

The President of the Security Council presents her compliments to the members of the Council and has the honour to transmit herewith, for their information, a copy of a **letter dated 4 December 2015 from the Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1373 (2001) concerning counter-terrorism** addressed to the President of the Security Council, and its enclosures.

This letter and its enclosures will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/2015/939.

8 December 2015

# United Nations Nations Unies

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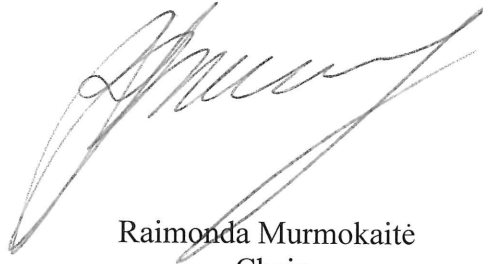
4 December 2015

Dear Madam President,

On behalf of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1373 (2001) concerning counter-terrorism, I have the honour to submit to the Security Council the conclusions of the Committee's special meeting with Member States and relevant international and regional organizations on "Stemming the Flow of Foreign Terrorist Fighters", held in Madrid on 27 and 28 July 2015, and the Madrid Guiding Principles on Foreign Terrorist Fighters (FTFs), adopted following this meeting. The Declaration of the meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and of the Interior held on the occasion of the special meeting is also attached herewith.

The Committee would appreciate it if the present letter and its annexes were brought to the attention of the members of the Council and issued as a document of the Council.

Please accept, Madam President, the assurances of my highest consideration.



Raimonda Murmokaite  
Chair

Security Council Committee established  
pursuant to resolution 1373 (2001)  
concerning counter-terrorism

Attachments

Her Excellency  
Ms. Samantha Power  
President of the Security Council  
New York

**Special Meeting of the Counter-Terrorism Committee on  
“Stemming the Flow of Foreign Terrorist Fighters”**

*Madrid, 28 July 2015*

**Conclusions**

*The Counter-Terrorism Committee:*

*Reaffirms* that terrorism in all its forms and manifestations constitutes one of the most serious threats to international peace and security and that any acts of terrorism are criminal and unjustifiable regardless of their motivations, whenever and by whomsoever committed; that terrorism cannot and should not be associated with any religion, nationality or ethnic group; and that terrorism should be unequivocally condemned universally;

*Recalls* that the Security Council, acting pursuant to Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, adopted resolution 2178 (2014) on countering threat posed by foreign terrorist fighters, on 24 September 2014;

*Recalls* the Statement of the President of the Security Council of 19 November 2014 (S/PRST/2014/23), which reaffirmed that the increasing threat posed by foreign terrorist fighters is part of the emerging issues, trends and developments related to Security Council resolutions 1373 (2001) and 1624 (2005) and encouraged the Counter-Terrorism Committee to hold special meeting in 2015, with the participation of Member States and relevant international and regional organizations, to discuss ways to stem the flow of foreign terrorist fighters; in this regard, *expresses its gratitude* to the Government of Spain for its generosity in hosting the Special Meeting of the Counter-Terrorism Committee in Madrid and for ensuring the meeting’s successful organization and outcome;

*Underscores* the need to implement all aspects of resolution 2178 (2014), to intensify those efforts and to identify and undertake priority actions aimed at stemming the flow of foreign terrorist fighters, in particular those mentioned in the Statement of the President of the Security Council of 29 May 2015 (S/PRST/2015/11);

*Reaffirms* that Member 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;

*Underlines* that the United Nations, specialized international and regional organizations, civil society, research institutes and academia have an important role to play in building an

understanding of the threat posed by the phenomenon of foreign terrorist fighters and in facilitating international cooperation in this field;

*Notes and welcomes* the conclusions of the technical discussions conducted with the Members of the Counter-Terrorism Committee, other participating Member States, and other relevant international and regional actors held in Madrid on 27 July 2015 that were briefed to the Committee by the rapporteurs for each of the three sub-topics identified and outlined below:

***Group I - Detection and Intervention against Incitement, Recruitment and Facilitation of FTFs***

- Member States are encouraged to address the threat posed by foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs) through a comprehensive approach in accordance with resolution 2178 (2014).
- Member States are encouraged to prevent radicalization to terrorism, stem recruitment, counter violent extremism, which can be conducive to terrorism, counter incitement to terrorist acts motivated by extremism or intolerance, and promote political and religious tolerance, economic development and social cohesion and inclusiveness.
- Member States are encouraged to engage relevant local communities and non-governmental actors in developing strategies to counter the violent extremist narrative that can incite terrorist acts, and address the conditions conducive to the spread of violent extremism, which can be conducive to terrorism, including by empowering youth, families, women, religious, cultural and education leaders, and all other concerned groups of civil society.
- Member States, international organizations and civil society are undertaking important initiatives in a number of relevant areas, including creating avenues for the voices of women and youth, strengthening the role of civil society while respecting its independence, supporting families in crisis, creating opportunities for victims to contribute to countering violent extremism, seeking a more prominent role for religious leaders, reinforcing community-policing programmes, monitoring the Internet and social media while respecting human rights and the rule of law, and developing education programmes to promote critical thinking and understanding of other cultures.
- There is a need to provide greater political and financial support for such initiatives and to provide for the security needs of civil society actors and others speaking out against terrorism and violent extremism.

- There is a need for further, in-depth global, regional and thematic research and analysis, both to better understand factors contributing to radicalization and to measure the impact of policies and projects aimed at addressing the threat.

## ***Group II - Prevention of FTF Travel***

- Member States affected by the FTF phenomenon have been strengthening their border-related controls to more effectively detect and prevent the cross border movement of FTFs.
- However, because some of the required measures and practices have not yet been fully put in place, there is a need to raise awareness of the implications of the actions of FTF at the border.
- Member States should consider increasing the availability of information needed for decisive action.
- Member States should consider strengthening coordination and inter-agency information exchange, both domestically and with counterparts in other Member States.
- Member States should consider providing dedicated resources and automated tools, including advance passenger information (API), access to watch lists, and centralized databases.
- Member States should consider introducing measures and practices to enhance the capacities of competent border authorities, including with respect to the type of information required at the border, the sources of information, and the methodologies for its processing in order to detect potential FTFs, and consider sharing this information with competent authorities.
- API is an essential source of information about passengers, both prior to their departure and prior to their arrival.
- Member States should consider standardizing the data transmitted and the means of transmittal, establishing a single point of collection of the information, use of interactive API, and importance of support to Member States to implement API systems.
- Member States should consider coordinated border management as an effective way to strengthen controls and delivery of service, achieve economies of scale, streamline operations, and enhance strategic management.

