



General Assembly

Distr.: General
23 September 2024

English only

Human Rights Council

Fifty-seventh session

9 September–9 October 2024

Agenda item 5

Human rights bodies and mechanisms

Written statement* submitted by "ECO-FAWN" (Environment Conservation Organization - Foundation for Afforestation Wild Animals and Nature), a non- governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[12 August 2024]

* Issued as received, in the language of submission only.



Reforms in the United Nations Security Council Urged in context of the Designation of Terrorists across the Globe

For tackling terrorism in contemporary times, reforms into dealing with demands at UNSC for declaration of global terrorists is the need of the hour to ensure effective functioning of Human Rights body's and mechanisms.

Introduction

Terrorism's presence is felt everywhere in the world with consistent marks of attacks and such activities, it has been a significant issue for decades affecting various parts of the world in different magnitudes. The complexity of the problem is augmented by geopolitical dynamics coming in way of blocking the designation of individuals and organizations as international terrorists. This interplay has profound implications for global and regional security, diplomatic relations, and counterterrorism efforts.

Historical Context of Terrorism in India

India has faced various forms of terrorism that finds expression in separatist movements. The insurgency in the Kashmir region, supported by cross-border terrorism, has been a focal point of India's counterterrorism strategy. High-profile attacks such as the 2001 Indian Parliament attack, the 2008 Mumbai attacks, and more recently, the Pulwama attack in 2019, highlight the persistent threat.

International Terrorism and India's Stand

India has consistently advocated for a strong global stance against terrorism, calling for a comprehensive international legal framework to combat it. The country has been proactive in proposing and supporting measures to designate terrorist organizations and individuals at international forums like the UNSC.

Role of Superpowers in Vetoing Terrorist Designations

The UNSC, with its five permanent members P5 plays a crucial role in global security, including counterterrorism efforts. The veto power held by these members allows them to block any substantive resolution, including those aimed at designating individuals or groups as international terrorists.

One prominent example is the case of Masood Azhar, the leader of Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM), a Pakistan-based terrorist organization responsible for several attacks in India. Despite clear evidence of his involvement, Azhar got his designation, as an international terrorist under the UNSC's 1267 Al-Qaeda Sanctions Committee, delayed.

Implications of Veto Power on Counterterrorism

The use of veto power by superpowers to block terrorist designations has several implications:

1. **Undermining International Efforts:** Vetoing terrorist designations hampers the global fight against terrorism. It sends a message of inconsistency and double standards in international counterterrorism efforts, weakening the credibility and effectiveness of the UNSC.
2. **Regional Instability:** For countries like India, the inability to get international support for designating terrorists leads to continued regional instability. Terrorist groups and their leaders, shielded from international sanctions, can operate with relative impunity, recruiting, fundraising, and planning further attacks.

3. **Diplomatic Strain:** Such actions strain diplomatic relations between affected countries and the superpowers exercising the veto. India's repeated attempts to designate Masood Azhar and China's opposition strained Sino-Indian relations, affecting broader diplomatic and economic engagements.
4. **Empowerment of Terrorist Groups:** The failure to designate terrorists internationally emboldens these groups, as they can exploit the lack of global consensus to further their agendas. This not only endangers the immediate region but also poses a threat to global security.

India's Response and Strategic Measures

Faced with the challenges posed by vetoes at the UNSC, India has adopted a multi-pronged approach:

1. **Bilateral and Multilateral Engagements:** India has intensified its diplomatic efforts to build bilateral and multilateral coalitions against terrorism. This includes engaging with countries that share similar concerns about terrorism and pushing for collaborative counterterrorism measures.
2. **International Advocacy:** India continues to advocate for a comprehensive convention on international terrorism at the United Nations. The proposed Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism (CCIT) aims to provide a legal framework to combat terrorism globally.
3. **Enhanced Security Measures:** On the domestic front, India has strengthened its counterterrorism capabilities. This includes improving intelligence gathering, enhancing coordination among security agencies, and modernizing counterterrorism infrastructure.
4. **Economic and Military Measures:** India has also used economic and military measures to counter terrorism. Surgical strikes across the Line of Control (LoC) and airstrikes in Balakot, Pakistan, are examples of India's proactive military responses to terrorist threats.

The Way Forward

To address the issue of superpowers vetoing terrorist designations, several steps can be considered:

1. **Reforming the UNSC:** There is a growing need to reform the UNSC to make it more representative and effective in addressing contemporary security challenges. This includes revisiting the use of veto power in matters of international security, particularly terrorism.
2. **Building Consensus:** Global consensus is crucial for effective counterterrorism. Engaging with superpowers to understand their strategic concerns and finding common ground can help in overcoming veto-related deadlocks.
3. **Strengthening International Legal Frameworks:** Enhancing international legal frameworks and mechanisms to combat terrorism, including expedited processes for terrorist designations and sanctions, can mitigate the impact of vetoes.
4. **Enhanced Intelligence Sharing:** Improving global intelligence sharing and cooperation can help preempt terrorist activities and reduce reliance on formal designations for effective counterterrorism action.

Conclusion

Terrorism remains a significant challenge for India, compounded by the geopolitical dynamics at the UNSC. The need for global consensus, UNSC reform, and stronger international legal frameworks are essential to effectively address the issue of terrorism and ensure global security.

GRAMIN KSHETRA NGO(s) without consultative status, also share the views expressed in this statement.

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