



Security Council

Distr.: General
31 December 2020

Original: English

Letter dated 30 December 2020 from the Permanent Representative of Tunisia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the pleasure to inform you that, under the presidency of Tunisia, the Security Council will hold a ministerial meeting to mark the twentieth anniversary of resolution [1373 \(2001\)](#) and the establishment of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution [1373 \(2001\)](#) concerning counter-terrorism, on the theme “Trends, challenges and opportunities”. The meeting will be held virtually on 12 January 2021 at 8.30 a.m.

In order to guide the discussion on the subject, Tunisia has prepared a concept note (see annex).

I would highly appreciate it if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Tarek **Ladeb**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Tunisia



Annex to the letter dated 30 December 2020 from the Permanent Representative of Tunisia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Concept note for the Security Council ministerial meeting to mark the twentieth anniversary of resolution 1373 (2001) and the establishment of the Counter-Terrorism Committee, on the theme “Trends, challenges and opportunities”, to be held on 12 January 2021

Background

1. The terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 in New York, Washington, D.C., and Pennsylvania sent a shock wave across the globe. The Security Council quickly reacted through the adoption of the landmark resolution 1373 (2001), which drastically changed the global approach to counter-terrorism. Setting the bedrock of the Council’s action in the field of counter-terrorism, the Council called upon States to implement a number of measures aiming at enhancing their legal and institutional capacity to prevent and counter terrorist threats, including by criminalizing terrorist acts, ensuring that terrorists are brought to justice and denying them safe havens and financial support. The Council also called upon States to work together urgently to prevent and suppress terrorist acts, including through increased cooperation and the full implementation of the relevant international conventions relating to terrorism.
2. The Security Council, in the same resolution, also established the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1373 (2001) concerning counter-terrorism, also known as the Counter-Terrorism Committee, as a subsidiary body of the Council in charge of monitoring the implementation of the resolution and called upon all States to report to the Committee. The mandate of the Committee and of its Executive Directorate continued to expand with the strengthening of the international counter-terrorism framework. A wide range of topics have since been addressed by the Council in several key resolutions,¹ including law enforcement, border management, judicial measures, international cooperation, financing of terrorism, use of biometrics and countering terrorist narratives and the misuse of information and communications technologies for terrorist purposes, with the integration of human rights and gender dimensions as cross-cutting issues.
3. Furthermore, the Committee and its Executive Directorate have developed important tools to monitor, promote and facilitate the implementation of the relevant resolutions.² These tools have allowed a constructive and in-depth dialogue with Member States to identify good practices, remaining challenges and areas of possible technical assistance.
4. Since 2001, the global terrorist threat has continued to evolve significantly. New terrorist groups have emerged, including Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and its affiliates. The world witnessed their increased ability to expand their networks on the ground and online, their considerable financial capacities, their use of sophisticated methods for recruitment, financing and planning and their ability to

¹ Including resolutions 1624 (2005), 2178 (2014), 2185 (2014), 2195 (2014), 2242 (2015), 2322 (2016), 2341 (2017), 2354 (2017), 2368 (2017), 2370 (2017), 2388 (2017), 2395 (2017), 2396 (2017), 2462 (2019), 2467 (2019) and 2482 (2019).

² Including country visits, the overview of implementation assessment the detailed implementation survey, the Madrid Guiding Principles on stemming the flow of foreign terrorist fighters (2015) (S/2015/939, annex II) and the addendum thereto (2018) (S/2018/1177, annex), and the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate technical guides and global implementation surveys.

adapt to national and international counter-terrorism mechanisms. They proved their capability to seize control over territories of sovereign States. They were also a major factor exacerbating ongoing conflicts, rendering them more violent and complicated and undermining peace efforts. New trends also emerged, such as the mobilization of “sleeper cells” or “lone wolves” in inspired attacks, particularly against soft or vulnerable targets, the misuse of new information and communications technologies, the growing interlinkages with transnational organized crime, the mobilization of foreign terrorist fighters in conflicts and the emergence of ethnically or racially motivated terrorism.³

5. In this framework, States are faced with the challenging task of balancing the effectiveness of their counter-terrorism measures and respect for their international obligations and commitments, particularly under international human rights law, international humanitarian law and international refugee law. They are required to address the root causes of terrorism and violent extremism while recognizing that this phenomenon cannot and should not be associated with any religion, nationality, civilization or ethnic group. To meet such a challenge, they need to adopt a whole-of-government and a whole-of-society approach that promotes the more active participation of civil society, the private sector, women and youth.

6. States are also required to develop cooperative mechanisms able to address the transnational dimensions of the threat. The proliferation of Security Council resolutions related to terrorism, the expansion of the mandate of the Committee, the development of a sophisticated United Nations architecture and the increasing efforts within regional and subregional organizations reflect the desire to strengthen and adapt international cooperation. More remains to be done in order to garner further support and coordination among all relevant stakeholders.

Objectives

7. The commemoration of the twentieth anniversary of Security Council resolution [1373 \(2001\)](#) and the establishment of the Committee is taking place against the backdrop of a turbulent and complex global security landscape, which has been further exacerbated by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. The health crisis has rapidly been placed as a top priority of the national and international agendas, diverting attention, capacities and resources from other priorities, including countering terrorism. The pandemic has also showcased the need to find new ways to ensure a continued ability to monitor the implementation of the relevant Council resolutions and to facilitate the delivery of technical assistance to States in changing and challenging circumstances.

8. The meeting constitutes an opportunity to assess the progress made in creating the necessary legal and institutional frameworks related to the prevention and countering of terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism and to highlight possible existing gaps and challenges in terms of international cooperation. The meeting should also contribute to identifying emerging trends and to laying the groundwork for common priorities that would shape future multilateral action.

9. During the meeting, Member States are encouraged to address the following questions:

(a) What are the challenges facing Member States in complying with the obligations set forth in Security Council resolution [1373 \(2001\)](#) and relevant subsequent resolutions?

³ Also identified by a number of countries as “extreme right-wing terrorism”.

(b) How efficient are international cooperation and technical assistance tools in helping Member States to combat terrorism and violent extremism? What are the best practices developed? How can they be better disseminated?

(c) How can the Security Council, through its Counter-Terrorism Committee, enhance and adapt its response to the constantly volatile and changing terrorist threat? What are the main challenges, and which areas should be prioritized?

(d) How can the current United Nations counter-terrorism architecture provide a further unified and integrated response to the existing gaps and needs, including through coordination between relevant subsidiary bodies as well as through the interaction between the Counter-Terrorism Committee, its Executive Directorate and other relevant United Nations entities?

Format, briefers and outcome

10. The briefing will be held virtually on 12 January 2021 at 8.30 a.m. at the ministerial level and will be chaired by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Tunisia. The briefers will include:

(a) The Under-Secretary-General of the Office of Counter-Terrorism;

(b) The Assistant Secretary-General and Executive Director of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate.

11. An outcome document, most likely a presidential statement based on consensual language, is envisaged.
