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Twenty-first report of the Secretary-General on the threat posed by ISIL (Da'esh) to international peace and security and the range of United Nations efforts in support of Member States in countering the threat

I. Introduction

1. In adopting its resolution 2253 (2015), the Security Council expressed its determination to address the threat posed to international peace and security by Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant[1] (ISIL, hereinafter referred to as "Da'esh")[2] and associated individuals and groups and requested that the Secretary-General provide an initial strategic-level report on the threat, followed by updates every four months. In its resolution 2734 (2024), the Council requested that the Secretary-General continue to provide, every six months, strategic-level reports that demonstrate and reflect the gravity of the threat posed by Da'esh to international peace and security and the range of United Nations efforts in support of Member States in countering the threat, particularly that reflect the impact of these efforts. It further requested that the latest biannual report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team pursuant to resolutions 1526 (2004) and 2253 (2015) concerning ISIL (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and the Taliban and associated individuals and entities be annexed to the present report.

2. The present report is the twenty-first such report.[3] It was prepared by the Office of Counter-Terrorism, with the input of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate and in close collaboration with the Monitoring Team and other United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact entities.

3. During the reporting period, the threat posed by Da'esh and its affiliates to international peace and security remained high. Despite sustained counter-terrorism pressure, the group continued to demonstrate resilience and adaptability, including through evolving tactics and geographic shifts in operational focus. The United Nations supported Member States in countering this threat, including through the implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and relevant Security Council resolutions.

[1] Listed as Al-Qaida in Iraq (QDe.115).
[2] In line with General Assembly resolution 75/291.
[3] See S/2016/92, S/2016/501, S/2016/830, S/2017/97, S/2017/467, S/2018/80, S/2018/770, S/2019/103, S/2019/612, S/2020/95, S/2020/774, S/2021/98, S/2021/682, S/2022/63, S/2022/576, S/2023/76, S/2023/568, S/2024/117, S/2024/583 and S/2025/72.

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II. Threat assessment

A. Overview and evolution of the threat[4]

4. The threat posed by Da'esh and its affiliates remained dynamic and diverse, with the highest intensity observed in parts of Africa. Da'esh and its affiliates sustained a high level of propaganda output, which continued to serve as a tool for recruitment and fundraising, as well as for conveying strategic priorities. There were growing concerns about the threat from foreign terrorist fighters.

5. Da'esh had still not officially confirmed the identity of its overall leader, who had adopted the name Abu Hafs al-Hashimi al-Qurayshi. The delayed confirmation may be due to concern that confirming his identity would make him a higher-priority target for counter-terrorism operations, or to avoid questions around his legitimacy. Some Member States continued to believe him to be Abdul Qadir Mumin (Somali) (not listed), head of the Karrar "office" in Somalia); however, opinions remained divided.

6. Leadership attrition continued, notably with the death of Abdallah Makki Mosleh Al-Rafi'i (also known as Abu Khadija) in March in Anbar Governorate in Iraq. Abu Khadija had held multiple senior roles, including that of deputy leader in charge of operational planning, as well as head of Da'esh regional "offices" for Bilad al-Rafidayn (Iraq) and Ard al-Mubaraka (the Syrian Arab Republic, Türkiye and the wider Levant). His death was not expected to destabilize the group's global network, which, in Member States' assessment, may absorb the impact and recover within six months.

7. In response to successive leadership losses resulting from counter-terrorism efforts, Da'esh appointed new mid- to senior-level commanders. The rise of younger leaders, who were more skilled in the use of modern technologies, was expected by Member States and the Monitoring Team to influence the group's strategies.

8. Da'esh activity in the Middle East was constrained by sustained counter-terrorism pressure, notably in Iraq and in the Syrian desert region. The situation in the Syrian Arab Republic remained fragile. Since the fall of the Government of Bashar Al-Assad and the takeover led by Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (QDe.137), Da'esh has been intent on destabilizing the interim authorities and exploiting existing vulnerabilities. Da'esh members seized stockpiles of heavy weaponry (such as missiles, anti-tank systems and mortars) held by the previous Government, and over 500 detainees affiliated with Da'esh were released from detention facilities following the change in power. Prison break incidents also occurred, during which Da'esh detainees escaped.

