



# Delisting Taliban from Sanctions: UN

## Why in News

Recently, The [United Nations \(UN\)](#) officials claimed that there are no requests from the [UN Security Council](#) Permanent members for the delisting of the **Taliban's** top leadership from sanctions thus far.

- They also **refuted reports** that the next meeting of the [Taliban Sanctions Committee also known as the resolution 1988 committee](#), due in September 2021, would **lift restrictions on designated terrorists like Sirajuddin Haqqani and Mullah Baradar**.

## Key Points

### ▪ Resolution 1988 Committee Meeting:

- [India's Permanent Representative to the UN \(UNPR\)](#) is the **Chairman** of the committee until December 2021, and is **key to deciding the date of the meetings, and scrutinising requests** to delist the Taliban leaders.
- The **meeting is expected to happen ahead of an important meeting to discuss the renewal of the mandate of the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA)**, which expires in September 2021.
- A decision is likely to be taken on whether **to extend the special travel exemptions given to 14 Taliban members to participate in the "peace and reconciliation efforts"**.
- The meeting could also **discuss whether to include other Taliban leaders in the exemptions**, giving them permission to travel and access some funds, which are frozen at the moment.

### ▪ Significance of the Meeting:

- This is the **first time the Committees would meet after the Taliban takeover of Kabul**, and after the deadline for the US troops to pull-out.
- The stand taken by the UNSC members, particularly the **P-5 — US, Russia, China, France and UK** — would indicate how they **intend to approach a future Taliban-led regime in Afghanistan**.
- This time around, the **UN would have to decide on continuing the accreditation with Ambassador Ghulam Isaczai who was appointed by the 'Islamic Republic of Afghanistan'**, given the Taliban control of Kabul, and its insistence on changing the country's flag, and name to the 'Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan'.

- In **1996**, the last time the Taliban took power in Kabul, the **UN had refused to recognise the regime**, and had continued the Ambassador nominated by the previous Rabbani government.

### ▪ Challenges:

- The **challenge will be to reconcile the ground reality of a Taliban dominated regime with a new mandate** for UNAMA.
- If the UN were to accept the new regime, which seems unlikely at present, **it would give the Taliban the mandate to propose the delisting of its own members**, as the Afghanistan UNPR is the "focal point" for the Sanctions list.

- Such a proposal would also run counter to the UN Security Council's own statement in August 2021 that firmly said that **members "do not support the restoration of the Islamic Emirate"**.

- **Importance of Sanctions for India:**

- The **reports concerning Sirajuddin Haqqani are significant for India** as he and the Haqqani group, founded by his father Jalaluddin Haqqani, are **wanted for the Indian Embassy bombings in Kabul in 2008 and 2009**.
- In November 2012, **India was instrumental**, as the then-President of the UN Security Council, **in ensuring that the Haqqani group was designated as a terror entity**.
- India had **worked with several countries to ensure the group was banned**, both in the UN's 1988 sanctions committee list as well as the US, which designated it a Foreign Terrorist Organisation at the same time.

- **Sirajuddin Haqqani**, deputy to Taliban chief Haibatullah Akhundzada, is now likely to have considerable influence in the next government in Afghanistan.
- His brother Anas Haqqani, who was arrested in 2014 for financing the group's terror attacks, and was released as part of a hostage swap in 2019 from Bagram prison, is now one of the chief negotiators in government formation talks in Kabul.

## **Resolution 1988 Committee/Taliban Sanctions Committee**

- **Background:**

- In 1999, the **UNSC Committee was established pursuant to Resolution 1267 (1999)**, which **imposed a limited air embargo and asset freeze on the Taliban**. Over time, measures became a targeted asset freeze, travel ban and arms embargo against designated individuals and entities.
- In June 2011, **after the adoption of resolution 1988 (2011)**, the Committee split into two.
  - **The 1267 Committee was henceforth known as the Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee**, mandated to oversee implementation of the measures against individuals and entities associated with Al-Qaida.
  - A separate Committee was established pursuant to **resolution 1988 (2011)** to oversee implementation of the measures against individuals and entities associated with the Taliban.

- **About:**

- The Committee comprises all **15 members of the Security Council** and makes its **decision by consensus**. The current Chair of the Committee, for the period ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2021, is India.
- The work of the Committee is **supported by the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team** pursuant to resolutions 1526 (2004) and 2253 (2015) concerning ISIL (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and the Taliban and associated individuals and entities.

- **Mandate:**

- Oversee the implementation of the **sanctions measures**.
- **Designate individuals and entities** who meet the listing criteria as contained in the relevant resolutions.
- Consider and **decide upon notifications and requests for exemptions** from the sanctions measures.
- Consider and **decide upon requests to remove a name** from the 1988 Sanctions List.
- Conduct **periodic and specialised reviews** of the entries on the 1988 Sanctions List.
- **Examine the reports** presented by the Monitoring Team.
- **Report periodically to the Security Council** on the implementation of the sanctions measures.

**Source: TH**

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