***Group III - Criminalization, Prosecution, International Cooperation, and the Rehabilitation and Reintegration of Returnees***

- Member States have already implemented a number of good practices related to the criminalization, prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration of FTFs, as well as in the area of international legal cooperation.
- Member States should consider reviewing the compliance of existing legislation with the requirements of resolution 2178 (2014) and updating national legislation frameworks accordingly.
- Member States should consider adopting legislation that is clear and comprehensive and upholding fundamental rule of law and human rights principles, in accordance with the relevant Security Council resolutions.
- In order to ensure effective investigation and prosecution of FTF-related offences, Member States should consider adopting criminal procedural and evidentiary rules that will permit the collection and use of evidence against FTFs.
- Member States should consider ensuring that criminal justice responses are complementary to existing comprehensive counter-terrorism strategies, as well as to adopt a case-by-case approach to returnees.
- Member States should consider implementing administrative measures and/or rehabilitation and reintegration programmes in cases where it would not be appropriate to bring terrorism-related charges.
- Member States should consider engaging in effective international legal cooperation in handling FTF-related cases, which are transnational in nature, as well as ensuring that their legislation is complementary by criminalizing the full range of offences contained in resolution 2178 (2014).
- Member States should consider updating their MLA laws and mechanisms; softening formal MLA requirements wherever possible; strengthening national MLA procedures; and establishing MLA central authorities endowed with adequate resources, training, and legal authority.

*Resolves* to develop, with the assistance of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED), a detailed outcome document containing a set of guiding principles taking into consideration the above with a view to assisting Member States' efforts to stem the flow of foreign terrorist fighters, including by compiling good practices and principles and promoting a unified approach for implementing resolution 2178 (2014);

*Encourages* CTED to step up its efforts, in close cooperation with the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF) Office, the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre (UNCCT) and other relevant CTITF entities, as well as other international specialized agencies, to facilitate technical assistance to Member States most affected by the foreign terrorist fighter phenomenon;

*Resolves* to continue to monitor and assist, with the support of CTED, Member States in the full implementation of all relevant Security Council resolutions; *further resolves* to continue to focus on ways and means to identify principal gaps in Member States' capacities to implement resolutions 1373 (2001) and 1624 (2005) that may hinder their abilities to stem the flow of foreign terrorist fighters, identify good practices, and facilitate delivery of related technical assistance; in this regard, *looks forward to* receiving CTED's third analytical report of the critical gaps for the most affected Member States for countering foreign terrorist fighters in September 2015, as well as CTITF's capacity building implementation plan for countering foreign terrorist fighters by October 2015.

# **The Counter-Terrorism Committee's Madrid Guiding Principles on Foreign Terrorist Fighters (FTFs)**

## **Introduction**

Foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs) pose an acute and growing threat to international peace and security. Their activities can increase the intensity, duration, intractability and unpredictability of conflicts and pose a serious threat to their States of origin, the States they transit and the States to which they travel, as well as to States neighbouring zones of armed conflict in which they are active. Over the past decade, the regions in which FTFs are active have witnessed a significant increase in violence, insecurity and instability. FTFs may be engaged in terrorism, war crimes, crimes against humanity and gender-related crimes.

Another significant risk derives from the activities of FTFs upon their return to their own States or upon their arrival in third States. Many FTFs leave their homes with no intention of returning, and instead do so with the intention of starting a new life, building a new “State”, or dying as martyrs. Not all return as terrorists, and many return precisely because they have become disillusioned and no longer wish to participate in armed conflict.

However, those who do return may have been exposed to extreme violence, sophisticated training and battlefield experience. A small number of returning FTFs therefore pose a very significant threat to international peace and security.

Terrorist groups also increasingly exploit information and communications technology (ICT) for the purposes of incitement, recruitment, and the facilitation of terrorist activities. They use ICT to recruit not only traditional combatants, but also businessmen, engineers and other professionals. This growing ICT expertise is a significant element of the FTF threat.

Security Council resolution 2178 (2014), adopted on 24 September 2014 pursuant to Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter, acknowledges the increasing threat posed by FTFs and requires Member States to prevent and suppress, consistent with their obligations under international human rights law, international refugee law, and international humanitarian law, the recruiting, organizing, transporting or equipping of foreign terrorist fighters; stop individuals believed to be FTFs from entering or transiting their territory; and ensure that their domestic laws and regulations establish serious criminal offences enabling them to prosecute and penalize prohibited conduct related to FTFs. The resolution represents a significant milestone in the international response to the FTF phenomenon.

In its Presidential Statement of 19 November 2014, the Council encourages the Counter-Terrorism Committee to hold open meetings, with the participation of Member States and relevant international and regional organizations, and to share national and regional experiences in addressing the threat posed by FTFs and violent extremism. Furthermore, in its presidential statement of 29 May 2015, the Council “recognizes that addressing the threat posed by foreign terrorist fighters requires comprehensively addressing underlying factors, including by preventing radicalization to terrorism, stemming recruitment, inhibiting foreign terrorist fighter travel, disrupting financial support to foreign terrorist fighters, countering violent extremism, which can be conducive to terrorism, countering incitement to terrorist acts motivated by extremism or intolerance, promoting political and religious tolerance,



economic development and social cohesion and inclusiveness, ending and resolving armed conflicts, and facilitating reintegration and rehabilitation”.

Accordingly, on 28 July 2015, the Committee held a special meeting on “Stemming the Flow of Foreign Terrorist Fighters”, which was preceded by a series of technical sessions, organized by the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED). The meeting and technical sessions were hosted by the Government of Spain in Madrid and were attended by around 400 participants from Member States representing every region of the world, including those most affected by the FTF threat, relevant international and regional organizations, academia and civil society. In accordance with the resolution, the participants discussed the principal gaps in Member States’ capacities to implement resolutions 1373 (2001) and 1624 (2005) that may hinder States’ abilities to stem the FTF flow.

The participants also shared effective practices and approaches to stemming the flow of FTFs, focusing on (i) detection, intervention against, and prevention of incitement, recruitment and facilitation of FTFs; (ii) prevention of FTF travel; and (iii) criminalization, prosecution (including prosecution strategies for returnees), international cooperation, and the rehabilitation and reintegration of returnees.

