africa, the Al-Qaida affiliate terrorist group Al-Shabaab, based in Somalia, remains dominant in its transnational activities. Several countries, including my own, Kenya, have suffered the senseless atrocities of that terrorist group. Al-Shabaab's recent brazen attack in south-east Ethiopia shows its opportunistic determination to continue spreading its dangerous ideology across borders.

We are also deeply disturbed by the spate of violence inflicted by Da'esh and its affiliates on aid workers and security agencies, as well as horrifying atrocities against innocent civilians. Against that backdrop, I would like to highlight five measures that we consider necessary to the efforts to counter the threat posed by Da'esh to international peace and security in Africa and globally.

First, there is a need for a surge in capacity-building initiatives and sustained collaboration in order to address the conditions conducive to the uptick in terrorism and violent extremism. Such initiatives should be based on especially designed counter-terrorism programmes that support the specific needs of countries, particularly those in conflict or emerging from it. Our priority in that regard should be to bolster State institutions, including on border management and law enforcement, with a view to enhancing resilience to terrorist activities and taking back territory controlled by terrorist groups.

Secondly, we encourage incorporating vulnerable groups and victims of terrorism in the fight against the scourge. That will enhance the effectiveness of reintegration tools such as psychological counselling, training programmes and the provision of skills needed to ensure the successful self-employment of former combatants.

Thirdly, there is a need for enhanced counter-terrorism partnerships and collaboration between UNOCT regional offices and the countries of the region through counter-terrorism narratives and sustained

engagement in implementing programmes and projects that mitigate against the spread of the threat.

Fourthly, terrorist groups continue to engage in illegal taxation and ransom of, and illegal trade in, natural resources and contraband in order to build revenue bases. We call for strengthened cooperation, particularly among the States of the region, to roll out strategies that seek to disrupt and combat cross-border illicit financial flows that are exploited by terrorist groups for revenue purposes.

Fifthly, terrorist groups should be clear that there is a heavy price to pay for their actions. In that regard, the Security Council must deploy all its counter-terrorism tools, including sanction regimes on all terrorist groups, entities and individuals, in equal measure, and avoid double standards.

In conclusion, I reaffirm Kenya's unreserved commitment to the fight against terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

Mr. Nebenzia (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We thank Under-Secretary-General Vladimir Voronkov and Mr. Weixiong Chen, Acting Executive Director of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, for their detailed analysis of the fight against the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). We also followed the remarks by Mr. Martin Ewi with interest.

We share many of the assessments contained in the Secretary-General's report (S/2022/576) on the threat posed by ISIL. On our part, we would like to make several points.

Russia is on the front line of the fight against terrorism. Having passed through the challenges of the 1990s, we have accrued vast experience. Some of the situations we lived through were difficult, but it gave us an opportunity to successfully counter contemporary threats. We take our obligations very seriously, and we intend to keep assisting States in combating international terrorism, including through financial contributions to the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and regional specialized mechanisms. We will continue developing channels of multilateral and bilateral cooperation, but only with those who truly intend to fight terrorists and not cozy up to them or even sponsor them.

We need to eliminate the remaining strongholds of international terrorism in Syria and put an end to the presence of ISIL and other terrorist groups on Syrian soil. At the moment, they are entrenched in areas not controlled by the Syrian Government. As recently as 4 August, when patrolling the skies above Syria, crews of Russian Air and Space Forces identified and eliminated a group of terrorists from Liwa Shuhada Al-Qaryatayn. That terrorist group is based in the Al-Tanf area, which is under the control of the United States military. The withdrawal of American occupying forces from Syrian territory would mean the swift and irreversible elimination of the ongoing terrorist presence in that long-suffering country, as well as that of terrorists bases in neighbouring States.

In the Council, when discussing the Secretary-General's reports on threats posed by ISIL, we have repeatedly raised the need to prevent weapons from falling into the hands of terrorists. We note that the latest report provides updates on that matter. In particular, it says that some terrorist and radical groups have called on their affiliates to use the events in Ukraine to access easily available weapons, which are being delivered unchecked to Kyiv from Western States. In that context, the report notes the growing threat of attacks from lone-wolf terrorists in Europe.

