

**Open briefing of the Counter-Terrorism Committee on the implementation of
the Security Council resolution
2178(2014) by the States most affected by
foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs)**

Statement by Counsellor Mr. Abhishek Singh

[22 July 2016]

Mr. Chairman,

We thank you for organizing this discussion on an issue that is of great concern for the international community today.

2. The rapidly expanding scale of the involvement of Foreign Terrorist Fighters is vastly transforming the already formidable and disproportionate challenge posed by terrorism across the world.

3. Although the attention now being attached to this phenomenon flows from the context of what is happening in Iraq and Syria, the phenomenon itself is not new. Foreign terrorist fighters have been involved in various conflicts around the world. It is the scale of the problem that finally appears to be bringing all of us to address this issue collectively.

Mr. Chairman,

4. The UNSC Report S/2015/975 of 29 December 2015 and also mentioned by by the CTED in their briefing today notes a *'pattern'* of terrorist attacks in the context of India *'that began to emerge more than two decades ago and shows no signs of abatement'*. It further notes that *'India continues to be among the world's most consistently targeted States'* and that *'Since the 1990s, it has endured multiple terrorist attacks linked to individuals who have trained or fought with Al-Qaida associates in Pakistan and Afghanistan'*.

5. We in India have been strengthening various measures to tackle this threat. These include proscribing various entities and individuals who have been involved in acts of terrorism, including the designation of ISIS/ISIL, and pre-empting travel to Iraq/Syria and prosecuting, where necessary. The Report also acknowledges the measures that India has taken in respect of Advance Passenger Information and Passenger Name Records. The Report also refers to the India-US cooperation into the Mumbai terrorist attacks of 2008.

6. While in India we have continued to improve our capacities to deal with and counter such terrorist attacks on our territory, where the involvement of foreign terrorist fighters has

been repeatedly clearly established, we have found only limited international cooperation forthcoming to address this challenge.

Mr. Chairman,

7. It is now being increasingly recognized that this is a challenge that concerns us all and that no country is immune to this threat. Foreign Terrorist Fighters from almost 100 countries are believed to be mobilized by ISIL!

8. While there have been isolated instances of effective international cooperation involving a few or a group of countries, a much larger scale of collective effort is necessary.

9. The Reports under consideration highlight several areas where international cooperation can help build national capacities such as preventing incitement/inter-state travel/financing of terrorists; criminalization of preparatory acts aimed at committing terrorist acts outside the State; and better law enforcement and prosecution; and improving intelligence gathering and sharing.

Mr. Chairman,

10. As pointed out in the various reports under consideration, considerable framework for such international cooperation already exists either at the UN bodies or in regional or other multilateral fora. At the UN, from the UNSC resolution 1373 of 2001 to resolution 2178 of 2014, and the sanctions committees such as 1267 Committee, several measures undertaken by the Security Council seek to address the threat of international terrorism.

11. The issue, however, is less of technical fine-tuning and more of mobilizing a collective political will that reflects the oft-quoted 'zero tolerance' to terrorism and gives full implementation to even the measures envisaged under such frameworks. This is reflected in the continuing lack of agreement to finalise a Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism that would send a strong message of a united international community. This is also reflected in the way the Sanctions Committees function reflecting very short term narrow priorities on part of some.

Mr. Chairman,

12. The non-local nature of terrorism, as reflected most clearly in the growing phenomenon of foreign terrorist fighters, means that no single country, acting alone, has the capacity to deal with this problem effectively. At the same time, the impact that the spread of violent extremism and the returning fighters have on societies also demonstrates increasingly that no country can assume that it will remain safe by not cooperating with others on this issue.

13. Any support of any kind to such terrorist acts or even lack of any action in countering such acts when they target another country, can only lead to disastrous consequences for all. Only a genuine recognition of this can lead us to begin to collaborate to jointly address this challenge that is posing a threat to all our societies.

14. India has, for a long time, been advocating a much closer international cooperation on countering terrorism globally. We hope that the time has now finally come when we can begin addressing this threat collectively with the seriousness it deserves. India stands ready to cooperate with all our partners in this endeavour.

Thank you.