The main outcomes of the special meeting and technical sessions, including specific effective practices and approaches, have been incorporated into the present set of guiding principles in an effort to assist Member States in their efforts to stem the flow of FTFs. The guiding principles are intended to complement the other materials prepared by CTED to help States strengthen their implementation of resolutions 1373 (2001), 1624 (2005) and 2178 (2014) (see the Committee’s website: [www.un.org/en/sc/ctc/resources/index.html](http://www.un.org/en/sc/ctc/resources/index.html)).

The participants reaffirmed the need for States to ensure that all measures taken to counter the FTF threat were fully compliant with their obligations under international law, in particular international human rights law, international refugee law, and international humanitarian law, and noted that efforts to do so involved numerous and significant challenges.

In order to develop an effective global response to the constantly evolving FTF threat and ensure effective implementation of the relevant Council resolutions, in particular resolution 2178 (2014), Member States, international and regional organizations, academia and civil society organizations should continue to share experiences and good practices, conduct related research and analysis, and assist one another with capacity-building. It will also be necessary to strengthen Member States’ resources to implement the resolution. The challenges in implementing it are complex and the Committee and CTED will continue to work closely with all concerned actors to help States meet the considerable challenges involved.

The following guiding principles for the implementation of resolution 2178 (2014) were identified by the participants in the special meeting and endorsed by the Committee. Many of the guiding principles set forth in this document build on existing good practices and work of the Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF), in particular its adopted comprehensive set of good practices to address foreign terrorist fighter phenomenon; the Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE); the European Union; the African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism; and the Meeting of Heads of Special Services, Security Agencies and Law Enforcement Agencies.

## **I. Detection of; intervention against; and prevention of the incitement, recruitment and facilitation of foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs)**

The discussions on this topic focused on preventing the travel of aspiring FTFs through the creation of strategic partnerships between governmental and non-governmental actors. The participants considered the origins and nature of the FTF problem, the threat posed by incitement and recruitment of FTFs, and effective and practical tactics for stemming the flow of FTFs at the community level, including with the support of youth; families; women; religious, cultural and educational leaders; and other civil society groups. The participants stressed the value of adopting a comprehensive approach that combines effective law enforcement and intelligence strategies with cooperation between governmental and non-governmental actors. Local communities can provide valuable insights into the factors that make individuals targets of incitement and recruitment to commit terrorist acts and can play a key role in preventing their travel. It is also essential to respect the independent roles of the various actors concerned and to avoid using civil society for law enforcement purposes. Member States must ensure compliance with their obligations under international law, in particular international human rights law, international refugee law, and international humanitarian law. Member States are urged to ensure the participation and leadership of women and women's organizations in developing strategies to counter terrorism and violent extremism which can be conducive to terrorism, including through countering incitement to commit terrorist acts, creating counter narratives and other appropriate interventions, and building their capacity to do so effectively, and further to address, including by the empowerment of women, youth, religious and cultural leaders, the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism and violent extremism which can be conducive to terrorism.

### **A. Understanding the threat and creating strategic partnerships**

An effective approach to stemming the flow of FTFs requires the involvement of many different stakeholders, all of which should strive to build a climate of trust and to understand the issues affecting different communities. Efforts to detect and prevent the activities of FTFs should involve not only law enforcement agencies, but also a wide variety of community stakeholders. It is essential to identify grievances and other social or personal factors that may lead individuals to consider travel for the purpose of engaging in terrorist acts.

***Guiding principle 1.** Governments should recognize that terrorism and violent extremism are complex and context-specific. While religion is sometimes cited as a driving factor, other factors (including ideological, social or psychological factors) can also be decisive. States should devote greater resources to supporting social services and funding relevant research in order to strengthen their understanding of the reasons why individuals become aspiring FTFs. In many cases, individualized intervention may be the only effective way to address radicalization to violence.*

***Guiding principle 2.** Because local stakeholders often have the best understanding of the nature and sources of the FTF phenomenon, States should create space for civil society and develop innovative mechanisms for dialogue between Government and local communities, youth, families, women, religious, cultural and education leaders, and all other concerned groups of civil society. Constructive dialogue between Government and communities is a crucial factor in building community resilience, identifying and addressing grievances, and*

*identifying persons targeted for recruitment by terrorists. Possible forms of dialogue include community-awareness briefings, town halls, the creation of independent ombudsman's offices, platforms for communities to express grievances and other gatherings to discuss community concerns, and the creation of "countering violent extremism (CVE) policy committees" involving governmental and non-governmental actors. It is important that such mechanisms be put in place at the local and national levels.*

***Guiding principle 3.*** *More focus should be placed on working with families, which will have a natural interest in preventing the departure of their relatives. States should strengthen communication with families while ensuring that such interaction is voluntary, not imposed. The establishment of national or regional "hotlines" may also be an effective practice. Governments should provide support to services that engage with families, but such services should be kept separate from security agencies. Efforts should be made to provide assistance and counselling in multiple disciplines, including psychological, social, religious and ideological counselling.*

***Guiding principle 4.*** *States should devote resources to educational programmes that develop critical thinking skills and build awareness and understanding of different cultures. Critical thinking and raised awareness can be crucial to reducing the susceptibility of young people to the messages of terrorist groups and violent extremists. One area in which education is especially crucial is refugee camps, where young people are vulnerable to violent extremist messaging and terrorist recruitment.*

***Guiding principle 5.*** *States should protect the right to freedom of religion or belief. Local communities are often best placed to engage with religious institutions in order to prevent their subversion by terrorists and their supporters. Consideration should also be given to promoting greater engagement of women in this regard.*

***Guiding principle 6.*** *Maintaining the memory of victims of terrorism or amplifying survivors' voices can play an important role in countering the messages of terrorists and violent extremists. States should therefore make a special effort to establish partnerships with victims and victim associations as part of their overall strategies to stem the flow of FTFs. Victims should have the opportunity to play a decisive role in CVE efforts by making their voices heard if they wish to do so.*

## **B. Community engagement and empowerment of local communities and civil society**

Terrorism will not be defeated by military force, law enforcement measures, and intelligence operations alone. There is also a need to address the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism in accordance with Pillar I of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. In this respect, participants in the special meeting welcomed the provisions of resolution 2178 (2014) encouraging Member States to engage with relevant local communities and non-governmental actors in developing strategies to counter the violent extremist narratives that can incite terrorist acts, including by empowering youth, families, women, religious, cultural and education leaders, and all other concerned civil society groups. Greater efforts in this area can lead to increased success in stemming the flow of FTFs at the community level.

