

**Security Council**

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Letter dated 23 November 2021 from the Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1373 (2001) concerning counter-terrorism addressed to the President of the Security Council

On behalf of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1373 (2001) concerning counter-terrorism, I have the honour to submit to the Council a document containing the global survey of the implementation of Council resolution 1624 (2005) by Member States (see annex).

The survey was prepared by the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, in accordance with paragraph 17 of Security Council resolution 2395 (2017).

The Committee should be grateful if the present letter and its annex would be brought to the attention of the members of the Security Council and issued as a document of the Council.

(Signed) Tarek Ladeb

Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1373 (2001) concerning counter-terrorism



Annex**Global survey of the implementation of Security Council resolution 1624 (2005) by Member States***Summary*

The present global survey of the implementation of Security Council resolution 1624 (2005) by Member States was prepared by the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate pursuant to the request of the Council, contained in its resolution 2395 (2017), that the Directorate update the previous survey (S/2016/50), issued in January 2016. It contains a detailed regional overview of the steps taken by States to implement Council resolutions aimed at countering incitement to commit terrorist acts, violent extremism and terrorist narratives, focusing primarily on the implementation of resolution 1624 (2005), in which the Council called upon all States to prohibit by law incitement to commit a terrorist act or acts.

According to the Executive Directorate's analysis, as at 1 March 2021, 112 States had expressly criminalized incitement to commit a terrorist act or acts in their national legislation (compared with at least 76 States as at 1 November 2015).

The survey also considers steps taken by States to implement other provisions of resolution 1624 (2005), such as measures to prevent incitement to commit terrorist acts; deny safe haven to persons credibly suspected of being guilty of incitement to commit terrorist acts; and counter incitement of terrorist acts motivated by violent extremism conducive to terrorism.

Two other Security Council resolutions are directly relevant to the preparation of the present survey. Resolution 2178 (2014), on the threat to international peace and security posed by foreign terrorist fighters, contains a provision encouraging States to engage with relevant local communities and non-governmental actors in developing strategies to counter the violent extremist narrative that can incite terrorist acts. It proposes to achieve this by addressing the conditions conducive to the spread of violent extremism, which can be conducive to terrorism, including by "empowering youth, families, women, religious, cultural and education leaders, and all other concerned groups of civil society". This approach has come to be known as countering violent extremism.

The survey also takes into account Security Council resolution 2354 (2017), on the threat to international peace and security posed by terrorist narratives spread by Da'esh, Al-Qaida and other terrorist groups. In that resolution, the Council encourages States to develop programmes to counter terrorist narratives, stressing that States have the primary responsibility in countering terrorist acts and violent extremism conducive to terrorism and noting that counter-narrative efforts "can benefit through engagement with a wide range of actors, including youth, families, women, religious, cultural, and education leaders, and other concerned groups of civil society".

The survey makes it clear that States have made considerable progress, since the publication of the previous survey, on prohibiting incitement to commit acts of terrorism and taking related steps to prevent incitement to commit acts of terrorism, to counter violent extremism conducive to terrorism and to counter terrorist narratives. It also addresses the human rights challenges that States continue to face in this area, most notably in connection with ensuring respect for the right to freedom of expression. The survey observes that States are now facing an increased threat due to incitement to commit terrorist acts based on xenophobia, racism and other forms

of intolerance.¹ It shows that many States are taking active measures to monitor and prevent the abuse of information and communications technology for terrorist purposes, noting that those measures can benefit from partnerships between government and the private sector.

Effectively countering incitement of terrorist acts motivated by violent extremism conducive to terrorism presents many challenges to Member States, but it is critical to confronting the threats to international peace and security posed by terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism. The present survey shows that States are employing a range of innovative approaches to address those threats, often based on strong partnerships involving all actors concerned in society.

¹ While the Security Council has not established an internationally agreed terminology regarding this threat, the Counter Terrorism Committee noted in previous documents that many of the Member States that it had recently assessed referred to terrorist acts of this kind through a wide range of terms.

