

The First Introductions of Debate for the UNSC

The evening of debate for delegates in the UN Security Council began promptly at 5:30 PM (4 AM UTC) and was packed full of a wide range of perspectives regarding the overarching theme of the Horn of Africa. Debate was quickly underway as delegates congregated over virtual means to discuss solutions to the terrorism currently ravaging the region. The subtopic of “leveraging capabilities to meet the demands of government's in Africa to combat terrorism and extremism” led to fruitful discussion amongst the many nations representatives.

The delegate of Russia began general debate by first stating how without a stable government, the Horn of Africa has become a “nuisance and threat towards growing youth”. They went further to discuss how the work in this area of Africa is often inconsistent however that Russia is currently wanting to continue their current work within the east of Africa as well as with Somalian ambassadors. They then went on to outline the work they are currently doing such as aiding with anti terrorism in Ethiopia. This effectively prompted others to join in debate and rapid claims and suggestions continued on through this first hour of debate.

Many delegations shared thoughts on the impact of terrorist attacks leading to civilian unrest and with the seeds of ideas for facing horrific terrorist attack outcomes planted, debate continued. The delegate of Estonia voiced their agreement that the region impacts numerous innocent lives without cause or effective solution. They went on to further highlight that it is the radicalized youth recruited within the extremist groups such as Al Shabab that is the root of the issue. This provided an important focus on the youth of the area that will soon become the building blocks of the future. They presented ideas directly to the UNSC on how they believed the council should deal with these threats and implement long term solutions such as working with employment to prevent such a great number of youth from joining the terrorist groups. Seeing as the youth in the areas are so prevalent within the extremist groups, it became an important subject of debate during the night.

In response to this, the delegate of the US noted that it is rather the living conditions that force people of the population to turn to terrorism and they urged the UNSC to aid local governments within the region to build secure governments as they believe “winning the hearts and minds of those in the African Horn is crucial as many in the region do not have enough food or water, driving them to terrorism”.

The response to both of these perspectives were met with disagreement from more than a couple nations’ delegations. Both delegates of Vietnam and Indonesia agreed that the issues of terrorist activity within the region is extreme and a grave issue and that a viable solution to combat this would rather be to implement law enforcement seeing as African states and world wide states are not being directly involved. They both agreed that the usage of military forces was to be considered as well, like strengthening the forces in Somalia to intimidate Al Shabab and prevent further loss of infrastructure. Indonesia’s delegate also mentioned the importance of strengthening borders as well as border smuggling allows terrorist organizations to attack easily. Whether or not these areas are of largest concern is questionable and are still up for debate.

The delegate of Russia made a final statement to the reporters of Al Jazeera following the first section of debate as follows; “The Russian Federation believes that eliminating extremist groups before they grow too large is a priority. We believe we can do so by winning the hearts and minds by building infrastructures in the Horn of Africa.” This seems to summarize well what the main goal of the debates tonight surround. After these first introductions of debate, further was underway and the remainder of the night included engaging points from delegations across the world.