9. Da'esh maintained up to 3,000 fighters across Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic. In the latter, the group expanded covertly into populated urban areas near Damascus, operating through small mobile cells. The group also sought to incite sectarian tensions and ran multilingual campaigns aimed at discrediting the interim authorities. It attempted to recruit some dissatisfied local fighters, foreign terrorist fighters and former regime soldiers. Da'esh carried out over 90 attacks across the Syrian Arab Republic, mostly targeting the Syrian Democratic Forces in the north-east of the country. On 22 June, an attack against a church in Damascus caused over 80 casualties. A preliminary investigation conducted by the interim authorities attributed the attack to Da'esh, but the group had not claimed responsibility for it.

[4] More information on the threat posed to international peace and security by Da'esh and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities may be found in the thirty-sixth report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted pursuant to resolution 2734 (2024) concerning ISIL (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals and entities (S/2025/482).

Fighter affiliations in the Syrian Arab Republic remain fluid and frequently shift. Da'esh is expected to continue projecting an external threat from the Syrian Arab Republic, where some of its key leaders remained based, if divisions in the country allow a permissive space from which they can plan and execute attacks. In Iraq, Da'esh was working to rebuild its networks and restore operational capacity in the desert region and along the border with the Syrian Arab Republic.

10. The pivot of Da'esh towards parts of Africa continued. These shifts were reflected in its operations and propaganda priorities. Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) (QDe.162) emerged as the most prolific Da'esh propaganda producer, surpassing other affiliates in volume of content produced, while simultaneously supporting its regional branches in the Sahel and North Africa through its Furqan "office", headed by Abu Bakr ibn Muhammad ibn Ali al Mainuki (not listed). The group achieved some territorial gains within Borno State in Nigeria, where it conducted several complex attacks targeting security installations and civilians. Some Member States reported that ISWAP had between 8,000 and 12,000 fighters, with indications of an influx of some foreign terrorist fighters, mostly from West Africa, over the past year.

11. For its part, Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (QDe.163) remained confined to a relatively limited zone, but appeared intent on extending its reach, especially within Niger. The continued existence of this Da'esh affiliate was bolstered by an informal truce with Jama'a Nusrat ul-Islam wa al-Muslimin (QDe.159), an Al-Qaida affiliate, rooted in their shared objective of targeting Sahelian security forces. Since late 2024, Islamic State in the Greater Sahara demonstrated its intention to shift its activities toward the north-west border of Nigeria, relying on the group known locally as Lakurawa, which reportedly pledged allegiance to it.

12. While not operationally active in Libya, Da'esh continued to maintain a foothold there, primarily through integration within transnational organized crime networks in southern Libya that are involved in the smuggling of arms and goods and the movement of fighters. Arrests by Libyan authorities (seven arrests performed in 2025 so far) revealed the presence of individuals tied to Da'esh logistics and financial networks linked to the Sahel region.

13. In Eastern Africa, Da'esh in Somalia launched on 31 December 2024 an attack on a base of the security forces in Dharjaale, Puntland region, in anticipation of a large-scale military counter-offensive supported by international partners. The attack was reportedly led almost entirely by foreign terrorist fighters of Arab origin, which highlights their key role and presence in Puntland region. During the counter-offensive by security forces, 200 Da'esh fighters were killed and over 150 arrested. Member States estimated that over half of the 600 to 800 Da'esh fighters in Somalia were of foreign origin, mostly from Eastern Africa, North Africa and the Arabian Peninsula. Member States were concerned that, without sustained counter-terrorism pressure, the threat may re-emerge.

14. Regional Member States estimated that the Da'esh affiliate in Cabo Delgado Province of Mozambique, Ahl al-Sunna wal-Jama'a (not listed), had 300 to 400 fighters. It remained resilient, conducting regular low-intensity attacks. Its centre of activity remained Mocimboa da Praia, Muidumbe, Mbau and Macomia, with two isolated attacks in the Niassa Special Reserve. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Allied Democratic Forces (Cde.001), led by Musa Baluku (not listed) and Abwakasi (CDi.040), operated in small, mobile combat units, avoiding prolonged presence in one location.

15. In Central Asia and Afghanistan, Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant-Khorasan (ISIL-K) (QDe.161) continued to represent the most serious threat, both regionally

and internationally. With about 2,000 fighters, it continued to recruit from within and beyond Afghanistan, including from Central Asian Member States and the North Caucasus region of the Russian Federation, as well as from among disaffected fighters from other groups. Under the leadership of Sanaullah Ghafari (QDi.431), the group continued to prioritize attacks on Shia communities, the de facto authorities in Afghanistan and foreigners. While efforts by de facto authorities diminished ISIL-K's capabilities, the group continued to operate with relative impunity. Tamim Ansar Al-Kurdi (not listed) was head of the Da'esh regional Siddiq "office" overseeing ISIL-K and operations in Central and South Asia. There were increasing concerns about foreign terrorist fighters moving mainly from the Syrian Arab Republic to Central Asia and Afghanistan, aiming to undermine regional security.

