30. Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts

During the period under review, the Council held four meetings under the item entitled "Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts". Three of the meetings held in 2022 took the form of briefings and the remaining meeting was convened for the adoption of a decision. ¹¹⁰² Indeed, the Council adopted one resolution, under Chapter VII of the Charter, and one presidential statement. ¹¹⁰³ More information on the meetings, including on participants, speakers and outcomes, is given in the table below. ¹¹⁰⁴

In 2022, Council members heard briefings by the Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism and by the Acting Executive Director of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate. In addition, Council members were briefed by two civil society representatives, a senior researcher at the Institute for Security Studies and a survivor of the Mumbai terror attacks of 26 November 2008. Briefings during the reporting period focused on the expansion of the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Da'esh) affiliates and those of Al-Qaida throughout the African continent, the increase in terrorist attacks based on xenophobia, racism and intolerance, the humanitarian and security situation of thousands of individuals suspected of having links with Da'esh held in detention facilities, and the activities of the Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate in support of the counterterrorism efforts of Member States. Briefers and Council members also discussed how developments in Afghanistan continued to affect counter-terrorism efforts in the region, 1105 and the importance of countering the use of new and emerging technologies for terrorist purposes.

On 9 February, Council members heard a briefing by the Under-Secretary-General of the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism on the fourteenth report of the Secretary-General on the threat posed by Da'esh to international peace and security. ¹¹⁰⁶ The Under-Secretary-General reported that Al-Qaida and Da'esh and their various affiliates remained serious threats and indicated that

¹¹⁰² For more information on the format of meetings, see part II.

¹¹⁰³ Resolution 2665 (2022) and S/PRST/2022/7.

¹¹⁰⁴ See <u>A/77/2</u>, part II, chap. 22.

¹¹⁰⁵ For more information on the situation in Afghanistan, see part I, sect. 14.

¹¹⁰⁶ See S/PV.8963. For the report of the Secretary-General, see S/2022/63.

terrorist attacks based on xenophobia, racism and intolerance were increasing. He urged the Council and all Member States to use every available tool at their disposal to sustain important gains against the threat posed by Da'esh to prevent its regional expansion and curtail its capabilities to launch attacks and recruit new members. He emphasized the need to focus on restoring human dignity, trust and social cohesion, starting by addressing the desperate situation in displacement camps and detention facilities across Syria and Iraq, where thousands of people, especially children, remained stranded at a growing risk of further radicalization and recruitment. He added that it was essential to ensure humanitarian access to those locations to alleviate suffering and reduce security concerns. He further reported that in Iraq and in the Syrian Arab Republic, Da'esh continued to operate as an entrenched rural insurgency, while its regional affiliates beyond those two countries continued to expand at an unsettling scale and pace. That, he specified, was particularly pronounced in Central, East and West Africa. In connection with the security landscape in Afghanistan following the Taliban takeover, the Under-Secretary-General reiterated the repeated calls by the Secretary-General for collective work to prevent Afghanistan from once again becoming a safe haven for terrorist activities. He also reported that in Europe, online terrorist radicalization and recruitment remained a foremost concern over the reporting period. In concluding, he urged the Council to sustain its consensus in counterterrorism cooperation.

In his briefing to Council members during the same meeting, the Acting Executive Director of the Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate asserted that the global terrorist landscape continued to present a range of complex challenges for Member States. 1107 He added that the threat of Da'esh persisted, with a resurgence of violence in Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic, and supporters notably emerging and expanding their operations in the battlefields of West, East, Southern and Central Africa while also seeking to exploit recent developments in Afghanistan. He further noted that Da'esh and other terrorist groups had sought to exploit fault lines arising from social restrictions, political tensions and economic downturns exacerbated by the pandemic. Against that backdrop, he reported that the Directorate continued to coordinate closely with the Office of Counter-Terrorism and other key partners to ensure that the

¹¹⁰⁷ See <u>S/PV.8963</u>.

recommendations of the Counter-Terrorism Committee served as the basis for relevant capacity-building activities. He informed that the Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate had recently issued its updated global survey of implementation by Member States of resolution 1373 (2001) and other resolutions, as well as its updated global survey on the implementation of resolution 1624 (2005), and a number of other reports and studies on the challenges faced by Member States. He said that the Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate had continued to work closely with the Office of Counter-Terrorism on a series of activities aimed at enhancing the capacities of Member States on, inter alia, countering terrorist travel; the creation of fusion cells; countering the trafficking of small arms and light weapons; the protection of vulnerable targets; countering the financing of terrorism; and prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration.

