

HMDC Presents... TERRORISM: Full Report

HMDC Presents... Special Session on Terrorism: State Sovereignty and Intervention (Research Report, December 2026)

Prepared for HMDC Forensics delegates attending Harvard Model United Nations Online, December 5-6, 2026. Every fact below comes from a page or official document that was opened and read in October 2026. Each evidence entry repeats its publication and date so the source is always visible.

WHAT OUR CHAIRS WILL FOCUS ON

Harvard tells us that this committee is a special session of the General Assembly about terrorism, and that the October and December sessions look at different questions. In December, we will study state sovereignty, which means a country's right to control its own land, and we will ask when it is fair and necessary for other countries to step in. Our job as delegates is to work together on a full plan against terrorism that keeps a balance between international law and each state's sovereignty. Harvard describes this as "balancing international law and state sovereignty," so every idea we bring should speak to both sides of that balance.

(Harvard Model United Nations, HMUN Online Committee Page, Last Accessed: October 2026)

<https://www.harvardmun.org/special-session-online>

The parts of this report that match that focus most closely are Sections 1B to 1E (the four ways states and the UN use force or invite help), Section 2B (the rules on sovereignty and force) and Section 2E (consent and the exit of UN missions).

How we use this report: This report already follows the December focus closely, so most of it is useful in committee. Recruitment, which appears in Sections 1A and 1F, and online extremist content, in Section 3D, belong mainly to Harvard's October session, so we treat them as background only. We use those facts when they help answer the December question, for example to show that heavy force can push people toward armed groups, but we do not build our speeches or resolutions around them. Our priority is always the same question: when may other countries act inside a state, and who should decide?

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INTRODUCTION: UNDERSTANDING THE TOPIC

Every state has sovereignty: the right to control its own territory and make its own decisions without outside interference. The UN Charter protects this right by banning the use of force against another state and by stopping the UN itself from interfering in a state's internal matters. Terrorism challenges this system because terrorist groups are not states. They cross borders, hide in areas where governments are weak, and attack people in other countries.

This committee must decide when, if ever, another state or group of states may act inside a country to fight terrorism. There are four main legal doors. The Security Council can authorise action under Chapter VII. A state that suffers an armed attack can claim self-defence under Article 51. The host state can invite foreign forces in (consent). Regional organisations such as the African Union can act, ideally with Security Council approval. Each door has advantages and disadvantages, and delegates will debate which doors to widen and which to narrow.

This topic is not only about armies. Evidence in this report shows that military intervention can also cause harm, for example by creating anger that helps terrorist groups recruit. Delegates should therefore weigh military options against policing, political settlements, prevention, financial controls and human rights protections.

PART 1, THE TOPIC

1A. THE HARMS

Terrorism kills thousands of people a year, mostly in a small number of countries where governments are weak. It also forces millions from their homes. However, the response to terrorism can cause harm too: wars fought in the name of counter-terrorism have killed far more people than terrorist attacks themselves, and abuses by security forces push some people into joining armed groups. The entries below show who is hurt, how many, and how badly.

Vision of Humanity (Institute for Economics and Peace), March 19, 2026: Terrorism deaths fell to their lowest level since 2007

Tagline: Counting terrorism deaths worldwide Source: According to... Vision of Humanity (Institute for Economics and Peace), March 19, 2026 Link: <https://www.visionofhumanity.org/maps/global-terrorism-index/> Fact: It states... that the Global Terrorism Index 2026, which covers 163 countries, counted 5,582 terrorism deaths and 2,944 incidents in 2025. Deaths fell 28 percent and incidents fell 22 percent, the lowest figures since 2007. Pakistan became the most affected country for the first time, with 1,139 deaths. Six of the ten most affected countries are in sub-Saharan Africa, and the Islamic State and its affiliates remain the deadliest group. Deaths in Western countries rose 280 percent to 57. This means... the global total is falling, but the harm is concentrated in a few fragile countries. Most of the places where intervention is debated (the Sahel, Somalia, Pakistan and Afghanistan) are on this list.

Vision of Humanity (Institute for Economics and Peace), March 19, 2026: Most attacks now happen near an international border

Tagline: Tracking attacks near borders Source: According to... Vision of Humanity (Institute for Economics and Peace), March 19, 2026 Link: <https://www.visionofhumanity.org/maps/global-terrorism-index/> Fact: It states... that more than 76 percent of terrorist attacks in 2025 took place within 100 kilometres of an international border, up from just under 60 percent in 2007. This means... terrorist groups use borders as shields, attacking on one side and hiding on the other. This is exactly why states argue about whether they may follow a group across a border without the neighbour's permission.

Council on Foreign Relations, July 29, 2026: The Sahel border zone accounts for over half of global terrorism deaths

Tagline: Locating the deadliest region Source: According to... Council on Foreign Relations, July 29, 2026 Link: <https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/violent-extremism-sahel> Fact: It states... that the Liptako-Gourma borderlands, where Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger meet, account for over half of global terrorism-related deaths. Conflict has displaced about 2.6 million people in Liptako-Gourma and about 2.8 million in the Lake Chad Basin (2022 figures). The region has also seen military coups in Mali (2020 and 2021), Burkina Faso (2022) and Niger (2023). This means... the Sahel is the centre of this debate. The governments there are military governments that reject Western intervention, so any plan the committee writes must work with states that guard their sovereignty very closely.

International Crisis Group, May 8, 2026: Jihadists and separatists launched an offensive of unprecedented scale in Mali

Tagline: Describing the April 2026 offensive Source: According to... International Crisis Group, May 8, 2026 Link: <https://www.crisisgroup.org/qna/africa/mali/mali-avoiding-trap-military-escalation> Fact: It states... that on April 25, 2026, the al-Qaeda-linked group JNIM and the separatist Azawad Liberation Front attacked towns across Mali. A car bomb near Bamako killed the Defence Minister. JNIM temporarily took Mopti and most of Sévaré, the groups seized Kidal, and JNIM declared a blockade of Bamako, a city of more than four million people. JNIM has attacked 14 of Mali's 19 regional capitals, and attacks on Malian towns have nearly tripled in five years. This means... terrorist groups in the Sahel are no longer only rural raiders; they can threaten capital cities. This raises the pressure for outside help, and the question of who should give it and on what terms.

International Crisis Group, February 20, 2026: Sahel violence is spreading into coastal West Africa

Tagline: Spreading violence to coastal states Source: According to... International Crisis Group, February 20, 2026 Link: <https://www.crisisgroup.org/rpt/africa/sahel-west-africa/321-le-jnim-et-le-dilemme-de-lexpansion-au-dela-du-sahel> Fact: It states... that JNIM has attacked coastal states since 2019 and that Benin and Togo face the greatest risk. Data from ACLED shows JNIM incidents in Benin rose from six in 2019 to 2021 to 173 in 2023 and 138 in 2024. Fighters based in Burkina Faso also pass through northern Côte d'Ivoire to resupply. This means... a threat that begins in one state soon becomes a threat to its neighbours. This is the strongest argument for regional cooperation, and also the reason neighbours may claim a right to act across the border.

Watson Institute, Brown University, Last Accessed: October 2026: Post-9/11 wars killed hundreds of thousands directly and millions indirectly

Tagline: Counting deaths from post-9/11 wars Source: According to... Watson Institute, Brown University, Last Accessed: October 2026 Link: <https://costsofwar.watson.brown.edu/costs/human> Fact: It states... that more than 940,000 people were killed by direct war violence in Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria, Yemen and Pakistan from 2001 to 2023, and more than 432,000 of them were civilians. A further 3.6 to 3.8 million people are estimated to have died indirectly, from damage to economies, health care and infrastructure, for a total of at least 4.5 to 4.7 million deaths. This means... large military interventions carried out in the name of counter-terrorism can cost far more lives than terrorism itself. Delegates who support intervention must explain how their plan avoids repeating this harm.

United Nations Development Programme, February 7, 2023: Government abuses are the most common trigger for joining extremist groups

Tagline: Linking state abuses to recruitment Source: According to... United Nations Development Programme, February 7, 2023 Link: https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/2023-02/JOURNEY%20TO%20EXTREMISM%20IN%20AFRICA%20PATHWAYS%20TO%20RECRUITMENT%20AND%20DISENGAGEMENT_2023.pdf Fact: It states... that a study of 2,196 people in eight African countries, more than 1,000 of them former members of extremist groups, found that 48 percent reported a "tipping point" event before joining. Of those, 71 percent named a government action, such as the killing or arrest of a family member or friend. Only 17 percent named religion as a key reason. The report also says that heavily military approaches still dominate in sub-Saharan Africa, with limited evidence that they work. This means... a counter-terrorism operation that harms civilians, whether by a foreign force or a national army, can create new terrorists. Any intervention plan needs strong rules for protecting civilians and holding abusers accountable.

International Centre for Counter-Terrorism, July 11, 2025: The Islamic State is growing in Africa while the global response shrinks

Tagline: Tracking a shrinking global response Source: According to... International Centre for Counter-Terrorism, July 11, 2025 Link: <https://icct.nl/publication/islamic-state-2025-evolving-threat-facing-waning-global-response> Fact: It states... that Islamic State fighters in Syria and Iraq fell to an estimated 1,500 to 3,000 by mid-2025, but its African branches grew. The Sahel branch has 2,000 to 3,000 fighters (up from about 425 in late 2018), the Somalia branch has about 1,000 after roughly doubling in one year, and the West Africa branch has 2,000 to 3,000 in the Lake Chad Basin. About 38,400 people remain in the al-Hol and Roj camps in Syria, 60 percent of them children. At the same time, Western states have withdrawn troops and cut counter-terrorism, prevention and development budgets. This means... the threat is moving to Africa just as outside help is shrinking. Delegates must decide who fills the gap: regional forces, new partners such as Russia, or UN-funded missions.