We believe that we need to delve into this topic today. Ukraine is now joining the ranks of Syria, Iraq, Libya and Afghanistan. Ukraine is receiving a great many Western weapons, ammunition and dual-use goods. Back in the day, the flow of Western arms into Iraq and the use of terrorists for geopolitical purposes led to the creation of ISIL. Arms deliveries to Libya caused the terrorist threat to spread across most of Africa. In Syria, in order to overthrow a legitimate Government, the West supported and gave weapons to ideologically motivated terrorists, calling them moderate freedom fighters.

In the Middle East, North Africa and Afghanistan, the United States and its satellites fuelled opposition forces that either quickly became terrorists or started to maintain close ties with them. In Ukraine, there is direct support and training for nationalist and neo-Nazi groups. In addition, just as terrorists use the conflicts in Afghanistan, the Balkans, Libya, Iraq and Syria to exchange tactical know-how and reinforce transnational networks, neo-Nazis and white supremacists are using Ukraine as a test battlefield. And Western States are shamelessly enabling this in many ways.

We should also mention double standards. In 2021, the United States Congress made another attempt to include the notorious Ukrainian Azov Battalion on its list of terrorist organizations. Earlier, in 2015, the United States House of Representatives made amendments to the draft Department of Defense Appropriations Act in order to prevent the use of the military budget to train the Azov Battalion. The Congress designated this group as a Ukrainian paramilitary neo-Nazi group. In 2018, the House of Representatives voted to ensure that “none of the funds made available by the Act may be used to provide arms, training or other assistance to the Azov Battalion.”

But after Russia started its special military operation, this bloodthirsty ideological group suddenly became the heroes of Mariupol, and the geopolitical gains of the United States authorities prevailed over the real fight against terrorism and various manifestations of extremism.

In Russia, the Azov Battalion is listed as a terrorist organization, and we have many reasons for that. Members of this group who surrendered to the Russian side have given information to that end. It is clear that this is why the Kyiv regime launched a precise strike targeting its former military elite in a detention facility in Yelenovka.

There is another parallel between events in the Middle East, North Africa and Afghanistan and what is happening in Ukraine. Part of the mercenaries, neo-Nazis, extremists and white supremacists who rushed to Ukraine from across the Western world, if they survive, will gain combat experience and then return to their countries of origin or third countries, just as foreign terrorist fighters did after fighting for ISIL. Something similar happened when the remaining bandits from Chechnya fled to Europe as political refugees and then later carried out terrorist acts in the countries where they were granted asylum. If anyone doubts this thesis, they can consult the numerous publications of specialized experts in Western sources.

In conclusion, let me say a few words about terrorist activity in Afghanistan. We heard American representatives claim to have eliminated Al-Qaida’s leader, Ayman Al-Zawahiri. That is remarkable news, but it has at least two sides. On the one hand, if confirmed, this is an indisputable success of American special services. On the other hand, it makes us doubt the veracity of the ostentatious claims made by the

United States Administration approximately one year ago that the American military had left Afghanistan after having successfully met their counter-terrorism objectives. After 20 years of the presence of United States and NATO forces, the situation in Afghanistan is teetering on the brink of humanitarian disaster, and ISIL terrorist attacks continue to multiply.

Ms. Moran (Ireland): I also want to thank Under-Secretary-General Voronkov, Acting Executive Director Chen and Mr. Ewi for their very informative briefings this morning.

In my remarks, I will focus on the issue at hand. I think the report of the Secretary-General (S/2022/576) is unambiguous: the threat to international peace and security posed by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and its affiliates continues to rise. ISIL’s attack on Al-Sina’a prison in Syria earlier this year provided a stark reminder that the group retains the capacity to mount high-profile attacks both there and in Iraq.

We also share the concerns expressed by the Secretary-General and Mr. Ewi in the Chamber today, with regard to the deteriorating situation on the African continent. The Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team’s assessment that two of ISIL’s three most active regional networks are now located in Africa is very worrying. I want to thank Mr. Ewi for his very informative briefing on the rationale for the growth of ISIL affiliates in Africa. It is something that we cannot ignore, and the root causes and drivers must be addressed.

Turning to Afghanistan, the attacks claimed by ISIL-Khorasan (ISIL-K) continue. There were three attacks in Kabul over the past week. One of those attacks killed and wounded women and children at a Shiite mosque. ISIL-K’s presence in the east and north of the country has also grown, and the geographical spread of its activity has widened.

Ireland condemns all attacks perpetrated by ISIL and its affiliates, including the targeting of women and children and the Hazara community in Afghanistan.

