

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. Churkin Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the United Nations

I welcome you to the presidency of the Security Council, Madam. We thank the Secretary-General for his comprehensive statement and the Permanent Representatives of Australia and Lithuania for their briefings on the efforts of the Committees they lead in undertaking the tasks mandated by recent decisions of the Council. We continue to believe that the activities of those entities are an important contribution to strengthening the central coordinating role of the United Nations and the Security Council in international counter-terrorism cooperation.

Two months, following the adoption of resolution 2178 (2014), aimed at cutting off the oxygen for all activities of foreign terrorist fighters, the Council has once again been compelled to focus on the problem of terrorism — a threat that is not going away. Posing a threat to all regions of the world, the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), the Al-Nusra Front (ANF) and other terrorist groups have long been active in the Middle East. They have acquired additional capacities for their criminal activities due to the weakening of State institutions, courtesy of foreign intervention in no small measure, and to the support of various foreign sponsors. Moreover, so long as the ISIL and ANF extremists were fighting Government forces in Syria, certain States did not seem especially bothered. We believe that such double standards are unacceptable in the fight against terrorism.

The report published recently by the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic, created by the Human Rights Council, explicitly notes that weapons and support provided from abroad to so-called moderate armed groups in Syria have time and again fallen into the hands of more radical elements, including ISIL. Extremists have enjoyed foreign financing, including through charitable organizations and private individuals. The document paints an appalling picture of the current consequences of such short-sighted — to put it mildly — activities, especially for civilians, including women and children.

Leniency towards the activities of extremist groups has jeopardized the future of entire States, as is clear in the examples of Iraq, Syria and Libya. Lebanon, Yemen, Mali and the Central African Republic are also on the firing line. Terrorist activities on the Afghanistan-Pakistan border continue to be linked to Al-Qaida, as stated in the reports of the Monitoring Teams of the Committees established pursuant to resolution 1988 (2011) and resolution 1267 (1999). In that regard, we support focusing the efforts of the Security Council on combating the radicalization that fuels terrorism, the replication of terrorist ideology and violent extremism, and the use of the media and the Internet for terrorist purposes, and on banning incitement towards terrorism and countering the appeal of terrorist activities. It is vital that States pursue their efforts under the auspices of the United Nations system's work in those areas. Presidential statement S/PRST/2014/23, adopted today, points us in the right direction.

Another cause for concern is terrorist income, one of the most important sources of which is the illegal trade in Syrian and Iraqi oil. In Syria, jihadists are exploiting as many as 10 oil fields. ISIL is producing almost 30,000 barrels a day. In Iraq, that terrorist organization controls 14 oil fields and is exporting up to 50,000-60,000 barrels a day. Terrorists' total daily income from the oil trade is approaching \$3 million. Moreover, air strikes on the oil facilities seized by the terrorists in Iraq and Syria have barely made a dent in the level of illegal sales. Objectively, they merely complicate the living conditions of people living in those regions. Oil tankers go about their business; makeshift pipelines are up and running; and shady dealers and middle-men are helping get crude oil onto the black market.

The Security Council's requirements of Member States, as set out in resolution 2170 (2014) seem to have gone unheeded — a situation that requires the Council's focused attention. In that context, we cannot help but note that in April 2013 the European Union partially lifted the series of restrictions imposed on Syria and authorized the purchase of Syrian oil by non-State traders. In so doing, it indirectly facilitated the financial strengthening of ISIL and the Al-Nusra Front, which control the oil fields in north-eastern Syria. Brussels should acknowledge that.

We are also troubled by reports of ISIL's seizure of humanitarian assistance earmarked for needy Syrians. We must prevent situations in which humanitarian assistance is distributed under the black flag of the Islamic State, which strengthens its authority in territory under its control.

Another worrisome issue is the growing battle capabilities of the terrorists, above all ISIL. They already have access to chemical weapons of mass destruction. There is much eyewitness testimony of their use by terrorist militants in Iraq and Syria. There is a genuine danger that they may gain access to the Libyan and Iraqi chemical arsenals. We believe that the Council must take a decisive stand on this issue and make it clear that the use of chemical weapons by whomsoever will carry consequences. In that regard, we regret that our delegation's proposed draft presidential statement on chemical weapons in Syria was effectively blocked by a number of delegations, which sought to amend it for one purpose alone — to shift all the focus on issues related to the chemical demilitarization of Syria. The text in question was also omitted from the presidential statement adopted today. We stress that shielding terrorists at a time when they are becoming increasingly proficient at synthesizing, producing and using substances for military purposes is unacceptable and very dangerous.

In the light of the new tasks assigned to the Security Council's counter-terrorism bodies, the need for the subsidiary organs of the Council and its expert groups to comply in their work with existing procedures takes on particular importance. In that regard, we would like to reiterate that resolution 2178 (2014) sets out a commitment for airlines to provide passenger name records only in cases where individuals under sanction by the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999) and 1989 (2011), concerning Al-Qaida and associated individuals and entities, have sought to leave or enter countries. Therefore, the instruction to the Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate (CTED) contained in today's presidential statement to prepare for the Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC) an overall report on measures to monitor the movement of air passengers and on the preparation of the relevant recommendations, without tying it to a specific Security Council sanctions list,

breaches the terms of resolution 2178 (2014).

We welcome the role of CTED in providing assistance to the Counter-Terrorism Committee and commend the Directorate's swift preparation of a preliminary analysis of the gaps in the implementation of resolutions 1373 (2001) and 1624 (2005) that make it harder for States to combat the threat of foreign terrorist fighters. We believe that the central focus of CTED under its updated mandate should remain to provide support to the CTC, monitoring the implementation of the previously mentioned resolutions and coordinating the provision of technical assistance to Member States.