

Open meeting of the Counter-Terrorism Committee

Building resilience of communities to prevent radicalization to terrorism

United Nations Headquarters, Trusteeship Council Chamber

Monday, 29 April 2024, 3.00 – 5.00 p.m. EDT

Concept note

I. Introduction

1. Member States have the primary responsibility for countering terrorist acts, including in building resilience of communities against radicalization to terrorism. The Security Council recognizes that acts of terrorism are most effectively prevented and countered through a comprehensive approach that includes actors from all sectors of society. In its resolution 2354 (2017), the Council stresses the importance of the role of the media, civil and religious society, the business community, and educational institutions in efforts to enhance dialogue and broaden understanding, in promoting tolerance and coexistence, and in fostering an environment which is not conducive to incitement of terrorism, as well as in countering terrorist narratives. Terrorist narratives can include the use of hatred and intolerance to radicalize others to terrorism.

2. While some young people are vulnerable to terrorist recruitment, the vast majority of youth instead play a positive role in their communities. In resolution 2250 (2015), and subsequent resolutions 2419 (2018) and 2535 (2020), the Council recognizes the role of youth in promoting a culture of peace, tolerance, and intercultural and interreligious dialogue with the aim of discouraging their participation in acts of terrorism and reiterates that efforts to counter terrorist narratives can benefit through engagement with a wide range of actors, including youth. An important aspect in this regard is to ensure meaningful consultations with women, girls, men, and boys from local communities and to address their context- and gender-specific needs and realities. This includes assessing the differential impact of counter-terrorism strategies on women and their full enjoyment of human rights, as mandated by the Council in its resolution 2242 (2015), including with regard to building community resilience to prevent and counter radicalization to terrorism.

3. Cities and local communities are often the most affected by a terrorist act. In resolution 2178 (2014), the Council encourages States to engage relevant local communities and non-governmental actors in developing strategies to counter terrorist narratives that can incite terrorist acts. To effectively build resilience to prevent and counter radicalization to terrorism, communities, leaders, and practitioners need to be empowered and supported, including through development programmes that build the capacities of local actors and institutions, promote good governance, and provide economic opportunities. Prevention measures and strategies undertaken at the city or local level, as well as the State or provincial level, can complement and reinforce efforts to prevent and counter terrorism at the national or federal level.

4. Another critical method of preventing incitement to terrorism and strengthening resilience is through education. In resolution 1624 (2005), the Council calls upon States to prevent the subversion of educational, cultural, and religious institutions by terrorists and their

Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED)

supporters, while in resolution 2178 (2014) it underscores the role education can play in countering terrorist narratives. States should take specific measures to support formal and non-formal educational activities and cultural programmes for the general public that enhance commitment to human rights as part of a pluralistic society, encourage critical thinking, promote equality and intercultural and interreligious dialogue, and strengthen the competencies needed to identify and counter hatred. The eighth review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy (resolution 77/298) welcomes engagement of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization with Member States to implement strategies to counter hate speech and violent extremism conducive to terrorism through education and by developing programmes to promote tolerance and interreligious and intercultural dialogue.

5. The Council has underscored that effective counter-terrorism measures and respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms, and the rule of law are complementary and mutually reinforcing and constitute an essential part of such efforts. To effectively build community resilience to prevent and counter radicalization to terrorism, those involved in such efforts must therefore enjoy adequate protection. This is becoming increasingly important in areas where the space for civic engagement is shrinking or even under attack, including in terms of undue restrictions imposed with regard to freedoms of expression, peaceful assembly, and association.

6. In its resolution 2396 (2017), the Council calls upon Member States to establish or strengthen national, regional, and international partnerships with stakeholders, both public and private, as appropriate, to share information and experience in order to prevent, protect, mitigate, investigate, respond to and recover from damage from terrorist attacks against “soft” targets. In the Delhi Declaration on Countering the Use of New and Emerging Technologies for Terrorist Purposes, adopted by the Counter-Terrorism Committee at its special meeting held in New Delhi on 29 October 2022, the Committee emphasizes the need for Member States to act cooperatively to prevent and counter the use of new information and communications technologies (ICT) for terrorist purposes, including with civil society and the private sector. In light of the rapid advancement of such technologies, including artificial intelligence (AI), Member States may consider developing measures to counter their potential uses for terrorist purposes, and to build resilience against terrorist attacks and recruitment, all while respecting international law, including international human rights law, international humanitarian law and international refugee law.

II. Objectives of the open meeting

7. The objective of the open meeting is to convene a broad range of experts to discuss experiences, identify the latest trends, and share best practices on building community resilience to prevent and counter radicalization to terrorism. The open meeting will also provide an opportunity to strengthen collaboration with all relevant United Nations bodies and stakeholders in line with Council resolution 2617 (2021).

8. In addition, the open meeting will help to foster understanding of the issues and challenges posed by the use of use of new and emerging technologies, including AI, for terrorist purposes, as well as explore ways to build resilience to terrorism through the use of these technologies.

III. Format of discussions

9. The half-day open meeting will include two thematic segments, each focusing on a

Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED)

particular aspect of the main theme, including the latest trends, updates, and expert perspectives on building resilience of communities to prevent and counter radicalization to terrorism. The segments will be followed by interactive dialogues. Member States will be encouraged to share their lessons learned, including success stories and challenges, related to the theme of the open meeting.

10. The Chair of the Committee will chair the meeting while facilitators may assist the Chair by moderating the different segments under the guidance of the Chair.

11. To ensure sufficient time, panellists will be afforded a maximum of 6 minutes to present their presentations. All panellists will be required to submit their presentations or written remarks to CTED at least three days in advance. The Chair of the Committee, supported by the Security Council Affairs Division, will circulate meeting documentation, and other logistical information, which will also be posted on the Committee's website.

IV. Panellists

12. Representatives of relevant international, regional and subregional organizations and other relevant stakeholders will be invited to serve as panellists. CTED will submit an updated list of panellists closer to the event.

V. Date and venue

13. The proposed open meeting will be held at United Nations Headquarters, on Monday, 29 April 2024, 3.00 – 5.00 p.m., at the Trusteeship Council Chamber.

VI. Outcomes

14. Based on the briefings received and outcomes of the discussions held during the open meeting, the Committee, supported by CTED, will continue to consult with United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact entities and the Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact Working Group on Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism Conducive to Terrorism, as well as other relevant United Nations entities, to promote appropriate human rights-based efforts to build resilience of communities to prevent and counter radicalization to terrorism.

15. The panellists' presentations or written statements will be posted on the Committee's website.