

**United Nations High-Level International Conference on Human Rights, Civil
Society and Counter-Terrorism**

**Session V: Role of the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Architecture:
“Challenges and the way forward”**

Malaga, 11 May 2022

Remarks of

**H. E. Mr. T. S. Tirumurti
Chair, Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee**

Excellencies, distinguished participants,

I am grateful to the Kingdom of Spain and to Under-Secretary General Voronkov of the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism for inviting me to address you today in my capacity as Chair of the Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee.

Let me begin by saying that the protection of human rights should be an important aspect of the global fight against terrorism.

As acknowledged in UNSC resolution 1566 of 2004, terrorism seriously impairs the enjoyment of human rights, threatens the social and economic development of all States, and undermines global stability and prosperity.

Terrorist groups continue to make efforts to destabilize governments and, democratic institutions, and in recent times, to attain State power without disavowing their affiliation with terrorism.

States therefore have a responsibility to protect their nationals and others against the threat of terrorist acts by taking positive measures and bringing the perpetrators of such acts to justice.

It is equally important to ensure that measures to counter terrorism are consistent with international law, including human rights law.

The UN Security Council Counter Terrorism Committee and its Executive Directorate is fully committed to enhance capacities of member states in countering terrorism consistent with international law, through facilitation of technical assistance.

Throughout the Committee's country assessment process human rights are consistently mainstreamed as cross-cutting issues.

The Committee and its Executive Directorate — working closely with UNOCT — identify new and impactful ways to effectively encourage Member States to address human rights shortcomings in their counter-terrorism measures, in order to support the full and effective implementation of relevant Council resolutions.

Excellencies, distinguished participants,

Let me also share a few thoughts regarding the challenges we are facing today, and the efforts being made by the Counter Terrorism Committee, as a critical piece of UN Counterterrorism architecture to address them.

The threat of terrorism is grave and universal and continues to grow in several parts of the world, particularly in Middle East, Central Asia, South Asia and several parts of Africa. A terrorist threat in one part of the world is threat to the peace and security in other parts of the world. It is therefore, imperative for us to reaffirm our

commitment to a “zero tolerance” approach to terrorism in its all forms and manifestations, and wherever, whenever and by whomsoever it is committed.

The CTC’s Open Briefing on 14 February 2022, focusing on terrorist threat in South and Southeast Asia, and CTED’s work with the Member States in the regions pursuant to Security Council resolution 2395 (2017), highlighted that the recent developments in Afghanistan have raised serious global concerns about the possibility of it’s becoming a safe haven for Al-Qaida and other terrorist groups. The Security Council demanded unequivocally that Afghan territory not be used for sheltering, training, planning, or financing terrorist acts and called for concerted action against all terrorist groups.

In the high-level international conference on counter terrorism in Central Asia on 3 March 2022, I underlined that the terrorist threat in Central Asia has remained high due to returning foreign terrorist fighters and developments in Afghanistan, and the ties between the Taliban, largely through Haqqanis, and Al-Qaida and foreign terrorist fighters remained close.

Additionally, in the past few years, we have witnessed the significant rise of ISIL and Al-Qaida in Africa, through the territorial expansion of their affiliates. In the Joint Open Briefing of the Counter Terrorism Committee and the ISIL and Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee (1267 Committee) on 7 April 2022, representatives of several member states as well as civil society organizations from Africa expressed their views on this threat, particularly underlining that terrorist groups in Africa aim to destabilize democratic institutions and take advantage of intercommunal conflict. The risk that a national stabilization effort may offer an opportunity for an ISIL or Al-Qaida-affiliated group to attain State power without disavowing its affiliation with terrorism should not be underestimated. It is important to distinguish between

political ideologies in a constitutional framework and radical and terrorist ideologies of terrorist groups.

Further, the use of information and communications technologies (ICT) and, new and emerging technologies, and cyberspace for terrorist purposes is on rise. Particularly in past two years, terrorists have exploited the pandemic to fuel societal divisions, sectarian hatred, and anti-democratic movements. In the Counter Terrorism Committee's Open Meeting on 23 March, participants highlighted the need for countering terrorist narratives and the use of internet for terrorist purposes through innovative means. Concerns were raised regarding the increasing misuse of virtual assets and new payment methods by terrorist groups for terror financing; and also regarding the use of drones for cross-border trafficking of arms, drugs and launching terror attacks.

During the Cybertech Tokyo event on 17 February, I emphasized that in the realm of cyberspace, terrorists need not be directly or physically involved in attacks as they can radicalize others to terrorism through terrorist material online around the globe. Terrorists who actually incite violent attacks should also be held responsible. The same goes for persons who use online financial platforms to raise funds for terrorist purposes, thus committing the crime of terrorism financing, and those who use online services to provide logistical or material support to terrorists.

Excellencies, distinguished participants,

I wish to welcome the emphasis placed by this Conference on the human rights of victims of terrorism and on the important roles that the victims and their networks can play in countering terrorism, particularly in countering terrorist narratives.

It is essential that we continue to identify further ways to support the victims of terrorism, including those who have suffered sexual and gender-based violence, by enhancing our efforts to uphold and recognize the rights of victims of terrorism and addressing their needs.

The Security Council has repeatedly emphasized the positive contribution that civil society, including women's organizations, academia, think tanks, and the private sector can make to support Member States' efforts to effectively counter terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism. In its recent resolutions, the Council requested the Counter Terrorism Committee and its Executive Directorate to identify ways to enhance and promote engagement with a broad range of civil society actors representing all regions of the world and all levels of society — including the grassroots level — in order to ensure that a broad and diverse range of voices are heard.

I therefore particularly welcome the participation of civil society in the Malaga Conference.

Let me conclude by saying that effective counterterrorism measures and the protection of human rights are complementary and mutually reinforcing. The Committee and its Executive Directorate remain strongly committed to supporting Member States in their efforts to prevent and counter terrorism in its all forms and manifestation and ensure that the implementation of relevant Security Council resolutions remain consistent with the international laws, including human rights law.

This commitment is, and will continue to be, an integral part of all our activities.

Thank you.