

UN Security Council Ministerial Meeting
20th Anniversary of Security Council Resolution 1373 (2020)
and the establishment of the Counter Terrorism Committee :
achievements in international cooperation, challenges and opportunities
(12 January 2021, 08.30 am US Eastern time)

Concept note

1/Background:

The terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 in New York, Washington D.C. and Pennsylvania sent a shock wave across the globe. The Security Council quickly reacted through the adoption of the landmark resolution 1373 (2001) which drastically changed the global approach to Counter-Terrorism. Setting the bedrock of the Council's action in the field of Counter-Terrorism, this resolution called on States to implement a number of measures aiming at enhancing their legal and institutional capacity to prevent and counter terrorist threats, including by criminalizing terrorist acts, ensuring that terrorists are brought to justice and denying them safe havens and financial support. The resolution also called on States to work together urgently to prevent and suppress terrorist acts, including through increased cooperation and full implementation of the relevant international conventions relating to terrorism.

Resolution 1373 (2001) also established the Counter Terrorism Committee (CTC) as a subsidiary body of the Security Council in charge of monitoring its implementation and called upon all States to report to the Committee. The mandate of the CTC and of its Executive Directorate (CTED) continued to expand with the strengthening of the international Counter-Terrorism framework. A wide range of topics have since been addressed by the Security Council in several key resolutions¹, including law enforcement, border management, judicial measures, international cooperation, financing of terrorism, use of biometrics, countering terrorist narratives and the misuse of information and communications technologies for terrorist purposes, with the integration of human rights and gender dimensions as cross cutting issues.

¹ Including Resolutions 1624 (2005), 2178 (2014), 2185 (2014), 2195 (2014), 2242 (2015), 2322 (2016), 2341 (2017), 2354 (2017), 2368 (2017), 2370 (2017), 2388 (2017), 2395 (2017), 2396 (2017), 2462 (2019), 2467 (2019) and 2482 (2019).

Other important documents were also adopted by the Committee or published by its Executive Directorate, including the Madrid Guiding Principles on stemming the flow of Foreign Terrorist Fighters (2015) (S/2015/939) and its Addendum (2018) (S/2018/1177), as well as CTED's Technical Guides and the Global Implementation Surveys.

Furthermore, the CTC and its Executive Directorate developed important tools to monitor and facilitate the implementation of the relevant resolutions² allowing in-depth dialogue with Member States to identify good practices, remaining challenges and areas of possible technical assistance.

Since 2001, the global terrorist threat has continued to evolve significantly. New terrorist groups have emerged, including ISIL and its affiliates. The world witnessed their increased ability to expand their networks on the ground and online, their considerable financial capacities, their use of sophisticated methods for recruitment, financing and planning and their ability to adapt to national and international counter-terrorism mechanisms. They proved their capability to seize control over territories of sovereign States. They became among the major factors exacerbating ongoing conflicts, rendering them more violent and complicated, and undermining peace efforts. New trends also emerged, such as the mobilization of "sleeper cells" or "lone wolves" in inspired attacks, particularly against soft or vulnerable targets, the misuse of new information and communication technologies, the growing interlinkages with transnational organized crime, the mobilization of foreign terrorist fighters in conflicts and the emergence of ethnically or racially motivated terrorism³.

In this framework, States are faced with the challenging task of balancing the effectiveness of their Counter Terrorism measures and the respect of their international obligations and commitments, particularly under international human rights law, international humanitarian law and international refugee law. To meet such a challenge, they need to establish independent accountability and oversight mechanisms and to adopt a whole-of-government and a whole-of-society approach which promotes more active participation of civil society, private sector, women and youth.

States are also required to develop cooperative mechanisms able to address the transnational dimensions of the threat. The proliferation of Security Council resolutions related to terrorism, the expansion of the mandate of the CTC, the development of a sophisticated UN architecture, and the increasing efforts within the regional and subregional organizations reflect the desire to strengthen and adapt the international cooperation. More remains to be done in order to garner further support and coordination among all relevant stakeholders.

² Including country visits, Overview of Implementation Assessment (OIA) and Detailed Implementation Survey (DIS).

³ also identified by a number of countries as "extreme right wing terrorism"

2/ Objectives:

The commemoration of the 20th anniversary of Security Council resolution 1373 (2001) and the establishment of the CTC is taking place against the backdrop of a turbulent and complexed global security landscape, which was further exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. The health crisis was rapidly placed as a top priority of the national and international agendas; diverting attention, capacities and resources from other priorities, including counter-terrorism. The pandemic also showcased the need to find new ways to ensure a continued ability to monitor the implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions and to facilitate the delivery of technical assistance to States in changing and challenging circumstances.

Despite the progress made in the last two decades, the threats posed by terrorism and by violent extremism conducive to terrorism, continue to undermine international peace and security. The expected meeting constitutes an opportunity to assess the progress made in creating the necessary legal and institutional frameworks related to the prevention and countering of terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism and to highlight possible existing gaps and challenges in terms of international cooperation. The meeting should also contribute to identifying emerging trends and to laying the groundwork for common priorities that would shape the future multilateral action.

During the meeting, Member States are encouraged to address the following questions:

- What are the challenges facing Member States in complying with the obligations set forth in Security Council Resolution 1373 (2001) and relevant subsequent resolutions?
- How efficient are international cooperation and technical assistance tools in helping members States combat terrorism and violent extremism? What are the best practices developed? How can they be better disseminated?
- How can the Security Council, through its Counter Terrorism Committee, enhance and adapt its response to the constantly volatile and changing terrorist threat? What are the main challenges and which areas should be prioritized?
- How can the current UN counter-terrorism architecture provide a further unified and integrated response to the existing gaps and needs, including through coordination between relevant subsidiary bodies as well as through the interaction between the CTC, CTED and other relevant UN entities?

3/ format, briefers and outcome:

The briefing will be held virtually on 12 January 2021 at 08.30 a.m (US Eastern time) at Ministerial level and will be chaired by the Minister of Foreign of Affairs of Tunisia. The briefers will include:

- Mr. Vladimir Voronkov, Under Secretary General of United Nations, Office of Counter-Terrorism.
- Mrs. Michelle Coninx, Assistant Secretary General, Executive Director of the Counter Terrorism Executive Directorate.

An outcome document, most likely a PRST, based on consensual language, is envisaged.