United Nations S/PV.7618

Security Council

Seventy-first year

Provisional

7618th meeting

Tuesday, 9 February 2016, 10.10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Ramírez Carreño	(Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of))
Members:	Angola	Mr. Lucas
	China	Mr. Shen Bo
	Egypt	Mr. Mahmoud
	France	Mr. Bertoux
	Japan	Mr. Yoshikawa
	Malaysia	Mrs. Adnin
	New Zealand	Mr. Van Bohemen
	Russian Federation	Mr. Zagaynov
	Senegal	Mr. Seck
	Spain	Mr. Gasso Matoses
	Ukraine	Mr. Vitrenko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Wilson
	United States of America	Mr. Pressman
	Uruguay	Mr. Bermúdez

Agenda

Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts

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/2016/92)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts

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/2016/92)

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Jeffrey Feltman, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, to participate in this meeting.

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/2016/92, which contains the 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. Feltman.

Mr. Feltman: I thank you, Sir, for the opportunity to brief the Security Council on the first report of the Secretary-General on the threat posed by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Daesh) to international peace and security and the range of United Nations efforts in support of Member States in countering the threat (S/2016/92). The report is submitted pursuant to resolution 2253 (2015), which the Council unanimously adopted last December in a meeting (see S/PV.7587) that included Ministers of Finance from around the world — an expression of the strong determination of Member States to address the threat that the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) represents to the international community and to the principles and values of the Charter of the United Nations.

Paragraph 97 of the resolution requests the Secretary-General to provide an initial strategic-level report that demonstrates and reflects the gravity of this threat, including

> "foreign terrorist fighters joining ISIL and associated groups and entities, and the sources of financing of these groups ... as well as their planning and facilitation of attacks".

The report also reflects the range of United Nations efforts in support of Member States in countering this threat, and contains recommendations for Member States now how to mitigate it, as well as ways in which the United Nations can support these goals. As requested by the Council, the report was prepared

> "with the input of CTED, in close collaboration with the Monitoring Team, as well as other relevant United Nations actors",

including the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF), the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq and the Office of the Special Envoy for Syria.

Data and imagery provided by Member States on potential routes of illicit trade in oil and oil products taken by ISIL could not be independently verified by the United Nations. Moreover, differences in the material provided point to the difficulty in establishing exact routes and distribution networks, given the variety and flexibility adopted by ISIL. It thus underscores the imperative of close coordination and cooperation among Member States, as demonstrated by the adoption of Security Council resolution 2253 (2015).

The report provides a strategic-level assessment of the threat. It highlights the fact that ISIL's emergence has been facilitated by the protracted conflicts and instability in Iraq and Syria, as well as the weakening of State institutions and the inability of States to exercise effective control over territory and borders. The group, which has benefited from a flow of financial resources and its ties with transnational organized criminals, is expanding its operations to other regions. ISIL's global expansion strategy may be a reaction to recent territorial losses inflicted by international military efforts. In this context, the swift expansion of ISIL operations across West and North Africa, the Middle East, and South and South-East Asia; the increasing number of terrorist groups pledging allegiance to its cause; and the substantial flow of foreign terrorist fighters from around the world are sources of major concern.

ISIL continues to perpetrate appalling human rights abuses against populations under its control, including mass executions, widespread torture, amputations, ethno-sectarian attacks, sexual violence, enslavement

and the systematic recruitment and abuse of children. The Secretary-General has said previously that some of ISIL's crimes, if proven, constitute crimes against humanity. This situation has led to a humanitarian crisis of unprecedented proportions. In Syria alone, around 12 million people have been forced to flee their homes, and more than 13.5 million are in need of humanitarian assistance. Large-scale, systematic destruction and looting of cultural sites are also part of the ISIL strategy.

The report also analyses ISIL finances, highlighting its capacity to rapidly and effectively mobilize vast resources. The main funding sources include the exploitation of oil and other natural resources, so-called taxing, confiscation, the looting of archeological sites, external donations, ransom payments and other financing techniques, such as the use of the Internet and social media to raise funds.

