



Security Council

Seventy-first year

7708th meeting

Wednesday, 8 June 2016, 3 p.m.

New York

Provisional

President: Mr. Delattre (France)

Members:

Angola	Mr. Lucas
China	Mr. Xu Zhongsheng
Egypt	Mr. Aboulatta
Japan	Mr. Okamura
Malaysia	Mrs. Adnin
New Zealand	Mrs. Schwalger
Russian Federation	Mr. Churkin
Senegal	Mr. Ciss
Spain	Mr. González de Linares Palou
Ukraine	Mr. Yelchenko
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . .	Mr. Wilson
United States of America	Ms. Sison
Uruguay	Mr. Rivas
Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Suárez Moreno

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/2016/501)

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16-16393 (E)



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The meeting was called to order at 3 p.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/2016/501)

The President (*spoke in French*): 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/2016/501, 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 this opportunity to brief the Security Council on the second report (S/2016/501) of the Secretary-General on the threat posed by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Da'esh) to international peace and security and the range of United Nations efforts in support of Member States in countering the threat. The report is submitted pursuant to paragraph 97 of resolution 2253 (2015), which requested the Secretary-General to submit an initial strategic-level report, followed by updates every four months, that demonstrate and reflect the gravity of the threat that the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) represents to the international community and the principles and values of the Charter of the United Nations.

The Secretary-General's initial report (S/2016/92), published on 29 January, addressed the areas identified by the Council, including the risks posed by foreign terrorist fighters and ISIL's funding sources, and contained recommendations for strengthening the

capacities of Member States to mitigate the threat posed by ISIL, as well as ways by which the United Nations could support those efforts.

This update report provides an updated assessment on the gravity of the threat posed by ISIL and associated groups and entities, their funding sources and geographic and thematic trends of the threat. It also highlights Member States and United Nations efforts and progress in implementing related counter-terrorism measures.

The report was prepared with the input of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, the contribution of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015), concerning the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities, and in close collaboration with the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF), the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre (UNCCT) and other relevant United Nations actors and international organizations.

The report stresses that the threat posed by ISIL and its associates remains high and continues to diversify. ISIL's military setbacks in Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic could be one of the factors behind the marked increase in the rate of return of foreign terrorist fighters. However ISIL is yet to be strategically or irreversibly weakened. The inflow of arms and ammunition, directly or indirectly, into ISIL-held territory remains a serious concern.

Given its recent military setbacks, ISIL may be moving into a new phase — elevating the role of its affiliates, trying to move funds outside the current zones of conflict and increasing the risk of complex, multi-wave and international attacks. The bombings and shootings in Paris in November 2015, and in Brussels in March, demonstrate the important role that returned terrorist fighters can play in coordinating terrorist operations.

The report also notes that, for the first time since the declaration of its so-called caliphate, in June 2014, the ISIL core is under financial pressure. ISIL is trying to compensate for the loss in oil revenues, mostly due to international air strikes, by intensifying efforts in taxation and extortion. It is not clear how much revenue ISIL earns from antiquities smuggling, which now

also may be from Libya and Yemen, but that practice remains a source of income as well.

The report emphasizes that, in that context, ISIL may attempt to exploit additional revenue-generating activities, such as the kidnapping of international hostages, to move funds internationally, through informal and formal channels, and to convert local currency into currency or commodities, such as gold, that can be more easily transferred internationally. ISIL's provision of funds to its affiliates and networks also represents a major concern.

Significant numbers of foreign terrorist fighters continue to travel to join ISIL in the Syrian Arab Republic and Iraq from States around the world, often using so-called broken travel techniques and false or stolen travel documents. In terms of current trends, the report notes the risks that returned foreign terrorist fighters represent for regions such as South-East Asia and countries such as Libya.

The report also highlights evolving aspects of the threat posed by ISIL.

First, in Libya, the terrorist group has gained control over territory in a relatively short time. Despite ISIL's difficulties in consolidating gains, building alliances and competing with other actors, Libya risks becoming a hub for ISIL's expansion in the wider Maghreb and Sahel region and beyond.

Secondly, in Afghanistan, despite some military setbacks in 2015 and 2016, ISIL has proved its ability to hold limited terrain and to conduct terrorist attacks in cities beyond its core territory.

