

Special meeting of the Counter-Terrorism Committee commemorating the 20th anniversary of the adoption of Security Council resolution 1373 (2001) and the establishment of the Counter-Terrorism Committee

*Economic and Social Council Chamber, United Nations Headquarters, New York,
Thursday, 4 November 2021*

Concept note

A. Introduction

1. On 28 September 2001, the Security Council adopted its resolution 1373 (2001), a landmark resolution that defined a broad counter-terrorism mandate for the international community and established the Counter-Terrorism Committee to monitor Member States' implementation of its provisions. This unanimous recognition by the Security Council of the severe threat posed by terrorism to international peace and security was a pivotal moment in the international community's counter-terrorism response to terrorism.

2. Since 2001, the United Nations has been at the heart of the global effort to combat terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. The Council has taken the leading role in guiding the evolution of the approaches required to address the threat of terrorism. Security Council resolution 1373 (2001) is the foundation upon which the Council's active counter-terrorism framework is built and continues to provide the basis for further developments in countering terrorism.

3. The year 2021 marks the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1373 (2001) and the establishment of the Committee. The Council stated that it looked forward to a special meeting to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the resolution's adoption.¹ Accordingly, the Committee decided in its 2021 work programme that it would arrange a special meeting, with the support of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED).^{2,3}

4. The special meeting is scheduled to be held at United Nations Headquarters, New York, Thursday 04 November 2021, as a full-day event. The special meeting would be open to the wider United Nations membership and other relevant stakeholders.

5. The special meeting was preceded on 3 September 2021 by an open meeting of the Committee with the CTED Global Research Network (GRN) on "Emerging threats, trends and

¹ In paragraph 11 of its resolution 2395 (2017), the Council states that it "looks forward to a special meeting to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1373 (2001) and the establishment of the CTC".

² In paragraph 17 of its 2021 work programme (S/2021/278), the Committee decides that "the Committee, with the support of the Executive Directorate, will prepare and arrange for a special meeting to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1373 (2001) and the establishment of the Committee".

³ In its 2021 work programme, CTED also states that "it will provide support to the Committee in preparing and arranging for a special meeting to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1373 (2001) and the establishment of the Committee".

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developments in terrorism and counter-terrorism: reflecting on 20 years of countering the terrorist threat”.⁴

B. Background: resolution 1373 (2001) and the establishment of the Committee

6. On 28 September 2001, in the wake of the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 against the United States, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 1373 (2001), establishing the basis of the Security Council’s future response to the terrorist threat. Adopted pursuant to Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter, the resolution created a body of legally binding obligations on Member States, calling upon them to implement measures intended to enhance their legal, institutional, and operational capacities to counter terrorist activities at home, in their regions, and around the world, and to work together to prevent and suppress terrorist acts. As noted above, the resolution also established the Counter-Terrorism Committee, which consists of all 15 members of the Security Council, to monitor States’ implementation of the resolution.

7. During the two decades since the adoption of resolution 1373 (2001), the Council has continued to play the leading role in the development of international policy and norms to address terrorism as a threat to international peace and security. Its counter-terrorism approaches have continued to develop and expand to support Member States in their efforts to counter the rapidly evolving global terrorist threat. Just two weeks after the adoption of resolution 1373 (2001), the Council adopted resolution 1377 (2001), which expanded the Committee’s mandate to facilitate the delivery of technical assistance aimed at enhancing States’ counter-terrorism capacities. The Council also stressed, in resolution 1456 (2003), that States must ensure that any measures taken to counter terrorism comply with all their obligations under international law, in particular international human rights law, international refugee law, and international humanitarian law. The Council has since reaffirmed that position in a number of subsequent resolutions.

8. A significant event in the development of the Council’s work on counter-terrorism was its 26 March 2004 adoption of resolution 1535 (2004), which established the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED) as a special political mission to assist the Committee in its work to monitor the implementation of resolution 1373 (2001) and continue the work on facilitation of the delivery of technical assistance aimed at enhancing Member States’ capacity-building. Since that time, CTED’s mandate has been regularly expanded to support the Committee’s growing mandate and to address the new tasks conferred upon the Committee and CTED by the relevant Council resolutions.

