

**Security Council**

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Letter dated 15 December 2015 from the Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1373 (2001) concerning counter-terrorism addressed to the President of the Security Council

On behalf of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1373 (2001) concerning counter-terrorism, I have the honour to submit the report of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate for consideration by the Council as part of its interim review of the work of the Executive Directorate pursuant to paragraph 2 of resolution 2129 (2013) (see annex).

The Committee would appreciate it if the present letter and the report could be brought to the attention of the members of the Security Council and issued as a document of the Council.

(Signed) Raimonda **Murmokaitė**
Chair

Security Council Committee established pursuant to
resolution 1373 (2001) concerning counter-terrorism



Annex

Report of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate on its activities and achievements during the period from 2014 to 2015

I. Introduction

1. The Security Council, in its resolution 2129 (2013), decided that the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate would continue to operate as a special political mission under the policy guidance of the Counter-Terrorism Committee until 31 December 2017 and also decided to conduct an interim review of the activities and achievements of the Executive Directorate by 31 December 2015.

2. The Committee, in its work programme for 2015, stated that it would assist the Security Council in conducting an interim review of the mandate of the Executive Directorate, in accordance with resolution 2129 (2013), bearing in mind the tenth anniversary of the operational establishment of the Executive Directorate, in December 2005.

3. The present report, prepared by the Executive Directorate pursuant to the above-mentioned resolution and work programme, contains a description of the activities and achievements of the Executive Directorate during the reporting period, with a particular focus on the elements specifically identified in resolution 2129 (2013) and subsequent resolutions, including resolution 2178 (2014), and in relevant presidential statements of the Council. The report is intended to assist the Committee in advising the Council within the framework of the interim review.

II. Monitoring, promoting and facilitating the implementation of resolutions 1373 (2001) and 1624 (2005) and the implementation of tasks set forth in resolution 2178 (2014)

A. Emerging trends and challenges

4. Terrorism, in all its forms and manifestations, continues to pose a grave threat to international peace and security. During recent years, the global security landscape has become more complex, volatile and challenging. The emergence of new terrorist groups, such as Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), also known as Daesh, has significantly exacerbated pre-existing political and security challenges in some of the world's most vulnerable regions. The trends currently dominating the international counter-terrorism agenda include: (a) the foreign terrorist fighter phenomenon; (b) preventing and countering violent extremism; (c) use of the Internet and communications technology by terrorists; (d) kidnapping for ransom to finance terrorist activities; (e) terrorists acting alone; (f) the evolving links between terrorism and organized crime; and (g) the complex roles of women in terrorism and counter-terrorism.

5. During the reporting period, the United Nations continued to promote coordination, collaboration and cooperation in countering terrorism, whether with external partners or among United Nations entities, including within the framework of the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force. The Executive Directorate

continued to encourage and assist Member States in reviewing, updating and strengthening their legislation in accordance with the international counter-terrorism instruments and the relevant Security Council resolutions, including on issues related to foreign terrorist fighters. With the assistance of the Committee and the Executive Directorate, States continued to improve their financial monitoring regimes, border control mechanisms, criminal justice and rule of law measures, human rights mechanisms and strategies to prevent and counter violent extremism in efforts to implement the measures required to effectively respond to the terrorist threat, including foreign terrorist fighters. Member States continued to face challenges in all of those areas. The increased focus of the international community on countering violent extremism was reflected in the summit on countering violent extremism, held in Washington, D.C., in February 2015, and the high-level event marking 10 years since the adoption of resolution 1624 (2005), held at United Nations Headquarters in September 2015, as well as in the intention expressed by the Secretary-General to present a United Nations plan of action on preventing violent extremism in 2016.

B. Foreign terrorist fighter phenomenon

6. The landmark Security Council resolution 2178 (2014), adopted under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, required Member States to take additional measures to combat the foreign terrorist fighter phenomenon and to counter and prevent violent extremism, and called on the Executive Directorate to assist Member States in several related areas. Pursuant to the resolution, the presidential statement of 19 November 2014 ([S/PRST/2014/23](#)) and the framework document for action by the Executive Directorate on resolution 2178 (2014), the Executive Directorate undertook a number of activities during the reporting period to support the Committee's efforts to assist Member States in implementing resolution 2178 (2014).