**Guiding principle 7.** *Effective community engagement to stem the flow of FTFs requires action in a number of different fields. States should consider developing comprehensive strategies to counter and prevent violent extremism that include significant roles for youth; families; women; religious, cultural and educational leaders; and other concerned civil society groups. Independent actors give CVE actions a level of credibility and effectiveness that Governments generally cannot achieve alone. However, care should be exercised in delineating the respective roles of Governments and civil society actors.*

**Guiding principle 8.** *Women, especially mothers, can play a crucial role in preventing radicalization and the flow of FTFs, as community leaders and role models. States should make greater efforts to involve women in programmes and strategies to stem the flow of FTFs because their participation can have a major impact, particularly where their family members are concerned. Those efforts could involve promoting greater inclusion of women in policymaking and law-enforcement bodies to stem the flow of FTF and increasing opportunities for women's civil society groups to participate in dialogue on effective approaches. States should pay close attention to the security risks encountered by women engaged in these efforts.*

**Guiding principle 9.** *The youth are often best able to recognize trends by terrorists and violent extremists in their communities to identify individuals at risk and influence their cohorts. States should therefore create mechanisms enabling young people to play a role in policymaking discussions that may be relevant to stemming the flow of FTFs. The engagement of young people can be facilitated through youth mentorship and skills-development programmes, community-service projects and enhanced educational opportunities that increase their sense of belonging. In all cases in which young people are given the opportunity to become engaged, States must take full account of their security needs.*

**Guiding principle 10.** *Engagement between Government and non-governmental actors should be based on a foundation of trust and respect. There should be recognition of the leading role to be played by Governments in taking effective action to stem the flow of FTFs, as well as an acknowledgement of the risks faced by security forces. Governments also have an obligation to uphold their international legal obligations in all their counter-terrorism efforts. In the case of civil society and human rights defenders, this includes safeguarding the ability of non-governmental actors to operate in a secure environment and fully respect human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the freedoms of thought, conscience, expression, religion, peaceful assembly, and association.*

### **C. Community policing and Internet-related law enforcement initiatives**

Law enforcement measures are essential to stemming the flow of FTFs. There is therefore a need to promote dialogue through methods that include engagement with communities and a commitment to transparency. One innovative approach adopted by an increasing number of States is the use of community-policing techniques. States should also pay close attention to FTF-related communication, whether at public gatherings or through the Internet and other communications technologies, while ensuring respect for human rights, including freedom of expression, and recalling that any restrictions thereon shall only be such as are provided by law and are necessary on the grounds set out in paragraph 3 of Article 19 of the ICCPR, and for privacy.

**Guiding principle 11.** *States should consider promoting greater reliance on community-policing techniques as part of their overall approach to stemming the flow of FTFs. Community policing is based on the development of mutual trust between law enforcement entities and the communities they serve. States need to reduce the corrosive effect of excessive force, arbitrary detention, and impunity on community relations and legitimacy. The objective should not be simply the short-term acquisition of intelligence, but rather the creation of long-term relationships that can enhance the capacity to detect and prevent the possible departure of aspiring FTFs. Successful community policing should not focus exclusively on counter-terrorism and CVE, but should instead address the full range of community concerns and thereby build trust.*

**Guiding principle 12.** *States should, as appropriate, include effective and swift measures to prevent and to counter incitement to commit terrorist acts as part of a comprehensive strategy to stem the flow of FTFs, while upholding their international human rights obligations.*

**Guiding principle 13.** *States, regional organizations, the private sector and civil society should establish effective partnerships with a view to developing improved methods for monitoring and studying terrorist content transmitted over the Internet and other communications technologies and countering incitement to commit terrorist acts, utilizing it for intelligence work, and referring it, where appropriate, to relevant law enforcement agencies. Counter-messaging can also be an effective measure. All actors should enhance dialogue concerning terrorist content transmitted over the Internet and other modern communications technologies in order to ensure that the most appropriate and useful action is taken with respect to such content.*

**Guiding principle 14.** *The Internet and other modern communications technologies are a vital means to seek, receive and impart information and ideas. States must ensure that any measures including enforcement actions taken to restrict freedom of expression comply with their obligations under international human rights law.*

## **II. Prevention of FTF travel, including through operational measures, the use of advance passenger information (API) and measures to strengthen border security**

In its resolution 2178 (2014), the Council reaffirms that all States shall prevent the movement of terrorists or terrorist groups by effective border controls. The resolution encourages States to employ evidence-based traveller risk-assessment and screening procedures in their existing authorities, including the collection and analysis of travel data and to intensify and accelerate the exchange of operational information regarding actions or movements of terrorists or terrorist networks, including FTFs, and calls upon States to require that airlines operating in their territories provide advance passenger information to the appropriate national authorities in order to detect the departure from their territories, or attempted entry into or transit through their territories, by means of civil aircraft, of individuals designated by the Committee established pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999) and 1989 (2011). The discussions during the special meeting resulted in the identification of a number of elements that would strengthen operational and practical measures aimed at stemming the flow of FTFs.

## **A. Operational measures to stem the flow of FTFs**

### **1. Collection of FTF-related information from various sources**

In order to effectively address the cross-border flow of FTFs, appropriate information about the identity of FTFs or potential FTFs, upon which border authorities can make informed decisions, should be made available in a timely manner to border posts and other relevant agencies for further action. Information on FTFs may be either specific or general in nature. Specific information includes information obtained from sources such as law enforcement and intelligence agencies, API, biometrics, national and international watch lists, INTERPOL Notices, Databases (including the FTF database), Diffusions, and analytical products, and informants. General information includes, inter alia, passenger name record (PNR) data and results of trends analysis and risk assessments.

**Guiding principle 15.** *In order to obtain information to help identify FTFs or potential FTFs:*

- a) *States should consult national, regional and international sources of information of FTFs;*
- b) *National law enforcement and security agencies should actively transmit relevant information that may be of use in identifying FTFs or potential FTFs;*
- c) *Relevant regional and international organizations should provide the tools and the means (i.e. FTF database) for the collection and dissemination of specific and general forms of FTF-related information with a focus on utilizing already existing, widely used, and proven mechanisms, such as I-24/7, INTERPOL's secure, global police-to-police communication system;*
- d) *Information should be transmitted to officials at land, air and maritime ports of entry, or to a centralized location for processing, prior to the arrival or departure of travellers, through established mechanisms;*
- e) *Collection, storage and sharing of information should be conducted in a non-discriminatory manner consistent with international human rights law*

### **2. Reliance on analysis to make general information on FTF actionable**

Information received must be processed and analysed in order to exploit its full potential to identify FTFs or potential FTFs through informed decision. In many cases, the specific information received should be analysed for comparison against known profiles of FTFs, the development of new profiles to better inform future analyses, and ultimately aim to facilitate timely dissemination to frontline officials. A particular challenge associated with the analysis of FTF activities is their use of evasive travel patterns, or “broken travel” (the deliberate use of techniques to break long-distance travel into multiple segments so that it becomes difficult to ascertain travel history and travel origin and prevent border authorities and counter-terrorism officials from accurately determining where they were prior to their arrival in a particular State). An associated challenge is distinguishing between “broken-travel” intended to evade counter-terrorism authorities from benign travel patterns that appear broken but have an innocuous purpose (e.g., cost savings, frequent flyer miles redemption, etc.).

