

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

*Statement by Ms. Power Permanent Mission of the United States to the United Nations.*

I thank you, Foreign Minister Mahamat again for being here with us in person. The United States greatly appreciates Chad's leadership and its work to focus the Council on the nexus between terrorism and transnational organized crime. I also thank Foreign Minister Wali and Minister Asselborn for their presence here today, which serves to underscore the critical importance of these issues. I particularly appreciated Luxembourg's attention to the impact of these issues on the welfare of children, an issue that Luxembourg insistently raises with regard to all the challenges we face, and a critical part of Luxembourg's legacy on the Council. The United States is very eager to support Nigeria and Chad and the other multinational partners in the effort against Boko Haram, a monstrous movement.

While the motivations of terrorists and transnational criminal organizations may differ, their use of brutal violence and the insecurity, fear and suffering that they cause are often remarkably similar. Terrorists and transnational criminal organizations are increasingly learning from one another's sophisticated tactics to raise funds, to move people and arms and to spread the fear that is a critical source of their power. We see this cross-pollination between terrorist groups and transnational organized crime all around us. Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), Boko Haram, the Al-Nusra Front and numerous other terrorist organizations raise tens of millions of dollars annually through kidnapping for ransom. In Somalia, Al-Shabaab has filled its coffers through illegal and environmentally devastating charcoal exports. Of the \$250 million worth of charcoal estimated to have been exported from Somalia in 2013 and 2014, 30 per cent is estimated to have gone to Al-Shabaab. AQIM and other terrorist groups regularly obtain arms through Maghreb and Sahel trafficking networks, relying on the same trade routes as transnational smugglers. And extremist groups raise cash through a variety of other criminal activities that cross borders, from selling drugs to stealing natural resources.

The Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) is another example of the increasingly similar modus operandi between those groups. While continuing to carry out deadly attacks propelled by its sadistic ideology, ISIL is also increasingly operating like a profit-driven criminal organization. Using fear, threats and attacks, ISIL extorts money from local businesses and traders and robs from banks and households alike. Working through long-established regional smuggling networks, ISIL transports oil across borders, netting roughly \$1 million a day through black market oil sales. There are credible reports that ISIL is profiting from Syrian and Iraqi so-called blood antiquities, sold by criminal middlemen to unscrupulous or unknowing buyers worldwide.

Those new sources of financing allow extremist groups to diversify their revenue streams and reduce the risk of disruption of the funds they need to carry out their horrific attacks. As terrorist criminal activities become more entrepreneurial and business-minded, the Security Council needs to better understand their tactics. We must develop and deploy a set of sophisticated tools to disrupt those expanding networks and cut off the funds that they are generating. To that end, the Council should prioritize three tasks.

First, the Council should build greater international cooperation, needed to fight the inter-related problems of terrorism and organized crime. We have taken steps to address that urgent need, including resolution 2170 (2014), on ISIL, and resolution 2178 (2014), on foreign terrorist fighters. We have established a robust international legal framework under the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, the United Nations Convention against Corruption and the three United Nations drug control conventions that, taken together and implemented effectively, provide common parameters and tools for recognizing and responding to different forms of transnational crime.

Building on that work, the Council should encourage Member States to do more to collectively address transnational threats. For example, greater international cooperation should facilitate the exchange of information and analysis about terrorists and crime networks. For its part, the United States has effectively used the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime as the basis for international legal and law enforcement cooperation against transnational organized crime with more than 55 countries. Our use of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and bilateral treaties has led to the return of nearly 30 fugitives to face prosecution in the United States. Greater cooperation is needed both among and within Governments so we can bring together experts from the law enforcement, military, diplomatic and intelligence communities. This is why today the Council called on Member States to work together to secure their borders, counter illicit financing and money laundering and implement international best practices and existing conventions.

Secondly, the Security Council should acknowledge that weak governance both encourages and is exacerbated by the terrorist use of crime. Terrorist groups and criminals gravitate towards places with rampant corruption and impunity. For this reason, strengthening the criminal justice systems in vulnerable countries is one of the most effective ways to fight transnational organized crime. Since our collective security is only as strong as our weakest link, we have a shared interest in building stronger, more transparent governance and justice institutions beyond our own borders. Military measures alone will not be enough.

Thirdly, the Security Council should call on States to provide assistance to those States most affected by these terrible threats. Tackling these challenges requires deploying all the tools we have, from innovative law enforcement and criminal justice tools to financial measures and sanctions. Yet all States do not currently have the same ability to take these steps. Member States should therefore identify areas where targeted assistance is most needed and focus support in those places. We particularly welcome the role of the United Nations counter-terrorism bodies, particularly the Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee's monitoring team, the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, in identifying threat and capacity gaps.

We have come through a horrific week, as others have mentioned, of terrorist attacks. On Tuesday, the Pakistani Taliban killed 145 people, 132 of them kids aged 5 to 17. It was an appalling attack on a school. A young student named Zeeshan told a reporter, "I saw militants walking past rows of students shooting them in the head". On Wednesday, more than 230 bodies of people believed to have been executed by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant were found in a mass grave in Syria's Deir ez-Zor province. And yesterday we learned that more than 100 women and children were kidnapped and 35 people killed during

a weekend raid in the northeastern Nigerian village of Gumsuri, believed to have been carried out by Boko Haram.

We know that we must do more to prevent these attacks, not only in Pakistan, Syria and Nigeria, but in all of our countries. We must dismantle the groups that threaten our collective security, but we cannot achieve that goal without tackling the organized criminal networks that extremists increasingly rely upon to fuel their terror. That is the work before us and we must succeed.