The attraction of ISIL to potential recruits continues unabated, particularly among young people in both developed and developing States. It is estimated that around 30,000 foreign terrorist fighters, originating from over 100 Member States and driven by a number of social, economic and geopolitical conditions, combined with individual circumstances, are actively engaged with ISIL and associated groups. These groups are using the Internet and social media as a promotional and recruitment tool. Information and communication technologies play a crucial role in foreign terrorist fighters' preparations to travel to join ISIL and its affiliates, the training and sharing of effective practices and the planning of attacks.

ISIL sympathizers, acting alone or in small cells, effectively expanded the geographical scope and complexity of their attacks in the second half of 2015, both in terms of planning and facilitation, as the attacks in Beirut, Paris and Jakarta demonstrated. The combination of home-grown small cells and terrorists who travel back and forth from Syria and Iraq, as well as the use of sophisticated technologies to plan the attacks, new logistical and training techniques, suicide attackers and rosters of foreign terrorist fighters with specialized skills all represent new and complex challenges.

In its second part, the report stresses that, while the primary responsibility for countering the threat of ISIL lies with Member States, the United Nations and other international organizations have a critical role to play in supporting the efforts of Member States, and have already taken a number of measures in this regard. These include the assessments of the threat and of States' capacities undertaken by the Monitoring Team of the Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015) concerning ISIL (Da'esh), Al-Qaida, and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities and the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate; the development by the CTITF and the United Nations Centre for Counter-Terrorism (UNCCT) of a United Nations capacity-building implementation plan for countering the flow of foreign terrorist fighters; and the development of capacity-building programmes and projects such as those being implemented by UNCCT, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, UNESCO, the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute, UN-Women and INTERPOL, among others.

In the third part of the report, the Secretary-General provides a number of strategic responses for Member States and the United Nations to address the threat of ISIL. These include addressing the underlying political and socioeconomic causes of relevant conflicts, particularly in Syria, and strengthening the operational and legal framework needed to choke off ISIL funding.

In the context of countering the financing of terrorism, Member States should ensure the timely exchange of information and financial intelligence, implement relevant Security Council resolutions and strengthen their collaboration with private-sector actors to address the threat. The United Nations should support these efforts in a more comprehensive way, particularly in its field operations, including by enhancing its research on the nexus between ISIL and transnational organized crime and stepping up technical assistance to build Member States' capacities.

In order to counter recruitment and address violent extremism and radicalization, Governments should consider developing national plans of action to prevent violent extremism, focus preventive efforts on education and youth, and strengthen strategies and legal frameworks to address the abuse of information and communication technologies. The United Nations should support these efforts, including through measures proposed by the United Nations plan of action to prevent violent extremism, which is currently under consideration, and the development of new tools that will facilitate cooperation between investigators and prosecutors involved in terrorism cases.

Member States should criminalize foreign terrorist fighters' travel in accordance with relevant resolutions and take measures to strengthen their border-management regimes, including by using INTERPOL databases, assessing foreign terrorist fighters' travel routes and trends on a continuous basis, and improving the exchange of information between States. The United Nations should step up capacity-building assistance in that context.

From preventive to security and criminal justice measures, Member States should strengthen their tools to disrupt ISIL's capacity to plan and facilitate attacks, including through the use of special investigative techniques and effective inter-agency coordination. Applying a case-by-case approach to ISIL returnees and ensuring the support of the United Nations in protecting cultural heritage is also recommended.

In conclusion, despite the efforts of the international community to counter ISIL through military, financial and law enforcement measures, and the substantial losses inflicted upon ISIL, the group continues to pose one of the major challenges of our time to international peace and security. In the face of that common threat, I would like to echo the Secretary-General's call to unity and to action, including in finding political solutions to the conflicts in Syria and Libya. I would like to assure the Council that the United Nations is committed to supporting Member States' efforts.

The Secretary-General will provide an update of this report to the Council in four months' time, as mandated by resolution 2253 (2015).

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Mr. Feltman for his informative briefing.

I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 10.20 a.m.