**Guiding principle 16.** *In order to exploit the full potential of information on the identity of FTFs or potential FTFs, States should consider:*

- a) *Establishing a dedicated analytical team and provide it with the tools and resources required to derive meaningful and actionable results;*
- b) *Ensuring that information collected about FTFs or potential FTFs is made available to the analytical team in a timely manner in order to facilitate the necessary analysis;*
- c) *Ensuring that risk analysis and indicator development are employed as tools to help identify particular risks;*
- d) *Developing risk indicators which are gender-sensitive;*
- e) *With the assistance of relevant international organizations and other experts, undertaking specific measures to improve understanding of the use of broken travel patterns by FTFs.*

### **3. Transmitting analysis and information on FTFs nationally and internationally**

Information and related analyses on FTFs and potential FTFs should be shared across the security hierarchy nationally and with competent border authorities internationally through coordination and through mechanisms for information exchange.

***Guiding principle 17.*** *In order to ensure the availability of relevant information to frontline officers nationally and internationally and thus enhance efforts to detect and prevent the cross-border movement of FTFs, States should consider:*

- a) *Enacting legislation, if necessary, and implementing procedures to gather traveller information, and use known traveller information, including API, complemented by PNR, if appropriate, to inform decisions about potential FTF travel;*
- b) *Ensure that procedures are in place to make certain that information on known or suspected FTFs is transmitted to frontline border officials for their action prior to the departure or arrival of the traveller;*
- c) *Establishing mechanisms for the provision of feedback on the validity and usability of the information, as well as on the results achieved;*
- d) *Encouraging bilateral and multilateral sharing of FTF-related information and analysis;*
- e) *Expanding access to, and utilization of, INTERPOL's global information sharing tools and resources among all member countries' national law enforcement, immigration, and border security authorities.*

### **4. Effective utilization of FTF-related information at border points**

It is essential to provide appropriate training and updated instructions to frontline officers on the risks posed by terrorism, and FTFs in particular, and the manner in which available information and tools can be fully and effectively utilized to identify FTFs or potential FTFs at border entry and departure points. Appropriate training and instructions can ensure the effective utilization of FTF-related information analysis at border points.

***Guiding principle 18.*** *In order to effectively utilize FTF-related information and analysis at border entry and departure points, States should consider:*

- a) *Establishing at all border locations mechanisms, including technology such as I-24/7, INTERPOL's secure, global police-to-police communication system, to ensure the prompt receipt of potential FTF-related travel information;*
- b) *Providing at border locations with appropriate tools to produce risk assessments aimed at preventing FTF travel;*
- c) *Ensuring that relevant security and border-control officials are sufficiently trained in the practices and procedures of risk analysis, risk-indicator development and their application in the identification of FTFs or potential FTFs;*
- d) *Facilitating greater working-level cooperation and coordination by all agencies, including those operating at the border;*
- e) *Ensuring that border-control officials are adequately trained in counter-terrorism issues, and that counter-terrorism agents are adequately trained in border-security issues;*
- f) *Raising awareness among border control officials of the particular challenges associated with detecting female FTFs, including the fact that they are younger and less likely to be known to intelligence and law enforcement officials;*
- g) *Employing traveller risk assessment and screening procedures, including collection and analysis of travel data, without resorting to profiling based on stereotypes founded on grounds of discrimination prohibited by international law.*

**5. Addressing gaps in the use of advance passenger information (API) and expanding its use to stem the flow of FTFs**

An API system enables border authorities to determine passenger risk before flights arrive on their territories or before passengers are approved for boarding in order to detect the departure from their territories, or attempted entry into or transit of suspected FTFs through their territories. The use of PNR systems, if permissible under national law, can complement API data and help inform decisions on potential FTFs. However, API systems are complex and require a high degree of technical capacity and skill and adequate resources.

***Guiding principle 19.*** *In order to facilitate broader, more comprehensive use of API, States should consider:*

- a) *Implementing an API system that complies with Annex 9 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation and the WCO/IATA/ICAO Guidelines on API;*
- b) *Implementing interactive API (iAPI), which analyses and responds to passenger data in real time and can prevent passengers from accessing aircraft or secure airport areas;*
- c) *Using a "single window" that serves the needs of all agencies and appointing a single agency to be the primary receiver of API data.*
- d) *Ensuring the alignment and standardization of API programme specifications and communication protocols with the standards and best practices agreed and adopted in the Guidelines on API;*
- e) *Ensuring adherence to the prescribed set of data outlined in the Guidelines;*
- f) *Implementing a PNR system to complement API in conducting risk assessment. Human rights should be respected in the collection, analysis, sharing, storage and use of PNR data;*
- g) *Ensuring the availability of adequate resources for implementing effective API systems;*



- h) *Integrating API with INTERPOL global indices and capabilities that include the Stolen and Lost Travel Documents (SLTD) database and Travel Documents Associated With Notices (TDAWN) system*

## **B. Practical measures to strengthen the overall security of borders**

### **1. Coordinated border management (CBM)**

Many States have turned to coordinated border management (CBM) to effectively manage their borders. Participants in the special meeting noted the need for cooperation and coordination by all security institutions where border security cannot be secured by one agency alone, as a means to strengthen the overall security of borders in stemming the flow of FTFs. A CBM approach can enable States to:

- a) Strengthen control and delivery of service;
- b) Clarify responsibilities and lines of work;
- c) Streamline operations;
- d) Reduce redundancies;
- e) Strengthen communication flows and information exchange;
- f) Rationalize the use of human and financial resources;
- g) Provide a more comprehensive and quicker response to emerging threats;
- h) Respond more quickly and effectively to emerging threats.

