

SECURITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE PURSUANT
TO RESOLUTIONS 1267 (1999) AND 1989 (2011)
CONCERNING AL-QAIDA AND ASSOCIATED
INDIVIDUALS AND ENTITIES

**Chair's Briefing to the Security Council
28 May 2014**

Statement delivered on behalf of the Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee

1. In my last briefing to the Council, I spoke of Al-Qaida's structural changes, noting that the movement no longer follows a centralised command structure. I also emphasised that the threat to international peace and security posed by Al-Qaida emanates from a range of increasingly heterogeneous groups and affiliates. In today's briefing, I will focus on these developments in the threat posed by Al-Qaida and its affiliates and outline the steps taken by the Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee to ensure that the Al Qaida Sanctions regime remains an effective response to this threat.

2. The Committee seeks to act quickly and strategically to ensure that the sanctions imposed support national and regional responses to the evolving Al-Qaida-inspired terrorist threat. This approach encourages Member States from all regions of the world to take ownership of the listing process, and was evident last week when the Committee approved the addition of Boko Haram to its list of individuals and entities subject to the targeted financial sanctions and the arms embargo set out in paragraph 1 of Security Council resolution 2083 (2012). As a result of the new listing, any individual or entity that provides financial or material support to Boko Haram, including the provision of arms or recruits, is eligible to be added to the Al-Qaida Sanctions List and subject to the sanctions measures.

I. The evolving threat to international peace and security posed by Al-Qaida and its affiliates

3. The 15th report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team details the manners in which Al-Qaida and its affiliates take advantage of local conflicts or situations of limited State control. When a political situation shifts and opportunities arise to bolster Al-Qaida's agenda, the organisation and its affiliates have become adept at quickly seizing these opportunities to regroup and strengthen. Similarly, restoration of political stability and security in one region does not necessarily serve to weaken the threat posed by Al-Qaida and its affiliates. It may simply mean that terrorists find safe havens and opportunities elsewhere. The shift in geographical focus of Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb in particular demonstrates this adaptability. AQIM militants have moved away from Mali and Algeria to regroup in southern Libya. This combined trend of localisation and globalisation demonstrates the need for the Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee to maintain a global approach while at the same time constantly assessing and re-assessing the threat.

4. Al-Qaida has gained dexterity not only geographically, but also structurally. In particular, the trend towards ever-increasing recruitment of foreign fighters has given Al-

Qaida and its affiliates a more global reach in a number of theatres of operation. This strategy has been employed with particular rigour in the Syrian context. The Monitoring Team's 15th report raises the specific issue of large numbers of Al-Qaida affiliated foreign fighters affiliating with the organisation Jabhat-al-Nusrah. As thousands of foreign fighters engage in conflict alongside local militants, ties are established that the Monitoring Team predicts could lead to new pan-Arab and pan-European networks of extremists. Furthermore, the return of these battle hardened foreign fighters to their countries of origin – or to third countries - with new ideas and skills is a cause for concern. Member states in North Africa, the Middle-East and Europe are already grappling with the reality of returning fighters with experience of working with Al-Qaida affiliates. For these reasons, the Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee will continue to maintain a global approach to the threat.

5. Generationally, Al-Qaida is getting younger – with leaders increasingly shaped by the experience of current social dynamics rather than the experiences of the 1990s. This trend is examined in the Monitoring Team's 15th Report, which notes that leadership positions within Al-Qaida are being taken up by men in their late 30s and 40s. With this generational shift comes new philosophical perspectives and outreach techniques. For instance, among the new generation of Boko Haram militants in northern Nigeria, a younger perspective has resulted in increased propensity for violence and less tolerance for local religious leadership. With Al-Qaida affiliates in Africa and Asia, mid-level commanders bring technological knowledge and a focus on innovative attack planning. Younger leaders are also more adept at connecting with the next generation of recruits, in particular through the sophisticated use of social media. While organisationally Al-Qaida is more splintered, the shift towards diverse and localised recruitment also means that it is more durable than before. This trend is further amplified by the scope for domestic radicalisation in a number of member states, where violent Al-Qaida inspired cells may generate largely autonomously, influenced by internet propaganda but disconnected from Al-Qaida affiliate command structures.

