

**Security Council Open Debate
Threats to International Peace and Security Caused by Terrorist Acts
International Cooperation on Combating Terrorism and Violent Extremism
November 2014, Security Council Chamber**

Statement by Mr. Thoms Permanent Mission of Germany to the United Nations

I would like to thank you, Madam President, for convening today's debate.

Germany, like so many others, is deeply concerned about the threat that terrorism and violent extremism pose to our societies. Germany is therefore strongly engaged in countering that threat both abroad and at home. We contribute to support for the Iraqi Government as well as the people affected by the crises in Iraq and Syria. That includes immediate responses to the humanitarian crises and structural support to neighbouring countries that are hosting Syrian refugees, to help prevent further destabilization of the region. Those efforts were at the heart of the conference on the Syrian refugee situation held in Berlin on 28 October.

An inclusive political process in Syria is a prerequisite for successfully combating the so-called Islamic State, and we therefore also support ongoing United Nations efforts for a peaceful resolution of the conflict. Another important aspect is our military assistance in the fight against the Islamic State and its associates, following the Iraqi Government's request for international support.

I share the threat assessment presented in the Secretary-General's statement as well as in the concept note for today's debate (S/2014/787, annex). I would therefore like to elaborate on some practical measures that Germany has taken to counter terrorism.

In Germany we currently have Salafist followers, numbering more than 6,000 individuals, who promote a society governed by a fundamentalist interpretation of Islamic rules. Approximately 450 radicalized German Islamists have travelled to Iraq and Syria, posing a threat there as well as on their possible return to Germany. Whenever operable information is available in time, our existing legal framework allows us to prevent the travel and transit of potential foreign terrorist fighters. We are presently reviewing our national legislation with regard to resolution 2178 (2014).

Security organs such as border police and law-enforcement authorities work hand in hand within our joint counter-terrorism centre. Multilateral and bilateral cooperation at the ministerial and agency level, including with the European Police Office, complements this concept.

Overcoming the factors underlying violent extremism is a fundamental and long-term challenge for all of our societies. Prevention is of the utmost importance, in particular with regard to the young generation. De-radicalization measures need to reintegrate those who have taken on extremist views. Security organs alone cannot accomplish this. Civil-society actors and social institutions, especially those at the local level, are key in contributing to this endeavour. Women have an important role to play.

Let me cite a few measures that we have put into practice. Families that fear that one of their members is about to travel to a crisis region and join a terrorist movement can seek counselling and support from a help desk. Prison environments are occasionally conducive to further radicalization. We have addressed this with a project that actively approaches prisoners at risk at an early stage of their detention.

Extremist views have to be delegitimized wherever they appear: in prisons, on the Internet, but also in schools and sport clubs. Credible counter-narratives must be developed. Alliances of civil-society actors, including representatives of Muslim communities, have the best chances of success.

The United Nations is at the core of coordinating the international community's response to the threat of terrorism and its efforts to counter violent extremism. An example is the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre. The Secretary-General recently presented his vision for transforming the Centre into a centre of excellence. We welcome and commend the Centre's commitment to operating in a complementary, interlinked and supportive fashion with the 34 institutions that are combined in the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force.

In conclusion, aligning and focusing our capacities is key in achieving a sustainable result in the fight against terrorism and in drying up its root causes.