The Guardian, September 16, 2026: Violence by armed groups in the central Sahel is heading for a record year

Tagline: Measuring a record year of Sahel violence Source: According to... The Guardian, September 16, 2026 Link: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2026/sep/16/al-qaida-and-is-linked-violence-in-africas-sahel-belt-set-to-hit-record-levels-this-year> Fact: It states... that the conflict monitor ACLED counted violent events involving armed groups linked to al-Qaida and the Islamic State in Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger rising from 63 in 2016 to 2,845 in 2025. By mid-September 2026 it had already logged 2,145 events, so the 2026 total is likely to pass 3,000. The 2026 Global Peace Index noted that the UN recorded more than 9,000 deaths from security incidents in these three countries in 2025, and the article says that killings have been carried out by government forces and Russian fighters as well as by armed groups. This means... while terrorism deaths are falling in most of the world, they are climbing fast in the central Sahel. Delegates should treat the Sahel as the main test case for any new intervention rules, and remember that state forces also cause civilian deaths there.

United Nations Security Council (Monitoring Team report S/2026/651), August 10, 2026: JNIM has 7,000 to 8,000 members and paid for its offensive with ransom money

Tagline: Paying for an offensive with ransom Source: According to... United Nations Security Council (Monitoring Team report S/2026/651), August 10, 2026 Link: <https://docs.un.org/S/2026/651> Fact: It states... that the UN sanctions Monitoring Team found the overall threat "broadly unchanged" but rising in the Sahel and South Asia. JNIM was the leading terrorist threat in the Sahel, with an estimated 7,000 to 8,000 members, about half of them in Mali. Most of a ransom of about 50 million US dollars, paid in 2025 for the release of one hostage, was shared among JNIM units and helped pay for the April 2026 offensive. The group also used dozens of commercial satellite communication terminals to coordinate attacks in remote areas. This means... money paid to free hostages can fund the next wave of attacks. Delegates can argue that stopping ransom payments (Resolution 2133) and cutting off equipment supplies is a way to weaken terrorist groups without sending troops across a border.

1B. MAJOR SOLUTION 1: SECURITY COUNCIL-AUTHORISED COLLECTIVE ACTION

Under this solution, outside force inside a state is lawful only when the Security Council authorises it under Chapter VII of the Charter (or when the host state consents). The Council would act more often and more clearly against terrorist safe havens, setting limits on time, purpose and conduct.

Advantages: it is the most clearly legal route and respects the Charter's system; it shares the burden among many states; and it gives the action international legitimacy. Disadvantages: any of the five permanent members can block action with a veto; Council wording is often vague, so states read it differently; and Council action can be slow when a threat moves fast.

United Nations Press (SC/12132), November 20, 2015: The Council called for "all necessary measures" against ISIL but states disagreed on the legal basis

Tagline: Authorising action without naming force Source: According to... United Nations Press (SC/12132), November 20, 2015 Link: <https://press.un.org/en/2015/sc12132.doc.htm> Fact: It states... that Resolution 2249 (2015), adopted unanimously, called on states with the capacity to do so to take "all necessary measures," in line with international law, against ISIL on its territory in Syria and Iraq. The text also reaffirmed respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all states. France said action could be based on Article 51 (self-defence), Russia said the Charter must be the foundation, and the United States described its campaign as necessary and proportionate. This means... even a unanimous resolution can leave the key question open. The committee can decide whether future resolutions should state clearly which legal basis applies, which territory is covered, and when authority ends.

United Nations Charter, June 26, 1945: The Charter bans force against states but keeps self-defence and Council action

Tagline: Reserving force to the Council Source: According to... United Nations Charter, June 26, 1945 Link: <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/un-charter/chapter-7> Fact: It states... in Article 42 that the Security Council may use air, sea or land forces when non-military measures are not enough. Article 51 keeps the "inherent right" of self-defence if an armed attack occurs, but only until the Council acts, and states must report such action to the Council immediately. Article 2(4), in Chapter I, bans the threat or use of force against any state's territorial integrity or political independence, and Article 2(7) stops the UN from intervening in matters that are essentially domestic, except for Chapter VII enforcement. This means... the Charter gives only narrow exceptions to the ban on force. Every proposal in this committee must fit one of these doors or argue openly for changing how they are read.

1C. MAJOR SOLUTION 2: SELF-DEFENCE AGAINST NON-STATE GROUPS ("UNWILLING OR UNABLE")

Under this solution, a state attacked by a terrorist group based in another country may strike that group without the host state's consent if the host state is "unwilling or unable" to stop it. Supporters want the UN to recognise this test and set conditions; opponents want the committee to reject it.

Advantages: it lets a victim state protect its people quickly when the host government cannot act; it closes safe havens in ungoverned areas; and it does not depend on the veto. Disadvantages: the attacking state decides for itself that its neighbour is "unwilling or unable," which invites abuse; it weakens the ban on force; and deployments can last for years without a clear end.

Lieber Institute, West Point, August 1, 2024: The test lets a victim state act when a host state cannot or will not

Tagline: Explaining the unwilling or unable test Source: According to... Lieber Institute, West Point, August 1, 2024 Link: <https://lieber.westpoint.edu/applying-unwilling-unable-test-israel-strikes-houthi-targets/> Fact: It states... that states should normally not operate militarily in another state without its consent, but every state has a duty not to knowingly allow its territory to be used against other states. If the territorial state is unwilling or unable to stop armed groups, the victim state may target those groups in self-defence. The author applies the test to Israel's July 2024 strike on Hodeidah, Yemen, where the Yemeni government does not control Houthi areas, while noting open questions about necessity and proportionality. This means... supporters see the test as common sense for areas no government controls. Delegates must decide whether the UN should define clear conditions for it or treat it as a threat to sovereignty.

Lieber Institute, West Point, February 23, 2024: The doctrine is contested and can justify open-ended deployments

Tagline: Questioning endless foreign deployments Source: According to... Lieber Institute, West Point, February 23, 2024 Link: <https://lieber.westpoint.edu/enduringly-unwilling-unable-syrian-chapter-forever-wars-saga/> Fact: It states... that about thirteen states accept the unwilling or unable doctrine as law, Brazil and Mexico strongly oppose it, and most other states have stayed silent; a 2021 Security Council Arria-formula meeting showed no common view. United States forces have operated in Syria since 2014 against the Syrian government's wishes, with about 900 troops there in November 2023. The author argues that a foreign presence should end once the host state is able and willing to deal with the threat. This means... there is no global agreement on this doctrine. A realistic resolution might not settle the whole question but could add limits, such as reporting duties and an end date once the host state regains control.

International Crisis Group, March 20, 2026: Pakistan bombed targets in Afghanistan, saying the Taliban shelter militants

Tagline: Striking across a border against militants Source: According to... International Crisis Group, March 20, 2026 Link: <https://www.crisisgroup.org/stm/asia-pacific/afghanistan/afghanistan-and-pakistan-trade-fire-conflict-takes-dangerous-turn> Fact: It states... that Pakistan accuses the Taliban government in Kabul of failing to act against the Pakistani Taliban (TTP), whose leaders and fighters shelter in Afghanistan, and demands "credible and verifiable action." On March 16, 2026, a strike that Afghanistan blamed on Pakistan hit a drug rehabilitation centre near Kabul, and the UN noted at least 143 deaths. Pakistan denied causing mass casualties and said it hit "military and terrorist infrastructure." It was the fifth Pakistani bombing of Kabul since October 2025, and more than 100,000 people have been displaced. This means... the "unwilling or unable" debate is happening right now between two UN members. Delegates can use this case to ask whether cross-border strikes against militants reduce terrorism or start a wider war that harms civilians.

United Nations Security Council (Monitoring Team report S/2026/651), August 10, 2026: UN monitors found that the Taliban continued to support the Pakistani Taliban

Tagline: Finding a host state unwilling to act Source: According to... United Nations Security Council (Monitoring Team report S/2026/651), August 10, 2026 Link: <https://docs.un.org/S/2026/651> Fact: It states... that cross-border attacks between Pakistan and Afghanistan escalated because the Pakistani Taliban (TTP) carried out a high number of attacks against Pakistan, and that the Taliban authorities in Kabul continued to support the TTP while publicly denying that they shelter any terrorist group. The Taliban moved about 2,000 TTP fighters and their families away from the Pakistani border, and the Taliban leader reportedly warned the TTP to stop attacking Pakistan. On April 28, 2026, al-Qaida's media outlet publicly supported the TTP's campaign against Pakistan for the first time. This means... an official UN body has found evidence that a host government is "unwilling" to stop a group attacking its neighbour. Delegates who support the doctrine can cite this report, while opponents can point out that the Taliban also took some steps, which shows that pressure and talks may work better than air strikes.

Watson Institute, Brown University, September 10, 2026: United States strikes on the Houthis in Yemen killed or injured at least 576 civilians

Tagline: Counting civilian costs of cross-border strikes Source: According to... Watson Institute, Brown University, September 10, 2026 Link: <https://costsofwar.watson.brown.edu/paper/YemenAirstrikes> Fact: It states... that a study by a Yemeni human rights group, published by the Costs of War project, found that 46 United States airstrike incidents in Yemen between December 2023 and May 2025 caused at least 576 civilian casualties: 213 people killed and 363 injured, including 50 children and 25 women. Most of the harm came during a seven-week campaign in March to May 2025, and the study's count of 208 civilians killed in that campaign is higher than the 153 deaths the Pentagon reported to Congress. The strikes also destroyed homes, farms, shops and infrastructure. This means... strikes against a non-state group inside another country, even when they answer real attacks, can kill many civilians and destroy the income of whole families. A resolution that allows such strikes should require civilian-harm tracking, honest public reporting and help for victims.

1D. MAJOR SOLUTION 3: INTERVENTION BY INVITATION (HOST-STATE CONSENT)

Under this solution, foreign or regional forces enter only when the host government asks for them. This is the most common form of counter-terrorism intervention today, used in Mozambique, Mali, Somalia and Iraq.