I. Introduction

1. The present global survey of the implementation of Security Council resolution [1624 \(2005\)](#) by Member States was prepared by the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate pursuant to the request of the Council, contained in its resolution [2395 \(2017\)](#), that the Directorate update the previous survey ([S/2016/50](#)), issued in January 2016. It contains a detailed regional overview of the steps taken by States to implement Council resolutions aimed at countering terrorist incitement, violent extremism and terrorist narratives, focusing primarily on the implementation of resolution [1624 \(2005\)](#), in which the Council called upon all States to prohibit by law incitement to commit a terrorist act or acts.

2. According to the Executive Directorate's analysis, as at 1 March 2021, 112 States had expressly criminalized incitement to commit a terrorist act or acts in their national legislation (compared with a figure of at least 76 States as at 1 November 2015).

3. Of all the means deployed by terrorists to commit their atrocities, one of the most potent has been their ability to communicate their message. Effective communication is vital to terrorism – it is the channel through which terrorists recruit, fundraise, mobilize, plan and incite. Terrorist attacks have a devastating impact on their direct targets, but unless terrorists and terrorist groups can communicate about those acts to others (including to incite further such attacks), they will likely be deemed a failure. Effective communication is an essential item in the terrorist toolkit. States continue to face challenges in their efforts to counter terrorist communications effectively within a framework of respect for human rights and the rule of law.

A. Incitement to commit terrorist acts

4. The Security Council took decisive action against incitement to commit terrorist acts in 2005, with its adoption of resolution [1624 \(2005\)](#). In the resolution preamble, the Council expressed deep concern that incitement of terrorist acts “poses a serious and growing danger to the enjoyment of human rights, threatens the social and economic development of all States, undermines global stability and prosperity and must be addressed urgently and proactively by the United Nations and all States”. In the same resolution, the Council called upon all States to prohibit by law incitement to commit a terrorist act or acts, take steps to prevent such incitement, deny safe haven to persons credibly suspected of being guilty of such incitement and strengthen the security of their international borders to prevent entry by those who are guilty of such conduct. It also called upon States to continue international efforts to enhance dialogue and broaden understanding among civilizations and to take all measures as might be necessary and appropriate, and in accordance with their obligations under international law, to counter incitement of terrorist acts.

5. The Security Council further developed its approach to countering incitement to commit terrorist acts with its resolution [2178 \(2014\)](#), on the threat to international peace and security posed by foreign terrorist fighters. In that resolution, the Council encouraged States to engage with relevant local communities and non-governmental actors in developing strategies “to counter the violent extremist narrative that can incite terrorist acts”. It proposed to achieve this by addressing the conditions conducive to the spread of violent extremism, which can be conducive to terrorism, including by “empowering youth, families, women, religious, cultural and education leaders, and all other concerned groups of civil society”. The Council also encouraged States to adopt tailored approaches to countering recruitment to violent extremism

and promoting social inclusion and cohesion. This approach is now widely referred to as countering violent extremism.

6. In 2017, the Security Council took a further step in addressing those issues with its adoption of resolution [2354 \(2017\)](#), which focuses on the threat to international peace and security posed by terrorist narratives spread by Da'esh, Al-Qaida and other terrorist groups. The resolution built upon the comprehensive international framework to counter terrorist narratives ([S/2017/375](#), annex), which had been developed by the Counter-Terrorism Committee and submitted to the Council. In that resolution, the Council stressed that States had the primary responsibility in countering terrorist acts and violent extremism conducive to terrorism. It stated that counter-narrative efforts “can benefit through engagement with a wide range of actors, including youth, families, women, religious, cultural, and education leaders, and other concerned groups of civil society”. It also noted that counter-narratives “should take into account the gender dimension” and should address specific concerns and vulnerabilities of both men and women.

7. The Counter-Terrorism Committee and its Executive Directorate have consistently placed the implementation of resolution [1624 \(2005\)](#) and related resolutions at the centre of their dialogue with Member States. They have gathered data on laws that prohibit incitement to commit a terrorist act or acts and discussed with States complementary approaches to countering incitement motivated by violent extremism conducive to terrorism and to countering terrorist narratives, including through partnerships with non-governmental actors and the development of strategies for countering violent extremism. One crucial area of inquiry has been the religious domain and the steps that States have taken to “prevent the subversion of educational, cultural, and religious institutions by terrorists and their supporters”, in accordance with resolution [1624 \(2005\)](#).