7. The Executive Directorate submitted a series of analytical reports on the foreign terrorist fighter threat, including: (a) a preliminary analysis of the principal gaps in the capacities of Member States to implement resolutions 1373 (2001) and 1624 (2005) that may hinder their abilities to stem the flow of foreign terrorist fighters ([S/2014/807](#)); (b) an analysis of challenges in prosecutions related to foreign terrorist fighters ([S/2015/123](#)); (c) three reports on the implementation of resolution 2178 (2014) by States affected by foreign terrorist fighters ([S/2015/338](#), [S/2015/683](#) and [S/2015/975](#)); and (d) an analysis of gaps in the use by States of advance passenger information and recommendations for expanding its use to stem the flow of foreign terrorist fighters ([S/2015/377](#)). The reports identified gaps in the legal frameworks and institutional and operational structures of States and provided recommendations on ways to address them. They were intended to assist States in their efforts to address their shortfalls and to guide United Nations agencies and potential donors and technical assistance providers in their efforts to develop and implement related capacity-building programmes.

8. The Executive Directorate worked to integrate measures from resolution 2178 (2014) into its dialogue with Member States and to raise awareness of the need to ensure full implementation of the resolution, through a wide range of events and activities. In July 2015, acting in accordance with paragraph 24 of the resolution and pursuant to the Council's above-mentioned presidential statement, the

Committee, with the support of the Executive Directorate, held a special meeting in Madrid with Member States and relevant international and regional organizations on stemming the flow of foreign terrorist fighters. Participants discussed the principal challenges with regard to the capacities of States to implement resolutions 1373 (2001) and 1624 (2005) that may hinder their abilities to stem the flow of foreign terrorist fighters and identified good practices in that regard. The outcomes of the special meeting included the conclusions of the Committee, the report on the special meeting and a set of guiding principles for stemming the flow of foreign terrorist fighters, which had been proposed by participants during the special meeting and the technical sessions that preceded it (S/2015/939, annexes I and II). The special meeting was followed by a ministerial meeting, the result of which was a ministerial declaration welcoming the conclusions of the Committee (S/2015/939, annex III).

9. The Executive Directorate participated in a number of foreign terrorist fighter-related events and activities around the world to raise awareness of the requirements of resolution 2178 (2014) and the work of the Council, the Committee and the Executive Directorate. On the basis of its assessments and pursuant to the presidential statement of 29 May 2015 (S/PRST/2015/11), the Executive Directorate made substantive contributions to the development of the United Nations capacity-building implementation plan for countering the flow of foreign terrorist fighters, by identifying the main themes and regions to be addressed in that regard.

10. The Executive Directorate will continue to analyse the foreign terrorist fighter phenomenon, including by: (a) conducting targeted fact-finding consultations and field visits on behalf of the Committee to the most affected States; (b) working with its partners within and outside the United Nations, in particular within the framework of the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force, on the identification and promotion of the good practices and technical assistance needs of States; and (c) partnering with academia in conducting research into the factors driving the foreign terrorist fighter phenomenon and violent extremism.

C. Stocktaking of the implementation of resolutions 1373 (2001) and 1624 (2005)

11. The stocktaking of the counter-terrorism efforts of individual States enables the Committee and the Executive Directorate to understand the progress achieved in the implementation of resolutions 1373 (2001) and 1624 (2005). It is also an important element of the Committee's continuous dialogue with States. The assessments conducted through the overview of implementation assessment and the detailed implementation survey helped to ensure thoroughness, consistency, transparency and even-handedness in the stocktaking process. During the two-year review cycle, the Committee approved 39 implementation assessments in the stocktaking exercise.

12. The Executive Directorate will continue to assist the Committee in the stocktaking exercise and to explore and recommend ways in which to enhance the process, including by adapting its assessment tools to the requirements of resolution 2178 (2014) and completing the compilation of technical guides on the implementation of the relevant resolutions.

D. Visits to Member States

13. Country visits are an integral part of the direct dialogue and engagement among the Committee, its Executive Directorate and Member States. They also serve as effective vehicles for the diagnosis of the progress, strengths and good practices of Member States, as well as their weaknesses and capacity needs. During the reporting period, the Executive Directorate visited 17 Member States, bringing the total number of States visited since 2005 to 106. States that are visited continue to find the direct communication and interaction constructive and useful, and participating United Nations agencies and international and regional organizations consider the visits to be a useful platform for synergizing their support programmes and activities. The Executive Directorate also carried out a number of political visits, including the high-level political visit to Mali and the Niger in February 2015, under the joint leadership of the Chair of the Committee and the Executive Director of the Executive Directorate. The visit reaffirmed United Nations support for the two States and delivered a clear message as to the requirements of the relevant Security Council resolutions.

