

**Special meeting of the Counter-Terrorism Committee  
with international and regional organizations  
on  
“Preventing Terrorists from Exploiting the Internet and Social Media  
to Recruit Terrorists and Incite Terrorist Acts, While Respecting  
Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms”**

*New York, 17 December 2015*

**Chair’s summary**

*Excellencies,*

*Committee members,*

*Ladies and gentlemen,*

**We have heard compelling testimony to the increasing threat posed by the use of the Internet and social media for terrorist purposes.**

**We have been reminded of the urgent need to strengthen the capacity of law enforcement officials to monitor and confront that threat.**

**We have also been reminded that, in doing so, we must never lose sight of the need to respect international human rights standards.**

**The same rights that apply offline, also apply online**

**As in all our counter-terrorism efforts: if we fail to apply this principle; if we fail to abide by the very beliefs that differentiate us from those who would sow the seeds of hatred and violence, then we merely defeat ourselves.**

**We run the risk of promoting further radicalization to violence and handing victory to the forces of chaos.**

**We have heard how ICT also can facilitate dissemination of counter-narratives and alternative messages and empower civil society voices, including youth, as credible and valuable conveyers of counter-narratives.**

**We have been reminded that, in removing content considered to incite or glorify terrorism, States must comply with international human right standards.**

**And any such actions must be taken with caution, within the framework of a comprehensive, preventive approach.**

**We heard the calls that Member States, consistent with freedom of expression, should work with the private sector to counter their hosting websites and social media from being abused to incite terrorism and violent extremism.**

**Member States should consider putting in place appropriate legal, institutional and administrative frameworks to respond to the threat, recalling that the rights to be free from arbitrary or unlawful interference with privacy and to freedom of expression should be protected by law.**

**A number of speakers have stressed the need for Government and the private sector to strengthen their cooperation in order to improve the requesting and sharing of electronic data consistent with international human rights standards.**

**States are also encouraged to review their domestic legal, institutional and administrative arrangements for the collection and retention of electronic data, bearing in mind the need to make increased use of and adapt to evolving technologies.**

**The sheer pace of technological change of course represents a tremendous challenge for all of us.**

**Governments, international and regional organizations, the private sector, academia and civil society must, together, undertake further research to strengthen their understanding of the ways in which terrorists use the Internet and social media for radicalization that leads to terrorism; incitement to terrorism; training; recruitment; provision of travel assistance to foreign terrorist fighters; and the coordination, planning and financing of terrorist activities.**

**We must continue to promote dialogue between all stakeholders, including industry and civil society representatives, and seek to develop policies that favour the free flow of information along with security.**

**We must impose restrictions only on a case-by-case basis, in accordance with the rule of law and judicial review.**

**It is clear that there is a need to develop context-specific counter narratives and messages.**

**It is also essential that the public and private sectors collaborate in promoting safety and counter-messaging.**

**As we have seen: representatives of the private sector recognize the need to prevent exploitation of their products and services by terrorists. Many ICT sector leaders are already fully engaged in this effort.**

**States are increasingly using ICT for monitoring and intelligence purposes, but they must do so within a framework that complies with human rights obligations and the rule of law.**

**We recognize the significant challenges involved in the use of electronic evidence in bringing terrorists to justice, but we also recognize the urgent need to do so effectively.**

**CTED is organizing an important session on this topic this afternoon, and we hope many of you can attend.**

*Excellencies,*

*Committee members,*

*Ladies and gentlemen,*

**In accordance with the relevant Council resolutions and the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, the Committee and CTED, acting together with other CTITF entities and in partnership with all relevant stakeholders, including civil society and the private sector, will continue to monitor the threat posed by use of the Internet, social media and other emerging technologies for terrorist purposes, as well as to collect, identify and share good practices developed worldwide.**

**The Committee and CTED will continue to assess Member States' implementation of resolutions 1373 (2001), 1624 (2005) and 2178 (2014) in relation to ICT, including measures taken against incitement to violence; to strengthen cooperation in preventing the use of ICT for terrorist purposes; and to support Governments, civil society and the private sector in their efforts to disseminate counter-narratives.**

**The Committee and CTED will consider convening further technical meetings on this topic during 2016 and will continue to work with their partners and others within the UN system and in other organizations to help Member States confront this very real and urgent threat.**

**I thank you all for your insights into this very complex issue.**