On 19 August, Council members heard a briefing by the Under-Secretary-General of the Office of Counter-Terrorism on the fifteenth report of the Secretary-General on the threat posed by Da'esh to international peace and security. 1108 The Under-Secretary General reported that Da'esh had continued to pose a threat to international peace and security which had been rising since the onset of the coronavirus disease pandemic, with Da'esh and its affiliates continuing to exploit pandemic-related restrictions and misuse digital spaces to intensify their efforts to recruit sympathizers and attract resources. He added that Da'esh had significantly increased the use of unmanned aerial systems and had managed to do so partially by resorting to a largely decentralized internal structure centred around a so-called general directorate of provinces and associated offices. He indicated that those offices operated not only in Iraq and Syria but also outside the core conflict zone, with the most active ones being reported in Afghanistan, Somalia and the Lake Chad basin and underscored the importance of understanding better and continuously monitoring that structure in order to counter and prevent the threat posed by Da'esh. He also noted that the threat posed by Da'esh and its affiliates remained higher in societies affected by conflict, such as the border between Iraq and Syria and Afghanistan, and reported that in Africa, Da'esh had expanded in Central, South and West Africa. He also expressed concern about the potential impact of climate-related challenges and global food insecurity in West Africa and the Sahel. Regarding Europe, he noted that Da'esh had called on

¹¹⁰⁸ See <u>S/PV.9108</u>. For the report of the Secretary-General, see <u>S/2022/576</u>.

sympathizers to carry out attacks by exploiting the easing of pandemic-related restrictions and the conflict in Ukraine. He noted that despite the persistent threat, joint efforts by Member States had continued to yield positive results and underscored that the diversity of resources used by Da'esh to finance terrorist activities and exert control over affiliated groups and fighters underlined the importance of sustained efforts to counter the financing of terrorism. He expressed deep concern about the limited progress achieved in repatriating foreign terrorist fighters and their family members from camps in the north-east of Syria. In closing, he concluded that the persistent threat posed by Da'esh, as well as the magnitude of the challenges it presented, underlined the importance of non-military measures to counter terrorism and address its consequences. He emphasized the importance of addressing the vulnerabilities, societal grievances and inequality which were exploited by the group. In this regard, he also emphasized the importance of promoting and protecting human rights and the rule of law.

During his briefing to the Council at the same meeting, the Acting Executive Director of the Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate asserted that the threat posed by Da'esh and its affiliates remained both global and evolving. 1109 He added that despite its recent leadership losses, Da'esh continued to take advantage of conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism to recruit as well as to organize and execute complex attacks. He noted that the situation in Africa, particularly in West and Central Africa and in Mozambique had become more concerning. The Acting Executive Director informed that over the current year, the Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate had been able to resume its on-site assessment visits on behalf of the Counter-Terrorism Committee. He also stated that the Directorate had issued several analytical and research products such as a report on key trends and developments in relation to Da'esh in Africa, a study on the interrelationship between counter-terrorism frameworks and international humanitarian law, and a joint report with the International Peace Institute on the relationship between masculinities and violent extremism conducive to terrorism. He also informed the Council about the forthcoming special meeting of the Counter-Terrorism Committee on the use of emerging technologies for counter-terrorism purposes, to be held from 28 to 30 October in New Delhi and Mumbai, India.

¹¹⁰⁹ See S/PV.9108.

At the same meeting, a Senior Researcher at the Institute for Security Studies, a think tank on human security in Africa, provided his reflection and analysis on why the threat posed by Da'esh to Africa was growing day by day and why the continent could be the future of the caliphate. He noted with concern that at least 20 countries in Africa had directly experienced Da'esh activity with more than 20 others being used for logistics and to mobilize funds and other resources. He emphasized that there were regional hubs which had become corridors for instability in Africa. He informed that the Lake Chad basin continued to serve as the group's biggest area of operations, that the Sahel had become ungovernable, and that Somalia remained the hotspot for the Horn of Africa. He enumerated the factors that he considered had made Da'esh successful in Africa. In this regard, he mentioned, inter alia, the presence of natural resources in connection with what he termed the battle over Africa's natural resources, the lingering grievances about global injustices and the lack of political will to deal with the Palestinian problem as a main source of radicalization for young people in Africa, the ability of Da'esh to work with other terror and criminal groups on the continent, the inconsistency in State responses to terrorism, the ailing war on terrorism in Africa, and the divorce between the fight against transnational organized crime and counter-terrorism in Africa. He stated that the Council could mobilize support for counterterrorism in Africa, be closer and more involved, and find a way to ensure that the resolutions that it adopted were communicated to those concerned on the ground, particularly at the community level. He also called on the Council to work closely with the African Union and regional economic communities in the fight against terrorism in Africa.