16. Da'esh continued to experiment with various communication platforms to glorify violence and promote an idealized life under the group's rule. It sought to exploit the reach and algorithmic influence of certain social media platforms – in particular to radicalize youth to terrorism and recruit them. The group also experimented with artificial intelligence to enhance propaganda efforts, primarily for radicalization to terrorism and recruitment to their ranks. Guidance had previously been issued by Da'esh to its supporters on using generative artificial intelligence tools without being detected. Reports by Member States indicated efforts to recruit experts in cybersecurity to strengthen the group's capabilities in this domain.

B. Situation of suspected Da'esh members and their family members in conflict zones

17. In the north-east of the Syrian Arab Republic, approximately 34,800 individuals remained in the Hawl and Rawj camps and in detention and other facilities, including "rehabilitation" centres; some individuals may have alleged links or family ties to Da'esh. The population includes more than 6,700 Iraqi nationals, 15,500 Syrian nationals and 8,500 foreign nationals from approximately 62 countries. More than 60 per cent of that population are children, approximately 68 per cent of whom are under 12 years of age and 8 per cent are under 5 years of age. More than 11,590 of those children are foreign nationals, including more than 5,960 from Iraq and more than 5,630 from 59 other countries. In addition, more than 9,680 Syrian children are living in the Hawl and Rawj camps, and most have no meaningful access to legal remedy. Approximately 15 unaccompanied children reside in an interim care centre within Hawl camp.

18. The human rights and humanitarian situation of individuals arbitrarily held under deteriorating conditions in camps and in detention and other facilities, including "rehabilitation" centres in the north-east of the Syrian Arab Republic remained a source of serious concern. The vast majority were being held incommunicado, with no information provided about their fate or whereabouts.

19. The fall of the Government of Bashar Al-Assad and the subsequent political transition in the Syrian Arab Republic resulted in increased instability in the security situation. Combined with cuts in foreign aid, this severely affected humanitarian operations at the Hawl and Rawj camps and increased the urgency of repatriating third-country nationals.

III. Updates on responses to the evolving threat

20. The United Nations continued to support Member States in their efforts to counter the threat posed by Da'esh, including through coordinated programming

across multiple regions and thematic areas. On behalf of the Counter-Terrorism Committee, its Executive Directorate continued to conduct visits to Member States to assess and provide recommendations on the implementation of relevant Security Council resolutions. In the reporting period, six visits were undertaken, to Cameroon, Chad, Hungary, Malta, Norway and Somalia, respectively.

A. Addressing the situation of suspected Da'esh members and their family members in conflict zones

1. Repatriation efforts

21. The pace of repatriations increased significantly during the reporting period, with five Member States reportedly repatriating more than 5,970 individuals in total from the north-east of the Syrian Arab Republic, up from 760 in the previous reporting period. In addition, the Government of Iraq alone repatriated 6,890 Iraqi nationals from the north-east of the Syrian Arab Republic to a rehabilitation centre in Iraq.

22. The United Nations continued to assist the Government of Iraq in advancing rights-based return, rehabilitation and reintegration efforts for individuals repatriated from the north-east of the Syrian Arab Republic. On 30 January, the United Nations and the Government of Iraq launched the second One United Nations plan (2025–2027), supporting the latter's efforts to facilitate the return of all its remaining nationals by the end of 2025, with reintegration support extending through mid-2027. The United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) continued to support high-level political engagement with senior Iraqi officials, including within the security sector, to promote national ownership and coordination in the implementation of these efforts.

23. Various United Nations entities continued to provide complementary support to the Government of Iraq across the humanitarian, security and development dimensions of return, rehabilitation and reintegration. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) continued to support the Government of Iraq in the return, rehabilitation and reintegration of individuals, particularly those from Hawl camp, including the transitional rehabilitation of returnees at Amal Rehabilitation Centre (formerly Jeddah-1 camp). Since January, IOM provided legal assistance to approximately 1,000 individuals at the Centre and key areas of operation in the Anbar, Ninawa and Salah al-Din Governorates in Iraq, addressing civil documentation, housing and property rights, and protection services, including gender-based violence case management, as well as delivering psychosocial support services.

