

As delivered



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MINISTERIAL-LEVEL BRIEFING

THREATS TO INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY CAUSED BY TERRORIST ACTS: THE
SECRETARY-GENERAL'S 13TH BIENNIAL STRATEGIC-LEVEL REPORT ON THE THREAT
POSED BY ISIL OR DA'ESH

THURSDAY 19TH AUGUST 2021 - 10:00 AM

STATEMENT BY AMB. MARTIN KIMANI, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE

1. I thank your Excellency **Subrahmanyam Jaishankar**, Minister of External Affairs of India, for organising this meeting and making your way here to New York to chair it.
2. I also thank Under-Secretary-General **Vladimir Voronkov**, Assistant Secretary-General **Michèle Coninsx** and Mr Davood Moradian, for their briefings on the Secretary-General's 13th strategic-level report on the threat posed by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant.
3. The threat posed by ISIL and its affiliates remains real and dangerously potent. As the findings of the report have noted, the group still maintains operational capability and could likely surge its activities in a post-Covid 19 landscape.
4. Kenya has a bitter experience with international terrorism, and we are a frontline state in combatting it. Especially vivid is the 1998 Al Qaeda attack on the US Embassy that treated Kenyan lives as mere collateral damage. We have responded. By building a genuine multi-agency capability from the national to local levels. Our agencies share intelligence and undertake joint operations. We have acted to try and limit radicalisation and recruitment in prisons. We have hardened our judicial capacities with magistrates and judges more aware of the law the terrorist crimes it seeks to address. We work with regional and global partners and have undertaken to share experiences and build capacity in countries in our region, and further afield, who are faced with this challenge.
5. Kenya has also built a robust and growing prevention capability. It spans disengagement of terrorist group recruits: from early stage to past fighters who for whatever reason do not belong in the criminal-justice process. We have built a Countering Violent Extremism platform that includes County Action Plans that bring together security agencies, local administrators and civil society to diagnose and address radicalisation and recruitment together. Our entire effort is grounded in public outreach to ensure the Kenyan people know and are positively responsive to the challenge of terrorism.
6. As we discuss the report, I want to point to a specific area that I believe needs much more action than is being taken at present. That is our duty to the victims of

sexual violence by ISIL and children born out such cruel abuse. Many of them continue to be confined in camps in Iraq and Syria which have unfortunately become breeding grounds for recruitment and radicalisation, as well as incubators of ardent terrorist elements. We have to do more. In the mandates that touch on this matter, we have to act to make them fit for action in addressing this important problem.

7. Kenya is alarmed by ISIL's expansion in many regions, especially in countries in Africa where its provinces and offshoots are entrenching themselves in conflict situations with far-reaching implications.
8. As I have listened to delegations, I have noted the frequent description of the challenge of ISIL as belonging to "Africa" as a whole. And yet we know that the majority of African countries are not at present directly faced with this threat. We need a finer brush to paint the canvas. If we characterise the entire continent as under the direct and active threat of terrorism, we risk creating a two-speed counter terrorism regime. Such usually come with damaging double standards particularly in the level and commitment of support. It also risks causing policymakers in the International Community feel that the problem is too large to address when in fact it is very specific to a few countries and only a few regions within those.
9. Having said that, it is true that IS and Al-Qaeda linked and inspired groups in Africa are embedding themselves in multiple domestic conflicts. Particularly in countries seeking to establish democratic institutions, with the terrorists attempting to influence and control the political agenda. In Somalia for instance, ongoing elections are being subjected to intimidation by Al-Shabaab and their political backers.
10. As the ongoing developments leading to the takeover of Afghanistan by the Taliban show, the Council should be concerned on the possibility that they may inspire copycat tactics within the region and internationally by fellow ideological groups with dire, long-term consequences.
11. **Mr. President,** Kenya is extremely concerned that the terrorism financing activities of Al-Shabaab and similar groups have surged. At times their revenues can rival or even surpass those of governments. We simply must do more to tackle this menace regionally and globally. We must be able to admit and deal with the fact that

humanitarian supply chains are part of the financing package and find ways to address this rather than hiding our heads in the sand.

12. In view of the highlighted issues, **Mr President**, I wish to underscore a number Measures that Kenya considers necessary in efforts to counter the rising threat of ISIL:
- i) **ONE:** I strongly echo the call by H.E. Jaishanker for listing regimes to be predicable and transparent. When countries seek to list terrorist entities, they must find a process that is logical and clear. The same should apply to delisting.
 - ii) **TWO:** We urge for protection of democratic processes and a united global call denouncing any attempts of takeover of legitimate political aspirations of the citizenry by IS and Al-Qaeda elements.
 - iii) **THREE:** The Security Council must be ready to utilise the full effect of resolution 1267 by urgently taking steps to revitalise the global counter terrorism architecture. In the first instance, declared IS and Al Qaeda groups such as Al Shabaab should be placed under the 1267 sanction regime. I was encouraged to hear delegations calling for a strong 1267 regime. Unfortunately we must note that our request to list Al Shabaab under 1267 was resisted. Despite the fact that everyone knows that the group is a committed Al Qaeda affiliate. The turning down of our request damages the credibility of the 1267 regime. It undermines the global counter terrorism architecture that was established by this Council following the 9/11 attacks.
 - iv) **FOUR:** It is good for us to emphasise our values when it comes to defending the frustration of humanitarian aid delivery due to counter terrorism sanctions. However, constantly restating this position does not address the very real problem that we have. The problem is not only that experienced by humanitarian actors seeking to deliver aid in situations with a terrorist entity present.
 - v) The other important problem that must be acknowledged is that terrorism is a major driver of humanitarian crisis. Terrorist groups are seeking to

dismantle and destroy states, and to control populations. This is leading to enormous humanitarian consequences. Determined counter terrorism prevents humanitarian catastrophe.

- vi) It is time there was a more productive conversation rather than restating principles and values at every sitting while refusing to engage with a very real problem. We must make the humanitarian curve-outs more operationally effective, and counter terrorism sanctions must be applied to do the job they are intended for.
- vii) **FINALLY:** We must do more to address the role of identity and state-building in dealing with the problem of ISIL and terrorism in general. Globally, the mediation of diverse identities in state-building is leading to political crises and conflicts. We must pay greater attention to this fundamental challenge when peacebuilding, during transitions from UN Missions, and in the long-term support to national governments. We hope to extend this conversation in October during our presidency.

- 15. In conclusion, I wish to reaffirm Kenya's condemnation in the strongest terms of all acts of terror in all their manifestation, wherever they are committed. Our support for all counter-terrorism efforts by member States, regional frameworks and the United Nations is unwavering.
- 16. Finally, Kenya supports the Press Statement circulated by the Presidency.

I thank you.