On 15 December, at the initiative of India which held the presidency for the month, ¹¹¹⁰ the Council held a high-level meeting under the sub-item entitled "Global counter-terrorism approach – principles and the way forward". At the meeting, the Council heard a briefing by the Under-Secretary-General of the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism, the Acting Executive Director of the Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate as well as a civil society representative.

The Under-Secretary-General of Office of Counter-Terrorism asserted that despite continuing leadership losses by Al-Qaida and Da'esh, terrorism in general had become more prevalent and more geographically widespread. He emphasized the urgency of the situation in

¹¹¹⁰ A concept note was circulated by letter dated 5 December 2022 (<u>S/2022/906</u>).

¹¹¹¹ See S/PV.9221.

West Africa and the Sahel, where terrorist groups were striving to expand their areas of operation, and added that the activities of such groups had also contributed to the deteriorating security situation in Central and Southern Africa. Turning to the situation in Afghanistan, he indicated that the sustained presence of terrorist groups in the country continued to pose serios threats to the region and beyond, as some groups had ambitions to conduct external operations. He also reported that the de facto authorities had failed to sever long-standing ties with terrorist groups sheltering in the country, despite the Council's demands to do so. The Under-Secretary-General expressed concern about the manner in which terrorist groups misused and abused developments in technological innovation, including online videogames, to advance their agendas. In that regard, he welcomed the adoption of the Delhi declaration on countering the use of new and emerging technologies for terrorist purposes at the special meeting of the Counter-Terrorism Committee held in India, in October. The Under-Secretary-General was also concerned about the increase in terrorist attacks based on xenophobia, racism and other forms of intolerance, or in the name of religion or belief. He also enumerated four principles for guiding collective action in countering terrorism going forward, namely, prevention, community-based and conflict- and gender-sensitive whole-of-society approaches, human rights at the centre of effective counter-terrorism responses, and the leverage of regional-based approaches.

During his briefing to the Council at the same meeting, the Acting Executive Director of the Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate stated that the threat of terrorism had become diffuse and diverse in nature, with battlefields emerging in the Sahel, in West, East, Southern and Central Africa and in parts of Asia. 1112 He noted that Da'esh was also persisting to regroup in its traditional geographic centre and indicated that threats from terrorism on the basis of xenophobia, racism and other forms of intolerance had been increasing. He further underlined that terrorists continued to exploit online platforms, to recruit and radicalize, raise funds, plan and coordinate operations and disseminate propaganda. He reported in that connection, that the Counter-Terrorism Committee had held a special meeting in India on 28 and 29 October, with the support of the Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate, on the topic of countering the use of new and emerging technologies for terrorist purposes. At the meeting, the Committee had

¹¹¹² Ibid.

adopted the Delhi declaration to reaffirm its commitment to working with Member States in achieving the full implementation of all relevant Council resolutions to address the threats posed by terrorism. He indicated the Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate would support the Counter-terrorism Committee in developing a set of non-binding guiding principles consistent with international human rights law and humanitarian law, with a view to assisting Member States in countering the threat posed by the use of new and emerging technologies for terrorist purposes. At the meeting, the Council also heard a briefing by a civil society representative, a staff nurse at the Cama and Albless Hospital n Mumbai who survived the terrorist attack on the hospital on 26 November 2008. She briefed the Council on her experience as a victim and survivor of terrorism, asserting that the victims and survivors of such attacks live the rest of their lives in trauma, and urging the international community, through the Council, to bring to justice the sponsors of the Mumbai attacks and give closure to the families of the victims.