B. Human rights dimension

8. As with all measures taken by States to counter terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism, the question of respecting human rights is a critical aspect of the discussion of incitement to commit terrorist acts. The right to freedom of expression is not absolute, and States have a legitimate basis to take enforcement action against genuine incitement to commit terrorist acts, in accordance with the requirements of their international legal obligations and commitments, as applicable, including the provisions of article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. However, States’ actions in those areas can raise profound and challenging human rights issues, concerning most directly the rights to freedom of expression and freedom of thought, conscience and religion. Indeed, United Nations human rights bodies and other international experts have raised concerns over counter-incitement measures that appear to have violated those rights.

9. Security Council resolution [1624 \(2005\)](#) is noteworthy in this regard, as the Council recalls in its preamble the right to freedom of expression. It is also the first counter-terrorism resolution in which the Council stressed that States must ensure that any measures taken to implement the resolution comply with all their obligations under international law, in particular international human rights law, refugee law and humanitarian law. The Executive Directorate routinely raises the human rights aspects of counter-incitement and countering violent extremism measures in its discussions with Member States, acting in accordance with the seventh preambular paragraph of resolution [2178 \(2014\)](#), in which the Council stated that “respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms and the rule of law are complementary and mutually

reinforcing with effective counter-terrorism measures, and are an essential part of a successful counter-terrorism effort”.

10. In resolution [1624 \(2005\)](#), the Security Council called upon all States to prohibit by law incitement to commit terrorist acts. The Committee and its Executive Directorate have regularly stressed the need to ensure the compliance of such measures with States’ obligations under international human rights law. Their recommendations are generally directed towards encouraging States to clarify the scope of the offence to ensure that it complies with the principle of legality. This requires that the offence be clearly drafted, thereby reducing the risk of criminalizing free speech. The Committee specifically draws States’ attention to best practices outlined in reports of United Nations human rights bodies. In order to enhance legal precision, they have often recommended that the offence expressly include both a subjective element (intent that a terrorist act be committed as a result) and an objective element (creation of a danger that this will in fact happen). They have also noted that the offence of incitement to commit terrorist acts, if it is tied to a definition of terrorism or of terrorist acts, will reflect any problems with the underlying definition of terrorism itself. If that underlying definition includes overly broad terms, then the incitement to commit terrorist acts offence will also likely be problematic.

11. A particular issue of concern in this area is the impact of counter-incitement and countering violent extremism measures on civic space and on the ability of civil society organizations and other independent actors to conduct their activities in full respect for their human rights, including the rights to freedom of expression and personal security. The Security Council has clearly called upon States to consider including such actors in developing comprehensive approaches to counter terrorist threats effectively, and the Committee and its Executive Directorate have identified a number of initiatives in which civil society’s role has been highly beneficial. However, United Nations human rights bodies have also decried policies and practices in some States that have failed to safeguard independent actors or, more disturbingly, directly targeted them with repressive measures.

12. The Executive Directorate has devoted considerable effort, since the adoption of resolution [1624 \(2005\)](#), to bringing Governments and civil society actors together to find common ground in addressing the threats of terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism, including the threat of incitement to commit terrorist acts. Many such initiatives have led to the recognition that it is possible to achieve more by working together in an atmosphere of dialogue and mutual respect. The Security Council, in its resolution [1963 \(2010\)](#), stressed the value, for States of developing, in accordance with their obligations under international law, strategies that “include countering incitement of terrorist acts motivated by extremism and intolerance”, as called for in resolution [1624 \(2005\)](#).