Key to tackling the global terrorist threat is addressing its complex, varied and context-specific drivers. In this regard, we share the Secretary-General’s concerns that global food insecurity in West Africa, particularly the Sahel, may exacerbate fragilities and fuel local conflict dynamics that catalyse the

spread of violent extremism and terrorism. Effective responses to countering and preventing terrorism therefore demand comprehensive and whole-of-society approaches that address underlying grievances that increase vulnerability to radicalization. Linked to this preventive approach, we also echo Mr. Ewi's remarks with regard to an early-warning system for terrorism in Africa.

As the Secretary-General points out, respect for human rights and respect for the rule of law are critical components of effective counter-terrorism responses. Too often, however, counter-terrorism measures are misused to crack down on civil society and repress human rights and freedoms, which are protected under international law. And too often, accountability for ISIL crimes, including sexual and gender-based violence, is lacking. In this regard, victims and survivors are being let down.

We commend the efforts of Member States and the United Nations, in particular those of the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant, in ensuring that perpetrators of ISIL's crimes are brought to justice. Open civic space, the protection of human rights, the safeguarding of humanitarian action and effective gender-responsive counter-terrorism responses are all mutually reinforcing objectives.

We applaud both the Office of Counter-Terrorism and Spain for Under-Secretary-General Voronkov's initiative in organizing the recent Malaga conference, the first international conference dedicated to civil society and human rights in counter-terrorism. We look forward to action on the many positive proposals advanced at the conference, including those recommended by civil society.

We also understand that the Secretary-General is preparing his report on ways to enhance human rights and gender considerations in the counter-terrorism efforts of the United Nations system. Ireland encourages broad consultation with States Members of the United Nations, with United Nations Global Compact entities and with civil society in this regard.

Ireland consistently highlights the importance of a gender-responsive approach across all aspects of the Security Council's agenda, which includes the full, equal and meaningful participation of women in counter-terrorism processes, as well as recognition of

the impact of structural gender inequality. We want to see more consistent and comprehensive evidence as to how gender considerations inform the United Nations counter-terrorism work. Ireland looks forward to further discussion of this issue at the Counter-Terrorism Committee's first-ever dedicated briefing on gender later this year.

We would also like to say to Acting Executive Director Chen that we particularly welcome the work of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate with the International Peace Institute in examining how violent extremist groups exploit notions of violent masculinities, and we encourage the Council to give greater attention to this issue.

In concluding, allow me to state once again Ireland's resolute commitment to working with everyone around this table to prevent and counter terrorism in full and to respect our duties and obligations under international law.

Ms. Dautllari (Albania): I thank Under-Secretary-General Voronkov and Acting Executive Director Chen for their briefings and for the work they are doing to coordinate United Nations efforts in this field. We also welcome the civil society briefer, in particular for sharing information on Africa.

We notice from the report of the Secretary-General (S/2022/576) that the threat posed by Da'esh and its affiliates continued to rise in the first half of 2022. Accordingly, we are concerned about its activities in Africa.

But Africa is not the only place that is of concern. Although on many occasions we have expressed the importance of preventing Afghanistan from becoming a haven for terrorism, Da'esh and its affiliate networks are, according to the Secretary-General's report, quite active in Afghanistan, which goes against the Doha agreement. We are deeply worried that Da'esh remains a persistent threat in Iraq and Syria, with its ability to organize complex attacks. In addition, radicalization in prisons, camps and detainee centres remains a challenge. That is why repatriation is important.

We know that repatriation is a very complex process. It needs to reflect an understanding of security considerations, but we also need to learn from one another and exchange best practices in order to manage repatriation effectively. It is in the spirit of that that Albania and other countries in the Western Balkans

have approached this humanitarian problem. Albania has already repatriated dozens of women and children from Syrian and Iraqi camps, with the most recent successful operation taking place just a month ago. We also echo the Secretary-General's call in this regard.

At the same time, we should address to a greater extent the issue of preventing terrorism and countering the terrorism narrative. We are aware that the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant and its affiliates continue to exploit conflict, governance failure, political turmoil and socioeconomic inequality to recruit followers and incite terrorist attacks. We have also seen the impact of food insecurity on Western Africa, which could lead to the spread of terrorism.

