

THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA

SEVENTIETH SESSION
SIXTH COMMITTEE
AGENDA ITEM 107: MEASURES TO ELIMINATE INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM

Check against delivery

S T A T E M E N T

by

Mr. Boris Holovka
Minister Counsellor

Permanent Mission of the Republic of Serbia to the United Nations

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Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, let me point out that, as a candidate country for membership in the European Union, my delegation subscribes to the statement made today by the representative of the European Union. I shall, therefore, focus on some points from the national perspective.

Let me first of all say that the Government of Serbia has always unequivocally and strongly condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, committed by whomever, wherever and for whatever purposes. Serbia is a party to 14 out of 18 international counter-terrorism instruments and is doing its utmost to fully implement relevant General Assembly and Security Council resolutions and, in particular, Resolution 1373 (2001).

Serbia is fully committed to countering contemporary threats and challenges and combatting terrorism and all forms of extremism and radicalism represents a priority of utmost importance. It has been one of the co-sponsors of the UNSC resolution 2178 and is an active member of the coalition against ISIL, firmly convinced that the threat of foreign terrorist fighters and violent extremism must and can only be countered through a multidimensional approach with legitimate means and with full respect of human rights.

In order to strengthen its capacities to prevent flows of foreign terrorist fighters and contribute more actively to this common combat, taking care of the obligations in the European Union accession process, Serbia has undertaken a number of measures at the strategic-political, normative, institutional and operational level. Important qualitative improvements have been made through the adoption of several national strategic-doctrinal documents, such as strategies and risk assessment, defining the basic policy direction in preventing and countering terrorism. Efforts have been made to harmonize domestic substantive legislation with international standards, inter alia, through innovating the Criminal Code and amending the Law on the Prevention of Money Laundering and the Financing of Terrorism, and the Law on restrictions on the freedom to dispose of assets in order to prevent terrorism. Institutional capacities have also been reinforced in the fight against terrorism. Increased measures have been taken at the operational level, which, inter alia, aim at raising the security of external borders and preventing the entry of foreign terrorist fighters or their transit through Serbia, monitoring and preventing travel to conflict areas, as well as creating conditions for the establishment of databases to disable movement and provide for more efficient supervision.

On this occasion I would like to note that Serbia has recently submitted a consolidated report on the capacities for the implementation of UN Security Council resolutions 1373 and 1624, detailing the measures taken in order to curb the threats and challenges related to the flows of foreign terrorist fighters.

Mr. Chairman,

Let me briefly turn to the activities undertaken by Serbia's current Chairmanship of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). In December 2014, under the Swiss OSCE Chairmanship, the OSCE Ministerial Council adopted a Declaration on the OSCE Role in Countering the Phenomenon of Foreign Terrorist Fighters in the Context of the Implementation of UN Security Council Resolutions 2170 and 2178. As part of our joint plan of work with Switzerland, the 2015 Serbian Chairmanship has put considerable focus on implementing this Declaration. In that regard, an OSCE-wide expert-level conference on Countering the Incitement and Recruitment of Foreign Terrorist Fighters was held from 30 June to 1 July in Vienna. During the Conference, a communication campaign highlighting the OSCE's comprehensive approach to preventing terrorism by branding all relevant activities across the Organization was launched with a common slogan: "OSCE United in Countering Violent Extremism". Based on the discussions at the event, the Chairmanship issued a Perception Paper on the outcomes and recommendations that provide a solid basis for the adoption of an OSCE Ministerial Council Document on Countering Violent Extremism and Radicalization that Lead to Terrorism, which would contribute to the discussions on Countering Violent Extremism in the UN and the adoption of a UN Action Plan on Preventing Violent Extremism. A further two events were also recently held: on 3 and 4 September an event on youth and radicalization was held in Belgrade, while on 7 and 8 October an expert workshop was held in Bucharest on media freedom and responsibilities in the context of counter-terrorist policies. Additional upcoming activities include the developing of awareness raising courses based on the OSCE guidebook entitled "Preventing Terrorism and Countering Violent Extremism and Radicalization that lead to Terrorism: A Community-Policing Approach" and the expected launch of a training programme called "Leaders Against Intolerance and Violent Extremism", with the aim of empowering civil society leaders, including youth, women and religious figures, to speak out, mobilize others and launch initiatives against intolerance and violent extremism.

Mr. Chairman,

Serbia is ready to contribute, in coordination with its partners around the world, to combating terrorist threats and the phenomenon of foreign terrorist fighters at the national, regional, European and global level. We remain firmly committed to the fight against terrorism and the phenomenon of foreign terrorist fighters, and in this regard we wish to emphasize the role of the institutions of the United Nations system as an undeniable leader at the global level.

Finally, before concluding, let me express our hope that the Working Group that will reconvene during the current session will succeed in finalizing the text of the draft Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism, as we believe there is sound basis to do it now and that political will to do so has been garnered. We will certainly do our utmost to actively support this goal.

Thank you.