

**Open briefing of the Counter-Terrorism Committee on
“The Role of Women in Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism”**

*****EaplgT gpeg'Tqgo '6, United Nations Headquarters, New York
9 September 2015

I. Introduction

1. Despite the growing awareness of women’s participation in terrorism and violent extremism, including as suicide bombers, the potential for women to act as a vital resource in policy and planning on countering violent extremism (CVE) remains largely untapped. Through their influence on the family, community and Government, women can play a positive and proactive role as agents of change to build resilience to radicalization to violence and conflict. Their inclusion is therefore an indispensable component of any comprehensive counter-terrorism strategy.

2. Security Council resolution 2129 (2013) affirmed the Council’s intention to increase its attention to women, peace and security issues in all relevant thematic areas of work on its agenda, including in threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts. Security Council resolution 2178 (2014), on stemming the flow of foreign terrorist fighters, encourages Member States to develop strategies to counter the violent extremist narrative that can incite terrorist acts and address the conditions conducive to the spread of violent extremism, which can be conducive to terrorism, including by empowering women.

3. In its Presidential Statement of 28 October 2014 (S/PRST/2014/21), the Council further noted that violent extremism, which is conducive to terrorism, is frequently targeted at women and girls, leading to serious human rights violations and abuses against them, and encouraged Member States to engage with women and women’s organizations, including refugees and internally displaced women, in developing CVE strategies.

4. However, there is a need to learn more about, and highlight initiatives of women and women’s groups aimed at countering terrorism and violent extremism, especially initiatives developed to address particularly acute threats, such as the FTF phenomenon. The Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED) has engaged in discussions aimed at noting good practices concerning women’s role in CVE, including through its active participation in the preparation of the *draft good practices on women and countering violent extremism* of the Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF), which will be considered for adoption by the GCTF plenary.

5. The February 2015 White House Summit to Counter Violent Extremism and subsequent high-level regional conferences on CVE have also highlighted the importance of the role of women in countering terrorism and violent extremism. It is expected that the United Nations Plan of Action on Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE), to be submitted by the Secretary-General in 2015, will also discuss women’s contribution to CVE efforts. The 10-year anniversary of the adoption of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, to be celebrated in June 2016, will also give consideration to this issue.

II. Objective

6. The open briefing will focus on recent initiatives in East and West Africa and the Middle East led by women and women's groups and aimed at countering terrorism and violent extremism. It will encourage the sharing of information about successes and lessons learned in this area and will include a historical overview of the various roles played by women in terrorism and violent extremism, as well as in countering terrorism and violent extremism.

7. The open briefing will provide a unique opportunity to bring together Member States, relevant international and regional organizations, civil society and academia to raise awareness of this issue, share recent experiences, and encourage further engagement by women in countering terrorism and violent extremism at the international, national and regional levels.

III. Format of discussions

8. In order to encourage interactive discussion, the meeting will follow a "presentation and discussion" format. The panellists will be encouraged to highlight ways in which the international and regional community can strengthen its engagement on this issue and support related initiatives (*draft agenda and panellists' biographies annexed herewith*).

IV. Participants

9. The open briefing will be open to all Member States of the United Nations.

V. Venue and date

10. The open briefing will be held in Conference Room 4 on 9 September 2015 from 3.00 p.m. to 5.30 p.m.

VI. Outcomes

11. A Chair's summary will be posted on the website of the Counter-Terrorism Committee together with any written statements submitted for inclusion.