

Security Council Open Debate on Threats to International Peace and Security Terrorism and Cross-Border Crime December 2014, Security Council Chamber

Statement by Mr. Ja'afari Permanent Mission of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations.

At the outset, I would like to thank you, Mr. President, and your friendly country and to extend our most sincere congratulations on its assumption of the presidency of the Security Council this month. We would also like to thank you, Mr. Foreign Minister, for convening this important debate.

I take this opportunity to express my most heartfelt condolences to the Government and people of Pakistan and to the bereaved families whose members were subjected to the odious terrorist attack that killed 141 students and wounded dozens of others. Those terrorist attacks demonstrate the nature of the nihilistic ideology of terrorists linked with Al-Qaida, such as the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), the Al-Nusra Front, Boko Haram, the Taliban, the Eastern Turkestan movement, the Caucasus Emirate, Ansar al-Sharia, the Al-Shabaab movement and, unfortunately, several others. At the same time, that event strengthens our commitment to bolster efforts to eliminate the scourge of terrorism. The threats looming over international peace and security due to terrorism and transnational organized crime could not have reached this magnitude or become so dangerous were it not for the organic link of terrorist groups, in terms of their interests, with the Governments of certain States that have adopted terrorism as an approach and even a tool of their foreign policy. Therefore, it falls upon United Nations Member States, together and individually, and relevant bodies within the Organization and beyond it in the international arena to intensify efforts and cooperation internationally and regionally to combat terrorism and crime and their masterminds.

The concept note (S/2014/869, annex) that you have prepared, Mr. President, underscores the crisis in Syria, where conflict has led to the growth in a war economy, including trafficking in human beings, weapons, drugs; taking hostages for ransom; and the seizure of oil facilities. Revenue generated by such activities has created incentives for some armed groups to prolong the conflict and has increased their wealth, significantly reducing our ability to compel them to engage in peace talks. That is extremely significant, and many Governments of Member States, whether in this Council or outside it, continue to ignore the irrefutable truth that this threat did not arise in a vacuum. It is rather the fruit of the policies and practices of Governments, of some States that have decided to fan the flames of the crisis in Syria and continue it by providing their support in various ways to armed terrorist groups. They seek to erode the foundations of the Syrian State and its institutions by using terrorism as a political weapon, thereby impeding a peaceful political solution based on inclusive national dialogue among Syrians under the Syrian Government.

On many occasions, we have spoken in the Council about acts perpetrated by terrorists active in Syria, in particular ISIL and the Al-Nusra Front, with regard to the extraction of and trade in oil resources belonging to the Syrian Arab Republic and the brotherly country of Iraq; the pillaging of archaeological sites, the shared heritage for humanity, and the sale of these archaeological items; and the dismantling of hundreds of factories, which are pillars of the Syrian economy, and their transfer to Turkey. All that has occurred in addition to the taking of hostages, the slavery and sale of women and children, and other crimes that are

abhorrent to humanity. How has the Council responded? For several years, three permanent members of the Council, before the exacerbation of the threat and danger, stopped the United Nations from taking even the smallest practical measure to defeat terrorism, which has been invading Syria, the Middle East and the world. For three years or more the position of those States and others in the Council was limited to shy condemnations.

Moreover, in April 2013 the European Union authorized the purchase of stolen Syrian oil from what it called opposition-controlled areas, in flagrant violation of that same international law concerning which some States of the Union have been ranting. This is robbery of the Syrian people's livelihood, the impact of which we are seeing every day. Now the European Union has once again imposed sanctions to ban the provision of fuel to the Syrian Air Force. That is irresponsible behaviour; it is also illegal and runs counter to the resolutions of the International Civil Aviation Organization. It does all this instead of working to seize looted Syrian antiquities being smuggled to Europe via Turkey.

Most members probably read several days ago the statement by the former Deputy Director of the European police, Europol, now head of the Belgian Federal Police Council, published in *The Times* of London, to the effect that Western dealers in archaeological artefacts are now directly dealing with ISIL, whereas in the past they had to use middlemen to buy looted archaeological masterpieces stolen from the Middle East.

The adoption by the Council on 28 July 2014 of presidential statement S/PRST/2014/14, which was drafted by the Russian delegation, called for the prohibition of all transactions in Syrian oil sales with ISIL and the Al-Nusra Front. That was a good first step in countering the terrorism represented by these two organizations and other entities and individuals affiliated with Al-Qaida. This step was strengthened by the Council's adoption of resolutions 2170 (2014) and 2178 (2014).

Nevertheless, ignoring the activities of those Governments that support terrorism within and outside the region will definitely undermine any possibility of producing tangible results in countering terrorism and transnational organized crime. Syrian oil and archaeological artefacts are transported to their buyers across our common borders with neighbouring States, especially Turkey, at a time when armed foreign terrorist fighters are being transported into Syria with their weapons through the same routes by the Turkish Government, with the knowledge and complicity of the intelligence services and senior officials of Governments that sponsor terrorism, as well as their partners in other States. That fact has been corroborated by numerous reports published by the United Nations, including the reports of the Panel of Experts on Libya, which have presented cogent evidence of the complicity of those States in transporting terrorists and arms from Libya into Syria, Egypt and the Sahel region.

My delegation reiterates its appeal to the Security Council to condemn States supporting terrorism and to force them to cease their destructive practices, to hold their regimes accountable, and compel them to respect the relevant Security Council resolutions on counter-terrorism, including resolutions 2167 (2014), 1373 (2001), 1624 (2005), 1989 (2011), 1540 (2004), 2133 (2014), 2170 (2014) and 2178 (2014). These resolutions were all adopted under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations in order to ensure that the Governments sponsoring terrorism in my country comply with them.

We have provided to the team tasked with the analytical support for resolution 2178 (2014) a list of and highly important information concerning foreign individuals killed in Syria recently. These include 110 from Chechnya, the Caucasus and Dagestan and other areas. We have also provided the list to the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1267 (1999). We will distribute it to Member States shortly.

I also call attention to an extremely important report that appeared in Washington, D.C. recently. It is entitled *Qatar and Terror Finance*, published in two volumes. It outlines Qatari authorities' support for terrorism, not only in Syria, but throughout the world. I present this information for the Council's consideration in the context of the debate on counter-terrorism.