***Guiding principle 20.*** *In order to strengthen coordination among the competent authorities at border locations and thereby enhance the overall security of their borders and stem the flow of FTFs, States should consider:*

- a) *Incorporating CBM principles, as appropriate, to enhance the effectiveness of border controls aimed at stemming the flow of FTFs;*
- b) *Implementing a CBM approach by establishing appropriate legal and regulatory frameworks and institutional structures, developing the required procedures, and acquiring the necessary human resources, training, infrastructure and equipment.*

### **2. Addressing spaces between official border crossings**

Spaces between official border crossings are difficult to control because they often include long and porous borders, open spaces and difficult terrain. They therefore present risks and vulnerabilities for potential crossing by FTFs.

***Guiding principle 21.*** *In order to strengthen the overall security of their borders and thereby stem the flow of FTFs, States should consider:*

- a) *Identifying the most vulnerable border stretches and implementing mitigation measures;*
- b) *Establishing controls at vulnerable locations;*
- c) *Establishing mobile border-processing units and/or roving patrols on the basis of risk assessment and assessed needs; and supporting them with transportable screening systems such as INTERPOL's Mobile INTERPOL Network Database (MIND);*
- d) *Extending areas of control adjacent to official border checkpoints;*

- e) *Establishing, strengthening, and acting upon bilateral agreements on cross-border matters;*
- f) *Increasing cooperation, coordination and information exchange with neighbouring and other States;*
- g) *Introducing appropriate legal measures to deter the unauthorized crossing of borders that are compliant with all relevant obligations under international law;*
- h) *Making available adequate and trained human resources to conduct border operations;*
- i) *Developing and deploying cost-effective detection technologies and infrastructure (e.g., integrated fixed towers and mobile technologies), as appropriate;*
- j) *Actively implementing bilateral and multilateral joint approaches to border-control operations;*
- k) *Designating a lead coordinating and implementing agency to operationalize FTF-related border-management measures.*

### **III. Criminalization, prosecution (including prosecution strategies for returnees), international cooperation, and the rehabilitation and reintegration of returnees**

The five technical sessions held on this theme enabled Member States, international and regional organizations, civil society stakeholders and practitioners to share information on the analysis of gaps in all areas of the criminal-justice process, as well as on effective strategies and techniques to overcome them. Many of the challenges involved in bringing FTFs to justice are addressed in the CTED report on “Bringing Terrorists to Justice: Challenges in Prosecution Related to Foreign Terrorist Fighters”, issued as Security Council document S/2015/123.

#### **A. Criminalization of acts aimed at stemming the flow of FTFs**

Reliance on existing laws, including laws that do not directly deal with terrorist offences, has enabled many States to mount an immediate solution to the FTF threat. However, doing so also presents a number of risks and challenges, including the Courts' reluctance to apply such legislation, the potential use of disproportionate penalties, and difficulties in obtaining international cooperation.

***Guiding principle 22.*** *Member States should actively review the compliance of their existing legislation with resolution 2178 (2014) and update national legislation frameworks, as needed, in order to criminalize the full range of FTF-related conduct, including preparatory acts and preventive offences, required by resolutions 1373(2001) and 2178(2014). In criminalizing FTF-related conduct, States should ensure that these criminal offences are clearly defined in their legal systems and that such criminalization is in accordance with their obligations under the applicable international law. Member States should consider taking steps to encourage the engagement of parliamentarians, civil society, relevant international and regional organizations and policymakers in the legislative process, as appropriate.*

***Guiding principle 23.*** *Member States that have already begun the process of reviewing and updating their legislation should continue to share their experiences and good practices with other Member States and should seek guidance and advice from United Nations bodies and*

other relevant international and regional organizations. They should strive to compile and distribute new legislation in a way that is accessible to other Member States who may benefit from, or require it.

**Guiding principle 24.** *Member States and international and regional organizations may wish to consider adopting a regional approach to addressing the criminalization of FTF-related acts. The Council of Europe adopted such an approach in the form of the Additional Protocol to the Convention on the Prevention of Terrorism. A regional approach may enhance implementation, harmonization and international cooperation.*

## **B. Investigation and prosecution of criminal offences to stem the FTF flow**

Generating admissible evidence and converting intelligence into admissible evidence against FTFs are complex and multifaceted tasks. Specific challenges in the investigation and prosecution of FTF cases include:

- a) Collecting evidence from countries of destination or areas where the military may play a role;
- b) Using intelligence or the products of special investigative techniques in court without exposing sources or methods;
- c) Generating admissible evidence from, or converting intelligence into admissible evidence information obtained through ICT, including social media;
- d) Handling cases involving incitement to commit terrorist acts and terrorist recruitment, especially when those offences are committed through the Internet;
- e) Proving the purpose of travel and the intent behind preparatory acts committed prior to travel.

**Guiding principle 25.** *Member States should consider reviewing national legislation to ensure that evidence collected through special investigative techniques or from countries of destination or evidence collected through ICT and social media, including through electronic surveillance, can be admitted as evidence in FTF-related cases, while respecting international human rights law including freedom of expression, and recalling that any restrictions thereon shall only be such as are provided by law and are necessary on the grounds set out in paragraph 3 of Article 19 of the ICCPR, and not be subjected to arbitrary or unlawful interference with privacy. Member States should take steps to ensure that lawfully gathered intelligence that may not be used in court can serve as a basis for a criminal investigation, including the use of special investigative techniques, which could, in turn, generate admissible evidence. Member States should consider implementing the relevant good practices and work of the GCTF, as well as other organizations that may develop similar products like the Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the European Union, the African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism, and the Meeting of Heads of Special Services, Security Agencies and Law Enforcement Agencies.<sup>1</sup>*

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<sup>1</sup> See in particular *The Rabat Memorandum on Good Practices for Effective Counterterrorism Practice in the Criminal Justice Sector* of the GCTF Global Counterterrorism Forum Criminal Justice Sector/Rule of Law Working Group: [www.thegctf.org/documents/10162/38299/Rabat+Memorandum-English](http://www.thegctf.org/documents/10162/38299/Rabat+Memorandum-English): [www.thegctf.org/documents/10162/38299/Rabat+Memorandum-English](http://www.thegctf.org/documents/10162/38299/Rabat+Memorandum-English) and the GCTF Recommendations for Using and Protecting Intelligence Information In Rule of Law-Based, Criminal Justice Sector-Led