14. The Executive Directorate will continue to make arrangements, with the consent of the States concerned, to conduct country assessment visits approved by the Committee, explore opportunities for conducting further high-level political visits of the Chair of the Committee and make the best use of the various types of visits endorsed by the Committee, in its engagement with Member States.

E. Global surveys on the implementation of resolutions 1373 (2001) and 1624 (2005)

15. Pursuant to Security Council resolution 2129 (2013), the Executive Directorate has worked to prepare and finalize, before the end of 2015, two updated versions of the global surveys on the implementation by States of resolutions 1373 (2001) and 1624 (2005). The surveys will draw on the assessment work of the Executive Directorate and other information gathered within the framework of country visits and dialogue with Member States. The survey on the implementation of resolution 1373 (2001) will provide an understanding of the current global counter-terrorism landscape and identify, at both the thematic and regional levels, the progress made by Member States since the publication of the previous version and the remaining shortfalls and additional needs with respect to capacity-building assistance. The survey on the implementation of resolution 1624 (2005) will focus on, inter alia, the increased magnitude of the threat of incitement, the strengthening of efforts to apply criminal procedures in curbing the threat, concerns as to whether the applied restrictions fall within the boundaries permissible by international human rights instruments, and the importance of working with civil society to counter violent extremism. The two surveys will also serve as a solid basis for inter-agency facilitation and coordination of technical assistance to Member States aimed at enhancing their capacities.

16. The Executive Directorate will assist the Committee in maximizing the impact of the two surveys, upon their adoption and publication, by disseminating them as widely as possible, including at open briefings and through other information and communications tools.

F. Identification of regional and thematic issues

17. Pursuant to paragraph 5 of resolution 2129 (2013), the Executive Directorate, together with other United Nations agencies and international and regional partners, delivered to the Committee a series of briefings on a wide range of regional and thematic issues of relevance to the implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions. The arrangements enabled the Committee to hold brainstorming discussions on evolving terrorism threats and challenges and effective approaches to addressing them. The Executive Directorate will continue its in-depth analysis of regional and thematic issues and work with partners both within and outside the United Nations system to keep the Committee informed of all relevant issues.

G. Streamlining work procedures

18. The Committee, with the support of the Executive Directorate, began its consideration of a revised procedure aimed at enhancing the role of the subcommittees in considering and reviewing the counter-terrorism efforts and capacity needs of States. The Committee put into practice additional expedited procedures, such as the adoption of State files through the silence procedure on a case-by-case basis. The improved procedures of the Committee were aimed at keeping pace with the evolving counter-terrorism situation and addressing terrorism issues in a timely manner. On 3 June 2015, the Committee adopted an enhanced procedure, adapting the semi-annual report of the Executive Directorate to make it an annual report. The procedures streamlined the working methods of the Executive Directorate and enabled it to provide a more comprehensive, in-depth, end-of-year assessment of new terrorist threats, trends, issues, challenges and good practices. The Executive Directorate continued to update the Committee on its activities through the submission of monthly reports. The Executive Directorate, together with the Committee secretariat, will continue to assist the Committee in streamlining its work procedures in order to promote greater transparency and efficiency.

III. Facilitating the delivery of capacity-building assistance to Member States

19. The Executive Directorate continued to work closely with technical assistance providers and donors in planning their activities and ensuring that those activities were relevant to the priority needs identified through its assessments. A number of technical assistance activities were facilitated pursuant to the country visits in a variety of thematic areas, including national counter-terrorism strategies, legislative drafting and implementation, countering violent extremism and the counter-financing of terrorism. During the reporting period, the Executive Directorate delivered two briefings to the Committee on those efforts. The assessment process was enhanced by disseminating technical assistance referrals through the Committee to implementing entities of the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force and by engaging international and regional partners with respect to the conclusions on the visits and follow-up action plans.

20. Following the high-level political visit of the Chair and the Executive Director to Mali and the Niger, the Chair transmitted a letter to the Under-Secretary-General

for Political Affairs and the Chair of the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force requesting that the Task Force and the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre give priority consideration to the capacity-building projects identified therein.

