



The threat posed by kidnapping for ransom by terrorists and the preventive steps the international community can take

The international community has made significant progress in combating the flow of funds to terrorist organisations. However, in the last three years, we estimate that Al Qaeda-affiliated and other Islamist extremist groups worldwide have collected tens of millions of dollars in ransoms. Payments to terrorists from Sahel to the Horn of Africa helped fuel instability in the region, and contributed to large scale attacks like In Amenas. The payment of ransoms to terrorist groups is one of the sources of income which supports their recruitment efforts, strengthens their operational capability to organise and carry out terrorist attacks, and incentivises future incidents of kidnapping for ransom, thereby increasing the risks to our nationals.

We are committed to protecting the lives of our nationals and reducing terrorist groups' access to the funding that allows them to survive and thrive in accordance with relevant international conventions. We unequivocally reject the payment of ransoms to terrorists in line with the UN Security Council Resolution 1904 (2009) which requires that Member States prevent the payment of ransoms, directly or indirectly, to terrorists designated under the UN Al Qaeda sanctions regime through the freezing of funds and other assets.

We welcome efforts to prevent kidnapping and to secure the safe release of hostages without ransom payments, such as those recommended by the GCTF, specifically in the Algiers Memorandum on Good Practices on Preventing and Denying the Benefits of Kidnapping for Ransom by Terrorists. We encourage further expert discussion, including at the Roma Lyon group, to deepen our understanding of this problem. We also encourage private sector partners, including aid and media organisations, travel and insurance companies, and other businesses to adopt their own similar guidelines and good practices for preventing and responding to terrorist kidnaps.

We continue to support efforts to reduce terrorist groups' access to funding and financial services through the ongoing work of the FATF to improve anti-money laundering and terrorist financing frameworks worldwide. We call on all countries to effectively implement the revised FATF Standards.

But when the worst happens, we agree to provide mutual assistance to States responding to terrorist kidnaps including, as appropriate and feasible, through information sharing and specialist expertise or assistance, or the provision of resources related to hostage rescue. We will also support capacity-building initiatives to help states prevent, and prepare to respond to future terrorist kidnaps including through bringing terrorists to justice more effectively and ensuring that they do not avoid responsibility.

We call on discussions at the UN on new mechanisms to increase international awareness of the threat of kidnapping for ransom, and propose consideration of further UN Security Council resolutions to address and mitigate the threat.

We strongly support efforts by the international community to tackle other forms of kidnapping and to reduce the threat of piracy.