**Guiding principle 26.** *Member States should build ICT and forensic capacities and expertise within national law enforcement agencies and strengthen the capacity of law enforcement agencies to monitor social media content related to terrorism in order to prevent the flow of FTFs in a manner compliant with the States' international human rights obligations. Member States should build and strengthen public-private partnerships, in particular, with social media service providers, while respecting international obligations and commitments regarding human rights, including freedom of expression and that any restrictions thereon shall only be such as are provided by law and are necessary on the grounds set out in paragraph 3 of Article 19 of the ICCPR. In this regard, Member States should encourage the ICT industry to voluntarily develop terms of service that target content aimed at recruitment for terrorism and recruiting or inciting others to commit terrorist acts, while respecting international obligations and commitments regarding human rights.*

**Guiding principle 27.** *Member States should consider taking steps to ensure effective inter-agency coordination, including by developing multi-agency task forces and liaison officers in order to ensure a collective response.*

**Guiding principle 28.** *Member States should consider involving their financial authorities in FTF-related investigations at the earliest opportunity. Financial investigations into transactions and financial crimes conducted and committed prior to departure can provide valuable information against FTFs and assist in proving the purpose of the travel.*

**Guiding principle 29.** *Member States should consider developing a proactive approach to the investigation of FTF-related offences and involving other officials, including prosecutors, in the early stages of investigation. Member States should consider developing ways to collect evidence regarding the purpose of travel that is consistent with their obligations under international human rights law, as early as possible. Collecting and preserving evidence prior to, or during travel or while the FTF is in the country of destination (i.e. from friends, family members, social media and the FTF own communications) facilitates timely prosecutorial decisions upon the FTF's return.*

### **C. Prosecution and rehabilitation strategies aimed at stemming the flow of FTFs**

The employment of rigid prosecution policies and practices against FTFs can be counterproductive to the implementation of comprehensive strategies to combat FTFs and violent extremism. Member States should also consider alternatives to incarceration, as well as reintegration and possible rehabilitation of returnees, prisoners and detainees. The adoption of a comprehensive, multidisciplinary approach that involves all branches of Government, as well as community and civil society stakeholders, can be a more effective way to bring terrorists to justice and can represent an effective long-term response to the risks posed by FTFs. Many Member States find it difficult to determine how to respond to the potential threat posed by specific categories of travellers, including, in particular minors, family members and other potentially vulnerable individuals; providers of medical services and other humanitarian needs; and disillusioned returnees who have committed less serious offences. More research and sharing of experiences is needed in order to develop effective, context-specific criminal-justice responses to FTFs and enable effective assessment of the

risks posed by various categories of returnees. In combating the FTF threat, it is important to address the full range of serious crimes committed during travel, in particular war crimes, crimes against humanity and gender-related crimes. Moreover, it is important to conduct an initial assessment of the FTF to determine the level of culpability and thereby determine the appropriate way to handle each individual.

**Guiding principle 30.** *Member States should ensure that their competent authorities are able to apply a case-by-case approach to returnees, based on risk assessment, availability of evidence, and related factors. Member States should develop and implement strategies for dealing with specific categories of returnees, in particular minors, women, family members, and other potentially vulnerable individuals; providers of medical services and other humanitarian needs; and disillusioned returnees who have committed less serious offences. Prosecution strategies should correspond to national counter-terrorism strategies, including effective CVE strategies.*

**Guiding principle 31.** *Member States should consider appropriate administrative measures and/or rehabilitation and reintegration programmes as alternatives to prosecution in appropriate cases. Such measures should be used in a manner compliant with applicable international human rights law and domestic legislation and should be subject to effective review.*

**Guiding principle 32.** *Member States should ensure that their criminal justice systems are capable of dealing with all serious crimes committed by FTFs, in particular, war crimes, crimes against humanity and gender-related crimes.*

#### **D. International judicial cooperation in stemming the flow of FTFs**

There are numerous challenges associated with effective international cooperation in stemming the flow of FTFs, including delays in the provision of mutual legal assistance (MLA), rigidity of procedures, and lack of capacity.

**Guiding principle 33.** *Member States should consider reviewing national MLA laws and mechanisms and updating them as necessary in order to strengthen their effectiveness, especially in light of the substantial increase in the volume of requests for digital data. Member States, consistent with their domestic law and legal framework, should also consider establishing appropriate laws and mechanisms that allow for the broadest possible international cooperation, including, inter alia, effective joint investigations, appointment of liaison officers, police-to-police cooperation, the establishment of 24/7 networks for cooperation, transfer of criminal proceedings, and transfer of sentences.*

**Guiding principle 34.** *Member States should consider designating MLA central authorities and ensuring that such authorities have adequate resources, training, and legal authority. Member States should also consider developing, and participating in, regional MLA cooperation platforms such as the Sahel Judicial Platform/Regional Judicial Platform of the Sahel Countries.<sup>2</sup> They should also consider developing and enhancing arrangements for expeditious cross-regional cooperation.*

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<sup>2</sup> See [unodc.org/documents/terrorism/Leaflets/14-06860\\_A5\\_leaflet\\_E\\_ebook.pdf](https://unodc.org/documents/terrorism/Leaflets/14-06860_A5_leaflet_E_ebook.pdf)

**Guiding principle 35.** *Member States should consider developing and implementing effective mechanisms for police-to-police cooperation. Member States should consider developing and implementing creative solutions to concrete international cooperation challenges. Member States should consider increasing their use of electronic communication, universal templates, relying on police channels of communication or public information wherever possible. In doing so, they should ensure full respect for fair trial rights of the accused.*

FINAL DRAFT

**MEETING OF THE MINISTERS OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND OF THE INTERIOR HELD IN  
MADRID ON THE OCCASION OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE COUNTER-TERRORISM  
COMMITTEE OF THE UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL, JULY 28 2015**

The States and organizations participating at the High Level Meeting on the occasion of the Special Meeting of the Counter-Terrorism Committee of the United Nations Security Council have agreed as follows:

1. We reiterate our condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, which constitutes one of the most serious threats to international peace and security, and reaffirm our solidarity with the countries facing the plague of terrorism and pledge our continued cooperation and support for their efforts.
2. We reaffirm our determination to continue to fight terrorism, fully complying with the Charter of the UN, and with all our obligations under international law, in particular international human rights law, international refugee law, and international humanitarian law, and resolve to counter this threat through a global comprehensive strategy, which implements and develops the UN Global Counter Terrorism Strategy and relevant resolutions of the Security Council.
3. We express concern that foreign terrorist fighters increase the intensity, duration and intractability of conflicts, and also may pose a serious threat to their States of origin, the States they transit and the States to which they travel, as well as States neighbouring zones of armed conflict in which foreign terrorist fighters are active and that are affected by serious security burdens, note that the threat of foreign terrorist fighters may affect all regions and States, even those far from conflict zones, and express grave concern that foreign terrorist fighters are using their extremist ideology to promote terrorism.