21. The Executive Directorate will continue to focus on its main tasks of conducting analyses of gaps in implementation and developing appropriate recommendations to be implemented by its partners. The Executive Directorate will also continue to explore, with other United Nations agencies, international and regional organizations and entities, how best to assess the impact of its donor-supported project activity linked to building capacity and cooperation, pursuant to resolution 2129 (2013).

IV. Special meetings, events and open briefings

22. Pursuant to paragraph 20 of resolution 2129 (2013) and to resolution 2133 (2014) and other relevant decisions of the Security Council, the Committee, with the assistance of the Executive Directorate, held 16 special meetings, events and open briefings during the review cycle. They were open to Member States and international and regional organizations and served as useful platforms for the timely exchange of information on new and emerging trends, threats and challenges; interaction among stakeholders; the sharing of good practices; the discussion of capacity-building needs; the planning of technical assistance programmes; and increasing the visibility of the work of the Committee and the Executive Directorate.

23. During the reporting period, the Committee held special meetings on kidnapping for ransom and hostage-taking (24 November 2014) and on stemming the flow of foreign terrorist fighters (26 and 27 July 2015). On 17 December 2015, a special meeting was held on preventing terrorists from exploiting the Internet and social media to recruit terrorists and incite terrorist acts, while respecting human rights and fundamental freedoms.

24. Open briefings, events, meetings and round tables were held on the following topics: preventing terrorists' misuse of travel documents and terrorism prevention activities (25 April 2014), the protection of critical tourism infrastructure (12 June 2014), countering incitement to commit terrorist acts motivated by extremism and intolerance: Morocco's approach and the experiences of other African States (30 September 2014), the importance of the rule of law in countering the current terrorist threat, with the Minister of Justice of France, Christiane Taubira, (10 February 2015), the launch of the Global Counter-Terrorism Research Network (19 February 2015), the use of advance passenger information to stem the flow of foreign terrorist fighters (11 June 2015), strengthening emergency responses in the aftermath of terrorist incidents (16 June 2015), new initiatives to address the foreign terrorist fighter challenge, with the Council of Europe (19 June 2015), the role of education in countering terrorism, incitement, and violent extremism, with the Tony Blair Faith Foundation (24 July 2014), the role of women in countering terrorism (9 September 2015), commemorating the tenth anniversary of resolution 1624 (2005) (14 September 2015) and foreign terrorist fighters, with the Global Counter-Terrorism Research Network (24 November 2015).

25. The Executive Directorate will continue to assist the Committee in organizing special meetings, events and open briefings and in following up on their outcomes, in collaboration with Member States and international and regional organizations and entities.

V. Development of comprehensive and integrated counter-terrorism strategies and mechanisms to implement them

26. Pursuant to paragraph 18 of resolution 2129 (2013), the Executive Directorate continued to advise Member States, where applicable, on the need to develop and implement comprehensive and integrated national and regional counter-terrorism strategies and mechanisms that are inclusive of a wide range of stakeholders and based on the rule of law and respect for human rights. The Executive Directorate, in its role as co-Chair of the inter-agency working group on national and regional counter-terrorism strategies of the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force, worked with the Task Force to draft the terms of reference for conducting activities relating to the inter-agency working group, which developed two regional counter-terrorism strategy projects, in Central and Southern Africa, sponsored by the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre. The Executive Directorate will continue to engage with Member States and regional organizations, in particular within the framework of the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force, on the introduction, refinement and implementation of comprehensive and integrated national counter-terrorism strategies aimed at promoting a government-wide response to the threat of terrorism that includes the contribution of civil society organizations, community and religious leaders, youth, women and other sectors of society.

VI. Human rights in the context of counter-terrorism

27. Pursuant to the relevant Council resolutions and in accordance with the Committee's policy guidance on human rights, the Executive Directorate continued to integrate elements based on human rights and the rule of law into its engagement and dialogue with Member States on their implementation of resolutions 1373 (2001), 1624 (2005) and 2178 (2014).

28. The Executive Directorate consulted with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and other United Nations human rights mechanisms in preparing and conducting assessment missions, evaluating country counter-terrorism profiles and facilitating the delivery of technical assistance. The Executive Directorate participated actively in the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force working group on promoting and protecting human rights and the rule of law while countering terrorism.

29. The Executive Directorate will continue to take into account the related requirements of the Security Council and encourages Member States to continue to work with the United Nations human rights mechanisms to ensure that their counter-terrorism measures comply with all their obligations under international law, in particular international human rights, refugee and international humanitarian law. The Executive Directorate will also continue to propose related recommendations for technical assistance to Member States.