At the end of the meeting, the Council adopted a presidential statement by which it reaffirmed that terrorism in all forms and manifestations constituted one of the most serious threats to international peace and security, and condemned in the strongest terms terrorism and all terrorist acts, including those on the basis of xenophobia, racism and other forms of intolerance, or in the name of religion or belief, further reaffirming that terrorism should not be associated with any religion, nationality, civilization, or group. 1113 The Council also stressed the need to promote and protect rights of victims of terrorism, including women and children, and reaffirmed that Member States must ensure that any measures taken to counter terrorism comply with all their obligations under international law, emphasizing also that effective counterterrorism measures and respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms and the rule of law were complementary and mutually reinforcing and an essential part of a successful counterterrorism effort. 1114 The Council further underscored the importance of a whole of government and whole of society approaches in increasing awareness about the threats of terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism and effectively tackling them, and urged Member States to continue efforts to ensure the full, equal and meaningful participation and leadership of women and inclusion of youth in all counter-terrorism and violent extremism conducive to

¹¹¹³ See S/PRST/2022/7, first and second paragraphs.

¹¹¹⁴ Ibid., fifth and seventh paragraphs.

terrorism approaches and strategies. ¹¹¹⁵ The Council also reiterated its call to Member States to, inter alia, take actions to address the threat posed by foreign terrorist fighters, and prevent and suppress the financing of terrorist acts and the movement of terrorists or terrorist groups through effective border controls and other measures. ¹¹¹⁶ The Council also urged Member States, when designating and applying measures to counter the financing of terrorism, to take into account the potential effect of those measures on exclusively humanitarian activities, including medical activities carried out by impartial humanitarian actors in a manner consistent with international humanitarian law. ¹¹¹⁷ The Council also expressed deep concern that the threat of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, had increased and become more diffuse, in various regions of the world, aided by the use of new and emerging technologies for terrorist purposes, while recognizing that innovations in technology could also offer significant opportunities for countering terrorism and in that regard, welcomed the adoption of the Delhi Declaration on Countering the Use of New and Emerging Technologies for Terrorist Purposes. ¹¹¹⁸

On 16 December, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 2665 (2022), under Chapter VII of the Charter, deciding that all States shall continue to take the measures required by paragraph 1 of resolution 2255 (2015) with respect to individuals and entities designated prior to the date of adoption of resolution 1988 (2011) as the Taliban, as well as other individuals, groups, undertakings and entities associated with the Taliban in constituting a threat to the peace, stability and security of Afghanistan as designated by the Committee established pursuant to paragraph 30 of resolution 1988 (2011) in the 1988 Sanctions List. 1119 The Council also decided to extend for a period of 12 months, until December 2023, the mandate of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team in support of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1988 (2011). 1120

In 2022, the discussions at the Council focused on many of the topics covered by the briefers and the decisions adopted during the meetings featured above. Council members

¹¹¹⁵ Ibid., eighth paragraph.

¹¹¹⁶ Ibid, thirteenth, fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth paragraphs.

¹¹¹⁷Ibid., seventeenth paragraph.

¹¹¹⁸ Ibid., twenty-third paragraph.

¹¹¹⁹ Resolution <u>2665 (2022)</u>, para. 1.

¹¹²⁰ Ibid., para. 2. For further information on the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team and the Committee established pursuant to resolution <u>1988 (2011)</u>, see part IX, sect. I.B.1.

expressed concern about the continued activity of Da'esh, and its expansion in other regions, particularly throughout Africa. 1121 Several Council members also expressed concern regarding the situation of foreign nationals including many women and children stranded in displaced persons camps and detention facilities, 1122 and emphasized the importance of repatriation, rehabilitation and reintegration of women and children 1123 and prosecution of foreign terrorist fighters. 1124 Furthermore, Council members discussed the importance of tackling terrorism financing, 1125 and the misuse of new technologies by terrorists. 1126 Some Council members continued to emphasize the need for the international community to prevent Afghanistan from becoming a safe haven for terrorism. 1127 Council members also discussed the importance of holistic approaches to countering terrorism, including addressing its root causes; 1128 and the need for full, equal and meaningful participation of women in counter-terrorism efforts. 1129

Developments concerning Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts were also considered under the item entitled "Briefings by Chairs of subsidiary bodies of the Security Council". 1130

See S/PV.8963, United States, United Kingdom, United Arab Emirates, Albania, China, Norway, France, Gabon, Ireland, Ghana, India, Brazil, Kenya and Russian Federation; S/PV.9108, United States, Norway, France, Ghana, Gabon, Brazil, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, Kenya, Russian Federation, Ireland, Albania, India, Mexico and China; and S/PV.9221, Ireland, United Arab Emirates, Kenya, Norway, France, China and Gabon.
 See S/PV.8963, United States and Albania; S/PV.9108, United States, Brazil, United Arab Emirates, Albania and China and S/PV.9221, United States.