Given these challenges, we advocate a comprehensive all-of-society human rights-compliant and gender-sensitive approach and welcome emphasis on interreligious and intercultural dialogue as an effective tool in prevention and in addressing the root causes of violence and extremism. We believe that it is critical to counter the use of religion and the narrative of hatred by terrorist groups. Based on its own historical experience, Albania believes that the promotion of peaceful coexistence is key to countering the narrative that promotes division among people.

The ramifications of violent extremism and the radicalization that leads to terrorism are global. That is why we should continue our international cooperation to counter the financing of terrorism and prevent terrorist groups from using new technologies to finance their operations. In that regard, we are pleased to hear that the Financial Action Task Force has joined the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact.

In conclusion, Albania reiterates its commitment in the fight against terrorism and will continue to provide unconditional support to the United Nations and other global players in this fight.

Mrs. Kamboj (India): I would like to begin by thanking Under-Secretary-General Voronkov and Acting Executive Director Chen for their respective briefings. I also thank Mr. Martin Ewi of the Institute for Security Studies for his insights.

It is clear from the report of the Secretary-General under consideration (S/2022/576) that terrorist threats are on the rise globally. It is our considered conviction that terrorism in one part of the world is a threat to

the peace and security of the entire world. Therefore, our response to this global challenge should be unified, coordinated, and most importantly, effective.

India's immediate neighbourhood has also recently borne witness to a spate of terror incidents. The series of attacks at religious places of minority communities, including the recent attack at the Sikh gurdwara in Kabul on 18 June, followed by another bomb explosion near the same gurdwara on 27 July, is alarming, to say the least. The recent findings of the report of the Monitoring Team of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1988 (2011) (see S/2022/419) points to a significant increase in the presence of Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant-Khorasan (ISIL-K) in Afghanistan and its capacity to carry out attacks. ISIL-K, with its base reportedly in Afghanistan, continues to issue threats of terrorist attacks on other countries. The linkages between groups listed by the Security Council, such as Lashkar-e-Tayyiba and Jaish-e-Mohammed, as well as provocative statements made by other terrorist groups operating out of Afghanistan pose a direct threat to the peace and stability of the region. We therefore need to see concrete progress in ensuring that such proscribed terrorists, entities and their aliases do not get any support, tacit or direct, from the terror sanctuaries, which also are based in the same region.

Given that background, it is puzzling to us that the Secretary-General's report chose not to take note of the activities of the several proscribed groups in that region, especially those that have repeatedly been targeting India. The selective filtering of inputs from Member States is uncalled for. We hope that, in future iterations of the Secretary-General's reports, inputs from all Member States will be treated on an equal footing.

The Secretary-General's report also outlines the fact that terrorist groups with linkages to ISIL and Al-Qaida are gaining in strength in Africa, targeting civilians, especially women and children, as well as security forces and United Nations peacekeepers. We appreciate the efforts of the countries of the region to take measures to combat that menace, and call upon the international community and the United Nations to support those efforts without any caveats.

ISIL's expansion in Africa deserves the full attention of the international community to ensure that that threat is not seen in isolation, as such threats have the potential to spill over to other parts of the world as well.

Last year, participants may recall that, on the occasion of the commemoration of the twentieth anniversary of the dastardly 9/11 attacks, the External Affairs Minister of India provided a series of suggestions on jointly combating terrorism (see S/2021/48). Building on those suggestions, I would like to offer the following observations.

First, the increasing use of the Internet and social media platforms to spread terrorist and violent extremist propaganda has posed challenges to Governments and the technology industry alike. The continued increase in the use of new technologies to move and store funds, including virtual assets, online exchanges and wallets and privacy coins, and the potential misuse of dual-use technologies pose the risk that terrorists will seek to abuse those systems for terrorism financing and other terror-linked purposes. There is therefore a need for intense discussions on the subject. I am therefore pleased to report that India, as Chair of the Counter-Terrorism Committee, will host a special session in Mumbai and Delhi on 28 and 29 October, highlighting the nature of that threat, Member States' capacity gaps, as well as best practices, and exploring a further course of action to effectively deal with the threat. The high-level meeting will be in-person, and I invite all Council colleagues to participate at the meeting. Formal invitations will be issued by the Chair later this month.

Secondly, we need political will to defeat terrorism. There can be no justification for terrorist acts, much less the glorification of terrorists, a tendency that we have unfortunately seen in recent years in some parts of the world. There should be no double standards in dealing with terrorists. We should refrain from labelling terrorism based on motivations, which will only allow opportunistic forces to provide justification for certain terror activities, based on their convenience.