9. The threat of terrorism continues to evolve. It has been marked in particular by the emergence of the foreign terrorist fighter (FTF) phenomenon, the rapid multiplication of methods used to finance terrorism, and the increasingly complex nature of the conflict situations in which terrorism is perpetrated and, in some cases, further fomented. The rapid increase in the

⁴ https://www.un.org/securitycouncil/ctc/sites/www.un.org.securitycouncil.ctc/files/20210901_ctc_grn_open_meeting_draft_concept_note.pdf

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use of technology for terrorist purposes and the ways in which terrorist narratives and extremist messaging are disseminated (notably through information and communications technologies (ICT), including the Internet) also pose significant challenges to Member States. In many regions of the world, these evolving threats are further exacerbated by socio-economic and humanitarian conditions, many of which disproportionately affect women and young people, that make communities more vulnerable to radicalization to violence and recruitment to terrorism. The related challenges have been further exacerbated by the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

10. Building on the foundations established by resolution 1373 (2001), the Council has taken actions to address these and other evolving terrorist threats, as well as the complex contexts in which terrorism occurs, through the adoption of over 20 additional resolutions relating to counter-terrorism.⁵ In recent years, the Council has also issued a number of presidential statements and policy documents and the Committee has adopted a range of assessment tools to guide Member States and the work of the Committee and CTED to support States in their implementation of Security Council resolutions on counter-terrorism.⁶ In doing so, the Council has continued to strengthen and define its comprehensive and multidimensional approach to counter-terrorism and to call attention to specific aspects of the multiple challenges encountered and ways to address them.

11. The mandates of the Committee and CTED have also continued to expand and evolve in accordance with the expansion and evolution of the international counter-terrorism framework and the United Nations counter-terrorism architecture. The Committee plays an increasingly substantial role in monitoring, promoting and facilitating the implementation of Security Council resolutions on terrorism through its assessments of, facilitation of technical assistance delivery to, and constructive dialogue with Member States.

12. The Committee's focus now encompasses a broad range of threats and emerging trends, including with respect to comprehensive and integrated counter-terrorism strategies, legal and judicial measures, international cooperation, countering the financing of terrorism, law enforcement, border management, biometrics, countering terrorist narratives and the misuse of ICT for terrorist purposes. The Committee has also significantly enhanced its work to consistently emphasize that human rights and gender are cross-cutting issues that must be applied across all aspects of countering terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism and to stress that the integration of the gender perspective and respect for human rights and the rule of law all constitute essential components of successful counter-terrorism efforts.

13. The Committee and CTED also continue to take stock of progress made by Member States in implementing resolution 1373 (2001) and other relevant resolutions, including by identifying relevant good practices. Over the past 20 years, the Committee and CTED have

⁵ Since the adoption of resolution 1373 (2001), the Council has adopted over 20 additional resolutions relating to counter-terrorism, including resolutions 1377 (2001), 1456 (2003), 1566 (2004), 1624 (2005), 1963 (2010), 2129 (2013), 2133 (2014), 2178 (2014), 2185 (2014), 2195 (2014), 2220 (2015), 2242 (2015), 2253 (2015), 2322 (2016), 2331 (2016), 2341 (2017), 2354 (2017), 2368 (2017), 2370 (2017), 2388 (2017), 2395 (2017), 2396 (2017), 2462 (2019), and 2482 (2019).

⁶ These include *the Madrid Guiding Principles on stemming the flow of Foreign Terrorist Fighters* (S/2015/939), the *Addendum to the guiding principles on foreign terrorist fighters* (2018) (S/2018/1177), the *Framework document for Counter-Terrorism Committee visits to Member States* (S/2020/731); the *Technical guide to the implementation of Security Council resolution 1373 (2001) and other resolutions* (S/2019/998); and the *Global Survey of the implementation of resolution 1373 (2001) by Member States* (issued in 2009, 2011, 2016 and 2021).

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gathered and regularly updated a large pool of data, including on good practices relating to the legal, institutional and operational counter-terrorism measures undertaken by Member States. This data is utilized to produce the Committee's reports and CTED analytical documents and assessment tools and is also shared with partners within the wider United Nations system, in particular under the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact.

C. Topics for special meeting

14. Although much has been accomplished in the area of countering and preventing terrorism, significant challenges and gaps remain. This special meeting will provide an opportunity to reflect on the work of the Committee and CTED over the last 20 years and to address the change and impact achieved through their committed efforts. It will facilitate in-depth discussion of the successes achieved and challenges encountered by States in implementing resolution 1373 (2001) and subsequent resolutions, as well as their various good practices developed.

