

Tackling terrorism and extremism before it starts

Well, thank you very much, Mr President. And may I start, of course, by thanking Vladimir and Michelle for their briefings today, which I think sets out very clearly, as does the Secretary-General's report, just how much of a challenge remains because, while military successes have removed Da'esh's territorial control of the so-called caliphate, Da'esh and foreign terrorist fighters continue to pose an ongoing and serious challenge to our individual and collective security. Not just Da'esh – I think other colleagues have also talked about other groups, particularly Al-Qaeda and Al-Qaeda affiliated groups. We must be very concerned by those.

And I think that faced with a problem which affects many countries in many regions of the world, member states naturally look to the United Nations and in particular look to this Council through its resolutions, through its committees to give guidance and support. And I think that means we need a not only timely and effective set of responses, but also even better coordination and evaluation. So we welcome as the UK the number of guidance products being developed to assist states in navigating some of these complex new challenges. But I would stress – I'm sure I'm preaching to the converted to my left – but I would stress the need to ensure that these are complementary and reflective of a whole-of-UN approach. And I think to that end, we would particularly encourage CTED to continue to, of course, conduct its assessment visits, to strengthen its own dialogue with member states and for member states to engage CTED in requesting those. And I can say that the United Kingdom is looking forward to its own CTED assessment in October this year.

And I would also stress the need for proactive follow-up by CTED and its partners. And of course, this is where the Office for Counterterrorism particularly comes in with its capacity building capabilities. It's so important that where CTED has carried out that assessment in partnership with a member state, that there is the capacity building and support there for those member states to be able to really make a difference. So I think that would be where I would start, if I might, in responding to the briefings I heard.

The Secretary-General's report colleagues, sets out a number of challenges. Let me just focus on a few. Firstly, I share the concerns raised by a number of colleagues and by our briefers about the conditions in the camps in northeast Syria, particularly for family members and for children. This should be of great concern for us all. And we welcome the United Nations' increased attention on the challenge of addressing these conditions while also integrating efforts to prevent violent extremism and incitement of terrorism among camp populations. And that's clearly a task beyond not only the United Nations. It is for all member states to think about how we can support such work.

And an important element of this is accountability for Da'esh's crimes. I was

really pleased to hear from the colleague from Equatorial Guinea on this. We, like you, fully support what UNITAD is doing in Iraq, particularly when it comes to sexual and gender-based violence. We've increased our funding for UNITAD at and I hope we all support their efforts to collect, preserve and of course, we hope use that crucial evidence.

It is also alarming that Da'esh still reportedly has \$300 million in reserves. Now we know that terrorist attacks are increasingly low cost and low tech. And we've seen in recent cases that transfers of small amounts of money, using new technologies, inspired by narratives both online and offline, can terrorise our citizens. So that amount of money could cause huge damage. We need again collectively to tackle the financing of terrorism and ensure we are doing so in a way which keeps pace with modern money flows – and that is a job for us all.

Thirdly, I want to say how much we agree with the Secretary-General's report's analysis of the risk of radicalisation and mobilisation taking place in prisons. Now, prisons, of course, are a place of risk, but at the same time, they can be an important place for disengagement and rehabilitation efforts. So we would encourage the UN and its partners to support member states to develop measures in this area. I would note that this Council has placed a great emphasis on prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration. And that's something which we've taken to heart in the United Kingdom, where, if I may just say a couple of words about our experience, in the United Kingdom, rehabilitation work focuses on a broad range of individuals, not just those serving a prison sentence for terrorism-related offense and not just those in prison. We also work with those on probation in the community and those subject to other sorts of court orders such as returnees from Syria.

Let me finish by expressing our concerns over the increase in the terrorist attacks motivated by extreme right-wing ideologies. We know that terrorist narratives, incitement and resources are moving across borders, both real and virtual. We fully support the Christchurch Call To Action and efforts to remove terrorist content online while protecting human rights and freedom of expression. And we look forward to working with our partners in member states, the United Nations and the technological industries to strengthen these efforts and combat incitement.

Across all forms of terrorism and extremism, let me say that we strongly support the United Nations Preventing Violent Extremism initiatives which place civil society at their centre.

The cornerstone of the United Kingdom's own Prevent model is our local work with communities and civil society organisations. We support civil society organisations across the country to build their awareness of the risks of radicalisation and their resilience to terrorism and violent extremist narratives and propaganda. And as I've said before in this chamber, there's not something that can be done from outside of a community, from outside of a country; it can only be done from local or by communities themselves being empowered to tackle extremism and terrorism before it starts. And that's one of the places in which the UN could be so very helpful in sharing best practice. And I encourage you to step up your efforts even further in this

area.

Thank you very much, Mr President.