C. New trends in incitement to commit acts of terrorism on the basis of xenophobia, racism and other forms of intolerance

13. Over recent years, there has been a notable increase in the dissemination of communications aimed at inciting terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism, including on the basis of xenophobia, racism and other forms of intolerance. In its recent analysis, the Executive Directorate cited research showing that there had been a 320 per cent rise in attacks conducted by individuals affiliated with such movements and narratives over the previous five years, mostly in Western States. Preventing and countering the spread of this threat are a new and growing challenge for Member States. Enforcement action and international legal cooperation in this area are complicated by the fact that States classify similar acts differently in

their respective laws. Nonetheless, the Directorate has observed that many States are devoting increased resources to the terrorist threat presented by such narratives, including online.

14. The threat of incitement to commit terrorist acts has been further aggravated by the impact of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. Terrorists have sought to exploit the fact that large numbers of people around the world remain in lockdown and are spending more time online. They have taken the opportunity to escalate messaging aimed at spreading COVID-19-related grievances and conspiracy theories in an effort to radicalize and recruit individuals into terrorism and incite terrorist acts. These developments have placed added pressure on States and technology companies to counter incitement to terrorism effectively while also ensuring respect for the rights to freedom of expression, freedom of opinion and freedom of thought.

D. Information and communications technology and public-private partnerships

15. Terrorists have become particularly adept at exploiting new and emerging information and communications technology (ICT) for their purposes, including incitement to commit terrorist acts. The private sector therefore has an especially crucial role to play in countering those activities. In its resolution 1624 (2005), the Security Council stressed the important role played by the business community, among other actors, in “efforts to enhance dialogue and broaden understanding, and in promoting tolerance and coexistence, and in fostering an environment which is not conducive to incitement of terrorism”. The aforementioned comprehensive international framework to counter terrorist narratives stresses the concern that Da’esh and other terrorist entities are using ICT in increasingly sophisticated ways to facilitate their activities, and it notes that companies that maintain ICT platforms can play an important role in preventing such abuse. In its resolution 2354 (2017), the Council requested the Executive Directorate to “further develop initiatives to strengthen public-private partnerships in countering terrorist narratives”.

16. In preparing the present global survey, the Executive Directorate noted that public-private partnerships had become an increasingly vital means of preventing and countering incitement to commit terrorist acts. States take different approaches to monitoring and regulating communications through ICT, and some of those approaches raise significant human rights issues. Some States and regional bodies maintain “Internet referral units”, through which private companies are notified about content that may violate their terms of service or otherwise raise security concerns. For its part, the Directorate has led the development of the Tech against Terrorism initiative, which was created to support smaller platforms in supervising posted content while also complying with international human rights standards. The Directorate is also a permanent observer to the Independent Advisory Committee of the industry-led Global Internet Forum to Counter Terrorism.² The Forum and the Tech against Terrorism initiative partner in their efforts to prevent and counter the terrorist exploitation of online platforms as well. In considering steps that have been taken to implement resolution 1624 (2005), it is essential to bear in mind the role of the private sector and the need for public-private partnerships.

² See www.gifct.org.

II. Progress achieved by Member States in the implementation of Security Council resolution 1624 (2005) and related resolutions

17. The previous survey (S/2016/50), issued in January 2016, mainly identified principles and good practices helpful for implementing resolution 1624 (2005) effectively. The present survey contains a more detailed regional overview of steps that States have taken to implement Security Council resolutions aimed at countering terrorist incitement, violent extremism conducive to terrorism and terrorist narratives. It is based on the Executive Directorate's analysis and its ongoing dialogue with Member States, including in the framework of country visits conducted on behalf of the Committee.

A. Africa

1. North Africa

(Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia)

18. **Prohibition of incitement of terrorist acts.** All six States of the subregion have adopted legislation to prohibit incitement to commit a terrorist act or acts.

19. **Freedom of expression.** Several States have introduced definitions of incitement or terrorism that appear to be vague or overbroad, leading to concern over their anti-incitement measures. Some States have also criminalized glorification. In the preamble of resolution 1624 (2005), the Security Council repudiated attempts at the justification or glorification of terrorist acts that might incite further terrorist acts. However, United Nations human rights mechanisms have raised concerns over those offences, on grounds that they may be interpreted too broadly, leading to infringements of the right to freedom of expression. In some States, the lack of clarity of relevant definitions appears to limit the ability of persons associated with civil society organizations to operate and express their views freely, resulting in serious concerns over personal security.

