

**Briefing by the Chairman of the Al-Qaida and the Taliban Sanctions Committee
to the Security Council pursuant to paragraph 31 of Resolution 1735 (2006)
14 November 2007**

Mr President,

I. Improving the Quality of the Committee's Consolidated List

1. As stressed in my last briefing to the Council, the completeness and accuracy of the Committee's Consolidated List are essential for the effectiveness of the sanctions measures. Over the last 6 months the Al-Qaida and Taliban Committee has strived to further improve the quality of the Consolidated List. I can assure you that this endeavour remains high on the Committee's agenda. It is worth recalling that the List belongs to all Member States of the United Nations and that the Committee therefore relies on their input and assistance to achieve this objective.

2. Improving the quality of the List can be done in three - complementary - ways:

1. providing additional identifiers to the existing names to assist Member States in the effective implementation of the sanctions;
2. listing individuals and entities that are associated with Al-Qaida, Usama bin Laden and the Taliban; and
3. removing the names of those who no longer meet the listing criteria's and of those who are deceased in accordance with the procedure described in note verbale SCA/2/06(8) dated 25 April 2006.

Continued improvement of the quality of the List is carried out on the basis of information provided to the Committee, including through the review pursuant to paragraph 6(i) of the Committee's guidelines.

3. As requested by the Council in resolution 1735 (2006), the Committee has paid a particular attention to the Taliban section of the List. I am pleased to report that since my last briefing to the Council, additional identifiers have been introduced to 67 entries in the Taliban section of the List, which means that close to half of the 142 names of the Taliban individuals currently listed have been updated during the last six months. The original script of the names of all Taliban individuals has also been added. Furthermore, for the first time since 2001, the Committee added one individual to the Taliban section of the List. The Committee also removed the last remaining entity from this section.

4. In the Al-Qaida section of the List, the names of seven individuals have been added since my last briefing, and improvements have been made to the existing information in 70 out of 350 entries. The Committee has also decided to remove 2 individuals and 12 entities from the Al-Qaida section of the List.

5. I would like to seize this opportunity to extend my appreciation to the States that have submitted information and encourage others to do so too and to come up with new listing requests. The cover sheet (standard form) provides a useful tool for the submission of such requests. I would also like to thank the Al-Qaida and Taliban Monitoring Team for its tireless efforts aimed at improving the List and encourage it to continue this work in close collaboration with States.

6. In addition to the PDF and HTML format, the Consolidated List is now also available in XML format, which will enhance and facilitate the incorporation of the List into national watch lists and databases. This will also make it easier for banks and other financial institutions, as well as for some international organisations, to incorporate a searchable version on their databases. The List can now be downloaded in the three formats from the Committee's website¹.

¹ <http://www.un.org/sc/committees/1267/index.shtml>

II. Outreach and Dialogue with Member States

7. As the responsibility to implement the sanctions measures rests on the Member States, the Committee continues to explore ways and means to enhance a mutually beneficial dialogue with States. The Committee therefore attaches great importance to its website¹, ensuring that it contains substantive information for Member States' use and is as user-friendly as possible. The Committee's enhanced website was presented to the broader membership on the occasion of an open briefing I gave on 20 July 2007 to all Member States. The Questions & Answers session gave the opportunity to all Member States to raise questions and share comments. I would like to continue with this form of engagement with Member States and welcome any suggestion with regard to the format and content of such briefings. I intend to hold another such open briefing in December.

8. Another way to interact with Member States is through visits. In accordance with paragraph 30 of resolution 1735 (2006), I have undertaken, as Chairman, 2 trips to selected countries. Last July, I visited Ethiopia, Djibouti and Kenya. Two weeks ago, I was in Central Asia where I visited Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. I want to thank the authorities of the visited countries for their cooperation. This kind of interaction is extremely useful for the Committee. It indeed provides a unique opportunity to update Member States directly on the latest developments but more importantly to listen to the suggestions and, in some cases, also the concerns of Member States which are in the front line to implement the sanctions measures imposed by the Security Council. During both trips, I could see that although the States' commitment is strong and the terrorist threat is deemed to be quite real, States still need a better understanding of the possibilities that the Al-Qaida and Taliban sanctions regime can offer to assist them in their fight against terrorism. My impression after these visits is that the sanctions regime has contributed less to this than it might have.