Thirdly, an effective functioning of the sanctions committees requires them to become more transparent, accountable and objective. The practice of placing holds and blocks on listing requests without giving any justification must end. It is most regrettable that genuine and evidence-based listing proposals pertaining to some of the most notorious terrorists in the world are being placed on hold. Double standards and continuing politicization have rendered the credibility of the sanctions regime at an all-time low. We hope that all the members of the Security Council can pronounce themselves in one voice, sooner rather

than later, when it comes to the collective fight against international terrorism.

Fourthly, linkages between terrorism and organized crime need to be addressed. In India, we have had first-hand experience of crime syndicates venturing into terrorism and, immediately thereafter, receiving State hospitality in a neighbouring country despite being listed under the Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015), concerning Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertaking and entities. Such hypocrisy needs to be collectively called out when the threat of terrorism looms large in each of our countries.

Fifthly, we need to support the capacity-building efforts of the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism and enhance its autonomy. India has been supporting those efforts by providing financial support and resources for the Office's programmes aimed at countering terror financing and preventing terrorist movement. We reiterate our call for providing greater financial support and adequate resources to the Office of Counter-Terrorism from the regular United Nations budget.

India has suffered from the menace of terrorism for decades and has learned to counter the threat with resolve and firm determination. We hope that the international community will stand united in addressing such a threat to humankind with zero tolerance.

Mr. De la Fuente Ramírez (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): I am grateful for the briefings by the Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT), Mr. Voronkov, the Acting Director of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED), Mr. Chen, and Mr. Martin Ewi, of the Institute for Security Studies.

Mexico notes with particular concern the active presence of both the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant and Al-Qaida in Africa. According to the 2022 Global Terrorism Index, terrorist deaths in the Sahel have increased tenfold since 2007, making it the new epicentre of terrorism. That is compounded by other complex phenomena, such as high population growth, lack of food and water, climate change and weak rule of law.

The Index highlights that in 2021, sub-Saharan Africa accounted for 48 per cent of the world's total

deaths from terrorism. Four of the nine countries with the largest increases in terrorism deaths were also in sub-Saharan Africa, namely, Burkina Faso, Mali, the Niger and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Those numbers are troubling, and they highlight the growing need to implement measures consistent with international law, in particular international humanitarian law and international human rights law, to comprehensively address the threat posed by the scourge of terrorism. We reiterate that abuses in the invocation of Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations in order to use force against terrorists are inadmissible and in violation of international law.

The situation in Afghanistan is also of concern. In 2021, Afghanistan was the country with the highest rate of terrorist impact. We reiterate the need for us to ensure that Afghanistan is not used as a platform or safe haven for terrorist groups.

All of the foregoing reinforces the importance of having a more effective preventive approach with an emphasis on sustainable development and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which pays special attention to the protection of women, children and minorities in general. Rebuilding the social fabric contributes to creating the necessary conditions to avoid the phenomena of radicalization, especially within the most vulnerable groups of society.

In conclusion, we would like to thank the Secretary-General and the UNOCT and CTED teams for having, at Mexico's request, incorporated for the first time in their report a reference to the role played by masculinities in terrorist groups and the way in which terrorist groups and networks interact with society. As we have repeatedly mentioned, this dimension is indispensable for adopting more effective approaches to prevent and counter the violent extremism that leads to terrorism. We also welcome the joint publication by CTED and the International Institute for Peace of a report examining how violent extremists exploit masculinities and how they interact with State actors, including counter-terrorism institutions. We hope that both the Security Council and the General Assembly will be open to further work on this issue in order to have a more robust preventive agenda that results in a truly cross-cutting gender policy, and which has at its core the protection of human rights as a fundamental part of the fight against terrorism.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of China.

I thank Under-Secretary-General Voronkov, Acting Executive Director Weixiong Chen and Mr. Ewi for their briefings and commend the Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT) and the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED) for their important efforts aimed at advancing international counter-terrorism cooperation.