20. **International cooperation and border control.** Some States of the subregion have effective provisions in place to deny safe haven to those suspected of being guilty of incitement and to maintain effective border control in that respect. However, lengthy borders across sparsely populated regions present significant challenges.

21. **Preventing incitement of terrorist acts, countering violent extremism and countering terrorist narratives.** Most States of the subregion have programmes to prevent incitement and counter violent extremism conducive to terrorism. Ministries of religious affairs in those States actively engage with religious institutions, including both places of worship and schools, and are taking steps to address the dissemination of messages of terrorist incitement and related intolerance.

22. One State has adopted a comprehensive national strategy for countering violent extremism emphasizing partnerships between government bodies and other actors, including faith leaders, civil society organizations, youth groups and the private sector. Another State is home to a leading religious research institution that, inter alia, analyses and counters narratives disseminated by international terrorist organizations, including Da'esh; conducts training programmes; and distributes publications that address erroneous or abusive interpretations of religious texts. Another State actively promotes moderation and the scholarly analysis of religious texts and operates training programmes for religious leaders from other States. One feature of its programmes is the training of women to serve as religious mentors (murshidahs).

2. East Africa

(Comoros, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Uganda and United Republic of Tanzania)

23. **Prohibition of incitement of terrorist acts.** Four of the 11 States of the subregion have adopted legislation to prohibit incitement to commit a terrorist act or acts. Four others have generic prohibitions on the incitement of criminal conduct. Three States do not appear to have introduced provisions that are readily applicable to incitement to terrorism.

24. **Freedom of expression.** The anti-incitement provisions of most States of the subregion raise significant concerns regarding respect for the right to freedom of expression. Many appear to be vague or overbroad, and potentially applicable to communications deserving protection under international human rights law. One State prohibits “incitement to do any act with the intent to overthrow the Government”, while another includes the concept of “soliciting the commission of a criminal act”. Several States lack clear objective and subjective elements in their respective offences. At least two States hold open the possibility of applying the death penalty to incitement offences, which raises concern over proportionality and respect for the right to life.

25. **International cooperation and border control.** The laws of most States of the subregion contain gaps concerning the denial of safe haven to those suspected of being guilty of incitement and maintaining effective border controls in that respect. Only two States appear to have introduced provisions in that respect. However, more information is needed in that regard.

26. **Preventing incitement of terrorist acts, countering violent extremism and countering terrorist narratives.** At least four States have introduced comprehensive programmes to prevent incitement and counter violent extremism. A further State is considering adopting such a programme, with the support of the Office of Counter-Terrorism and the United Nations Development Programme. Several States implement whole-of-government approaches to countering violent extremism that include some level of community-level dialogue. However, there is significant mistrust between Governments and civil society organizations in some States of the subregion.

27. Several States attach high importance to monitoring communications over the Internet and other ICT media, but resources are generally scarce and activities in this area may raise significant human rights issues. Several States support focused efforts to counter terrorist narratives and promote interreligious understanding, including through messages broadcast over television and radio that, in some cases, have included the voices of family members of violent extremists and voices of victims. Several States have also taken steps to strengthen school curricula, including through peace education. The Intergovernmental Authority on Development, through its Centre of Excellence for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism, provides guidance and support to States of the subregion in the development of effective programmes for countering violent extremism and counter-narratives.

Box 1

Regional spotlight: Somalia

Adopted in September 2016, the national strategy and action plan for preventing and countering violent extremism of Somalia have been consistently supported by the international community. During their initial development, a stakeholder analysis was conducted to identify key partners and constituencies from local communities and civil society that should be involved in their further development and implementation. Initial research was conducted to identify the main recurring conditions conducive to recruitment and radicalization leading to terrorism in the country. Relevant federal government partners were also identified.