Advantages: it respects sovereignty because the host state chooses; it can be fast; and it often produces quick military results. Disadvantages: the government that invites troops may be unelected or abusive; the host can expel partners suddenly, leaving a security gap; and results often fade when foreign troops leave or funding runs short.

International Crisis Group, May 8, 2024: Invited troops cut insurgent numbers in Mozambique by about 90 percent

Tagline: Shrinking an insurgency with invited troops Source: According to... International Crisis Group, May 8, 2024 Link: <https://www.crisisgroup.org/qna/africa/mozambique/what-future-military-intervention-mozambique> Fact: It states... that after insurgents attacked Palma in 2021, Mozambique accepted a Southern African Development Community mission (about 2,200 troops) and Rwandan forces (about 2,500) under a bilateral deal. Together they cut insurgent numbers from about 3,000 to as few as 300 by 2023, and more than half a million displaced people went home. However, new attacks displaced almost 113,000 people after December 2023. This means... consent-based intervention can produce real results quickly. It also shows that military gains are fragile without longer-term plans.

International Crisis Group, May 8, 2024: Regional missions depend on unreliable funding

Tagline: Running missions on uncertain money Source: According to... International Crisis Group, May 8, 2024 Link: <https://www.crisisgroup.org/qna/africa/mozambique/what-future-military-intervention-mozambique> Fact: It states... that the southern African mission relied on member contributions and ran constant deficits. South Africa paid about 45 million US dollars a year, and the European Peace Facility gave 15 million euros for non-lethal equipment, which was not enough for large operations. The mission's mandate ended on July 15, 2024, and analysts expected a "security vacuum" the insurgency would likely exploit. This means... funding is often the weak point of regional intervention. A resolution can address who pays, for how long, and how missions hand over to national forces.

International Crisis Group, Last Accessed: October 2026: Attacks continued in northern Mozambique in September 2026

Tagline: Returning attacks after foreign withdrawal Source: According to... International Crisis Group, Last Accessed: October 2026 Link: <https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/southern-africa/mozambique> Fact: It states... that in September 2026 the Islamic State Mozambique group attacked a hunting lodge in the Niassa Special Reserve, killing one person, abducting at least 11 and displacing about 2,700. It was the group's first attack in Niassa since May 2025, and abductions for ransom continued in Cabo Delgado after a joint Mozambican and Rwandan campaign in July. This means... five years after the intervention began, the group is weakened but not defeated. Delegates should ask what "success" means and when invited forces should leave.

Council on Foreign Relations, July 29, 2026: Sahel governments expelled Western forces and turned to Russia

Tagline: Replacing Western partners with Russia Source: According to... Council on Foreign Relations, July 29, 2026 Link: <https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/violent-extremism-sahel> Fact: It states... that France ended Operation Barkhane and Task Force Takuba in 2022 after Mali's military government cut defence ties, and completed its withdrawal from Niger in October 2023. The Russian Wagner group entered Mali in December 2021, and its successor, Russia's Africa Corps, is now a key security partner. Mali also demanded in June 2023 that the UN peacekeeping mission leave. This means... consent can be withdrawn as quickly as it is given. A host government may also choose partners that other states see as harmful, and the UN has little power to stop that choice.

International Crisis Group, May 8, 2026: Russian forces could not prevent major losses in Mali

Tagline: Testing the limits of Russian support Source: According to... International Crisis Group, May 8, 2026 Link: <https://www.crisisgroup.org/qna/africa/mali/mali-avoiding-trap-military-escalation> Fact: It states... that Russia's Africa Corps reportedly has at least 2,000 personnel in Mali, joins airstrikes and escorts fuel convoys, but Russian forces were pushed out of Kidal in a negotiated withdrawal. Crisis Group warns that relying mainly on military force risks a cycle of escalation and repression, and recommends reopening dialogue with armed groups. This means... changing the foreign partner did not end the threat. Delegates can argue that consent-based intervention needs political goals, not only troops.

Security Council Report, July 1, 2026: Invited partners kept striking terrorist groups in Nigeria and the Sahel

Tagline: Working with host-state partners Source: According to... Security Council Report, July 1, 2026 Link: <https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/monthly-forecast/2026-07/west-africa-and-the-sahel-17.php> Fact: It states... that on May 16, 2026, United States Africa Command and Nigerian forces reportedly killed Abu-Bilal al-Minuki, described as ISIL's second-in-command worldwide, with further strikes on May 18. Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger reportedly carried out joint airstrikes in Mali through their Alliance of Sahel States. JNIM's fuel blockade of Bamako has reportedly lasted since September 2025, and on June 18, 2026, gunmen attacked the airport in Niamey, Niger, killing 11 soldiers and 2 civilians. This means... operations with the host state's consent remain the most common form of counter-terrorism intervention, whether the partner is a distant power or a neighbour. The committee can propose common rules, such as civilian protection and reporting, for all of them.

1E. MAJOR SOLUTION 4: REGIONAL PEACE OPERATIONS FUNDED BY THE UN

Under this solution, regional organisations, especially the African Union, lead counter-terrorism missions with Security Council approval, and the UN helps pay for them with assessed (required) contributions. This mixes local legitimacy with global funding.

Advantages: neighbours understand the conflict and have a direct interest in ending it; Council approval gives legal cover; and reliable funding avoids the deficits seen in Mozambique. Disadvantages: UN members disagree on how much to pay; regional troops can also commit abuses; and missions can become open-ended.

United Nations Press (SC/15544), December 21, 2023: The Council agreed that UN funds may pay for African Union-led operations

Tagline: Opening UN funding to African missions Source: According to... United Nations Press (SC/15544), December 21, 2023 Link: <https://press.un.org/en/2023/sc15544.doc.htm> Fact: It states... that Resolution 2719 (2023), adopted unanimously, allows the Council to consider, case by case, requests from the African Union Peace and Security Council to use UN assessed contributions for African-led peace support operations. Missions must follow the UN human rights due diligence policy. An amendment caps UN funding at 75 percent of each operation's annual budget, with the remaining 25 percent to be raised separately. This means... the UN has already created a tool for funding regional intervention with built-in human rights rules. The committee can debate how to use it for counter-terrorism and how to fill the remaining 25 percent.

Security Council Report, Last Accessed: October 2026: The African Union mission in Somalia depends on yearly renewals and voluntary money

Tagline: Renewing the Somalia mission yearly Source: According to... Security Council Report, Last Accessed: October 2026 Link: <https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/somalia/> Fact: It states... that Resolution 2767 of December 27, 2024 authorised the African Union Support and Stabilization Mission in Somalia (AUSSOM), and Resolution 2809 of December 23, 2025 extended it until December 31, 2026. A Secretary-General report in May 2026 was to update the Council on voluntary resource mobilisation for the mission's budget. The Council also renewed sanctions against Al-Shabaab. This means... Somalia is the leading example of a consent-based, regionally led, Council-approved counter-terrorism mission. Its next renewal is due in December 2026, the same month as this conference.

Security Council Report, June 14, 2026: The Somalia mission faced a funding gap, and the United States opposed using Resolution 2719

Tagline: Exposing the Somalia funding gap Source: According to... Security Council Report, June 14, 2026 Link: <https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/whatsinblue/2026/06/private-meeting-on-the-african-union-support-and-stabilization-mission-in-somalia-aussom.php> Fact: It states... that the Secretary-General's May 29, 2026 report found a 2025 funding gap of about 38.5 million US dollars against AUSSOM's total budget of 154.7 million. The UN support office in Somalia (UNSOS) is managing a 130 million dollar shortfall by cutting flights, delaying military helicopters and reducing mine clearance. The United States strongly opposes funding AUSSOM through Resolution 2719. The mission operates in 49 locations, and its plan is to reduce them to 23. This means... the funding tool the Council created in 2023 has not yet been used for the most obvious case. Delegates must decide whether to push the Council to apply Resolution 2719 or to find other money.

International Peace Institute, January 16, 2026: A drawdown is the most likely future for the Somalia mission

Tagline: Weighing options for the Somalia mission Source: According to... International Peace Institute (IPI Global Observatory), January 16, 2026 Link: <https://theglobalobservatory.org/2026/01/with-aussoms-funding-challenges-here-to-stay-what-are-the-options-for-the-missions-future-in-somalia/> Fact: It states... that the African Union estimated AUSSOM needed 196 million US dollars for 2025, mostly to pay soldiers 1,000 dollars a month, but pledges reached only 48.6 million and unpaid debts stood at 93.9 million. In August 2025 the United States effectively cancelled its share of the UN support budget, about 25 percent. The author lists three options: a budget-driven drawdown that hands security to bilateral partners (the most likely), a cheaper mission paid mostly by African states, or a mission tied to political talks with al-Shabaab. This means... regional missions can shrink because of money, not because the threat is gone. Delegates should plan a handover so that a withdrawal does not open a security gap, as happened in Mali.

United Nations General Assembly Sixth Committee (statement of the African Group), October 6, 2025: African states called for Resolution 2719 to be put into practice

Tagline: Demanding predictable money for African missions Source: According to... United Nations General Assembly Sixth Committee (statement of the African Group), October 6, 2025 Link: https://www.un.org/en/ga/sixth/80/pdfs/statements/int_terrorism/01mtg_african_group.pdf Fact: It states... that Africa "continues to pay a heavy price," with groups linked to the Islamic State and al-Qaida expanding in the Sahel, coastal West Africa, the Lake Chad Basin and the Gulf of Guinea, and new cells appearing in Central, Eastern and Southern Africa. The African Group called for "adequate, sustainable and predictable financing" for counter-terrorism on the continent, asked for Resolution 2719 to be implemented, and named the full launch of the African Standby Force as a priority. It also described respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity as a "non-derogable" duty, meaning one that can never be set aside. This means... African states want African-led forces paid for by the UN, but they do not want outsiders acting on their territory without consent. A resolution that combines Resolution 2719 funding with strict host-state consent is likely to win African votes.