VII. Implementation of Security Council resolution 1624 (2005)

30. The Executive Directorate continued to pay close attention to the implementation by Member States of resolution 1624 (2005), both through its assessment exercises and within the framework of several initiatives aimed at promoting its implementation. The Executive Directorate also participated in the summit on countering violent extremism, held in Washington, D.C., in February 2015, and other high-level conferences on countering violent extremism, and contributed to the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force working groups on conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism and on national and regional counter-terrorism strategies.

31. The Executive Directorate facilitated the organization of two national workshops, in Nairobi from 22 to 24 October 2014 and in Mombasa, Kenya, from 20 to 22 January 2015, on the effective implementation of resolution 1624 (2005). The workshops, organized in cooperation with the International Centre for Counter Terrorism — The Hague, enabled representatives of the Government of Kenya and Kenyan civil society organizations to discuss and analyse the effective implementation of resolutions 1624 (2005) and 2178 (2014). The Mombasa workshop led to an agreement on the establishment of an ad hoc steering committee to develop a comprehensive strategy to counter violent extremism and paved the way for Kenya to join the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force Integrated Assistance for Countering Terrorism initiative. In Tunis, from 3 to 5 November 2015, the Executive Directorate facilitated a workshop on the implementation of resolution 1624 (2005) and the implementation of the recently finalized national counter-terrorism strategy of Tunisia. This was a first step in a long-term process of dialogue and trust-building among all stakeholders involved in the implementation of the aspects of the strategy relating to preventing and countering violent extremism.

32. The commemoration on 14 September 2015 of the tenth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1624 (2005) confirmed that Member States continued to prioritize efforts to prohibit and counter incitement to commit acts of terrorism. The event also shed light on States' approaches to addressing the use of the Internet and other communications technologies for incitement purposes and demonstrated the need to further develop and disseminate effective and lawful approaches to preventing and suppressing terrorist incitement. The discussions provided a blueprint for future dialogue between the Committee and Member States in that area.

33. The Executive Directorate will continue to monitor and promote the implementation by Member States of resolution 1624 (2005) and will continue to cooperate with other Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force entities in that regard, including within the framework of the plan of action on preventing violent extremism to be presented by the Secretary-General.

VIII. Promoting the role of women in countering terrorism and violent extremism

34. In its resolution 2178 (2014), the Security Council encouraged Member States to empower women to develop strategies to counter the narratives that could incite terrorist acts and to address the conditions conducive to the spread of violent

extremism. In the presidential statement of 28 October 2014 (S/PRST/2014/21), the Council noted that violent extremism, which is conducive to terrorism, is frequently targeted at women and girls, leading to serious human rights violations and abuses against them, and encouraged Member States to engage the participation of women and women's organizations, including refugees and internally displaced women, in developing strategies to counter violent extremism. In that regard, the Executive Directorate strengthened its coordination with the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) and engaged in outreach to women's rights advocates and civil society aimed at implementing the requirements of the relevant Council resolutions and decisions.

35. In accordance with Security Council resolution 2242 (2015), the Executive Directorate will continue to enhance its collaboration with UN-Women, integrate gender as a cross-cutting issue into the activities of the Committee and the Executive Directorate and conduct gender-related research on the factors driving radicalization for women and the impact of counter-terrorism strategies on women's human rights and women's organizations with a view to developing targeted and evidence-based policy and programming responses and strengthening its gender expertise.

IX. Engagement within the framework of the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force and with other Security Council subsidiary bodies and United Nations entities

36. The Executive Directorate continued its activities as a core member of the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force, including by contributing to eight of the nine working groups on: conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism; the protection of critical infrastructure including the Internet, vulnerable targets and tourism security; border management and law enforcement relating to counter-terrorism (acting as Chair); countering the financing of terrorism; legal and criminal justice responses to counter-terrorism (acting as co-Chair); promoting and protecting human rights and the rule of law while countering terrorism; supporting and highlighting victims of terrorism; and national and regional counter-terrorism strategies (acting as co-Chair).

37. The Executive Directorate continued to act as co-Chair of the Integrated Assistance for Countering Terrorism initiative and to contribute to two ad hoc working groups of the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force, on foreign terrorist fighters and on preventing and countering violent extremism. The Executive Directorate worked with the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre to identify and prioritize technical assistance needs and develop capacity-building programmes.