24. In January, the European Union-United Nations Global Terrorism Threats Facility, managed by the Office of Counter-Terrorism, concluded the first phase of its support to Iraq, responding to needs identified within the Global Framework for United Nations Support on Syrian Arab Republic and Iraq Third Country National Returnees. The support consisted of advisory services and the provision of training and information technology equipment to 54 security personnel to assist in the registration and screening of adult individuals seeking voluntary repatriation from Hawl camp.

2. Prosecution and investigation

25. The United Nations continued to support Member States in strengthening rights-based legal and institutional frameworks for the investigation and prosecution of terrorist offences. The Office of Counter-Terrorism, in cooperation with the Office of the National Security Adviser of Iraq, strengthened the capacity of 143 Iraqi security officials in Basrah and Baghdad, as well as in Ninawa, Kirkuk and Diyala,

governorates that are among the most affected by Da'esh, through training to investigate terrorist offences in compliance with suspects' rights, with the goal of reducing reliance on confessions. The Office of Counter-Terrorism conducted the first training with the National Center for International Judicial Cooperation, which leads investigations into Da'esh crimes, marking a significant step in engaging with the Center to strengthen cooperation on accountability and justice. As part of these trainings, the Office of Counter-Terrorism also supported dialogues between security forces and the High Commission for Human Rights of Iraq to foster a culture of rights compliance in the investigation and prosecution of terrorist cases.

26. UNAMI and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights monitored the investigative hearings of 32 detainees as well as the trials of 88 detainees in Iraq as part of their efforts to promote fair trial rights in criminal and terrorism cases. The detainees, all adult men suspected of involvement in Da'esh crimes, included 101 individuals who had been transferred from detention facilities in the north-east of the Syrian Arab Republic to Iraq.

27. In January and March, in Malawi, the Global Terrorism Threats Facility contributed to the ongoing development of new counter-terrorism legislation by supporting a series of three round tables in Lilongwe and three national consultative workshops convened by the Law Commission, which brought together representatives of national and local government agencies, civil society and the private sector.

28. In April, the Office of Counter-Terrorism and the Government of Kazakhstan organized a cross-regional dialogue on prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration in partnership with the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. The dialogue convened 116 government and civil society representatives from eight countries from the Middle East and North Africa, Central Asia and South-East Asia to discuss good practices and ongoing challenges related to the repatriation of individuals from conflict zones and prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration processes.

3. Rehabilitation and reintegration

29. Throughout the reporting period, the Office of Counter-Terrorism, in collaboration with the Department of Peace Operations, developed action-oriented recommendations on programmatic interventions related to individuals associated with terrorist groups in the Lake Chad basin and the Sahel region, with a focus on the coherent and effective operationalization of prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. The report was based on more than 100 consultations with government officials and United Nations entities working on these issues in these regions and will serve to inform the United Nations framework of joint support for Lake Chad basin and the Sahel.

30. In April 2025, the Office of Counter-Terrorism held a training for 31 practitioners working in the Amal Rehabilitation Centre in Iraq on the rehabilitation of Iraqi nationals returning from the north-east of the Syrian Arab Republic, focusing on key disengagement principles and engagement techniques to support client-led behavioural change. The training was based on a curriculum developed by the Office of Counter-Terrorism.

31. The Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) provided specialized training on mental health and psychosocial support for practitioners in Iraq working with children returned from the Syrian Arab Republic. It also supported capacity-building efforts in Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mozambique, Nigeria,

Tajikistan, the United Republic of Tanzania and Uzbekistan to strengthen the investigation, prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration of individuals associated with terrorist groups.

B. International and regional cooperation

32. The United Nations, Member States and international and regional organizations continued to strengthen international and regional counter-terrorism cooperation, with notable progress made in Africa and Central Asia. In June, the Conference of West African Experts on Countering Terrorist Threats to Vulnerable Targets, held under the Global Programme on Countering Terrorist Threats against Vulnerable Targets led by the Office of Counter-Terrorism, resulted in the creation of a regional working group of experts from Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Mauritania, Morocco, Senegal and Togo.

33. United Nations entities promoted technical-level cooperation through the exchange of good practices and national experiences, contributing to more effective counter-terrorism approaches. As part of these efforts, the Global Terrorism Threats Facility facilitated a study visit to Nigeria for representatives of the Tubsan National Centre for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism of the Federal Government of Somalia. The visit enabled direct learning from the experience of Nigeria in managing voluntary defections from terrorist groups.