We reaffirm the principles of UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 2178 and relevant Presidential Statements (PRST), which call upon UN Member States to develop legislative, judicial, law enforcement and other relevant measures to establish efficient and effective international cooperation efforts against the phenomenon of foreign terrorist fighters.

We reaffirm the principles contained in UNSCR 1373 regarding criminal investigation, prosecution and international cooperation on procedural matters regarding the financing and support of terrorist groups.

We call upon States to propose creative ideas and new approaches for developing legal tools to further counter terrorism, including the phenomenon of Foreign Terrorist Fighters, in line with obligations under international law.

**4.** We call upon the international community to implement and reinforce the measures contained in UNSCR 2178.

We underscore the importance for all the States of the International Community to develop, as a matter of priority, without delay, adequate, swift and effective measures to fight the phenomenon of foreign terrorist fighters. We encourage all States to keep up the momentum in strengthening their national legislations against foreign terrorist fighters, speeding up prosecutions of foreign terrorist fighters and other individuals who cooperate in their recruitment, organization and financing of travel and related activities, and strengthening the mechanisms for international assistance in the area of criminal justice.

**5.** We call upon States to take effective measures to prevent individuals who travel to a State other than their State of residence or nationality for the purpose of the perpetration, planning, or preparation of terrorist acts, including by increased international cooperation through timely information exchange, including through multilateral fora, and through the implementation of good practices, agreed upon as appropriate, as well as through measures to increase the use of Advance Passenger Information data, improve security at border crossings and to ensure effective co-ordination between national border, police and intelligence authorities, as well as with private sector organisations, to tackle foreign terrorist fighter travel

**6.** We also call upon the international community, in the framework of the fight against terrorism financing, to pay specific attention to the financing, facilitation, and travel tradecraft used by foreign terrorist fighters.

**7.** We urge all States to consider listing, pursuant to UNSCR 1267/1989/2161, individuals, groups, undertakings, and entities associated with Al-Qaida who are financing, arming, planning, or recruiting for them, including ISIL/Da'esh, Boko Haram, Al Nusra Front, and Ansar Al Sharia.

**8.** The International Community must also continue to more effectively carry out efficiently coordinated actions to prevent the spread of violent extremism, by promoting, inter alia, interreligious and intercultural dialogue.

We note with concern that terrorist groups, in particular the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL, also known as Da'esh), Al-Nusra Front (ANF), Ansar Al Sharia, Boko Haram, all the other cells, affiliates, splinter groups, or derivatives of Al-Qaeda, and groups that have pledged allegiance to ISIL/Da'esh, are exploiting information and communications technology to spread their violent ideology, to conduct incitement to violence, and to attempt to attract our citizens, especially the youth. We are determined to counter radicalization to violence and violent extremism by spreading the values of peaceful coexistence and pluralism upon which the international society is based, and supporting relevant local communities and civil society leaders, notably through paying special attention to women and youth in schools and prisons.



Together with the promotion of universal values, we underline the need to stop the criminal propaganda of the terrorist groups, the spread of the messages of incitement to violence and recruitment in social media networks and the internet, including the glorification of their cruel acts which causes tremendous suffering to victims, and highlight that a closer dialogue with internet service providers is crucial in this regard.

**9.** We pay tribute to all the victims of terrorism. Victims who have survived terrorist attacks and relatives of victims are among the most powerful and persuasive voices to delegitimize terrorism and to reveal its radical inhumanity. We call upon states to promote and highlight credible voices who can speak powerfully against the destructive propaganda of terrorist groups, including those who have chosen to leave or have been rehabilitated.

**10.** We strongly urge States, if they are able, to assist in the delivery of impactful capacity building and other technical assistance needed by the most affected states, especially those burdened with the need to commit extraordinary resources to counter the foreign terrorist fighter phenomenon, including states neighbouring zones of armed conflict in which foreign terrorist fighters are active.

**11.** While we value the progress achieved by States in taking the necessary measures to counter foreign terrorist fighters since the adoption of Resolution 2178, there is an urgent need to redouble efforts. We urge all States to significantly increase coordinated international action to create more obstacles in order to reduce the travel of foreign terrorist fighters and dramatically reduce the pace of their arrivals to conflict zones, in particular Syria, Iraq, and Libya.

In this context, we note the fact that various international regional and sub-regional organizations have decided to include in their activities and Plans of Action measures to counter violent extremism and to fight the phenomenon of foreign terrorist fighters.

**12.** We welcome recent developments and initiatives at the international, regional, and subregional levels to prevent and suppress the foreign terrorist fighter phenomenon, note the work of the Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF), in particular its adoption of a comprehensive set of good practices to address the foreign terrorist fighter phenomenon and the establishment of its Working Group on Foreign Terrorist Fighters, and the work of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the European Union, the Council of Europe, the African Center for the Study and Research on Terrorism, the Meeting of the Heads of Special Services, Security Agencies and Law Enforcement Organizations, the Arab League, and INTERPOL.

**13.** We fully support the central role that the United Nations plays in the fight against terrorism and in the preparation and implementation of measures to counter the phenomenon of foreign terrorist fighters. The Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC), created by UNSCR 1373 and its supporting body the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED), the 1267 Al Qaida Sanctions Committee, and the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF) Office have played an important role to strengthen global actions against foreign terrorist fighters.

We specifically commend and appreciate the CTC and CTED for its commitment in implementing pertinent UNSCRs, and in particular UNSCR 2178 and relevant PRSTs. We underline the importance of their analysis of emerging trends and challenges, as well as their identification of good practices in the implementation of UNSCRs related to the fight against terrorism, and we welcome their cooperation with civil society and academic institutions, including the recent launching of the Global Research Network.

**14.** We welcome the Conclusions reported by the CTC at its Special Meeting to stem the flow of foreign terrorist fighters on July 28, 2015, on the basis of the work carried out by the experts during the CTED-led technical sessions on July 27, 2015. We believe that these Conclusions of the CTC will enable States to more effectively implement relevant counterterrorism UNSC resolutions, in particular UNSCR 2178, to counter the threat of foreign terrorist fighters.

**15.** We congratulate Spain for its leadership on counterterrorism and successful hosting of the Ministerial Session to stem the flow of foreign terrorist fighters and express our gratitude for its generous hospitality.