9. Pursuant to paragraph 29 of resolution 1735 (2006), I would like to renew the outstanding invitation to Member States to come to the Committee and have more in-depth discussions on sanctions related issues. Dialogues of this nature are essential for both the Committee and the Member States. In this regard, suggestions and experiences accumulated by States can be shared with the Committee and the Committee can be more proactive and efficient in addressing their implementation challenges.

10. On their side, the experts of the Monitoring Team continue to visit States. Since the last briefing, the Team has visited 4 Member States. The Team has also begun implementing areas of cooperation with international and regional organisations such as the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), the International Air Transport Association (IATA) and the World Customs Organization (WCO), in accordance with paragraph 23 of resolution 1735 (2006). In addition, the Team has expanded cooperation with INTERPOL to improve implementation of the sanctions measures, which has resulted in the increase of the issuance of UNSC-INTERPOL Special Notices for listed individuals which currently amount to 298. As a next step, the Team and INTERPOL are arranging for the issuance of Special Notices for listed entities. Finally, the Team has also participated in several conferences and meetings on counter-terrorism related issues.

III. Issues Currently on the Committee's Agenda

11. The Committee has started its consideration of the 7th Report of the Monitoring Team submitted to the Committee on 30 September 2007, in accordance with resolution 1735 (2006). As it was the case for the previous reports, it will be soon transmitted to the Council and become an official UN document. The report contains a great number of recommendations on how to further improve sanctions implementation. It is the intention of the Committee to report to the Council on its position regarding those recommendations.

¹ <http://www.un.org/sc/committees/1267/index.shtml>

12. Pursuant to paragraph 21 of resolution 1735 (2006), the Committee has started its consideration of the identification of possible cases of non-compliance based on a background paper prepared by the Monitoring Team. The Committee has developed a methodology to identify possible cases of non-compliance, to gather additional information if needed and to take action on specific cases. The Committee also agreed to develop specific and general recommendations derived from this empirical analysis on what could be done to prevent the occurrence of such cases, including by identifying the difficulties faced by States in implementing the sanctions. The overall objective of this exercise is to improve the effectiveness of the sanctions regime. The Committee intends to forward to the Security Council to this effect its findings once the discussion in the Committee has been concluded;

13. Since the establishment of the Focal Point for De-listing last March, pursuant to resolution 1730 (2006), the Committee has received 16 requests (4 individuals and 12 entities) through that process. I am pleased to announce that the Committee approved today the de-listing of 1 individual and 12 entities associated with him. Although the Committee decided to maintain the names of the 3 other individuals on the List, the Focal Point allows petitioners to have a proper consideration of their de-listing requests. It is worth mentioning that one other request has been submitted to the Focal Point for De-listing but has not yet reached the Committee. The Committee intends to have this month a specific discussion on the issue of delisting procedures in accordance with paragraph 13 and 14 of resolution 1735 (2006). The Committee also intends to evaluate the first edition of the review pursuant to paragraph 6(i) of the Committee's guidelines that was concluded last July without any change to the List, as well as prepare the 2008 edition.

14. In the application of the sanctions measures, the Committee is specifically mindful that the Council provided for exemptions, including for humanitarian purposes. Since 1 January 2007 the Committee has received 5 notifications for humanitarian exemptions under paragraph 1(a) and 16 requests for extraordinary expenses under paragraph 1(b) of resolution 1452 (2002). Out of these, no negative decision has been taken by the Committee in respect of 5 notifications under paragraph 1(a) and 14 requests under paragraph 1(b) have been approved. During the same period the Committee has received no application for exemptions to the travel ban.

15. The Committee has also started an in-depth discussion on the how to limit and reduce the number of pending issues.

16. The criminal misuse of the Internet and the involvement of banks and financial institutions in the effective implementation of sanctions have been discussed based on reports prepared by the Monitoring Team. The Committee has requested the Team to make some concrete recommendations that, if approved, could address both issues in a practical way.

IV. Conclusion

17. The Al-Qaida and Taliban sanctions regime continues to be a powerful instrument in the fight against terrorism. However, whereas the threat from Al-Qaida and the Taliban remains real, the mechanism to counter this threat has not reached its full potential. The Committee is trying its best to make the Consolidated List more dynamic and therefore more credible but cannot do it alone. Additional input from Member States is indeed essential to have a List that would better reflect the reality on the ground. A greater involvement of Member States would also contribute to a more effective implementation of the sanctions measures that would at the same time strengthen national and regional efforts in the fight against terrorism. In this context, I appeal to all States to increase their support and assistance to the Committee and the Monitoring Team to achieve our common objective, i.e. to prevent and counter terrorist acts.

I thank you Mr President.