34. Technical assistance expanded through support by the Global Terrorism Threats Facility to Iraq, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Malawi, Maldives, Nigeria, Somalia, Tajikistan and Uganda, at their request and based on needs identified by the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate. The support was focused on detecting, preventing, responding to and investigating terrorist threats.

35. Criminal justice cooperation was strengthened through support provided by the United Nations. UNODC facilitated coordination among criminal justice officials and organized high-level dialogues between Maldivian and Sri Lankan authorities on terrorism cases and bilateral agreements. UNODC also provided technical assistance to improve mutual legal assistance and digital evidence-sharing frameworks.

36. The United Nations supported Member States in advancing inclusive, multi-stakeholder approaches to prevent and counter violent extremism conducive to terrorism, with a focus on regional cooperation and community resilience. In Turkmenistan, the United Nations Development Programme, together with the Government of Japan, the European Union and Hedayah, strengthened partnerships across borders and sectors, ensuring a people-centred approach to building resilient communities for the prevention of violent extremism conducive to terrorism and addressing the drivers of radicalization to terrorism.

37. To promote multilateral cooperation, the Office of Counter-Terrorism, in partnership with the Government of Austria and the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, organized policy dialogues on the nexus between counter-terrorism, preventing and countering violent extremism conducive to terrorism, and peacebuilding. The dialogues, which were intended to inform the 2025 review of the peacebuilding architecture and the ninth review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, in 2026, brought together Member States, regional organizations, civil society and entities of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact. The first two sessions, held in January, in New York, and in June, in Vienna, focused on terrorism as a driver of conflict and on rule of law and human rights-based approaches.

C. Coordination and coherence across United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact entities

38. The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact, comprising 46 entities, continued to coordinate United Nations efforts to prevent and counter terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism. In February, the Coordination Committee of the Compact adopted a decisions document that contained a reaffirmation of United Nations support for the implementation of action 23 of the Pact for the Future (General Assembly resolution 79/1), in which Member States committed to pursuing a future free from terrorism.

39. On 25 June, the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact held a retreat with regional organizations on the implementation of action 23 of the Pact for the Future. The Under-Secretary-General for Counter-Terrorism highlighted the commitment to mutual accountability, regional ownership and sustainable partnerships through the Compact and invited regional organizations to co-lead future initiatives. The Special Representative for Iraq and Head of UNAMI delivered a keynote presentation on the role played by the integrated special political mission in aligning United Nations engagement with regional organizations. Key outcomes included consensus on a structured approach to regional engagement on preventing and countering terrorism and consensus on regionally aligned, human rights-based and gender-responsive approaches. An outline action plan was also agreed to guide implementation through the Coordination Compact.

D. Supporting the victims of Da'esh

40. The United Nations advanced efforts to promote the rights and voices of victims of terrorism. On 28 April, the Office of Counter-Terrorism, in partnership with Spain and with support from the Group of Friends of Victims of Terrorism, launched the victims of terrorism associations network, uniting over 120 victims and survivors from six continents, including victims of Da'esh. The platform enables victims, their associations and civil society to share good practices, develop trauma-informed tools and build advocacy skills. The launch helped to raise awareness of victims' rights and amplify their voices in counter-terrorism discourse.

41. UNODC continued to support Iraqi victims of terrorism, organizing national meetings aimed at strengthening advocacy capacity, supporting long-term recovery from the impact of terrorist acts and promoting accountability. UNODC-facilitated national inter-agency coordination meetings led to the development of a comprehensive guide on victims' rights and access to justice, which was aimed at improving institutional coordination and ensuring victim-centred approaches by national authorities.

42. IOM continued its support for the implementation of the Yazidi Survivors Law in Iraq, which includes the ongoing operation of the comprehensive mental health and psychosocial support referral system under the framework of the Law. As of April, the system had provided monthly compensation to more than 2,350 survivors, while approximately 200 survivors had accessed free psychosocial services through local non-governmental organizations.

E. Border management and law enforcement

43. In March, the Office of Counter-Terrorism, in collaboration with UNODC and the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism, held a high-level event on the

human rights provisions of the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism. The event raised awareness among 200 participants of the importance of upholding and promoting human rights while countering nuclear terrorism.

