

**Remarks by Mr. Vladimir Voronkov,
Under-Secretary-General, United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism**

Briefing to the Security Council on the 14th report of the Secretary-General on

9 February 2022

Mr. President,
Excellencies,

I thank the Security Council for the opportunity to brief you today.

Just over 20 years ago, the footage of planes crashing into the Twin Towers here in downtown New York was seared into

I am pleased to be joined today by Mr. Weixiong Chen, Acting Executive Director of the Counter-
Directorate, to present this report, which our offices prepared jointly with the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team.

I welcome the recent mandate extensions by the Council of two United Nations counter-terrorism entities: the Counter-Team, through resolutions 2610 (2021) and 2617 (2021).

I also take this opportunity to commend the excellent work of the Monitoring Team, aptly led by Mr. Edmund Fitton-Brown, which recently produced its 29th and Al-Qaida, informing the Secretary-

Mr. President,

affiliates to international peace and security remains significant.

Two weeks ago, I briefed the Security Council on the terrorism landscape in the northeast of Syrian Arab Republic, jailbreak attack on al-Hasakah city.

The assault on the prison was significant operations since Da esh defeat in Syria nearly three years ago.

The attack was also a shattering and sober reminder of the extreme brutal violence.

I was particularly disturbed by use of children as human shields during the intense fighting that occurred in and around the prison.

This deeply distressing event also took a heavy toll on the civilian population in nearby neighborhoods, and was denounced around the world.

It is encouraging to note that, according to reports, a targeted attack last week resulted in the death of -Rahman al-Salbi also known as Abu Ibrahim Al-Hashimi Al-Quraishi.

While this is perhaps the most significant in a series of blows against its leadership in recent months, is known for its ability to re-group despite similar losses in the past, maintaining and intensifying its activities in conflict-afflicted regions across the world.

We have learned over the past two decades that co 12 Tf1 0 0 1 266.33 598.2 Tm0 g0 G(the e)6(xc)-5(e)41-3(e)

Military counter-terrorism operations may be necessary, but comprehensive measures with a strong focus on prevention are required to address the dynamics that fuel the appeal of terrorism.

I therefore urge the Council and all Member States to use every available tool at their disposal to sustain important gains against the threat posed by [redacted] to prevent its regional expansion, and curtail its capabilities to launch attacks and recruit new members to its ranks.

Starting in Iraq and Syrian Arab Republic, where its operational leadership is still concentrated, [redacted] s
between the countries where it retains between 6,000 and 10,000 fighters.

During the reporting period, the group maintained its ability to launch attacks at a steady rate, including hit-and-run operations, ambushes and roadside bombs in both countries. It also continued to attack government forces and civilians with the apparent aim of instigating panic and increasing pressure on the authorities.

It is crucial to build on the momentum following the recent death of Al-Quraishi. Now is the time to address the grievances that [redacted] with their propaganda to attract new followers.

We must focus on restoring human dignity, trust and social cohesion.

This must start with addressing the desperate situation in displacement camps and detention facilities across Syria and Iraq.

I remain profoundly disturbed by the humanitarian hardships of thousands of people, especially children with presumed family links [redacted] remain stranded in this precarious limbo, at a growing risk of further radicalization and recruitment.

It is essential to ensure humanitarian access to these locations to alleviate their suffering, and reduce security concerns. While I welcome the efforts of those Member States that have repatriated their citizens, the current pace does not demonstrate the requisite urgency and is likely to exacerbate conditions conducive to terrorism.

Repatriation alone is not sufficient. Comprehensive responses in countries of nationality that include protection, prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration, as appropriate, are crucial. In this regard, I note that most of the individuals held in these camps and detention centers are Syrian and Iraqi nationals.

It is essential that these efforts are grounded in human rights and the rule of law, including due process and fair trial guarantees, promoting accountability,

I wish to highlight in this regard the Global Framework that my Office coordinates together with UNICEF, which assists requesting Member States with these efforts, and I urge the international community to support the Multi-Partner Trust Fund that was launched in September.

Mr. President,

During the reporting period, beyond Syria and Iraq continued to expand at an unsettling scale and pace, partly enabled by the proliferation of conventional arms and weapons, especially in fragile conflict settings.

While the interplay between terrorism and conflict, and the threat of spill-over is a global strategic challenge, it is particularly pronounced in Central, Eastern, and West Africa, where the would have serious and lasting repercussions well beyond the continent.

In Cabo Delgado and the border area between Mozambique and Tanzania, the affiliate has suffered setbacks following the deployment of foreign troops. There has been an increase in sporadic violent attacks on civilians in more remote areas. The group appears displaced rather than defeated, and its fighters have continued to regroup into smaller, more autonomous cells.

The in Burkina Faso, Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mali, Niger, Nigeria and Uganda is another cause for serious concern, and tactical gains in these regions may also increase revenues.

during the reporting period, following counter-terrorism gains, defections, and public investments in development initiatives.

The security landscape in Afghanistan changed dramatically on 15 August, following the Taliban take-over. Member States are concerned that terrorist groups enjoy greater freedom in Afghanistan than at any time in recent history.

I reiterate Secretary-General Guterres repeated calls to work together to prevent Afghanistan from once again becoming a safe haven for terrorist activity.

Outside conflict zones, in Europe, online terrorist radicalization and recruitment rel1 0 0 1 m0 g0 G[Gute]-5(rr)6

Mr. President,

My Office has continued to work closely with partners across all sectors.

I am very proud that we ensured business continuity during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, and intensified the implementation of our global programmes and projects to address the needs of Member States.

These efforts have been bolstered by our growing presence in the field, as requested by Member States.

This includes our new Programme Office in Nairobi and I thank Ambassador Kimani and the Government of Kenya for the close collaboration in this regard and the Programme Office for Counter-Terrorism and Training in Rabat, in which context I thank the Government of the Kingdom of Morocco.

Mr. President,

This past June, the General Assembly adopted by consensus its most comprehensive and forward-looking