38. The Executive Directorate continued to cooperate closely with the experts of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999) and 1989 (2011) and the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004), including through the enhanced and systematized exchange of information, the sharing of mission reports and the preparation of joint documents and joint statements to the Council by the Chairs of the Committees. In addition, the experts of the Committee established pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999) and 1989 (2011) and, where appropriate, those of the established pursuant to resolution 1540

(2004), joined the Executive Directorate on country visits carried out on behalf of the Counter-Terrorism Committee. The Executive Directorate coordinated with the Monitoring Team of the Committee established pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999) and 1989 (2011) in preparing assessment documents and participating in workshops, taking into account the new requirements of resolution 2178 (2014). On 18 December 2014, pursuant to paragraph 23 of resolution 2129 (2013), the Counter-Terrorism Committee held a briefing at which the Caribbean-based shared focal point spoke on plans and activities to support the work of the Committee in the region.

39. In accordance with resolutions 2129 (2013), 2185 (2014), 2195 (2014) and 2220 (2015) and other decisions of the Council, the Executive Directorate continued to engage in close liaison with other Security Council sanctions regimes, the Terrorism Prevention Branch of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the Department of Political Affairs of the Secretariat, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Office for Disarmament Affairs, the resident coordinators of the United Nations Development Programme and the Special Envoys and Special Representatives of the Secretary-General on regional and thematic issues of common concern, including in the assessment and identification of technical assistance needs.

40. The Executive Directorate took steps to further strengthen its partnership with other Special Envoys and Special Representatives of the Secretary-General and other Heads of Offices on issues before the Council, the Committee and the Executive Directorate.

41. The Executive Directorate will continue to explore with other United Nations entities all feasible and effective ways to improve coordination and information-sharing and avoid the duplication of efforts. In that regard, the Executive Directorate will explore the possibility of expanding the use of regionally based shared focal points to support the work of the Committee and its Executive Directorate, as well as the experts of the Committee established pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999) and 1989 (2011) and the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004).

X. Engagement with international, regional and subregional organizations and entities

42. International, regional and subregional organizations continued to be key partners of the Committee and the Executive Directorate in working with Member States to implement resolutions 1373 (2001), 1624 (2005) and 2178 (2014) and other relevant decisions of the Council. Partnership and engagement with those organizations and entities included information-sharing, conducting assessment missions, designing needs-based capacity-building programmes, developing typologies, promoting international good practices, conducting research and facilitating the delivery of technical assistance. The Executive Directorate continued to be an active participant in the meetings and activities of the Global Counterterrorism Forum and its regional and thematic groups.

43. The Executive Directorate will continue to strengthen its working relationships with international, regional and subregional organizations and entities in assisting Member States in achieving the full implementation of the relevant resolutions.

XI. Interaction with academia, civil society and other non-governmental actors

44. Academia is a vital partner of the Committee and the Executive Directorate in the analysis of the drivers of terrorism and violent extremism and in the development of recommendations on ways to address new trends and challenges related to terrorism. On 19 February 2015, acting in accordance with the relevant provisions of resolution 2129 (2013), the Committee, with the support of the Executive Directorate, launched the Global Counter-Terrorism Research Network in order to strengthen its capacity to identify new trends and developments related to terrorism and to monitor the counter-terrorism efforts of States. During the open meeting of the Committee with the Network on the subject of foreign terrorist fighters, held on 24 November 2015, members of the Network presented the findings of their research on two issues related to the foreign terrorist fighter phenomenon: the various backgrounds and motivating factors of foreign terrorist fighters, and rehabilitation and reintegration strategies for foreign terrorist fighter returnees.

45. The events and other activities of the Network have provided a useful forum for discussion and exchange of information by the Committee and its Executive Directorate and its research partners on trends and developments in the implementation of resolutions 1373 (2001), 1624 (2004) and 2178 (2014), including gaps and best practices in addressing the foreign terrorist fighter phenomenon and other key issues relevant to the work of the Committee. The Executive Directorate maintains an updated list of Network institutions and draws upon their research and analysis in its assessments and analysis.

46. Pursuant to paragraph 19 of resolution 2129 (2013) and other relevant decisions of the Council, the Executive Directorate continued to take steps to strengthen its partnerships with relevant civil society, women's and youth groups and educational entities in support of the Committee's efforts to promote the effective implementation of resolutions 1373 (2001), 1624 (2005) and 2178 (2014).