44. In response to the growing threat posed by the illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons in fuelling terrorism and organized crime across Africa, the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate published an analytical brief[5] identifying key gaps and challenges in weapons and ammunition management. The brief highlighted four critical areas of concern, namely, gaps in legal frameworks, insecure stockpiles, limited baseline assessments and inadequate tracing capacity, and emphasized the need for strengthened regional cooperation and border management to curb cross-border arms flows and disrupt the enabling environment for terrorist groups.

45. To prevent terrorists from acquiring weapons, the Office of Counter-Terrorism continued to support Member States in Central Asia with the implementation of Security Council resolution 2370 (2017). From January to June 2025, the Office engaged in the development of technical guidelines to counter terrorist acquisition of weapons including improvised explosive devices, unmanned aircraft systems and small arms and light weapons. In May and June, the Office of Counter-Terrorism and UNODC organized four national seminars benefiting over 50 participants from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan on good practices for strengthening coordination on combatting the illicit trafficking of small arms and light weapons and their supply to terrorists.

46. As terrorists continued to leverage unmanned aerial systems in their operations, the United Nations continued to support Member States in strengthening operational capabilities to prevent and respond to terrorism. In the reporting period, the Office of Counter-Terrorism coordinated the delivery of 16 unmanned aerial systems and high-precision imaging payloads to national entities in Senegal with responsibility for counter-terrorism. These assets will enhance the operational capacity of the national authorities to safely and securely operate non-lethal unmanned aerial systems, improving border surveillance, reconnaissance and the collection of high-resolution imagery and other data to support intelligence-led efforts to detect and disrupt terrorism-related activities.

47. The United Nations continued to deliver support to Member States in their efforts to counter the movement of terrorists across borders, including by enhancing passenger data capabilities and cross-border cooperation. The United Nations Countering Terrorist Travel Programme, led by the Office of Counter-Terrorism, provided comprehensive and tailored assistance to 67 Member States in legislative, operational and transport industry engagement and technical areas. As part of this support, the Programme delivered capacity-building on operational processes, inter-agency cooperation and the use of the United Nations-owned goTravel software in Nigeria, the Philippines and the Republic of Moldova for more than 100 law enforcement officials who now have an enhanced understanding of and technical expertise on the use of passenger data to counter terrorist travel. With technical assistance from the Programme, the Republic of Moldova established its Passenger Information Unit in March, becoming the seventh Member State to do so, and launched the goTravel software, which provides the technical capability to collect and analyse passenger data for counter-terrorism purposes as well as to identify potential links between terrorist organizations and transnational criminal groups. In April, the

[5] United Nations, Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, “Weapons management challenges in the context of terrorism and counter-terrorism in Africa”, CTED analytical brief, January 2025.

Programme supported the launch of the East Africa regional working group on advance passenger information and passenger name record to enhance Member State cooperation in countering terrorist mobility.

48. The Global Programme on Countering Terrorist Threats against Vulnerable Targets, led by the Office of Counter-Terrorism, implemented 19 technical assistance, outreach and capacity-building activities at the global, regional and national levels aimed at supporting the efforts of Member States to strengthen the security of critical infrastructure and public places. At the national level, tailored assistance was provided to over 100 officials from Benin, Mauritania and Senegal. For example, in April, the Global Programme held an event in Dakar to launch the Government's road map for countering terrorist threats against vulnerable targets and provided introductory capacity-building on the protection of critical infrastructure and public spaces. The Programme, in partnership with the International Maritime Organization, worked with the Government of Mauritania to enhance capacity development on protecting hydrocarbon infrastructure and maritime and port facilities from terrorist attacks.

49. The Global Terrorism Threats Facility and the Global Programme, on the basis of the road map (national action plan) on the protection of vulnerable targets that the Global Programme developed with Kyrgyzstan, provided technical advice to the Anti-Terrorism Centre of Kyrgyzstan for the development of a secure online platform for the collection and analysis of information with the aim of enhancing the protection of vulnerable targets from terrorist attacks.

50. The Global Programme also collaborated with the Counter-Terrorism Preparedness Network to hold an expert meeting in London in February with 33 participants from 10 Member States to inform the development of a joint technical guide on good practices to enhance security at urban transport hubs.

51. On 5 March, the Office of Counter-Terrorism and the Government of France held a high-level event on protecting major sporting events from terrorist threats, which included a focus on innovative technologies, human rights safeguards and gender inclusion. The event brought together more than 1,400 participants from Member States, sports bodies, civil society and the private sector.