Thirdly, information and communications technologies continue to be a key enabler for ISIL and its affiliates and to play an essential role in helping these groups function, recruit, gather supplies and attack.

Fourthly, sexual violence continues to be used as a tactic of terrorism to increase ISIL's power, revenue and recruitment base, as well as to shred the social fabric of targeted communities.

The report also highlights the efforts and progress of Member States and the United Nations in implementing related counter-terrorism measures in a number of thematic areas.

Since the Secretary-General's initial report on the threat posed by ISIL, Member States have continued to update their legislation in response to

resolution 2178 (2014); strengthened their capacities to effectively investigate and prosecute complex terrorism-related cases; sought to identify barriers to the sharing of financial information; worked on designing and implementing comprehensive border-management strategies; and paid increased attention to the development of comprehensive approaches to countering recruitment and preventing and countering violent extremism, among other areas.

During the same period, the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force finalized the Security Council-mandated capacity-building implementation plan for countering the flow of foreign terrorist fighters. The implementation plan includes 37 mutually reinforcing project proposals submitted by 12 CTITF entities, prioritized by the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate geographically and thematically. The plan addresses the entire life cycle of the phenomenon of foreign terrorist fighters, from their radicalization to travel, operationalization, fighting, reintegration and rehabilitation. The total budget of the entire project is \$100 million to \$120 million over three to five years. To date, we have identified approximately 10 per cent of the needed funding from donors and commenced a number of the projects included in the plan, including on advanced passenger information.

To implement all the projects and help Member States make an impact on the foreign terrorist fighter phenomenon, further funding will be required. To that end, the Council will recall that in S/PRST/2015/11, the Security Council encouraged

“[m]ember States to provide needed financial and other assistance to CTITF and the UNCCCT”.

Since January, CTITF entities have also implemented specialized capacity-building programmes to counter the financing of terrorism, strengthen border controls and implement advanced passenger information systems; developed a counter-terrorism prosecutors' network; launched an innovative project on private-sector engagement in responding to terrorists' use of information and communications technologies; and organized a major international conference with our Swiss partners in Geneva on preventing violent extremism.

In the field, the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) has prepared assessment reports on ISIL that it shares with Member States to support their efforts to counter the threat of ISIL. UNSMIL

has continued to support the efforts of the Presidency Council in leading Libya's transition and the establishment of the Government of national accord to curtail further expansion of ISIL.

Despite the efforts of the international community, including the United Nations, to counter ISIL, and despite ISIL's military setbacks in Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic and its financial pressures, ISIL continues to pose a significant challenge to international peace and security.

In the face of this common threat, I would like to reiterate the Secretary-General's call to unity and action, including in finding political solutions to the conflict in Syria, and to assure the Council that the United Nations will continue to support Member States in implementing the relevant resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly.

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 French*): I thank Mr. Feltman for his briefing.

The representative of the Russian Federation has asked for the floor to make a statement.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): First of all, I should like to underscore the importance of the full implementation of resolution 2253 (2015) in order to combat the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), Al-Qaida and associated groups such as Jabhat Al-Nusra.

Strategic reports of the Secretary-General to implement this resolution are meant to shape an objective understanding of the terrorist threat and assess the contributions of Member States in combating this global threat. Unfortunately, the current report of the Secretary-General (S/2015/501) not meet this goal. Furthermore, the document is based on one-sided data and therefore does not give a true picture of the situation. For example, in paragraph 4 of the report, it is stated that ISIL's military setbacks are directly linked to some efforts of the international coalition forces. The impression one gets is that the report specifically highlights the role of the coalition led by the United States, whereas the efforts of other States, which are often more effective, are intentionally ignored. This kind of philosophy is fundamentally wrong, as it does not contribute to the shaping of the global anti-terrorist

coalition whose establishment President Putin of Russia has called for during the seventieth session of the General Assembly.

It is important to note that significant damage to capacity of ISIL was inflicted by the Russian air force. We deem it unacceptable to say nothing about that or about the efforts of the Syrian armed forces, which selflessly are on the front lines of the fight against the terrorist threat. It is difficult to understand that the report says nothing about the role of the Russian air force or the important expulsion of terrorists from Palmyra and the restoration, with the help of the Russian armed forces and experts, of peaceful conditions there, including the demining of that historic citadel.

