



Remarks by First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Serbia Ivica Dacic at today's high-level meeting of Counter-terrorism Committee of United Nations Security Council entitled "Stopping flow of foreign Terrorist fighters", Madrid, 27-28 July:

Esteemed Chair,  
Distinguished Excellencies,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

I have been honored to participate in today's special meeting of the Counter-Terrorism Committee, dedicated to one of the most important and most challenging issues nowadays. I would like to take this opportunity and express my gratitude to Spain as the host and current member of the UN Security Council for inviting the Republic of Serbia to participate in the meeting, as well as for the attention paid to the security issues, especially to day-to-day challenges set before us by terrorist acts and foreign fighters.

Serbia is firmly determined to respond to modern security challenges, among which the counter terrorism and all forms of extremism and radicalism present our priority goal. The Republic of Serbia, as one of 104 co-sponsors of the Security Council resolution 2178, strongly supports its full implementation.

The Republic of Serbia is aware that the complexity of the phenomenon of terrorism, extremism and radicalism of any kind requires a coordinated action on the broader international level and engagement in all their aspects with the aim of a comprehensive response.

Excellencies,

The Republic of Serbia is actively engaged in the activities at the international level with the aim to curb these challenges. We reiterated many times the readiness to help combat terrorism, within our capabilities and according to resources available.

We actively participate in the work of international and regional meetings, in the exchange of information and prevention of spreading the ideology of terrorists. We fulfill our international obligations responsibly in the context of the implementation of all UN Security Council resolutions on this matter, and we also contribute as a member of the Global coalition to combat the so-called "Islamic state".

All countries that are exposed to terrorist threats and that fight against the phenomenon of foreign terrorist fighters, consequently, face particular or specific challenges. In this regard, the Republic of Serbia is not an exception, because it is facing the most challenges mentioned today.

The Republic of Serbia is located in a specific environment, where there are strong centers through which an aggressive ideology of "Islamic state" has been affirmed, including the recruitment and sending of foreign terrorist fighters to the crisis areas. A particular challenge is the territory of the Autonomous Province of Kosovo and Metohija, where the phenomenon of foreign terrorist fighters is very pronounced to a large extent.

As I have already pointed out, in finding solutions to existing challenges, Serbia is relying on its own efforts, but to a large extent on international, especially regional cooperation.

Ladies and gentlemen,

In order to strengthen our capacities to prevent flows of foreign terrorist fighters and contribute more actively to this common combat, taking care of the obligations in the European Union accession process, we have undertaken a number of measures at the strategic-political, normative, institutional and operational level.

Important qualitative improvements have been made through the adoption of several national strategic-doctrinal documents, such as strategies and risk assessment, defining the basic directions of Serbian policy in preventing and countering terrorism. Efforts have been made to harmonize the domestic substantive legislation with international standards, inter alia, through innovating the Criminal Code and amending the Law on the Prevention of Money Laundering and the Financing of Terrorism, and the Law on restrictions on the freedom to dispose of assets in order to prevent terrorism. Institutional capacities have also been reinforced in the fight against terrorism. Increased measures have been taken at the operational level, which, inter alia, aim to raise the security of external borders and hindering the entry of foreign terrorist fighters or their transit through Serbia, monitoring and preventing travel to conflict areas, as well as creating conditions for the establishment of databases to disable movement and more efficient supervision.

Excellencies,

As you are all aware Serbia is the Chairman in Office of the OSCE for 2015 and please allow me to address you, as well, in this capacity today.

In December 2014 under the Swiss OSCE Chairmanship, the OSCE Ministerial Council

adopted a Declaration on the OSCE Role in Countering the Phenomenon of Foreign Terrorist Fighters in the Context of the Implementation of UN Security Council Resolutions 2170 (2014) and 2178 (2014). As part of our joint plan of work with Switzerland, the 2015 Serbian Chairmanship has put considerable focus on implementing this Declaration.

In that regard, we organized an OSCE-wide expert-level conference on “Countering the Incitement and Recruitment of Foreign Terrorist Fighters”, on 30 June – 1 July in Vienna with a view to contribute to the high-level discussions on Countering Violent Extremism expected to take place at the UN General Assembly in September 2015.

During the Conference, the Serbian Chairmanship jointly, with the OSCE Secretary General, launched a communication campaign highlighting the OSCE’s comprehensive approach to preventing terrorism by branding all relevant activities across the Organization with a common slogan: “OSCE United in Countering Violent Extremism”.

Based on the discussions at the event, the Chairmanship issued a Perception Paper on the outcomes and recommendations which was circulated to all OSCE delegations and conference participants. These recommendations provide a solid basis for the adoption of an OSCE Ministerial Council Document on Countering Violent Extremism and Radicalization that Lead to Terrorism, which would contribute to the high-level discussions on Countering Violent Extremism in the margins of the UN General Assembly in September 2015 and the adoption of a UN Action Plan on Preventing Violent Extremism.

Based on the ongoing global discussions on Countering Violent Extremism and the outcomes of our conference, there will also be four additional upcoming activities of particular interest: Firstly in September in Belgrade, the Serbian Chairmanship will host an event on youth and radicalization;

- Then on 7-8 October in Bucharest, there will be an expert workshop on “Media Freedom and Responsibilities in the Context of Counter Terrorist Policies” organized jointly with the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media;
- The OSCE is developing awareness raising courses based on the OSCE guidebook on “Preventing Terrorism and Countering VERT: A Community-Policing Approach”;
- And finally the OSCE will launch a training programme “Leaders Against Intolerance and Violent Extremism” (LIVE) to empower civil society leaders, including youth, women and religious figures, to speak out, mobilize others and launch initiatives against intolerance and violent extremism.

We strongly encourage all States to support the Serbian Chairmanship and the OSCE in these endeavors.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Today’s meeting should be used for discussions and harmonization of future guidelines for the formulation of strategies and techniques that will be made available to the states. This should support to countries in their efforts to confront the phenomenon of foreign fighters and prevent their organization, strengthening and recruiting.

I would like to use the opportunity to emphasize that Serbia will be particularly honoured to once again host the representatives of the UN Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee. We are confident that this will be a great opportunity to jointly analyze the measures that the Republic of Serbia has taken to strengthen its capacities to prevent the flow of foreign terrorist fighters. On this occasion I would like to note that the Republic of Serbia recently submitted a consolidated report on the capacities for the implementation of UN Security Council resolutions 1373 and 1624, detailing the measures taken in order to curb the threats and challenges related to the flows of foreign terrorist fighters.

The Republic of Serbia is ready to contribute, in coordination with our partners around the world, to combating the terrorist threats and the phenomenon of foreign terrorist fighters at the national, regional, European and global level. We remain firmly committed to the fight against terrorism and the phenomenon of foreign terrorist fighters, and in this regard special attention is paid to the institutions of the United Nations system as an undeniable leader at the global level in this field, too.