

**Open briefing of the Counter-Terrorism Committee  
on the work of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate  
(CTED) with the Member States of South and South-East Asia pursuant to  
Security Council resolution 2395 (2017)**

*14 February 2022, 10.00 a.m.-1.00 p.m. EST*

**Concept Note**

**I. Introduction**

1. Since the adoption of Security Council resolution 1373 (2001), the Member States of South and South-East Asia have made significant progress in strengthening their counter-terrorism capacities. Specific measures introduced have focused on counter-terrorism legislation, countering the financing of terrorism, law enforcement and border controls (including maritime and aviation security, immigration, and intelligence-sharing), as well as on international, regional, and subregional cooperation.

2. Most of the terrorist attacks perpetrated in South and South-East Asia over recent years were either inspired by, or to various degrees directed by, the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), also known as Da'esh, Al-Qaida and other terrorist groups proscribed under 1267 Committee. Since 2016, pro-ISIL, Al-Qaida and other terrorist groups and individuals proscribed under 1267 Committee have continued to carry out mass casualty attacks, focusing on “soft” targets, including places of worship hotels, open markets, law enforcement, and national government interests. Online recruitment and radicalization of ISIL and Al-Qaida sympathizers in South and South-East Asia have continued to be a concern, particularly in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. The concerns related to use of emerging technologies for propaganda, terror-financing, and use of Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) for cross border trafficking of drugs, arms and even launching terrorist attacks have remained high. Moreover, the increase in the number of women becoming involved with ISIL and Al-Qaida and its affiliates, including in carrying out suicide bombings, continues to be a concern.

3. The Monitoring Team has raised the concern that Afghanistan may become a safe haven for Al Qaida and a number of terror groups active in the South Asia region and, in the medium to long term, the crisis may have profound and negative consequences linked to terrorism in neighbouring Member States and beyond. Recent events in Afghanistan have escalated the humanitarian crisis in that Member State. The United Nations and other humanitarian actors are in a race against time to deliver life-saving aid to affected people and position supplies for the rest of the winter.

4. The foreign terrorist fighter (FTF) phenomenon remains a significant counter-terrorism challenge in the two subregions, which remain a source, transit point and destination for ISIL fighters, as well as for militants connected to, inter alia, the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) (also known as the Islamic State East Asia Province), Jemaah Islamiyah, Al-Qaida and other terrorist groups proscribed under 1267 Committee. Governments are particularly concerned about the terrorism threat posed by the potential return of nationals who travelled to support ISIL in the Syrian Arab Republic and Iraq. Over the past few years, hundreds of FTFs from South and South-East Asia have returned to their home States or relocated to other States. Children who

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accompanied their parents to the Syrian Arab Republic or were born there to FTF families are an especially troubling issue.

5. The risk of violent radicalization and recruitment in detention and prisons is high in both subregions. Several States are experiencing significant problems relating to overcrowding in prisons, combined with limited resources to manage terrorist offenders and recruitment in custodial settings. Additionally, a number of prisoners previously incarcerated on terrorism charges are approaching the end of their sentences and may pose a threat upon their release.

### **II. Visits of the Counter-Terrorism Committee to States of the region aimed at monitoring, promoting and facilitating their implementation of Security Council resolutions on terrorism**

6. Acting on behalf of the Counter-Terrorism Committee, CTED has conducted assessment visits to several States of South Asia and to all States of South-East Asia. These visits have enabled CTED to identify strengths, effective practices and progress made by States in implementing the relevant Council resolutions and related international standards. They have also provided an opportunity for the Committee to identify remaining challenges and areas in which the visited States may benefit from receiving technical assistance.

7. As part of its visit follow-up, CTED, acting on behalf of the Committee, identifies technical assistance needs in consultation with the State concerned and refers priority recommendations to partner entities and organizations to help them design targeted counter-terrorism projects for the visited Member State. Projects developed in South and South-East Asia over recent years have focused on, inter alia, aligning domestic counter-terrorism legislation with the requirements of the relevant Council resolutions and international standards; enhancing the capacity of criminal justice officials to bring terrorists to justice (including through the development of the Regional Toolkit for South Asian Judges on the Adjudication of Complex Terrorism Cases); the use of special investigative measures and the gathering and use of evidence, including digital evidence, by investigators, prosecutors and judges (e.g., Global Initiative on Strengthening Officials' Capacity in Obtaining and Preserving Electronic Evidence); enhancing immigration and border-control measures (e.g., United Nations Countering Terrorist Travel Programme); the development of good practices to address the prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration (PRR) of foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs); measures to prevent the use of internet and communications technologies (ICT) for terrorism purposes; Berlin Memorandum on Good Practices for Countering Terrorist Use of UAS, the drafting of national action plans to countering violent extremism (CVE) as and when conducive to terrorism; and the protection of human rights while countering terrorism.

### **III. Objective of proposed open briefing**

8. The objectives of the proposed open briefing are: (i) to facilitate discussion of the current and evolving threat of terrorism in South and South-East Asia, especially in light of evolving situation in Afghanistan, close ties between Taliban, largely the Haqqani Network, Al-Qaida and foreign terrorist fighters in the region, and growing influence of ISIL-K ; (ii) to identify progress achieved and remaining gaps in implementing the relevant Security Council resolutions and international standards in compliance with international law (particularly with the adoption of resolution 2617 (2021) and the updated version of the Global survey of the implementation of Security Council resolution 1373 (2001) and other relevant resolutions by

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Member States); (iii) to inform the Committee about CTED's efforts to facilitate technical assistance delivery in accordance with the Committee's visit recommendations and the requests of Member States, including in close cooperation with the Terrorism Prevention Branch of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC/TPB); the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT), the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL); and the relevant United Nations Resident Coordinators; and highlight the impact and implications of Covid-19 on counter-terrorism and the countering violent extremism landscape as and when conducive to terrorism. The briefing, organized pursuant to the list of regional and thematic briefings for 2021 adopted by the Committee on 29 April 2021, will also provide an opportunity for the Committee to exchange views on efforts to promote regional, cross-regional, and international cooperation to counter terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism.

### **IV. Format**

9. The open briefing will be held on 14 February 2022, from 10.00 a.m. to 1.00 p.m. EST, and will include representatives from Member States in South and South-East Asia, and United Nations entities, including the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT), United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team pursuant to resolutions 1526 (2004) and 2253 (2015) concerning ISIL (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and the Taliban and associated individuals and entities. The briefing will be open to the wider membership and other implementing partners (including relevant United Nations entities) and other relevant actors. It is anticipated that the briefing will include briefings by Member States in South and South-East Asia, especially those who have been visited by CTED on behalf of the CTC recently. The initial statements will be followed by a question-and-answer session, and active participation will be encouraged.

10. The Committee Chair will act as Chair and moderator. The Acting Executive Director will also act as moderator.

11. An annotated agenda and meeting documentation will be posted on the Committee's website (<https://www.un.org/securitycouncil/ctc/>).

### **V. Date and venue**

12. The open briefing will take place in the Economic and Social Council Chamber, United Nations Headquarters, New York, on 14 February 2022, from 10.00 a.m. to 1.00 p.m. EST. It will also be streamed live on UN Web TV.

### **VI. Outcome and follow-up**

13. CTED will prepare a briefing summary, which will include observations and recommendations for next steps. The summary will be shared with all participants and other relevant partners. CTED will continue to engage closely with the Member States of South and South-East Asia and relevant partners on the development of future activities in this context. CTED will arrange for usual press coverage as per established practices for Committee's open events.