
Security Council

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New York

Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts

Mr. Ambassador Ricardo Alberto Arias

Permanent Representative of Panama to the United Nations

Mr. Arias (Panama) (*spoke in Spanish*): First and foremost, Mr. President, allow me to thank you, personally, and the delegation of the Russian Federation for convening this important open debate on the renewal and updating of the mandate of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED).

In turn, I would like to thank Ambassador Mike Smith for his detailed briefing on the review and suggestions regarding the organizational plan and working methods of the Executive Directorate. I would like to start by indicating that, in the opinion of my delegation, the success of the efforts of the United Nations in the fight against terrorism will largely depend on the acceptance of these efforts by the Member States and their cooperation in them.

Therefore, Panama welcomes the process launched by Mr. Smith, who, through a broad-ranging process of consultations with the membership of the Organization, has recommended a number of modifications to the organizational plan and to the working methods of the Executive Directorate. It is important for the Executive Directorate to maintain this approach of organizing consultations with the membership whenever it takes action.

Among the proposed changes, we would like to single out the following: the format of visits, the intention of the Executive Directorate to participate more actively in the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force and the internal reorganization of the Directorate.

With regard to the visits of the Executive Directorate, it is worth recalling, during the year when we chaired the Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC), visits to specific countries were the subject of lengthy discussions. At that time, the Committee and its Executive Directorate lacked the necessary procedures to set clear objectives for these visits. This, combined with the fact that only developing countries were visited, could be perceived as a selective decision. The new proposal, which will allow for greater flexibility in the nature and aims of the visits, will both have positive results and establish criteria for deciding which countries are to be visited. In particular, we welcome the planned visits to developed countries in order to monitor their compliance with resolutions 1373 (2001) and 1624 (2005) and in order to draw on their experience in providing technical assistance to countries which need it and have sought it.

With regard to the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, as adopted by the General Assembly, we wish to emphasize that its comprehensive nature gives scope for addressing issues, such as the root causes of terrorism, which, given their nature, are not, strictly speaking, within the mandate of CTC.

In this regard, we welcome the decision of the Executive Directorate to step up its involvement in the Task Force, and we recommend that it make contributions alongside this Task Force, in accordance with its mandate. This would avoid duplication of effort and enhance the coordination of the entire United Nations system in combating this scourge. We also support greater interaction between the CTC and CTED on the one hand and the Human Rights Council and the Office of the High Commissioner on the other.

With regard to internal reorganization, we take note, with interest, of the establishment of thematic groups, as well as the two new entities, one, dealing with the quality control of documents, the other dealing with communication and outreach.

We take note of the relevance of these new innovations in order to achieve greater accuracy and a closer and enhanced style of the work in question between the Executive Directorate and the Member States. This would thus contribute to the effective implementation of its mandate.

Finally, we agree with Mr. Smith regarding the importance of ensuring consistency in the work of the Executive Directorate. This is a technical Secretariat, composed of various experts with a specific mandate.

All documents and evaluations submitted by the Executive Directorate should be based on technical criteria, avoiding any form of political consideration. It is only thus that the Executive Directorate will be able to fulfil the mission entrusted to it. Taking into account the information submitted to us by Mr. Smith, Panama supports the renewal of the mandate of the Executive Directorate and wishes it every success in carrying out its functions.