1F. MAJOR SOLUTION 5: NON-MILITARY APPROACHES (POLICING, POLITICS AND PREVENTION)

Under this solution, the international community focuses on police and intelligence work, political settlements with armed groups where possible, and prevention programmes that address the reasons people join. Outside states help with training, money and information rather than troops.

Advantages: it avoids violating sovereignty; historical evidence shows it ends more terrorist groups than military force; and it avoids the civilian harm that drives recruitment. Disadvantages: it is slow; it may not stop a group that is already seizing towns; and negotiating with armed groups is politically difficult and can reward violence.

RAND Corporation, June 30, 2008: Most terrorist groups ended through politics or policing, not military force

Tagline: Ending terrorist groups without armies Source: According to... RAND Corporation, June 30, 2008 Link: https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_briefs/RB9351.html Fact: It states... that of 268 terrorist groups that ended between 1968 and 2006, 43 percent ended by joining a political process, 40 percent were broken up by police and intelligence agencies, 10 percent won, and only 7 percent were ended by military force. This means... this older study is still widely cited because it covers four decades. It supports delegates who argue that foreign military intervention should be a last resort.

United Nations Development Programme, February 7, 2023: Most fighters who leave do so because the group disappointed them

Tagline: Explaining why fighters leave Source: According to... United Nations Development Programme, February 7, 2023 Link: https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/2023-02/JOURNEY%20TO%20EXTREMISM%20IN%20AFRICA%20PATHWAYS%20TO%20RECRUITMENT%20AND%20DISENGAGEMENT_2023.pdf Fact: It states... that 68 percent of people who left extremist groups voluntarily said the main reason was that they no longer agreed with the group's actions, including killing civilians. Funding for peacebuilding and prevention has stayed flat or fallen to about 2 percent, even though the report cites a return of 16 dollars for every dollar invested in peacebuilding. Voluntary leavers were also far less likely to plan to rejoin than those who were arrested. This means... programmes that help fighters leave and return home may reduce violence at low cost. The committee can propose more money for these programmes as an alternative or partner to military action.

International Crisis Group, February 20, 2026: Police, not soldiers, should guard borders, and talks with insurgents should be explored

Tagline: Using police at borders Source: According to... International Crisis Group, February 20, 2026 Link: <https://www.crisisgroup.org/rpt/africa/sahel-west-africa/321-le-jnim-et-le-dilemme-de-lexpansion-au-dela-du-sahel> Fact: It states... that no lasting solution is possible without a regional response, and that coastal and Sahelian states must rebuild trust damaged by the rise of military governments. It recommends investing in intelligence, using police rather than soldiers at borders to reduce stigma against groups such as nomadic herders, and exploring possible understandings with insurgents that could reduce violence. This means... states can cooperate across borders without sending troops into each other's territory. This offers a middle path between full intervention and doing nothing.

International Crisis Group, June 17, 2026: Outside partners should offer limited help and push for political dialogue

Tagline: Pairing aid with political dialogue Source: According to... International Crisis Group, June 17, 2026 Link: <https://www.crisisgroup.org/opd/africa/mali-united-states/could-united-states-make-difference-mali> Fact: It states... that after the April 2026 offensive some experts called for United States intervention in Mali, but the authors warn against ignoring 15 years of lessons from Sahel counterinsurgency. They suggest low-cost, non-lethal help such as equipment maintenance and training to defuse roadside bombs, a gradual programme-by-programme approach, development investment, and encouraging Bamako to combine military action with political dialogue. They also warn that unconditional security help could strengthen an abusive government. This means... outside help can come with conditions that protect civilians while still respecting the host state's choices. Delegates can debate what conditions are fair.

UN Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, August 5, 2026: Security measures alone will not defeat the Islamic State

Tagline: Looking beyond security measures alone Source: According to... UN Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, August 5, 2026 Link: https://www.un.org/securitycouncil/ctc/sites/www.un.org.securitycouncil.ctc/files/cted_5_august_2026_isil_23rd_report.pdf Fact: It states... in a briefing to the Security Council that the threat from the Islamic State "has not receded" but has "dispersed and adapted," and that "a response confined to one region, or to security measures alone, will not address the problem." The directorate called for "more adaptive, comprehensive and context-specific" responses, and warned of persistent gaps in dealing with the links between terrorism and organised crime, as well as the growing use of armed drones by terrorist groups, including in parts of Africa. This means... the UN's own monitoring body says force by itself is not enough. Delegates can use this to argue that every intervention plan should be paired with prevention, justice, financial controls and support for communities.

1G. LESSER SOLUTIONS

- **Targeted sanctions:** freezing the money and travel of named terrorists through the UN list (see Part 2D). Helps without crossing borders, but raises fairness concerns for those listed.
- **Repatriating foreign fighters' families:** bringing home women and children held in camps in north-east Syria (see Part 2F). Reduces a long-term risk but is politically unpopular in many home countries.
- **Online content removal:** cooperation with technology companies to remove terrorist propaganda (see Part 3D). Low cost, but raises free-speech questions.
- **An agreed definition of terrorism:** finishing the long-delayed comprehensive convention so that "terrorism" cannot be stretched to cover political opponents.
- **Clear reporting rules:** requiring states that use force in self-defence to file detailed Article 51 letters and to report again when operations end.

PART 2, THE UNITED NATIONS RECORD

The UN has built a large counter-terrorism system since 2001: dozens of Security Council resolutions, a sanctions list, a monitoring directorate, a General Assembly strategy reviewed every two to three years, and a dedicated office. What it has not done is agree on a definition of terrorism or on when states may use force against terrorists inside another country. The entries below show what the UN has done, what is working and what is not.

2A. TABLE OF UN RESOLUTIONS AND INSTRUMENTS

Every symbol below was confirmed on an official UN site (un.org, press.un.org or docs.un.org). Descriptions are plain summaries.

General Assembly

Symbol	Year	Body	What it does
A/RES/2625(XV)	1970	General Assembly	Declaration on Friendly Relations: confirms non-intervention and that states must not organise or allow terrorist acts against other states from their territory.
A/RES/49/60	1994	General Assembly	Declaration on Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism.
A/RES/51/210	1996	General Assembly	Adds to the 1994 declaration and creates the Ad Hoc Committee that drafts new terrorism treaties, including the unfinished comprehensive convention.
A/RES/60/1	2005	General Assembly	World Summit Outcome; paragraphs 138-139 set out the Responsibility to Protect, with collective force only through the Security Council.
A/RES/60/288	2006	General Assembly	Adopts the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and its four pillars.
A/RES/62/272	2008	General Assembly	First review of the Global Strategy.
A/RES/64/297	2010	General Assembly	Second review of the Global Strategy.
A/RES/66/282	2012	General Assembly	Third review of the Global Strategy.
A/RES/68/276	2014	General Assembly	Fourth review of the Global Strategy.
A/RES/70/291	2016	General Assembly	Fifth review of the Global Strategy.
A/RES/71/291	2017	General Assembly	Creates the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT).
A/RES/72/284	2018	General Assembly	Sixth review of the Global Strategy.
A/RES/75/291	2021	General Assembly	Seventh review of the Global Strategy.
A/RES/77/298	2023	General Assembly	Eighth review of the Global Strategy (adopted June 22, 2023).
A/RES/80/286	2026	General Assembly	Ninth review of the Global Strategy (adopted July 1, 2026, by a recorded vote of 140 to 3 with 1 abstention, the first review not adopted without a vote).

Security Council

Symbol	Year	Body	What it does
S/RES/1267	1999	Security Council	Creates the sanctions committee and asset freeze, first aimed at the Taliban.
S/RES/1368	2001	Security Council	Condemns the September 11 attacks and recognises the right of self-defence.
S/RES/1373	2001	Security Council	Requires all states to criminalise

			terrorist financing and acts; creates the Counter-Terrorism Committee.
S/RES/1377	2001	Security Council	Ministerial declaration on a global effort against terrorism.
S/RES/1456	2003	Security Council	Foreign ministers' declaration; counter-terrorism must respect international law.
S/RES/1535	2004	Security Council	Creates the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED).
S/RES/1540	2004	Security Council	Requires states to keep nuclear, chemical and biological weapons away from non-state actors.
S/RES/1566	2004	Security Council	Sets up a working group on measures against terrorist groups beyond Al-Qaida and the Taliban.
S/RES/1624	2005	Security Council	Calls on states to prohibit incitement to commit terrorist acts.
S/RES/1631	2005	Security Council	Encourages cooperation between the UN and regional organisations on peace and security, including against terrorism.
S/RES/1787	2007	Security Council	Extends CTED's mandate.
S/RES/1805	2008	Security Council	Extends CTED's mandate to 2010.
S/RES/1963	2010	Security Council	Extends CTED's mandate to 2013.
S/RES/1988	2011	Security Council	Creates a separate Taliban sanctions committee.
S/RES/1989	2011	Security Council	Makes the 1267 list an Al-Qaida sanctions list.
S/RES/2129	2013	Security Council	Extends CTED's mandate to 2017.
S/RES/2133	2014	Security Council	Calls on states to prevent kidnapping and ransom payments to terrorists.
S/RES/2170	2014	Security Council	Condemns ISIL and Al-Nusra Front and their abuses.
S/RES/2178	2014	Security Council	Requires states to stop foreign terrorist fighters from travelling.
S/RES/2195	2014	Security Council	Addresses how terrorist groups profit from transnational organised crime and calls for stronger cooperation against both.
S/RES/2199	2015	Security Council	Targets terrorist income from oil, antiquities and ransoms.
S/RES/2242	2015	Security Council	Women, peace and security; links women's participation to countering extremism (related).
S/RES/2249	2015	Security Council	Calls on able states to take "all necessary measures" against ISIL in Syria and Iraq, in line with international law.
S/RES/2250	2015	Security Council	Youth, peace and security; involves young people in preventing violence (related).
S/RES/2253	2015	Security Council	Expands the sanctions list to cover ISIL supporters.
S/RES/2309	2016	Security Council	Strengthens aviation security against terrorism.
S/RES/2322	2016	Security Council	Strengthens international police and judicial cooperation on terrorism.
S/RES/2341	2017	Security Council	Protects critical infrastructure from terrorist attack.
S/RES/2354	2017	Security Council	Sets a framework for countering

