

**Statement by H.E. Ambassador Eshagh Al Habib**  
**Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the**  
**United Nations**

**On “Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts: International cooperation in combating terrorism 20 years after the adoption of resolution 1373 (2001)”**  
**Before the United Nations Security Council**  
**New York, 12 January 2021**

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*In the Name of God, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful*

**Mr. President,**

I would like to begin with thanking the Tunisian presidency of the Council for organizing this open debate to assess the progress made in fighting international terrorism and to identify related challenges.

Despite achievements in combating international terrorism, there remain a number of challenges and much needs to be done to avert the threats it poses to our societies.

Besides the low level of international cooperation, a major challenge to international efforts in combating terrorism is the selective, imbalanced and partial implementation of relevant international legally-binding instruments.

Yet, the greatest factor challenging the effectiveness of international efforts, is the act of certain States in politicizing counterterrorism. The adoption of this detrimental approach has already resulted in grave and far-reaching security and legal consequences.

For instance, while all States must comply with international law in combating terrorism, certain countries violate even the basic principles of international law under the pretext of counterterrorism efforts.

The clear example is the violation of the sovereignty, political independence, unity and territorial integrity of Syria by the United States. While it claims that its military presence in Syria is for fighting terrorism, it neither has obtained the consent of the Syrian Government to do so in that country, nor is duly authorized by the Security Council.

Another manifestation of such irresponsible policies is the preparation, by the United States, of the so-called list of terrorism-sponsoring-States. The mere function of that list, which is political in nature and lacks any conclusive evidence to substantiate the allegations made, is to blackmail the adversaries of the United States.

Most often, this illegitimate tool is used to justify the application of unlawful unilateral sanctions on such States, which itself, by its nature and definition, is an act of terrorism in which economic means replace weaponry. Unilateral sanctions of the United States against Iran are clear examples of economic terrorism since they cause death with the declared intention of compelling the Iranian

Government to do or to abstain from doing certain acts as defined by the United States. Through hampering international cooperation, unilateral sanctions also seriously undermine international efforts to combat terrorism.

A similar tool is the designation of entities or officials of the adversary States as the so-called terrorist organizations or individuals. These unlawful designations are often used to apparently justify the terrorist acts of the United States against such organizations or persons, the living example of which is the horrific assassination of martyr Qasem Soleimani in January 2020, in a terrorist act conducted at the direct order of the U.S. President in gross violation of international law. Given the leading role of martyr Soleimani in defeating Security Council-designated terrorist groups in the region, his assassination was an exceptional gift to Daesh and helped it to increase its terrorist activities in Iraq and Syria.

The irony is that, such designations and lists include only countries and organizations that resist the hegemonic policies of the United States. Conversely, they exclude the Israeli regime, which inherently is founded on terrorism, and the involvement of its institutions and authorities in terrorist acts is well-documented, the latest example being the serious indications that the assassination of Martyr Fakhrizadeh, a prominent Iranian scientist, on 27 November 2020, was conducted by the Israeli regime.

Harboring terrorists and providing them with a safe haven is another indicator of the politicization of, and selective approach in, counterterrorism efforts. Since a few years ago, the United States, in clear violation of its obligations under international law, has been harboring the Mojahedin Khalgh Organization – an extremely dangerous terrorist group that is responsible for the killing of more than 12,000 Iranians and many Iraqis – and providing its members with safe havens.

Just very recently, the current administration of the United States, in an entirely vindictive move, designated Cuba as a so-called State sponsor of terrorism and Ansarallah of Yemen as the so-called terrorist organization and also baselessly accused Iran of having ties to Al Qaeda, which we reject categorically. The Islamic Republic of Iran condemns, in the strongest possible terms, all such unfounded and politically motivated acts.

The aforesaid cases are only a few examples of how destructive the politicization of counterterrorism efforts and the selective, imbalanced and partial implementation of relevant international obligations are. If remained unaddressed, such challenges would further undermine international cooperation, erode our counterterrorism capacities, and ultimately embolden terrorist networks to increase their activities. We should not allow this to happen, particularly owing to the newly sophisticated means used by terrorists that necessitates our further vigilance and enhanced cooperation in a genuine and constructive manner and in full accordance with international law as well as through the adoption of a comprehensive and non-selective approach to address all root causes of terrorism and combating it in all its forms and manifestations. As an active country in combating terrorism in the region, the Islamic Republic of Iran stands ready to continue its unprecedented contribution towards uprooting this menace.

**I thank you, Mr. President.**