52. To enhance national capacities to address terrorist threats at borders, IOM strengthened the border management efforts of the Government of Iraq through the development of infrastructure, the provision of equipment and specialized training to counter Da'esh threats. Related training activities held in early 2025 addressed the examination of documents, interview techniques and the prevention of trafficking in persons at key crossing points. Technical improvements included the deployment of the latest integrated risk education and information system to Baghdad International Airport's document examination laboratory and the provision of document examination devices to airports in the Kurdistan Region, enhancing capabilities for detecting fraudulent documents.

53. The Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate and the International Institute for Justice and the Rule of Law, with the support of the European Union and the Government of the Republic of Korea, held a regional event in Jakarta on strengthening the oversight and accountability of national security agencies in counter-terrorism, which was focused on the Brussels memorandum on good practices for oversight and accountability mechanisms in counterterrorism of the Global Counterterrorism Forum. The event explored opportunities and challenges in ensuring effective intelligence oversight, particularly in the context of rapidly evolving and emerging technologies.

F. Countering the financing of terrorism

54. During the reporting period, United Nations entities continued to support Member States and Financial Action Task Force-style regional bodies in enhancing efforts to counter the financing of terrorism. The Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate integrated the Counter-Terrorism Committee's non-binding guiding principles on preventing, detecting and disrupting the use of new and emerging financial technologies for terrorist purposes (the Algeria Guiding Principles) (S/2025/22, annex) into its assessments and dialogue with Member States and is working with the entities of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact and other providers of technical assistance to mainstream the principles into capacity-building and programming efforts.

55. United Nations entities collaborated with the Financial Action Task Force Global Network to enhance Member States' responses to countering the financing of terrorism. In particular, work on the *Comprehensive Update on Terrorist Financing Risks*,[6] approved by the Financial Action Task Force plenary in June, was co-led by experts from the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate and the French Treasury, with support from the Financial Action Task Force secretariat and inputs from across the Financial Action Task Force Global Network. The Office of Counter-Terrorism, UNODC and the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team also contributed to the project. The report attests to a coordinated approach between the relevant United Nations entities and the Task Force in analysing evolving terrorist financing risks and trends and is aimed at supporting Member States and other relevant stakeholders in understanding, detecting and addressing them.

56. In Eastern and Southern Africa, the Office of Counter-Terrorism supported the Eastern and Southern Africa Anti-Money Laundering Group in the integration of human rights considerations into its regional risk assessment processes, including through the identification and mitigation of risks that may affect civil society actors.

57. UNODC continued to support Member States through national and regional workshops, with a particular focus on regional capacity development in countering the financing of terrorism in West Africa. As a result, the Court of First Instance of Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, delivered its first-ever verdicts on the financing of terrorism in early 2025, convicting and sentencing six individuals and setting an important legal precedent for the region.

G. Impact of information and communications technologies and new technologies on counter-terrorism

58. The United Nations provided support to Member States for strengthening responses to the use of digital and emerging technologies by terrorists by providing capacity-building and technical assistance, including for the development of operational and institutional responses grounded in human rights and the rule of law. Beginning in January, the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre, within the Office of Counter-Terrorism, in collaboration with the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL), enhanced the capabilities of approximately 170 officials from nine Member States in the investigation of terrorist activity on the dark web, the use of virtual assets and open-source investigations.

59. The Global Terrorism Threats Facility continued to provide technical assistance to the digital forensic laboratory of the Ministry of Justice of Kyrgyzstan through the

[6] Financial Action Task Force, *Comprehensive Update on Terrorist Financing Risks* (Paris, 2025).

provision of specialized equipment, complemented by advisory and mentoring services aligned with international good practices.

60. In Iraq, IOM supported the Ministry of Migration and Displacement in developing a Government-owned case management system based on the Organization's Information, Counselling and Referral Service model, which supports the identification of individual needs and referral to appropriate services. As part of this effort, unified identity cards for returnees were launched at the Amal Rehabilitation Centre to improve case tracking and service delivery for individuals returning from Hawl camp.

61. The Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate integrated the Counter-Terrorism Committee's non-binding guiding principles on threats posed by the use of unmanned aircraft systems for terrorist purposes (Abu Dhabi Guiding Principles) (S/2023/1035, annex) into its assessments and dialogue with Member States.