II. Enhancing the effectiveness of the Al-Qaida Sanctions regime

6. The Committee remains dedicated to ensuring that the Al-Qaida sanctions regime is as effective as possible. The threat posed by Al-Qaida and its affiliates is characterised by the fluidity of its organisational structure and geographical reach. Maintaining a sanctions list that most effectively responds to the threat means identifying potential targets and promptly adding these names to the sanctions list. Conversely, it also means removing names from the sanctions list of individuals and entities that are no longer affiliated with Al-Qaida. To do this in a global context, the Committee relies upon the engagement of all Member States. I would like to take this opportunity to underscore that any Member State may at any time propose a name for listing or de-listing under the Al-Qaida sanctions regime, and I encourage all Member States to consider doing so.

7. On 22 May the Coordinator of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team briefed the Committee on the current threat landscape. The Committee recognises that sanctions will have most impact if the individuals and entities targeted by the regime are those currently involved in influential roles in, or supporting (in particular, financially), Al-Qaida and its affiliates. It is important for the Committee, as well as for

all Member States to respond to the changing threat in the names that are proposed for listing and de-listing.

8. An important focus for the Committee is improving implementation of the sanctions measures. In its 15th report, the Monitoring Team highlighted the implementation value for the travel ban of publishing biometric data on listed individuals. The Committee is now seeking to collect this data from Member States, both for existing entries on the list, as well as when new names are proposed for listing. Similarly, the Committee has initiated a Council-wide engagement with the World Customs Organisation (WCO) to seek an amendment to the Joint Guidelines on Advanced Passenger Information that it issues with the International Civil Aviation Organisation and the International Air Transport Association. The proposed amendment would raise awareness among national civil aviation authorities of the requirements and targets of Security Council travel bans.

9. In view of the growing use by Al Qaida-inspired terrorists of improvised explosive devices, the Monitoring Team concluded that IEDs are Al-Qaida's weapon of choice and the principal cause of civilian casualties in attacks by Al-Qaida and its affiliates. More alarming still, Al Qaida affiliates disseminate step-by-step guides to the manufacture of IEDs in a deliberate attempt to arm "lone-wolf" terrorists. The Monitoring Team has already engaged Member States, counter-IED specialists and those involved with private sector supply chains of components that may be used to construct IEDs: and the Committee is now considering the best way forward.

III. Conclusion

10. The Committee is currently in the process of reviewing over one hundred and fifty entries on the Al-Qaida Sanctions list – that's over half the total. The names under review include those lacking identifiers necessary to ensure effective implementation of the sanctions measures, entries corresponding to reportedly deceased individuals and to entities that are reported or confirmed to have ceased to exist. The Committee also undertakes a review of those entries that have not been reviewed in three or more years. The responsiveness of Member States remains crucial for the successful conduct of these reviews, and in this connection, I should like to take this opportunity to thank those Member States who have actively participated in these review processes by providing detailed and updated information. The Committee also continues to engage with the Ombudsperson on delisting requests. This process contributes to making the Al-Qaida Sanctions list focused and effective.

11. The rapid evolution of the threat that Al-Qaida and its affiliates pose to international peace and security requires dynamic, timely action from the Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee and from the broader United Nations membership. Ensuring the effectiveness of this tool remains a shared undertaking. Member States have a dual opportunity in this regard: I encourage Member States to at once assess the threat posed by Al-Qaida and its affiliates and to actively contribute to making the sanctions list relevant. I also urge Member States to concentrate efforts to fully implement the sanctions measures against listed individuals and entities within their jurisdiction. As

always, the Committee and the Monitoring Team stand ready to support Member States in this crucial endeavour.