			terrorist narratives.
S/RES/2368	2017	Security Council	Renews and updates the ISIL and Al-Qaida sanctions regime.
S/RES/2370	2017	Security Council	Aims to stop terrorists from acquiring weapons.
S/RES/2379	2017	Security Council	Creates a team (UNITAD) to collect evidence of ISIL crimes in Iraq.
S/RES/2395	2017	Security Council	Extends CTED's mandate.
S/RES/2396	2017	Security Council	Addresses returning and relocating foreign terrorist fighters.
S/RES/2462	2019	Security Council	Strengthens rules against terrorist financing.
S/RES/2482	2019	Security Council	Addresses links between terrorism and organised crime.
S/RES/2593	2021	Security Council	Demands Afghan territory not be used to threaten or attack any country.
S/RES/2610	2021	Security Council	Renews ISIL and Al-Qaida sanctions; extends Monitoring Team and Ombudsperson to 2024.
S/RES/2617	2021	Security Council	Renews CTED's mandate.
S/RES/2664	2022	Security Council	Creates a humanitarian exemption to UN asset freezes.
S/RES/2690	2023	Security Council	Ends the UN mission in Mali (MINUSMA) at Mali's request.
S/RES/2697	2023	Security Council	Final extension of UNITAD in Iraq.
S/RES/2713	2023	Security Council	Sanctions and arms embargo on Al-Shabaab.
S/RES/2719	2023	Security Council	Allows UN assessed funding for African Union-led peace operations, up to 75 percent.
S/RES/2732	2024	Security Council	Narrows the UN mission in Iraq (UNAMI) and closes it by December 31, 2025.
S/RES/2734	2024	Security Council	Renews ISIL and Al-Qaida sanctions; extends Monitoring Team and Ombudsperson to June 2027.
S/RES/2767	2024	Security Council	Authorises the African Union mission in Somalia (AUSSOM).
S/RES/2809	2025	Security Council	Extends AUSSOM until December 31, 2026.
S/RES/2810	2025	Security Council	Renews CTED's mandate until January 5, 2029 (adopted unanimously December 29, 2025).

Treaty foundation: The UN Charter (1945), especially Articles 2(4), 2(7), 42 and 51, and the 19 UN counter-terrorism treaties listed in Part 3A.

2B. THE RULES ON SOVEREIGNTY AND FORCE

International Court of Justice, December 19, 2005: The Court rejected Uganda's claim of self-defence in Congo

Tagline: Rejecting a self-defence claim Source: According to... International Court of Justice, December 19, 2005 Link: <https://www.icj-cij.org/case/116> Fact: It states... that in Armed Activities on the Territory of the Congo (DRC v. Uganda), the UN's highest court found that Uganda's military presence without Congo's consent was a "grave violation" of the Charter's ban on force. The Court rejected Uganda's claim of self-defence and found that Uganda also broke the rule of non-intervention by supporting armed groups inside Congo. This means... the Court treats consent and the ban on force very seriously, even when a state says it faces threats from armed groups across the border. This ruling is a key reference for delegates who defend strict sovereignty.

United Nations (Responsibility to Protect), Last Accessed: October 2026: Collective force to protect populations requires the Security Council

Tagline: Limiting collective action to the Council Source: According to... United Nations (Responsibility to Protect), Last Accessed: October 2026 Link: <https://www.un.org/en/genocide-prevention/responsibility-protect/about> Fact: It states... that in the 2005 World Summit Outcome (A/RES/60/1), every state accepted the responsibility to protect its people from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. If peaceful means fail and a government "manifestly" fails to protect its people, states are prepared to act collectively through the Security Council under Chapter VII, case by case, with force as a last resort. This means... the Responsibility to Protect covers mass atrocities, not terrorism in general, and it still sends force through the Council. Delegates who want to justify intervention against terrorist groups committing atrocities may cite it, but only within these limits.

2C. THE UN COUNTER-TERRORISM SYSTEM

United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism, Last Accessed: October 2026: The Global Strategy has four pillars and has been reviewed nine times

Tagline: Reviewing the Global Strategy regularly Source: According to... United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism, Last Accessed: October 2026 Link: <https://www.un.org/counterterrorism/un-global-counter-terrorism-strategy> Fact: It states... that the General Assembly adopted the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in 2006 (A/RES/60/288) and has reviewed it nine times, most recently in A/RES/80/286, adopted July 1, 2026. The four pillars are: addressing the conditions that help terrorism spread; preventing and combating terrorism; building states' capacity and the UN's role; and respecting human rights and the rule of law. This means... all UN members have already agreed that counter-terrorism must respect human rights and address root causes, not only use force. Delegates can use the four pillars to organise a balanced resolution.

United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism, Last Accessed: October 2026: A dedicated UN counter-terrorism office was created in 2017

Tagline: Creating a UN counter-terrorism office Source: According to... United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism, Last Accessed: October 2026 Link: <https://www.un.org/counterterrorism/about> Fact: It states... that UNOCT was established on June 15, 2017 by General Assembly resolution 71/291. Its jobs include coordinating counter-terrorism work across the UN, balancing the four pillars, strengthening capacity-building for member states and raising resources. The UN Counter-Terrorism Centre, set up in 2011, is its main training and project arm. This means... the UN mainly helps states build their own capacity rather than intervening directly. Strengthening this office is a sovereignty-friendly option.

United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism, Last Accessed: October 2026: Less than 20 percent of the office's budget comes from the UN regular budget

Tagline: Depending on voluntary donor money Source: According to... United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism, Last Accessed: October 2026 Link: <https://www.un.org/counterterrorism/funding-and-donors> Fact: It states... that less than 20 percent of UNOCT's annual budget comes from the UN regular budget; the rest depends on voluntary contributions. Donors pledged a record 65.9 million US dollars in 2025, and cumulative contributions since 2007 total about 467.7 million US dollars. Qatar (142.9 million) and Saudi Arabia (111.2 million) are the largest donors, together giving about 54 percent. This means... a few donors fund most UN counter-terrorism work, which raises questions about priorities and independence. The committee may propose more stable funding through the regular budget.

United Nations Security Council, Last Accessed: October 2026: The Counter-Terrorism Committee lists 51 resolutions on terrorism

Tagline: Listing resolutions on terrorism Source: According to... United Nations Security Council, Last Accessed: October 2026 Link: <https://www.un.org/securitycouncil/ctc/content/security-council-resolutions> Fact: It states... that the Counter-Terrorism Committee lists 51 Security Council resolutions relevant to terrorism, from Resolution 1368 (2001) on the September 11 attacks to Resolution 2810 (2025) renewing the Executive Directorate's mandate. They cover financing, foreign fighters, weapons, aviation, critical infrastructure, narratives and hostage-taking. This means... the Council has produced many binding rules on what states must do at home, but very few on when states may act abroad. That gap is the heart of this committee's topic.

Security Council Report, Last Accessed: October 2026: The Council planned to extend CTED to January 2029

Tagline: Extending the monitoring directorate Source: According to... Security Council Report, Last Accessed: October 2026 Link: <https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/counter-terrorism/> Fact: It states... that the Council was expected to vote on December 29, 2025 on a United States draft extending the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED) mandate until January 5, 2029. It also notes Council briefings in February and August 2026 on the Secretary-General's twice-yearly reports on the ISIL threat, and a September 11, 2026 briefing marking 25 years since the 9/11 attacks. This means... the UN's monitoring system is secure for several more years; the Council adopted this extension unanimously as Resolution 2810 (2025) (see Part 2A). The committee can suggest new tasks for CTED, such as tracking cross-border operations or human rights compliance.

United Nations Press (GA/12767), July 1, 2026: The ninth review of the Global Strategy needed a vote for the first time

Tagline: Breaking consensus on the Global Strategy Source: According to... United Nations Press (GA/12767), July 1, 2026 Link: <https://press.un.org/en/2026/ga12767.doc.htm> Fact: It states... that the General Assembly adopted the ninth review of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy by a recorded vote of 140 in favour, 3 against (Argentina, Israel and the United States) and 1 abstention (Japan, which later said it meant to vote in favour), ending a run of adoptions without a vote. The text calls on states to finish the comprehensive convention on international terrorism and to act against terrorist misuse of new technologies such as 3D printing, virtual assets and drones. The United States called the text "bloated, outdated and lacks focus," while the European Union warned against using counter-terrorism measures to silence dissent. This means... agreement on the UN's main counter-terrorism framework is weakening. Delegates should expect sharp divisions even on texts that were once adopted without a vote.

International Centre for Counter-Terrorism, August 24, 2026: The ninth review kept the old text with no real change

Tagline: Rolling over the Global Strategy Source: According to... International Centre for Counter-Terrorism, August 24, 2026 Link: <https://icct.nl/publication/house-divided-ninth-review-global-counter-terrorism-strategy-and-future-un-counter> Fact: It states... that the ninth review, negotiated from March to June 2026 with Morocco and Finland leading the talks, was a "technical rollover" of the 2023 text with no substantive change. A much shorter United States draft, circulated on June 8, would have weakened privacy, gender and human rights references, but it was never used as the basis for talks. The final text kept references to human rights, civil society and the Special Rapporteur, and left out the disputed ideas of non-violent "extremism" and "separatism." The author recommends starting early on the tenth review, due in 2029. This means... states could not agree on new ideas, so they kept the old ones. A committee resolution that proposes new rules should expect the same divisions and build compromise early.