H. Countering terrorist narratives and engaging with communities to prevent and counter violent extremism conducive to terrorism

62. The United Nations continued to promote inclusive, community-based and context-specific approaches to preventing and countering violent extremism conducive to terrorism, with a focus on youth engagement, digital resilience, local governance, gender-responsive reintegration and multi-stakeholder cooperation. On 17 April, the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre organized a side event on online gaming-related risks on the margins of the Economic and Social Council youth forum. Held in partnership with Japan and Singapore, the event facilitated multi-stakeholder dialogue on emerging risks and opportunities in online gaming, with particular attention paid to the impact on children and young people.

63. The Office of Counter-Terrorism, through the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre and with substantive support from the Russian Federation, launched a global project aimed at bringing together Member States, regional organizations and United Nations entities to exchange experiences and strengthen responses to radicalization to terrorism and incitement to violence.

64. United Nations efforts to address local drivers of violent extremism conducive to terrorism continued through community-based prevention initiatives. In Iraq, IOM supported the implementation of the national countering violent extremism strategy through 13 projects in six districts targeting localized drivers. Training activities on community engagement techniques to build trust between returnees, individuals vulnerable to violent extremism and police forces reached more than 120 civil society members, local authorities and security actors.

65. In Nigeria, UNODC worked directly with young people and communities to prevent recruitment by terrorist groups while supporting the rehabilitation and reintegration of those affected through mentorship and training programmes for selected youth peace champions. State-level policy guidance for operationalizing the Nigeria Call for Action,[7] a declaration adopted by the Government of Nigeria that recognizes as a priority the protection of children from recruitment and exploitation by terrorist groups, was developed in partnership with state-level committees for the protection of children in contexts of insecurity.

[7] Available at www.unodc.org/unodc/en/justice-and-prison-reform/strive/newsroom_nigeria-call-for-action_dec-2022.html.

66. Gender-responsive approaches to prevention received enhanced attention through United Nations programmatic initiatives for women. In Tajikistan, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), in collaboration with the Government and civil society organizations, launched a localized assessment of gendered drivers of violent extremism conducive to terrorism to inform comprehensive gender-responsive reintegration processes.

IV. Observations

67. The threat posed by Da'esh and its affiliates remains undiminished and is marked by adaptability, transnational reach and an expanding operational footprint. While sustained counter-terrorism efforts have constrained the group in the Middle East, its strategic orientation has increasingly shifted towards Africa. Da'esh has consistently demonstrated the ability to regroup and absorb leadership losses and continues to pursue opportunistic expansion into fragile settings, particularly in areas where political instability, weak governance or conflict provide permissive environments. In these contexts, Member States remained concerned about the use of new technologies by terrorist groups. I call on Member States and partners to strengthen coordinated and regionally anchored responses, rooted in international law, including international humanitarian law and international human rights law, and guided by the principle of national ownership, to address both the symptoms of terrorism and the conditions conducive to its spread.

68. While the Pact for the Future reaffirmed the resolve of the international community to pursue a future free from terrorism and address the conditions that give rise to terrorism, resolve must be matched by action. I call upon Member States to deepen regional and international cooperation, strengthen multilateral frameworks and commit to joint strategies that link prevention, protection and accountability. Only through sustained partnership and whole-of-government and whole-of-society approaches, across governments, institutions and communities, can we build the resilience needed to confront evolving threats and promote a peace that is grounded in human rights and the rule of law.

69. I remain gravely concerned about the ongoing humanitarian and security challenges, as well as human rights violations, in camps and detention facilities, particularly in the north-east of the Syrian Arab Republic. The continued confinement of thousands of individuals, especially children, in dire conditions is an affront to human rights and presents serious long-term risks to regional and global security. These settings are potential incubators of radicalization to terrorism and recruitment. I reiterate my call for all Member States with nationals in these facilities to facilitate their safe, voluntary and dignified repatriation, in line with their international legal obligations. As stipulated in Security Council resolution 2427 (2018), children must be treated primarily as victims and granted access to protection and reintegration support. Where necessary, judicial accountability must be pursued in accordance with due process and the rule of law.

70. The United Nations, through its Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact, will continue to support Member States in strengthening coordination and coherence and implementing the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and relevant Security Council resolutions. I call upon Member States to strengthen cooperation with the United Nations and to provide the resources needed to deliver timely, effective assistance, especially to countries on the front line of efforts to prevent and counter terrorism.

Annex

Thirty-sixth report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted pursuant to resolution 2734 (2024) concerning ISIL (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals and entities

The report was issued as document S/2025/482.