

**Briefing by Ambassador Verbeke , Chairman of the Al-Qaida and Taliban Committee, pursuant to paragraph 31 of Resolution 1735 (2006) in the Security Council on 22 May 2007**

**I. Introduction**

This is the first briefing before the Council in my capacity as Chairman of the 1267 Committee. The Committee continues to play a very important role in the fight against terrorism, through placing individuals and entities associated with Al-Qaida and the Taliban on its Consolidated List and monitoring the implementation of the sanctions measures by States, with the support of the Al Qaeda Taliban Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team. Since the last briefing given by my predecessor, Ambassador Mayoral of Argentina, on 28 September 2006, 3 individuals and 1 entity has been added to the List and no names have been removed from the List. The Committee has also approved a number of technical changes to the List in its efforts to improve its quality. The Committee has also acknowledged receipt of 23 notifications pursuant to resolution 1452 (2002) with the aim of releasing frozen assets in light of humanitarian exemptions to the assets freeze.

**II. Further Improvements to the Sanctions Regime**

**(a) Adoption of resolution 1730 (2006) and 1735 (2006)**

Last December 2006, the Security Council adopted two important resolutions for the Committee's work:

- resolution 1730 (2006) requests the Secretary General to establish a focal point within the Secretariat to receive de-listing requests and performing the tasks described in the annex to the resolution. As a consequence, petitioners seeking to submit requests for de-listing can now do so, either through this focal point, or through their State of residence or citizenship. The focal point for de-listing became operational on 29 March 2007 (S/2007/178). So far, the Committee has not yet received any delisting requests through the focal point. The Committee, from which this idea originated, is pleased to see that this procedure is in place for all sanctions committees dealing with listed individuals or entities.
- resolution 1735 (2006) reiterates the existing mandatory measures (assets freeze, travel ban and arms embargo) and extends the period for consideration by the Committee of notifications of humanitarian exemptions to the assets freeze submitted pursuant to resolution 1452 (2002) from 48 hours to three- working days. The resolution also renewed the mandate of the experts of the Monitoring Team for another period of 18 months.

**(b) Revision of the Committee's guidelines for the conduct of its work**

In the last 6 months, the Committee has revised its guidelines for the conduct of its work twice:

- On 29 November 2006, the whole section 6 related to the listing procedure was amended in order to improve the procedure. A review process with regard to the List has also been introduced in paragraph 6(i).
- Following the adoption of resolutions 1730 (2006) and 1735 (2006), the Committee thoroughly revised its guidelines on 12 February 2007 in order to make them in line with these new resolutions. It was the first sanctions committee to do so pursuant to paragraph 2 of resolution 1730 (2006).

**(c) Committee's reports**

During the reporting period, 4 reports were issued by the Committee:

- On 20 December 2006, the Committee forwarded to the Security Council a report (S/2006/1047) containing its position on the recommendations included in the Monitoring Team's fifth report (S/2006/750).
- On the same day, the Security Council received the Committee's written assessment related to implementation actions taken by Member States pursuant to paragraph 17 of resolution 1617 (2005) – (S/2006/1046).

- On 29 January 2007, the Committee transmitted its annual report on its activities in 2006 to the Security Council (S/2007/59).
- On 24 April 2007, the Committee forwarded a report (S/2007/229) containing its position on the recommendations included in the Monitoring Team's sixth report (S/2007/132). The consideration of the Team's reports always provides the Committee with an opportunity to reflect upon and assess on how to further improve the sanctions regime. In its consideration of the sixth report, the Committee focused on the recommendations that were not already covered by resolutions 1730 (2006) and 1735 (2006).

### **III. Current and Future Work of the Committee**

Based on its programme of work for the period 1 January – 31 July 2007, the Committee is currently considering the following issues:

**(a) Further improvement of the quality of the Consolidated List, in particular the Taliban section, as requested by the Council in resolution 1735 :** The completeness and accuracy of the Consolidated List continue to be essential for the success of the established sanctions measures. The Committee, with the assistance of the Monitoring Team, has introduced a number of improvements to its list. Further improvements are needed especially with regard to the Taliban sanctions list to make it in line with the current reality on the ground and to make the sanctions more effective by adding more identifying information. States are therefore encouraged to submit the names of individuals and entities that should be included on the list because of their association with Al-Qaida and/or the Taliban, as well as additional and updated information for the names already on the List. A standard form (cover sheet) is available on the Committee's website and the Committee and the Monitoring Team are ready to assist States in this regard at any time.

