

Historical Security Council

Topic Area B: Threats to International Peace and Security caused by Terrorist Acts

Prior to the events of 11 September 2001, the Security Council was not actively involved with terrorism as a distinct topic. Previous actions tended to focus on specific terrorist acts, as opposed to the broader topic of terrorism as a threat to international peace and security. However after the events of 11 September the Council became actively involved in the topic. Resolution 1373 established the Counter-Terrorism Committee of the Security Council. This committee has held frequent meetings on the topic since that time, including issuing its first report in October 2001.

Resolution 1373 and subsequent documents laid out the broad mandate for Security Council action on the topic and primarily focused on utilizing the Council's legal authority to request and compel action from the Member States. Actions and discussions to date have dealt with the funding of terrorism, entities or persons involved in terrorist acts, and with taking the necessary steps to prevent the future commission of terrorist acts. In addition, the Council authorized "all necessary measures" by Member States to deal with terrorist threats, leading directly to the US led action in Afghanistan against the Taliban regime and al-Qaeda.

The Committee's primary responsibility is to enforce the Council's resolutions on terrorism and is also charged with exploring ways to assist states in their own counter-terrorism efforts, especially those states which lack the technology or financial ability to successfully implement their efforts without outside assistance.

In addition to the work of the Committee, the Council held a Ministerial level meeting in November 2001 which led to the implementation of the "Declaration on the Global Effort to Combat Terrorism." The Security Council and the General Assembly both adopted the document which condemns all acts of terrorism and stresses the need for all states to sign on to the relevant treaties and legal documents dealing with international terrorism.

Questions to consider from your government's perspective on this issue include the following

- Does your government fully support all of the Security Council mandates already in existence? Should additional steps be required of Member States to combat terrorism?
- How can states be better incentivized to comply with the existing Council resolutions on the subject?
- How active should the Council be in allowing military actions by Member States to combat terrorism in the future?

Bibliography

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“Security Council OKs Terror Resolution; General Assembly Meets.” UN Wire, 30 Sep 2001

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“Symposium Aims To Channel UN Efforts To Fight Scourge.” UN Wire, 3 Jun 2002.

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UN Documents

S/2001/986, Report of the Counter-Terrorism Committee

S/PRST/2002/10, 15 Apr 2002

S/Res/1465 (2003)

S/Res/1438 (2002)

S/Res/1377 (2001), Declaration on the global effort to combat terrorism

S/Res/1373 (2001), Establishment of the Counter-Terrorism Committee

S/Res/1368 (2001)

Additional Web Resources

<http://www.un.org/en/sc/ctc/> - Security Council CounterTerrorism Committee

<http://www.un.org/terrorism/> - UN Action to Counter Terrorism