



FOREIGN TERRORIST FIGHTERS

Given though the ISIL (Da'esh) terrorist group has lost control of the territories it controlled in Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic, tens of thousands of the more than 40,000 foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs) from 110 States who travelled to join the conflict in those two States may still be present in the region. Consequently, previous expectations that the group's military losses would result in a flood of returnees have not been realized, as many States have instead received a steady trickle of returning FTFs.



DID YOU KNOW?

According to the United Nations Secretary-General, an estimated 20,000 fighters may still be present in Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic.

Whereas Security Council resolution [2178 \(2014\)](#) focused on stemming the flow of foreign terrorist fighters attempting to travel to conflict zones, Security Council resolution [2396 \(2017\)](#) concentrates instead on returning and relocating FTFs, calling on States to strengthen measures to prevent the transit of terrorists, including by ensuring that identity documents are not forged and employing evidence-based risk assessments, screening procedures, and the collection and analysis of travel data to identify individuals posing a terrorist threat, in accordance with domestic and international law, and without resorting to profiling based on discrimination. The latter resolution also calls on States to take appropriate action with regard to suspected terrorists and their accompanying family members who enter their territories. While

emphasizing that Member States are obliged to bring to justice anyone who has participated in a terrorist act, the resolution also stresses the importance of assisting women and children associated with FTFs who might be victims of terrorism. It also underlines the need for comprehensive and tailored prosecution, rehabilitation, and reintegration (PRR) strategies for family members that might have abetted terrorist acts in various roles, taking into account gender and age sensitivities in the design of such strategies.

In its resolution 2178 (2014), the Council defines FTFs as "individuals who travel to a State other than their State of residence or nationality for the purpose of the perpetration, planning or preparation of, or participation in, terrorist acts or the providing or receiving of terrorist training, including in connection with armed conflict", adding that FTFs

increase the intensity, duration, and complexity of conflicts and may constitute a serious danger to their States of origin, transit, destination, as well as neighbouring zones of armed conflict in which they are active.

CTED has identified three major trends since the adoption of Security Council resolution 2396 (2017): (i) difficulties in conducting comprehensive risk assessments of returnees and their accompanying family members, as well as various evidentiary and jurisdictional challenges linked to the prosecution of returning and relocating FTFs; (ii) as a significant number of FTFs have already entered States' criminal justice systems, new demands have been placed on prisons and increasing concerns raised about the potential for in-prison radicalization; (iii) the potential risks posed