We would also like to ask the authors of the report why it does not reflect the data that was provided on the results of the efforts of the Russian air force in Syria, including lists of eliminated terrorist leaders, which were specifically requested from us by the monitoring group of the anti-terrorist sanctions committees. What then was the purpose of asking for this information?

In this connection, we think that it is very important to convey to the Members of the United Nations an objective picture of the Russian anti-terrorist operation in Syria. We are convinced that its effectiveness is based on the fact that we are acting with the legitimate consent of the Syrian Government. As a result of the efforts of the Russian air force in Syria, this operation was a turning point in destroying the resource base of the terrorists. We destroyed thousands of support facilities with stockpiles of ammunition and military equipment, material resources, oil and fuel supplies and explosives. We destroyed more than 200 oil production, transit and refining facilities, as well as more than 2,000 transport modalities used to smuggle oil to Turkey. The most recent example was the destruction, just several days ago, of four sites for the illegal production of oil located in the Raqqa and Homs provinces, which are controlled by ISIL fighters.

We would like to underscore that without the consolidation of efforts in combating terrorism, the threat will remain significant. The situation in Syria remains a source of considerable concern. What is important is to quickly separate Jabhat Al-Nusra from the Syrian opposition. It is essential for those who are fighting in Syria to clearly state whether they are with the terrorists or against them. We should not

delay this process, because by delaying it we are only strengthening terrorist groups.

As a consequence, Jabhat Al-Nusra, Ahrar Al-Sham, Jaish Al-Islam and Jaish Al-Fatah have practically become connected structures, and some entities have violated the ceasefire regime. These kinds of threatening developments are occurring due to external interference by forces that are trying to undermine Russian-American cooperation. As a result, the Syrian armed forces are combating large-scale offensives on the part of the jihadists, who are moving across the Syrian-Turkish border. A clear illustration is the situation in Aleppo, where terrorists are continuing, with external support, to seize new territories. The Kurdish neighbourhood of Sheikh Maqoud has been the target of daily artillery shelling by Al-Nusra. We have found that Al-Nusra are being helped by other armed groups that are considered moderate. As a result of double standard politics, Al-Nusra thinks it can act without any consequences and is now deploying its forces in civilian neighbourhoods and using civilians as human shield.

For several months, we have been assured that the link between the terrorists and the moderate opposition would be broken. But we are not seeing any results. Consequently, violent confrontation continues to increase, while the terrorist threat, as the events of the past year have shown, continues to intensify and to extend far beyond the Syrian border.

Ending external support for terrorists requires an immediate solution. The Syrian-Turkish border needs to be closed immediately. In addition to what I said earlier, border crossings, which the international community designated for humanitarian deliveries, are often being used for criminal ends. There is irrefutable documentary evidence of that process taking place in the border districts, but that proof is being disregarded. In that regard, we also continue to be surprised by the inexplicable lack of action on the part of some of our international partners.

One is amazed at the ongoing disregard for Turkey's role in the financing of, and the provision of resources and recruits for, terrorist operations in Syria. The report

has been scrubbed of even indirect links to information provided by Russian on the financing of ISIL.

The regular flow of information about supplies from Turkish territory into Syria of components for the production of chemical weapons for the needs of terrorists requires particular attention. Unfortunately, that issue is persistently hushed up, and a corresponding Russian initiative to strengthen the fight against the threat of chemical terrorism is being slowed down for no apparent reason.

Another example is the information we have provided to the Security Council on supplies to ISIL of components for the production of improvised explosive devices (IED). Our analysis had shown that those substances were produced in Turkey and were provided to Syria. Our analysis of the IED components found in Syria and Iraq shows that they were either manufactured in Turkey or delivered to that country without the right of re-export.

Once again, it behooves us to pay particular attention to actions by Turkey and to such disturbing elements in its regional policy as its unauthorized intrusion on the territory of Syria and Iraq. There are reports that Turkey is building extended concrete walls on Syrian territory close to its borders. We request the Secretariat to find out about that and to report back to the Council.

As before, we believe that resolution 2253 (2015) includes a very important list of measures to strengthen the regime and put an end to the illegal supplies being channeled to ISIL and groups related to it, as well as to strengthen the United Nations monitoring and sanctions regime. As we see it, currently, the goal is to further strengthen that very important resolution. An objective, balanced and fair report of the Secretary-General, pursuant to that resolution, would be a very important contribution to that cause.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 3.20 p.m.