**(b) Review pursuant to paragraph 6(i) of the Committee's guidelines:** In March 2007, the Committee initiated this review; out of more than 100 individuals and entities identified by the Secretariat for this purpose one individual and one entity have been suggested for such a review. The Committee will examine these cases in July after the necessary consultations with the relevant States have been held.

**(c) Improvement of the Committee's guidelines with regard to paragraph 1(a) of resolution 1452 (2002)** related to the provision of basic expenses in light of humanitarian exemptions to the assets freeze, pursuant to paragraph 17 of resolution 1735 (2006).

**(d) Other issues to be considered:** The Committee will discuss such issues as the criminal misuse of the Internet, the involvement of the private sector into sanctions implementation, especially assets freeze, and possible instances of non-compliance.

**(e) Stock-taking exercise:** In July, the Committee will evaluate the implementation of resolutions 1730 (2006) and 1735 (2006).

**(f) Committee's Website<sup>1</sup>:** The Committee's website was modernized at the end of February. Its presentation is now more user-friendly and its content has been expanded. The Committee is currently working to further improve its website in order to enhance its outreach to the broader membership and the outside world. Fact sheets on the relevant procedures are currently under the consideration of the Committee and will be posted on the website. Member States are encouraged to fully utilize this practical tool for a better implementation of the sanctions measures.

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

#### IV. Partnership in Sanctions Implementation

##### *(a) Cooperation with States*

**Visits to States:** The Committee fully realizes that dialogue with States is vital to the full implementation of the sanctions measures. It also recognizes that one of the most effective means of dialogue between the Committee and States is through direct contact, including country visits by its Chairman or the Monitoring Team. The Committee has therefore highly benefited from information received from the experts of the Team as a result of their trips to selected States and international organizations.

From October 2006 to-date, the Monitoring Team members have traveled to sixteen countries to discuss issues regarding the effective implementation of the sanctions regime. The Team has also convened two regional meetings of heads and deputy heads of the intelligence and security services of two groups of countries to discuss the threat from Al-Qaida and Al-Qaida-related groups and implementation issues: one with officials from the Middle East, North Africa and Pakistan, and another with officials from five States in the South East Asian region, which was the first such meeting of this group.

As Chairman, I am planning to make two trips this year: one early July and the other one during the fall.

**Direct States' access to the Committee:** Pursuant to paragraph 29 of resolution 1735 (2006), I would like to renew the outstanding invitation and encourage Member States to come to the Committee and have more in-depth discussions on sanctions related issues. Dialogue with the Committee is key to an effective implementation of the sanctions. In this regard, all suggestions and experience that can be shared with the Committee are of the utmost importance.

##### *(b) Cooperation with the CTC and the 1540 Committee:*

The Committee, mainly through the activities of the Monitoring Team, has continued to enhance its coordination efforts with the Counter-Terrorism Committee and the 1540 Committee through, inter alia, the harmonization of relevant activities of experts, such as trips to selected States.

##### *(c) Cooperation with Interpol and other international and regional organisations:*

The Committee has continued, with the effective support of the Team, to develop the Interpol-United Nations Security Council Special Notices. To this date 275 such notices have been issued. On 3 April 2007, the Committee approved a revised action plan regarding special notices allowing the issuance of Special Notices also for the entities appearing on the Committee's list.

With the assistance of the Team, the Committee has continued to build up its links with international and regional organisations such as OSCE, AU, EU and OAS.

#### V. Conclusion

In my function as Chairman of the Committee, I feel both a great deal of satisfaction and responsibility. My satisfaction originates from the steady progress achieved in the Committee's work. The responsibility emanates from the need to achieve more for the sanctions regime to be a relevant and adequate tool to address the threat of Al-Qaida and the Taliban. On a daily basis, I receive the professional assistance from the Monitoring Team and support from Committee members and the Secretariat. With the contribution of all Member States, through their conscious sanctions implementation, we can achieve better results in challenging terrorism and its deadly acts. Our firm determination should be to prevent terrorist acts rather than to deal with their consequences.

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