UN News, February 4, 2026: The UN counter-terrorism chief said the Islamic State threat had "increased steadily"

Tagline: Urging nationally owned responses Source: According to... UN News, February 4, 2026 Link: <https://news.un.org/en/story/2026/02/1166889> Fact: It states... that the acting head of the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism told the Security Council that the threat from the Islamic State had "increased steadily" since August 2025, with its affiliates able to control territory in parts of Africa, where this is "further weakening the capacity of national authorities." He repeated three calls from the Secretary-General: bring people home from the camps in north-east Syria; in Africa, "Member States must exercise political ownership and forge unified, coherent, and joint responses"; and keep "nationally owned and inclusive prevention" at the heart of counter-terrorism. This means... the UN's top counter-terrorism official places the main responsibility on the affected states and their neighbours, not on outside armies. Delegates who defend sovereignty can quote this, while others can argue that "joint responses" require more regional cooperation across borders.

2D. SANCTIONS AND THEIR SIDE EFFECTS

United Nations Security Council, Last Accessed: October 2026: The ISIL and Al-Qaida sanctions regime freezes assets and bans travel

Tagline: Freezing assets of listed terrorists Source: According to... United Nations Security Council, Last Accessed: October 2026 Link: <https://main.un.org/securitycouncil/en/sanctions/1267> Fact: It states... that the sanctions regime began with Resolution 1267 (1999), was split in 2011 by Resolutions 1988 and 1989, and was widened to ISIL supporters by Resolution 2253 (2015). States must freeze listed people's funds, stop their travel and block arms sales to them. An Ombudsperson reviews requests to be removed from the list, and Resolution 2734 (2024) extended the Ombudsperson and Monitoring Team to June 2027. The committee decides by consensus. This means... sanctions let the UN act against terrorists without sending troops across borders. Delegates may debate whether the Ombudsperson process is fair enough and whether it should be copied for other lists.

United Nations Press (SC/15134), December 9, 2022: The Council protected humanitarian aid from asset freezes

Tagline: Protecting humanitarian aid from sanctions Source: According to... United Nations Press (SC/15134), December 9, 2022 Link: <https://press.un.org/en/2022/sc15134.doc.htm> Fact: It states... that Resolution 2664 (2022), adopted 14 to 0 with India abstaining, says that providing funds or goods needed for humanitarian aid does not violate UN asset freezes. It applies to the ISIL and Al-Qaida regime for two years and to future asset freezes. India abstained because it feared terrorist groups could misuse the exemption. This means... counter-terrorism rules had been making it harder to deliver food and medicine in areas controlled by armed groups. The committee must balance cutting off terrorists against helping civilians who live under them.

2E. CONSENT AND THE EXIT OF UN MISSIONS

United Nations Press (SC/15341), June 30, 2023: The UN ended its Mali mission because Mali asked it to leave

Tagline: Withdrawing peacekeepers at host request Source: According to... United Nations Press (SC/15341), June 30, 2023 Link: <https://press.un.org/en/2023/sc15341.doc.htm> Fact: It states... that Resolution 2690 (2023), adopted unanimously, ended the mandate of the UN mission in Mali (MINUSMA) on June 30, 2023, with withdrawal by December 31, 2023, after Mali's transitional government requested it. Several members regretted the fast timeline. The United Arab Emirates said keeping peacekeepers without consent would be untenable, while Mali objected that the Council still treated its situation as a threat to peace. This means... UN peacekeeping depends on host consent, even when the security situation is getting worse. Since the mission left, the Sahel has seen even larger attacks (see Part 1A).

Security Council Report, Last Accessed: October 2026: The UN mission in Iraq was set to close at the end of 2025

Tagline: Closing the Iraq mission Source: According to... Security Council Report, Last Accessed: October 2026 Link: <https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/iraq/> Fact: It states... that Resolution 2732, adopted May 31, 2024, narrowed the mandate of the UN Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) and decided to close the mission by December 31, 2025. This means... states that have recovered from terrorist control, like Iraq after ISIL, want international presences to end. This supports the idea that outside involvement should have clear end points.

United Nations Secretary-General (report S/2026/638), July 31, 2026: The Islamic State in Iraq was at its weakest, and Iraq finished bringing its citizens home from Syria

Tagline: Recovering after the mission ends Source: According to... United Nations Secretary-General (report S/2026/638), July 31, 2026 Link: <https://docs.un.org/S/2026/638> Fact: It states... that the Islamic State in Iraq "was at its weakest," with strength in the low hundreds of fighters, able to carry out only simple attacks and earning about 500,000 US dollars a year, largely because of sustained pressure by Iraqi security forces. Iraq completed its last repatriation from the Syrian camps in February 2026, bringing home a total of 21,536 people between May 2021 and February 2026, and UN agencies are supporting their return to communities. This means... Iraq is a case where a state that once needed large foreign help now handles the threat mostly with its own forces. Delegates can use it to argue that outside missions should aim to build national capacity and then leave.

International Peace Institute (IPI Global Observatory), September 16, 2026: UN missions face a "crisis of consent" from host governments

Tagline: Rebuilding host-state consent for missions Source: According to... International Peace Institute (IPI Global Observatory), September 16, 2026 Link: <https://theglobalobservatory.org/2026/09/strategic-level-compacts/> Fact: It states... that UN peace operations have faced a marked decline in host-state consent over the past five to ten years, from Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo to Mali, the Central African Republic and Lebanon, ending in full withdrawal of consent in Mali. The Secretary-General's August 20, 2026 review of peace operations suggests "strategic-level compacts," political agreements that set out what the Security Council, the UN Secretariat and the host state each promise to do. The article warns that such deals are hard to keep when governments change, for example after coups, and recommends rewards such as investment rather than punishments. This means... consent is not a one-time permission but something that must be kept alive. The committee could propose written compacts with host states for any UN-supported counter-terrorism effort, so that both sides know their duties and an exit is planned.

United Nations Press (SC/14620), August 30, 2021: The Council demanded that Afghanistan not be used to attack other countries

Tagline: Demanding Afghanistan not shelter attacks Source: According to... United Nations Press (SC/14620), August 30, 2021 Link: <https://press.un.org/en/2021/sc14620.doc.htm> Fact: It states... that Resolution 2593 (2021), adopted 13 to 0 with Russia and China abstaining, demanded that Afghan territory not be used to threaten or attack any country, after the Taliban took power. It also called for humanitarian access and respect for the rights of women, children and minorities. This means... the Council expects every government, including one it does not formally recognise, to stop terrorists using its territory. The open question is what happens when a government fails to meet that duty.

2F. HUMAN RIGHTS CONCERNS

Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Last Accessed: October 2026: The misuse of counter-terrorism laws has grown

Tagline: Warning about misuse of terrorism laws Source: According to... Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Last Accessed: October 2026 Link: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/special-procedures/sr-terrorism> Fact: It states... that the UN Special Rapporteur on counter-terrorism and human rights, a post created in 2005 and renewed in April 2025, finds that "the misuse of legislation and policies to combat terrorism have grown." Recent work covers the impact on civil society, the misuse of these measures against environmental and Indigenous rights defenders, and transnational repression. This means... the word "terrorism" can be used to justify actions against peaceful critics, both at home and abroad. Any resolution expanding intervention powers needs safeguards against this.

Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Last Accessed: October 2026: UN experts urged 57 states to bring home their citizens from Syrian camps

Tagline: Urging repatriation from Syrian camps Source: According to... Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Last Accessed: October 2026 Link: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/special-procedures/sr-terrorism/detention-and-repatriations-north-east-syria> Fact: It states... that people linked to ISIL, including many children, are held in overcrowded camps and prisons such as al-Hol and Roj in north-east Syria. UN experts call repatriation "the only international law-compliant response," urged 57 states in February 2021 to repatriate women and children, and in July 2023 called for an end to "mass arbitrary and indefinite detentions." This means... the defeat of ISIL territory left a problem that crosses many borders. Home states have a responsibility for their own citizens, and the committee can push for repatriation and fair trials.

United Nations Secretary-General (report S/2026/638), July 31, 2026: Al-Hol camp closed, and 15,000 to 20,000 former residents are unaccounted for

Tagline: Losing track after a camp closes Source: According to... United Nations Secretary-General (report S/2026/638), July 31, 2026 Link: <https://docs.un.org/S/2026/638> Fact: It states... that the Syrian authorities closed al-Hol camp on February 22, 2026, after control of parts of north-east Syria passed to the Syrian government. Around 15,000 to 20,000 people who had lived there, mostly women and children with family links to the Islamic State, remained unaccounted for, most of them believed to have moved to the Idlib area, and more than 1,000 were assessed to have joined the Islamic State or other armed groups. More than 5,700 detainees were transferred to Iraq, at least 150 fighters escaped from Shaddadi prison in January, and Roj camp still held about 2,500 foreign nationals. UNICEF warned that thousands of foreign children, including more than 4,000 who left al-Hol, remain at risk of trafficking and recruitment. This means... years of delay in bringing people home have now made the problem harder, because many former camp residents can no longer be found. Delegates can argue that every home state must act quickly to repatriate its remaining citizens from Roj and to trace the children who left al-Hol.

Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, July 20, 2026: Treating organised crime as terrorism carries risks

Tagline: Separating organised crime from terrorism Source: According to... Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, July 20, 2026 Link: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/documents/thematic-reports/a81227-distinguishing-organized-crime-terrorism-protect-human-rights> Fact: It states... that the Special Rapporteur's report to the General Assembly (A/81/227) examines the recent legal treatment of some organised crime groups as "terrorist," explains why treating crime and terrorism as the same is inappropriate, describes the human rights harms and limited effectiveness of excessive securitisation, and proposes alternatives such as curbing illegal firearms and corruption and strengthening human development. This means... labelling a criminal group "terrorist" can be used to justify military action, including across borders. Delegates should decide whether intervention rules apply only to terrorist groups and how those groups are defined.

Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, January 8, 2026: A UN expert updated a model definition of terrorism

Tagline: Defining terrorism to protect rights Source: According to... Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, January 8, 2026 Link: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/documents/thematic-reports/ahrc6152-defining-terrorism-respect-and-protect-human-rights> Fact: It states... that the Special Rapporteur's report A/HRC/61/52 updates a model definition of terrorism first written in 2010, to guide international instruments and national laws in defining terrorism in a way that respects human rights. This means... there is still no definition of terrorism agreed by all states. A committee resolution could recommend this model definition as a starting point.

2G. WHAT IS WORKING AND WHAT IS NOT

Working: - Binding rules on what every state must do at home, such as criminalising terrorist financing (Resolution 1373) and stopping foreign fighter travel (Resolution 2178). - Targeted sanctions with an Ombudsperson for removal requests, now with a humanitarian exemption (Resolution 2664). - Prevention and capacity-building through UNOCT, though it is underfunded and depends on a few donors. - Global terrorism deaths falling to their lowest level since 2007.

Not working: - No agreed definition of terrorism, which lets governments label opponents as terrorists. - No agreement on when states may use force against terrorists inside another country; the "unwilling or unable" doctrine is accepted by only a small number of states. - UN missions depend on host consent and can be forced out (Mali, 2023) even as violence grows. - Regional missions suffer funding gaps, and the 2719 funding tool has a 25 percent gap. - Thousands of people, including children, were left in camps in north-east Syria for years after ISIL lost its territory; al-Hol closed in February 2026, but 15,000 to 20,000 of its former residents are unaccounted for and about 2,500 foreign nationals remain in Roj camp.

2H. WHERE THE MAJOR BLOCS STAND

Every year the General Assembly's Sixth Committee (the legal committee) debates "Measures to eliminate international terrorism," and groups of states read out joint statements. The positions below come from the October 2025 debate, the most recent full set, and they show where delegates can expect support and opposition. Delegates should check their own country's statement on the same UN page.

United States: The United States says effective counter-terrorism means disrupting terrorist networks, holding state sponsors accountable and degrading groups' ability to attack, and it calls repatriation from north-east Syria "essential." It is cautious about the comprehensive convention and stresses "proper burden-sharing" from partners. Source: According to... United Nations General Assembly Sixth Committee (statement of the United States), October 7, 2025 Link: https://www.un.org/en/ga/sixth/80/pdfs/statements/int_terrorism/03mtg_us.pdf

Russian Federation: Russia calls for cooperation "without double standards and politicisation" (translated from Russian), supports the "extradite or prosecute" rule, especially for foreign terrorist fighters, and backs a comprehensive convention without politically motivated exceptions. It also urges common standards against terrorist use of new technologies, drones and cryptocurrencies. Source: According to... United Nations General Assembly Sixth Committee (statement of the Russian Federation), October 6, 2025 Link: https://www.un.org/en/ga/sixth/80/pdfs/statements/int_terrorism/04mtg_russia.pdf

European Union: The EU says counter-terrorism "must never serve as a pretext for human rights violations" and wants civil society, women and young people involved in prevention. It supports reviving talks on the comprehensive convention and offers the Council of Europe's new common definition of terrorism as a model (see Part 3A). Source: According to... United Nations General Assembly Sixth Committee (statement of the European Union), October 6, 2025 Link: https://www.un.org/en/ga/sixth/80/pdfs/statements/int_terrorism/01mtg_eu.pdf

African Group (African Union members): African states treat respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity as a duty that can never be set aside. At the same time, they want UN-funded, African-led operations under Resolution 2719 and the full launch of the African Standby Force (see Part 1E). Source: According to... United Nations General Assembly Sixth Committee (statement of the African Group), October 6, 2025 Link: https://www.un.org/en/ga/sixth/80/pdfs/statements/int_terrorism/01mtg_african_group.pdf

Non-Aligned Movement (mainly developing states): The movement rejects the use or threat of force against any member "under the pretext of combating terrorism," and rejects one-sided lists that accuse states of sponsoring terrorism. It insists that terrorism must not be confused with the struggle of peoples under foreign occupation for self-determination, and it calls for a UN summit on terrorism and its root causes. Source: According to... United Nations General Assembly Sixth Committee (statement of the Non-Aligned Movement), October 6, 2025 Link: https://www.un.org/en/ga/sixth/80/pdfs/statements/int_terrorism/01mtg_nam.pdf

Alliance of Sahel States (Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger): Burkina Faso says the three states chose collective defence because regional organisations and the international community gave no "sincere and adequate response" (translated from French), and it presents the alliance's unified force as a more independent, Sahel-centred answer. It also said the Global Strategy is held back by what it called "international hypocrisy," and asked for an honest self-review. Source: According to... United Nations General Assembly Sixth Committee (statement of Burkina Faso), October 6, 2025 Link: https://www.un.org/en/ga/sixth/80/pdfs/statements/int_terrorism/02mtg_burkinafaso.pdf

PART 3, INTERNATIONAL EFFORTS

Outside the UN itself, many organisations work on terrorism across borders: treaties, military coalitions, regional organisations, financial watchdogs, police networks and partnerships with technology companies. Some of these act with a host state's consent, some help states build their own capacity, and some work entirely without troops. Single-country domestic policy is left to each delegate's own country research.

3A. TREATIES

United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism, Last Accessed: October 2026: Nineteen international treaties cover specific terrorist acts

Tagline: Listing nineteen counter-terrorism treaties Source: According to... United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism, Last Accessed: October 2026 Link: <https://www.un.org/counterterrorism/international-legal-instruments> Fact: It states... that 19 international legal instruments target specific acts, including aircraft hijacking (1970), hostage-taking (1979), terrorist bombings (1997), terrorist financing (1999) and nuclear terrorism (2005). Each treaty covers one type of act rather than terrorism as a whole. This means... states have agreed many times on banning specific acts, but never on one comprehensive treaty. These treaties also rely on states prosecuting or handing over suspects, which is an alternative to military intervention.

United Nations General Assembly Sixth Committee (statement of the European Union), October 6, 2025: Europe is building a common regional definition of terrorism

Tagline: Agreeing a regional definition first Source: According to... United Nations General Assembly Sixth Committee (statement of the European Union), October 6, 2025 Link: https://www.un.org/en/ga/sixth/80/pdfs/statements/int_terrorism/01mtg_eu.pdf Fact: It states... that the Council of Europe recently adopted an Amending Protocol that changes the definition of terrorist offences in its Convention on the Prevention of Terrorism (CETS 196), and that once it enters into force it will give Europe "a common pan-European definition of terrorism." The EU invited other states to consider this framework. It also noted that the EU's rules on terrorist content online, in force since 2022, require platforms to remove terrorist content within one hour, with safeguards for freedom of expression. This means... if the whole world cannot yet agree on one definition, regions can agree first and then offer their text as a model. Delegates could propose that the committee study regional definitions, such as Europe's and the African Union's 1999 convention, as building blocks for the long-delayed global convention.

3B. MILITARY AND SECURITY COALITIONS

Global Coalition Against Daesh, Last Accessed: October 2026: Ninety partners joined the coalition against ISIS

Tagline: Uniting ninety partners against ISIS Source: According to... Global Coalition Against Daesh, Last Accessed: October 2026 Link: <https://theglobalcoalition.org/en/mission/> Fact: It states... that the coalition, formed in September 2014, has 90 partners and works on five lines of effort: military support to local partners, stabilising liberated areas, countering propaganda, stopping foreign fighters (in line with Resolution 2178) and cutting ISIS financing. It says it supported the military defeat of ISIS in Iraq and Syria. This means... this is the largest counter-terrorism coalition in history. It operated in Iraq with consent but in Syria without the government's consent, so it is the clearest test case for the sovereignty debate.

African Union, Last Accessed: October 2026: The African Union may intervene in a member state for grave crimes

Tagline: Allowing intervention for grave crimes Source: According to... African Union, Last Accessed: October 2026 Link: <https://au.int/en/psc> Fact: It states... that the African Union Peace and Security Council was created by a protocol adopted July 9, 2002 and has 15 members. With the Commission Chairperson, it can recommend to the AU Assembly intervention in a member state over war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity under Article 4(h) of the AU Constitutive Act. It is also tasked with making sure counter-terrorism conventions are implemented. This means... African states have already agreed that sovereignty has limits in grave situations. This regional rule is a model delegates may cite when debating intervention rules.

Council on Foreign Relations, July 29, 2026: Three Sahel states formed their own alliance and left ECOWAS

Tagline: Leaving ECOWAS for a new alliance Source: According to... Council on Foreign Relations, July 29, 2026 Link: <https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/violent-extremism-sahel> Fact: It states... that Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger formed the Alliance of Sahel States, signed a mutual defence pact in September 2023, and formally left the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in January 2025, turning toward Russia and away from Western partners. This means... regional cooperation in West Africa has split. Any plan that relies on ECOWAS will not reach the three states most affected by terrorism unless it also engages the new alliance.

International Crisis Group, May 8, 2024: The European Union funded African troops through the European Peace Facility

Tagline: Funding African troops through Europe Source: According to... International Crisis Group, May 8, 2024 Link: <https://www.crisisgroup.org/qna/africa/mozambique/what-future-military-intervention-mozambique> Fact: It states... that the European Peace Facility gave 15 million euros in non-lethal equipment to the southern African mission in Mozambique and 20 million euros to Rwanda's deployment, with EU members divided over renewing the Rwandan funding. This means... outside funders shape which interventions happen and how long they last. Delegates may propose clearer rules for donor funding of regional missions.

