

Security Council Open Debate
Threats to International Peace and Security Caused by Terrorist Acts
International Cooperation on Combating Terrorism and Violent Extremism
November 2014, Security Council Chamber

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

I thank you, Madam President, for organizing this important meeting. I also thank the Australian Foreign Minister for her bold introductory statement. Three months have passed since the Security Council adopted resolution 2170 (2014), which was soon strengthened with the long-awaited adoption of resolution 2178 (2014). In assessing the efforts undertaken by the United Nations to implement those two resolutions since then, we note that the Organization continues to turn a blind eye to Governments that support terrorism, which have taken advantage of the United Nations silence to compete repulsively with one another in their pretence of combating terrorism. The efforts of the relevant bodies of the United Nations have been characterized by their slow-paced, bureaucratic nature, rather than by a relentless and effective endeavour to address the grave threat posed to Member States and international peace and security by terrorism.

Certain efforts have strikingly lacked the required firmness. For example, the draft questionnaire on the phenomenon of foreign terrorist fighters, proposed by the United Nations Centre for Counter-Terrorism of the Department of Political Affairs, is the result of three years of work. According to United Nations officials, it will take 18 months to implement and will require terrorists returning from abroad to respond voluntarily to the naive questions contained therein.

Another weakness of the United Nations response is the ongoing opacity of certain subsidiary committees in evaluating the information submitted by Member States. For instance, I note that we have yet to receive a reply to any of our official letters to the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004), the most recent of which, dated 22 October, has an annex of photographs of victims of bombs containing skin-burning chemical substances, used by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) against the inhabitants of the Ayn al-Arab region in Syria. We also do not know if the Committee is following or interested in ISIL's current attempts to introduce and use VX toxic gas on Syrian soil, although we alerted it to that danger two days ago.

For their part, high-ranking officials of the Secretariat and even the Secretary-General's official Spokesperson continue to use the expression "armed opposition" in referring to terrorist organizations included on the list of the Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999) and 1989 (2011) concerning Al-Qaida and associated individuals and entities. They have persisted in this odd approach in spite of several letters we have sent to the Secretary-General on this issue, in which we have underscored the contradiction between this description and the resolutions of the Security Council.

At the international level, over the past three months several States have taken measures to honour their international commitments. Others, including sponsors of international terrorism, have established an alliance outside the framework of the United Nations and without a Security Council mandate in order to carry out air strikes against ISIL in Syria and

Iraq. In spite of appeals by the Syrian Government for cooperation and coordination in order to achieve the common objective of eliminating terrorism, some States that support terrorism have undermined any joint efforts on the matter. Today, nearly two months after the beginning of air strikes against ISIL, we read in American newspapers, such as *The Washington Post*, statements by United States officials asserting that more than 1,000 foreign terrorist fighters move across the Turkish border into Syria and Iraq to join the ranks of terrorist organizations, adding that the rate has not changed in spite of the air strikes. Therefore, while the monthly number of deaths among ISIL fighters averages about 500, the organization is taking in about 1,000 new terrorists per month. That confirms what we have said repeatedly, namely, that air strikes cannot achieve their established goals if they are carried out in violation of the Charter of the United Nations and without cooperation and coordination with the Governments concerned — and if they are not accompanied by enjoining States that incite and support terrorism to stop their practices that violate the principles of international law and the provisions of the Charter and pose a threat to international peace and security.

In that regard, I should like to draw the Council's attention to a story published in *The New York Times* on 3 November. According to that paper, American officials have suggested a possible action by the coalition to expel ISIL from Iraq. That is a welcome effort, to which we agree. However, after achieving that objective and chasing ISIL out of Iraq, those terrorist elements would be pushed into Syrian territory, rather than eliminating them. The goal is probably to allow the coalition to justify continuing its operations for three to four years.

Another dangerous element lies in the fact that coalition aircraft have targeted oil and gas wells and facilities that belong to the Syrian people, resulting in a serious loss of gas and oil, damaging the Syrian economy and sources of revenue that could help the Syrian State and people to rebuild.

Buddhist wisdom has it that there are three things that cannot be hidden for long: the sun, the moon and the truth. My delegation expects the United Nations to play an effective role in ending the practices of States that support terrorism. Those terrorists who are killing, raping and selling women in slave markets are Saudi. The person who is massacring journalists and foreign nationals is British. The kidnapers of Christian and other clerics are Chechen. The head of the Khorasan organization is a Kuwaiti. The kidnapper of peacekeepers of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon is Jordanian, while the one who paid him ransom is Qatari. Mehdi Nemmouche, who attacked the Jewish synagogue in Brussels, is French. Some of the beheaders are Australian. While the financiers, the inciters and the arms providers are Saudis and Qataris. The host, the smuggler and the trainer of terrorist elements sent to Syrian territory is Turkish. The supporter and ultimate beneficiary is Israeli. Meanwhile, the suffering is being borne by Syrians, Iraqis and Lebanese.

Paragraphs 14 and 31 of the latest report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team (see S/2014/815) mentions the presence of thousands of foreign terrorists linked to Al-Qaida in Syria and Iraq, coming from more than 80 countries from all regions of the world. In paragraph 71, the Monitoring Team points to the existence of terrorist training camps in Libya and neighbouring countries, namely, Jordan, Turkey and Saudi Arabia. The Government of Syria has been drawing attention to this development for years,

without getting any response to our appeals from the so-called international community.

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic welcomed resolutions 2170 (2014) and 2178 (2014), calling for their strict implementation. The Government has also expressed its willingness to cooperate at the regional and international levels to combat terrorism. Syria will continue to combat the terrorism posed by ISIL, the Al-Nusra Front and other terrorist groups, which some like to call moderate opposition and which have been carrying out massacres and barbaric acts against Syrians, some of which were timed simultaneously with meetings of the Security Council so as to accuse and criticize the Government of Syria.

I have in my possession the confession of one of the terrorists who carried out the Houla massacre on 25 May 2012, one day before a Council meeting on Syria. We will transmit that confession to the Committee established pursuant to Security Council resolution 1373 (2001). The confession has been translated and is available to Council members.

Lastly, I should like to express my disagreement with the unobjective opinion of the Permanent Representative of France, namely, that ISIL has been able to grow thanks to what he called the support of the Syrian regime. This is a stunning contradiction coming from the representative of a permanent Member State of the Security Council. The French Permanent Representative appears not to have heard or understood what was said by his Australian colleague and Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1267 (1999) in his briefing. The Ambassador of Australia said verbatim that ISIL as an organization evolved from Al-Qaida in Iraq and its origins were in terrorist networks in Afghanistan.

Obviously, Al-Qaida, its affiliates and its splinter groups have been able to grow thanks to the support of Saudi Arabia for terrorism in Afghanistan. We all know that the perpetrators of the 9/11 attacks were Saudis, and those who commit massacres in my country today are supported by Saudi Arabia and Qatar.

Seventy-two Saudi clerics launched a call to all Muslims to go to Syria for jihad. If Saudi Arabia is serious about combating terrorism, how could it allow those disreputable people, who claim to speak in the name of Islam, issue calls for jihad in Syria? The question is aimed at the Saudi Ambassador, who has just left.