

International community must stay 'one step ahead' of ISIL, stresses UN official

8 February 2018 – Despite military successes against the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Da'esh), the terrorist group and its affiliates continue to pose a significant threat around the world, the top United Nations counter-terrorism official told the Security Council today, urging strengthened international cooperation to address violent extremism and bring those behind it to justice.

“The rapidly evolving and transnational threat from ISIL presents a difficult challenge for Member States and the international community,” said Vladimir Voronkov, the head of the UN [Counter-Terrorism Office](#) at a Security Council [meeting](#), on threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts.

“ISIL is no longer focused on conquering and holding territory. It has been forced to adapt and focus primarily on a smaller and more motivated group of individuals who remain committed to inspiring, enabling and carrying out attacks,” he added.

Countering the changing threat implies the “need to stay one step ahead of ISIL” as it continues to adapt and evolve, stressed the UN official.

In particular, Mr. Voronkov called for a strong international framework to counter the threat from ISIL through the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy as well as relevant General Assembly and Security Council resolutions, as well as effective implementation of existing multilateral tools and legal instruments, conventions and protocols.

Addressing the ISIL threat also requires addressing its underlying conditions which sway young men and women towards violent extremism, he added.

He also urged the international community to address the “deficit” in counter-terrorism cooperation at the global, regional and national levels and called on countries to engage fully at the first ever UN Summit of Heads of Counter-Terrorism Agencies (to be held in June.)

The UN official informed the 15-member council of the evolving activities of ISIL and its affiliates in different parts of the world, including efforts to fund its illicit activities and spread propaganda.

He also warned that ISIL members and its sympathizers continue to abuse social media, as well as technology such as encryption methods and communication tools within the dark web, to communicate, coordinate and facilitate their activities and perpetrate attacks.