Institute for Security Studies, January 27, 2025: The Lake Chad regional force is under strain

Tagline: Straining a regional task force Source: According to... Institute for Security Studies, January 27, 2025 Link: <https://issafrica.org/iss-today/decades-of-security-cooperation-under-threat-in-lake-chad-basin> Fact: It states... that the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF), set up in 1994 by the Lake Chad Basin Commission and reactivated in 2014 with African Union backing to fight Boko Haram, has stopped the group from taking more territory and disrupted its bases. However, Boko Haram attacks in late 2024 killed at least 81 people in Mafa, Nigeria, and more than 40 soldiers in Barkaram, Chad. Chad threatened to leave the force in November 2024, Niger has suspended active participation since its July 2023 coup, and the force lacks money, troops and equipment. This means... a regional force built on agreement between neighbours can work, but it weakens when governments change or feel others are not sharing the burden. Delegates can propose stable funding and political support for such forces.

3C. PREVENTION, FINANCE AND LAW ENFORCEMENT NETWORKS

Global Counterterrorism Forum, Last Accessed: October 2026: Thirty-one members work on civilian counter-terrorism skills

Tagline: Building civilian counter-terrorism skills Source: According to... Global Counterterrorism Forum, Last Accessed: October 2026 Link: <https://www.thegctf.org/About-us/Background-and-Mission> Fact: It states... that the forum was launched in 2011, has 31 members, and aims to reduce terrorist recruitment and increase countries' civilian capabilities for dealing with terrorist threats, in support of UN efforts. It inspired three institutions: Hedayah, the Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund (GCERF) and the International Institute for Justice and the Rule of Law (IJL). This means... much international counter-terrorism work is about courts, prisons and prevention rather than armies. These bodies offer help that does not challenge sovereignty.

Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund, Last Accessed: October 2026: A global fund pays for local prevention projects

Tagline: Funding local prevention projects Source: According to... Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund, Last Accessed: October 2026 Link: <https://www.gcerf.org/about-us/> Fact: It states... that GCERF supports local initiatives that address the drivers of violent extremism, giving grants of up to three years to locally registered organisations that coordinate community groups. It also offers one-year urgent grants and a fellowship for small women-led organisations. Past recipients include groups from Bangladesh, Kenya, Kosovo, Mali and Nigeria. This means... money can go directly to communities at risk, with the host state's agreement, rather than to foreign troops. This fits the UNDP evidence that prevention costs far less than conflict.

Financial Action Task Force, Last Accessed: October 2026: The FATF sets global rules against terrorist financing

Tagline: Blocking money for terrorism Source: According to... Financial Action Task Force, Last Accessed: October 2026 Link: <https://www.fatf-gafi.org/en/the-fatf/what-we-do.html> Fact: It states... that the FATF has 38 members and more than 200 jurisdictions have committed to its standards. It studies how terrorists raise and move money, sets global standards and assesses whether countries act effectively. Countries that repeatedly fail can be placed under "increased monitoring" (the grey list) or named high-risk (the black list). Russia's membership was suspended on February 24, 2023. This means... the FATF pressures states to act against terrorist money inside their own borders, using reputation and economic cost rather than force.

INTERPOL, Last Accessed: October 2026: INTERPOL shares data to identify terrorists and stop their travel

Tagline: Sharing police data across borders Source: According to... INTERPOL, Last Accessed: October 2026 Link: <https://www.interpol.int/en/Crimes/Terrorism> Fact: It states... that INTERPOL uses biometric and battlefield data to identify terrorists, shares alerts about networks, uses its databases to stop terrorist travel, and runs regional projects including in the Sahel. A September 2026 operation used new data-analysis tools to identify 126 terrorism suspects. This means... police cooperation lets states arrest suspects across borders through legal channels. This supports the RAND finding that policing ends more terrorist groups than military force.

BBC News, October 12, 2026: A Lockerbie bombing suspect says he was illegally taken from Libya to face trial in the United States

Tagline: Questioning how suspects cross borders Source: According to... BBC News, October 12, 2026 Link: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c3qjndjlk1e0o> Fact: It states... that Abu Agila Mas'ud, charged by the United States in 2020 over the 1988 bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 that killed 270 people, told a Washington court he was seized by an armed Libyan militia and handed "hooded and bound" to FBI agents in December 2022. His lawyers call this an unlawful rendition that showed "an utter disregard for Libyan law and sovereignty" and want the case thrown out. The United States Justice Department replies that, under United States law, the way a defendant is brought to court does not remove the court's power to try him, and that the militia's actions cannot be blamed on the United States. An INTERPOL red notice was in force at the time, and his trial is due to begin in January. This means... even law-enforcement routes, which are usually seen as respecting sovereignty, can be disputed when a suspect is removed without a clear extradition process. Delegates can propose that the resolution support lawful extradition and "prosecute or extradite" rules as the normal way to bring suspects to justice across borders.

3D. ONLINE EFFORTS

Christchurch Call, Last Accessed: October 2026: Governments and companies committed to removing terrorist content online

Tagline: Removing terrorist content online Source: According to... Christchurch Call, Last Accessed: October 2026 Link: <https://www.christchurchcall.org/> Fact: It states... that the Christchurch Call was created after the March 15, 2019 mosque attacks in New Zealand to stop terrorist and violent extremist content online while protecting human rights and an open internet. It includes more than 56 governments, more than 20 online service providers and a civil society advisory network, working on 25 commitments. This means... terrorism also crosses borders online. Cooperation between states and companies is a way to act against it without any physical intervention.

Global Internet Forum to Counter Terrorism, September 2, 2026: More than forty platforms work together against extremist content

Tagline: Joining platforms against extremist content Source: According to... Global Internet Forum to Counter Terrorism, September 2, 2026 Link: <https://gifct.org/about/> Fact: It states... that GIFCT is a technology-led nonprofit founded in 2017 to stop terrorists from exploiting digital platforms. It became independent after the 2019 Christchurch attacks and now includes more than 40 platforms beyond its founders. This means... private companies play a growing role in counter-terrorism. Delegates may ask how governments and the UN should oversee their decisions.

3E. REGIONAL DIPLOMACY

International Crisis Group, Last Accessed: October 2026: A Togolese initiative brought divided West African states back to talks

Tagline: Restarting regional talks in West Africa Source: According to... International Crisis Group, Last Accessed: October 2026 Link: <https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/sahel> Fact: It states... that a Togolese initiative brought West African states, the central Sahel states and key foreign partners back into talks after years of discord, and that Algeria and Mali announced steps in 2026 to repair relations that had worsened sharply since 2023. Niger and Benin are also exploring reopening their border. This means... diplomacy between neighbours is restarting, which could allow cross-border cooperation that respects each state's sovereignty. The committee can support these efforts in its resolution.

International Crisis Group, March 20, 2026: Several states tried to mediate between Pakistan and Afghanistan

Tagline: Mediating a cross-border conflict Source: According to... International Crisis Group, March 20, 2026 Link: <https://www.crisisgroup.org/stm/asia-pacific/afghanistan/afghanistan-and-pakistan-trade-fire-conflict-takes-dangerous-turn> Fact: It states... that Türkiye and Qatar brokered a ceasefire between Pakistan and Afghanistan on October 19, 2025, followed by talks in Istanbul and informal discussions with Saudi mediation. The ceasefire collapsed on February 21, 2026, after Pakistani airstrikes on alleged TTP targets. Crisis Group recommends that the mediators (Qatar, Türkiye, the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia and China) coordinate closely, that the Taliban give written guarantees against cross-border attacks backed by verification, and warns that an unconditional crackdown on the TTP is unrealistic. This means... mediation and verification offer an alternative to cross-border strikes. The committee can support monitoring mechanisms and neutral mediators instead of, or alongside, military action.

KEY VOCABULARY

1. **Sovereignty:** a state's right to control its own territory and decisions without outside interference.
2. **Non-intervention:** the rule that states must not interfere in the internal affairs of other states, found in Article 2 of the UN Charter and the 1970 Friendly Relations Declaration.
3. **Use of force:** military action by one state against or inside another; banned by Article 2(4) of the Charter except in narrow cases.
4. **Self-defence (Article 51):** the right of a state to use force after an armed attack, until the Security Council acts.
5. **Chapter VII:** the part of the UN Charter that lets the Security Council make binding decisions, including authorising force, to restore peace.
6. **Non-state actor:** a group that is not a government, such as a terrorist group, militia or rebel movement.
7. **"Unwilling or unable" doctrine:** the contested claim that a state may strike a non-state group in another country if that country will not or cannot stop it.
8. **Intervention by invitation:** foreign military help that enters a country because its government asked for it (consent).
9. **Safe haven:** an area where a terrorist group can operate and train without being stopped.
10. **Targeted sanctions:** measures, such as asset freezes and travel bans, aimed at specific people or groups rather than whole countries.
11. **Responsibility to Protect (R2P):** the 2005 commitment that states must protect their people from mass atrocities, with collective action through the Security Council if they fail.
12. **Repatriation:** returning people, such as detained foreign fighters' families, to their home country.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. When a terrorist group attacks from another country, under what conditions, if any, may the victim state use force there without that country's permission?
2. Should the UN recognise, limit or reject the "unwilling or unable" doctrine? Who should decide whether a state is "unable"?
3. If a host government invites foreign forces, should the UN set conditions on those forces, such as human rights rules and reporting duties, even when the forces are not UN troops?
4. How should regional missions, such as the African Union mission in Somalia, be funded, and who should pay the 25 percent that Resolution 2719 leaves open?

5. Evidence shows that abuses by security forces push people into terrorist groups. How can an intervention plan protect civilians and hold abusers accountable?
6. Should the UN finally agree on a single definition of terrorism? How would it stop governments from labelling peaceful opponents or criminal groups as terrorists to justify force?
7. What should happen to the people, including children, still held in camps in north-east Syria, and who is responsible for them?
8. When should a foreign or UN presence end, and how can the international community avoid a security gap when it leaves?