47. The Executive Directorate will continue to work with and expand the Network with a view to further strengthening its analytical capacity and awareness of new and emerging trends and developments. The Executive Directorate will continue to engage, and enhance its partnership with, civil society and other relevant non-governmental actors in support of the work of the Committee, in particular in strengthening the role of women, young people, religious figures, the media and the private sector in raising awareness about the threat of terrorism and ways to address it effectively.

XII. Implementing the communications strategy

48. In accordance with the revised communications strategy adopted by the Committee in 2014, the Executive Directorate continued to raise awareness and understanding of specific issues, themes and events, as well as the overall work of the Committee and the Executive Directorate, through increased use of the Committee website, social media and traditional forms of media, including press briefings, press releases and opinion pieces. The Executive Directorate also worked more closely with the Department of Public Information of the Secretariat, drawing on the

resources of United Nations information centres around the world. The Executive Director and visiting guests participated in media stakeouts and noon briefings of the Spokesperson for the Secretary-General in connection with Committee events and specific issues of relevance to the Committee and the Executive Directorate.

49. The Committee website has undergone substantial qualitative and quantitative improvements, including the recent addition of a section listing media coverage of the work of the Committee and the Executive Directorate. An ongoing project to switch from the current website to a new platform using a web content management system will strengthen the site and better integrate visual and social media content.

50. In 2015, the activities of the Committee and the Executive Directorate were covered by traditional media more than 120 times, which represents a substantial improvement in terms of traditional media exposure. The social media presence of the Committee and the Executive Directorate continued to improve, with Twitter the most widely employed tool. The number of followers of the official Twitter account of the Executive Directorate (@UN_CTED) is currently more than 9,000, representing an increase of more than 30 per cent in a little more than a year. During the same period, the number of tweets, retweets and other engagement on Twitter increased by 330 per cent. Linking tweets to web stories helped to drive traffic to the Committee website. The Executive Directorate continued to hold regular briefings for diplomats, students and journalists and to address conferences via pre-recorded video speeches, where appropriate.

51. The Executive Directorate will continue to implement the revised communications strategy, under the Committee's guidance and within the framework of the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force, and to explore ways and means to advance counter-messages and counter-narratives, including within the framework of the Secretary-General's plan of action on preventing violent extremism.

XIII. Organization and operations of the Executive Directorate

52. Since the operational establishment of the Executive Directorate, in December 2005, it has supported the Committee in implementing its mandate, under the Committee's political guidance. In 2014 and 2015, the Executive Directorate witnessed a significant increase in the number of tasks assigned to it by the Security Council and the Committee. Pursuant to resolution 2178 (2014) and the relevant presidential statements, the new tasks pertained in particular to the analysis of new trends and developments relating to the implementation of resolutions 1373 (2001) and 1624 (2005), the foreign terrorist fighter phenomenon and countering violent extremism.

53. The staffing table of the Executive Directorate currently includes 35 posts in the Professional category and 8 in the General Service category. During the reporting period, two new posts (P-4 and P-3 Political Affairs Officers) were approved by the General Assembly and one P-2 Associate Political Affairs Officer post was reclassified as a P-3 post. The number of additional tasks and responsibilities assigned by the Council, however, placed a significant strain on the Executive Directorate's resources. In 2014 and 2015, extrabudgetary funds in the amount of \$1,082,868 were used to support activities relating to raising the awareness and enhancing the capacity of Member States with respect to the implementation of resolutions 1373 (2001), 1624 (2005) and 2178 (2014).

54. The Executive Directorate will continue to explore ways to increase its resources and capacity, including by soliciting voluntary contributions to the Trust Fund for the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate and by recruiting Junior Professional Officers, consultants and temporary staff.

XIV. Conclusions and observations

55. During the reporting period, the Executive Directorate completed or undertook to complete all tasks conferred upon it by the Council in its resolution 2129 (2013) and its other relevant resolutions and decisions. In the context of the rapidly evolving global terrorism landscape and the efforts of the United Nations and its Member States to combat terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and to address the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism and violent extremism, the Executive Directorate will continue to carry out its work, under the policy guidance of the Committee and in close partnership with Member States, other United Nations agencies, international, regional and subregional organizations and entities and civil society, in order to ensure the effective and full implementation of the relevant Council resolutions and decisions.