The most recent report of the Secretary-General (S/2022/576) indicates that the current international counter-terrorism situation remains grave. The Islamic State continues to launch terrorist attacks in an attempt to regain influence, and it continues to infiltrate Africa. Taking advantage of the volatile political security situation, the intensified economic and social conflicts, fuelled by the coronavirus disease pandemic, and other current conditions, fans feelings of grievance and recruits new members. A large number of foreign terrorist fighters remain in conflict-affected areas for extended periods of time, becoming an increasingly large security risk. We need to take into account the evolving counter-terrorism situation, sum up and reflect on the lessons learned and enhance the capacity of all countries to effectively contain and combat the global terrorist threat.

China would like to emphasize the following four points. First, counter-terrorism requires a comprehensive approach to addressing both the symptoms and the root causes. Counter-terrorism efforts should focus on using political, economic, and judicial means in an integrated manner, working to eliminate root causes of terrorism and curbing the ability of terrorist organizations to launch attacks and recruit new members. International counter-terrorism cooperation should focus on addressing such challenges as the misuse by terrorists of the Internet and emerging technologies, the diversification of terrorism financing and the convergence of terrorist extremism and transnational organized crime. It should also support countries in strengthening information-sharing, exchange of experiences and judicial cooperation. A large number of foreign terrorist fighters have remained in Syria, Iraq and other countries for extended periods of time, and solutions for their repatriation should be developed as soon as possible. Attention should be paid to strengthening youth education and employment and

to preventing the incitement of young people through violent extremist ideologies.

Secondly, we should vigorously promote counter-terrorism capacity-building with a focus on helping developing countries, especially African countries, to enhance their counter-terrorism capabilities. The Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee and other United Nations counter-terrorism bodies should optimize resource allocation, consider the needs of each country, focus their efforts and resources on counter-terrorism capacity-building, support developing countries in improving their counter-terrorism capacity at the legislative, judicial and law-enforcement levels, and enhance the effectiveness of preventive actions against terrorism.

The Secretary-General's report indicates that two of the three most dynamic Islamic State networks are based in Africa. Countries outside the region should adjust their military deployments in Africa to avoid creating a security vacuum and strengthen communication and coordination with African countries to explore ways under the United Nations framework to overcome challenges of counter-terrorism operations in logistics funding and capacity-building.

Thirdly, double standards must be abandoned in the fight against terrorism. There are no good or bad terrorists. Counter-terrorism must put aside geopolitical considerations and ideological biases. All countries have the obligation to strictly implement the relevant sanctions against Council-designated terrorist organizations and individuals. Selective counter-terrorism that condones or even uses terrorist organizations for geopolitical gains and the instrumentalization of counter-terrorism seriously undermines the effectiveness of international counter-terrorism cooperation.

The international community should pay equal attention to terrorist attacks everywhere. Since the sudden withdrawal of foreign forces from Afghanistan, spillover effects from terrorist forces in the country on regional security have continued to emerge. Recently, the successive terrorist attacks launched by the Islamic State in Afghanistan are a cause for concern. The international community should continue to pay attention to and combat the Islamic State, Al-Qaida, the East Turkestan Islamic Movement and other active terrorist forces.

Fourthly, counter-terrorism actions should comply with international law and respect the sovereignty of all countries. China supports international counter-terrorism cooperation based on equality and mutual respect. At the same time, counter-terrorism operations should be carried out in line with the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter. The targeted elimination of terrorists through armed strikes must not undermine the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the countries concerned.

The counter-terrorism practice of the international community over the past two decades has shown that we cannot rely solely on military means to fight terrorism. Military intervention in the name of counter-terrorism and blatant violation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of other countries will only cause greater disasters, harm innocent civilians and even provide a breeding ground for the growth and spread of terrorist forces.

China actively participates in international counter-terrorism cooperation through the China-United Nations Peace and Development Fund. It supports the UNOCT and CTED in implementing cooperation projects to help developing countries, especially African countries, through counter-terrorism training, provision of counter-terrorism teaching materials and equipment, and the holding of seminars on cross-border counter-terrorism cooperation, so as to enhance their capacity to prevent and combat terrorism. We will continue to take practical actions and help support Africa, Central Asia and other front-line countries to strengthen counter-terrorism capacity-building and contribute to effectively responding to terrorist threats and maintaining regional peace and security.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers. If there are no more requests to take the floor, I would like to reiterate China's thanks to our briefers, Under-Secretary-General Voronkov, Mr. Chen and Mr. Ewi, for their important contributions to our meeting today.

The meeting rose at 12.10 p.m.