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Note to the Secretary-General
(through the Deputy Secretary-General)

EXECUTIVE OFFICE
OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

✓ / SECURITY COUNCIL SUMMIT ON FOREIGN TERRORIST FIGHTERS
24 September 2014

15/09/14

for
Update
policy

1. Experts estimate that foreign nationals from over 80 countries have travelled to take part in the fighting in Syria, many of whom are now also actively engaged in terrorist activities in Iraq. The exact number of 'Foreign Terrorist Fighters' (FTFs) associated with ISIL and the Al-Qaeda affiliate Al Nusra Front (ANF) is unknown but is estimated to exceed 13,000 individuals. Many Member States have expressed concern over the increasing flow of these international recruits to terrorist organizations. Apart from their impact locally, many Member States are concerned that when these fighters return home, or move to other destinations, they may pose a wider threat to Member States' stability and security.

2. As chair of the Security Council for the month of September, the United States (US) will convene a high-level Security Council Summit in New York on 24 September 2014 to address and focus on the serious and emerging threat posed by FTFs. This high-level meeting will be chaired by the US President, Barack Obama.

3. In preparation for this meeting, a draft resolution addressing the FTFs phenomenon has been put forward by the US and is currently being negotiated among the Council members. Key elements of the proposed resolution include:

The latest
draft
Resolution
is attached

- The growing threat that the unprecedented flow of fighters and facilitation networks represent, which increasingly fuels multiple conflicts worldwide and threatens domestic or home-grown terrorist attacks in the FTF's country of origin or other countries they may travel to.
- The reinforcement of the existing UN counter-terrorism framework to address more directly FTF and violent extremism, including through expanding and clarifying previous Member States' obligations, strengthening international cooperation mechanisms, and calling upon Member States to report to the Security Council on their progress in this regard.
- The introduction of new elements into the international community's counterterrorism legal and policy frameworks, including a definition of the term 'Foreign Terrorist Fighter', the scope of which is currently being discussed among Council members. The resolution will require States, among other issues, to prevent and suppress recruiting, organizing, transporting and equipping of FTFs, and the financing of FTF travel and activities; to ensure States' legislation effectively prosecutes and penalizes FTFs; and to prevent the entry or transit of individuals believed to be traveling for terrorism-related purposes.
- The need to deepen the UN engagement on the FTF phenomenon, including by requesting the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED) and the Al-Qaeda/Taliban Monitoring Team to focus on this threat, coordinate its efforts with the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF), and submit a report on this topic to the Security Council that will include an assessment and recommendations.

4. The Council has invited you to present the opening remarks, and the CTITF Office within DPA is currently working on the draft with inputs from various parts of the UN system, including core UN entities working on terrorism-related issues.

5. After your statement, the Security Council members will be invited to speak on the challenges they are facing in regard to FTFs, as well as on lessons learnt and good practices to counter violent extremism. Members will also discuss international cooperation and the UN's

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ability to respond to the larger FTF threat. As a follow-up to this discussion, the Security Council will revisit this issue in consultations within six months.

6. The UN has already moved to take action through the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre (UNCCT)'s project on enhancing the understanding of the FTF's phenomenon and developing best practices to counter the free flow of 'Foreign Fighters' in Syria and around the world. This project which will benefit from the recent financial contributions to UNCCT, will be launched before the Council Summit in a briefing to Member States on 16 September. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) is also launching a global project on strengthening the legal regime against emerging terrorist threats including FTFs.

8. This political and institutional momentum, the transnational nature of these new terrorist threats, and the recent Saudi contribution of USD 100 million to the UNCCT within the CTITF Office could provide a strategic opportunity to position the United well in international efforts to fight terrorism.



Jeffrey Feltman
Under-Secretary-General
15 September 2014

CC: Ms. Susana Malcorra