15. The discussions will focus on the progress made and continuing challenges in implementing resolution 1373 (2001) and other relevant resolutions, as addressed by the Committee's 2021 updated *Global survey of the implementation of resolution 1373 (2001) and other relevant resolutions by Member States* (S/2021/XXX) and as experienced by States themselves. Participants are encouraged to reflect on significant developments in the work of the Committee and CTED to advance international standards, promote the adoption of a comprehensive approach to counter-terrorism, encourage engagement with civil society and its integration into the overarching global counter-terrorism effort, and ensure the inclusion of the human rights and gender dimensions in countering terrorism and violent extremism leading to terrorism.

16. This special meeting will also adopt a forward-looking stance by considering next steps for the Committee and CTED, as well as the future of counter-terrorism efforts. This will enable Member States, United Nations bodies, international and regional organizations and entities, civil society groups and academia to discuss areas where further engagement and innovation are required, especially with regard to addressing emerging terrorist threats and ways in which the United Nations counter-terrorism efforts and architecture could be further enhanced to help strengthen States' responses to the global terrorist threat, in compliance with international law, including international human rights, refugee, and humanitarian law.

17. Participants are encouraged to build upon the discussions initiated at the Security Council Ministerial Meeting of 12 January 2021 on "The evolving terrorism landscape and emerging trends in counter-terrorism" and the open meeting of the Committee with the GRN, held on 3 September 2021, on "Emerging threats, trends and developments in terrorism and counter-terrorism: reflecting on 20 years of countering the terrorist threat" by expanding the discourse to address the future of multilateral counter-terrorism actions over the next decade aimed at enhancing their impact, sustainability, and success.

D. Format of special meeting

18. The special meeting is anticipated to be conducted in an in-person format with on-line participation by speakers, as necessary, in accordance with the prevailing arrangements for United Nations conferences.

19. As reflected in the draft agenda (*see Annex*), the special meeting will begin with a plenary session, continue with interactive sessions featuring interventions from Member States and other participants, and conclude with the reading of the Chair's summary as an outcome document.

20. The opening plenary session will begin with a minute of silence in memory and honour of the victims of terrorism, their families, and survivors of terrorism. This would be followed by the addresses by the Secretary-General of the United Nations [TBC], the Chair of the Counter-Terrorism Committee, and the Executive Director of CTED, and a brief statement on the victims of terrorism. The Vice-Chair(s) of the Committee would serve as moderator(s).

21. Participants will then attend three interactive sessions covering:

- Progress, remaining challenges, and good practices developed in implementing resolution 1373 (2001) and other relevant resolutions.
- International cooperation, including relationships with key international and regional organizations and partnerships with United Nations bodies, highlighting challenges encountered in addressing the evolution of the threat and the steps taken to implement and advance the relevant international standards, codes and best practices, as well as efforts to facilitate and strengthen States' capacity to counter terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism, international and regional approaches, and measures introduced and planned to achieve a tangible impact and sustainable results.
- Ways forward, including through an all-of-society approach, to enhance the implementation of resolution 1373 (2001) and other relevant resolutions, to effectively address emerging terrorist threats, and to shape the future work of the Committee and CTED.

22. Participants are invited to intervene during the interactive sessions. All statements and subsequent intervention by participants should focus on the progress achieved in implementing resolution 1373 (2001) and other relevant resolutions; the identification of remaining challenges and areas for engagement; areas of emerging threats and risks; and the sharing of experiences and lessons learned. Participants are especially encouraged to identify ways to enhance both the future implementation of resolution 1373 (2001) and the future actions and orientation of the Committee and CTED with a view to further strengthening the impact and sustainability of counter-terrorism measures, particularly in light of emerging threats and the continuously evolving terrorism landscape.

23. The observations of participants and moderators will be reflected in a summary of the meeting to be prepared by supporting rapporteurs.

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24. The meeting will be conducted in the six official languages of the United Nations [*pursuant to rules for interpretation and availability at the time of the special meeting*].

E. Participants

25. In accordance with Security Council resolution 2395 (2017) and the Committee and CTED work programmes (S/2021/278), the meeting is open to the wider United Nations membership and other relevant stakeholders, to include partner United Nations counter-terrorism bodies, representatives of international, regional and subregional organizations, and representatives of the GRN, civil society and the media.

F. Outcome

26. The Committee will issue an outcome document in the form of a Chair's summary-at the conclusion of the special meeting, highlighting the progress achieved in implementing resolution 1373 (2001) during the previous 20 years, reaffirming the commitment of Committee members to the fight against terrorism, and setting out a broad vision for the future actions and orientation of the Committee and CTED, which would be made publicly available.

27. The summary of the key observations made by the moderators and rapporteurs be part of the special meeting documents to be made publicly available.