¹¹²³ See <u>S/PV.8963</u>, United States, Albania, United Arab Emirates, Mexico, Ireland and Brazil; <u>S/PV.9108</u>, United States, Brazil, United Arab Emirates and China; and <u>S/PV.9221</u>, United States.

¹¹²⁴ See S/PV.8963, United States, Norway and Ireland; S/PV.9108, United States; and S/PV.9221, United States.
1125 See S/PV.8963, United States, France, Gabon, Ireland, Ghana, India and Kenya; S/PV.9108, France, Ghana, Gabon, Kenya, Albania, India and China; and S/PV.9221, India, United Arab Emirates, United States, United Kingdom, Ghana and France.

¹¹²⁶ See S/PV.8963, United Kingdom, United Arab Emirates, France and India; S/PV.9108, Ghana, United Arab Emirates, Albania, India and China; and S/PV.9221, India, Ireland, United Arab Emirates, United States, United Kingdom, Kenya, Norway, France, Albania, China and Brazil.

¹¹²⁷ See <u>S/PV.8963</u>, United States, United Kingdom, United Arab Emirates, China, France, India and Russian Federation; <u>S/PV.9108</u>, United States, Norway, France, United Kingdom, Ireland, Albania, India, Mexico and China; and <u>S/PV.9221</u>, Ireland, United Kingdom and France.

¹¹²⁸ See S/PV.8963, Albania, Norway, Mexico, Ireland, Ghana and Brazil; S/PV.9108, Norway, France, Ghana, Gabon, Brazil, Ireland, Albania, China and Mexico; and S/PV.9221, Ireland, United Arab Emirates, United States, United Kingdom, Kenya, Norway, France, Albania, China, Mexico, Brazil and Gabon.

¹¹²⁹ See <u>S/PV.8963</u>, United States, United Arab Emirates, Norway and Ireland; <u>S/PV.9108</u>, Ireland; and <u>S/PV.9221</u>, Ireland, United Arab Emirates, United States, United Kingdom, Norway and Brazil.

¹¹³⁰ See part I, sect. 31.

Meetings: Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts

Meeting record and date	Sub-item	Other documents	Rule 39 and other invitations		Decisions and vote (for-against-abstaining)
S/PV.8963 9 February 2022	Fourteenth report of the Secretary-General on the threat posed by ISIL (Da'esh) to international peace and security and the range of United Nations efforts in support of Member States in countering the threat (S/2022/63)	е	Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism, Acting Executive Director of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate	All Council Members, al invitees	1
S/PV.9108 9 August 2022	Fifteenth report of the Secretary-General on the threat posed by ISIL (Da'esh) to international peace and security and the range of United Nations efforts in support of Member States in countering the threat (S/2022/576)	e	Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism, Acting Executive Director of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, Senior Researcher, Institute fo Security Studies	All Council Members, al invitees ^a	1
<u>S/PV.9221</u> 15 December 2022	Global counter-terrorism approach – principles and the way forward Letter dated 5 December 2022 from the Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2022/906)		Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism, Acting Executive Director of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, Nursing Officer at the Cama and Albless Hospital in Mumbai	All Council Members, ^b a invitees	<u>S/PRST/2022/7</u> .ll
<u>S/PV.9222</u> 16 December 2022		Draft resolution submitted by the United States (S/2022/955)			Resolution 2665 (2022) 15-0-0 (Adopted under Chapter VII)

^a The senior Researcher at the Institute for Security Studies participated in the meeting by videoconference.

^b Ghana was represented by its Permanent Secretary. Kenya was represented by its Principal Secretary of Foreign Affairs. India was represented by its External Affairs Minister. Ireland was represented by its Minister for Foreign Affairs and Defence. United Arab Emirates was represented by its Cabinet Member and Minister of Culture and Youth. United Kingdom was represented by its Minister of State. United States of America was represented by its Under Secretary for Political Affairs.