The key objectives of the national strategy and action plan include:

- Organizing relevant measures across the Government and with other partners
- Strengthening research on the root causes and drivers of terrorism and violent extremism leading to terrorism
- Capacity-building
- Effective communication
- Measuring progress and regular recalibration to ensure that implementation is strategic, coherent, sustainable and fit for purpose

The national strategy and action plan are part of the national security architecture of Somalia. Since their adoption, Somalia has taken to steps to advance their implementation. A coordination office was established in the Office of the Prime Minister in 2017, and national and State-level coordinators were appointed to promote implementation at the local level, including in such areas as strategic communication, the treatment of former terrorist fighters, educational and job security programmes for young people and programmes for victims of terrorism. Somalia is currently considering ways to further operationalize and implement the national strategy and action plan within the framework of its national security architecture, including through the adoption of appropriate legal frameworks.

3. Southern Africa

(Botswana, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe)

28. **Prohibition of incitement of terrorist acts.** Seven of the 12 States of the subregion have adopted legislation to prohibit incitement to commit a terrorist act or acts. Other States appear to lack directly relevant legislation.

29. **Freedom of expression.** The anti-incitement provisions of at least two States of the subregion appear clearly drafted, taking into account the right to freedom of expression. Legal definitions in other States appear to be vague (including by using terms such as “promoting” and “encouraging”). At least one State provides for the possibility of sentencing offenders to life imprisonment for incitement, which raises a concern with respect to proportionality.

30. **International cooperation and border control.** Most States of the subregion have relatively weak legal frameworks for denying safe haven to those suspected of

being guilty of incitement and maintaining effective border controls in that respect. However, more information is needed in that regard.

31. **Preventing incitement of terrorist acts, countering violent extremism and countering terrorist narratives.** There are only limited initiatives under way in the subregion relating to prevention, countering violent extremism and countering terrorist narratives. Some States have national programmes aimed at combating racism and promoting local community empowerment. However, those programmes are concerned with broader social goals that are not directly linked to countering terrorism, incitement or violent extremism conducive to terrorism.

32. In one State, a provincial government has prepared a recovery and stabilization plan with countering violent extremism elements intended to address a recent string of terrorist attacks. The plan appears to be designed primarily to assist internally displaced persons and direct victims of violence (although some elements are focused on addressing radicalization to violence among persons released by the criminal justice system). In the same State, a faith-based organization drafted a “good practices” document relating to religion, which was disseminated to religious centres in a region recently afflicted by terrorist violence.

4. West Africa

(Benin, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Côte d’Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo)

33. **Prohibition of incitement of terrorist acts.** Eight of the 15 States of the subregion have adopted legislation to prohibit incitement to commit a terrorist act or acts. At least two others have introduced related provisions that would seem effective for that purpose. Several States do not appear to have introduced provisions that are readily applicable to incitement to terrorism.

34. **Freedom of expression.** The anti-incitement provisions of several States appear to contain shortfalls regarding respect for the right to freedom of expression. Those States rely on terms that are vague or overbroad, including such concepts as “promotion” and “encouragement”. At least one State has introduced a clear objective element, requiring that the incitement create a risk that terrorist acts be carried out.

35. **International cooperation and border control.** Most States of the subregion have legal gaps relating to the denial of safe haven and ensuring effective border security in that respect with neighbouring States. Two States, however, appear to have introduced relevant provisions.

36. **Preventing incitement of terrorist acts, countering violent extremism and countering terrorist narratives.** Two States have introduced relatively well-developed programmes to counter violent extremism, and others are developing such programmes. Several States have created mechanisms that, although not aimed specifically at terrorism or violent extremism conducive to terrorism, may be beneficial in alleviating those threats. These include such mechanisms as a national peace council, a national youth authority and, in several States, truth and reconciliation commissions. Several States emphasize the promotion of interfaith dialogue and understanding. An externally funded programme has supported radio stations in several States in the subregion to develop creative programming aimed mainly at young people to counter terrorist narratives and offer positive alternative approaches to local issues of concern.

37. Several States are taking steps to address financial support for educational and religious institutions by terrorists and their supporters, including by funders that advocate violent extremist views conducive to terrorism, including entities based outside their borders. Those States are working on limiting terrorist influences. The

approach that some States have taken includes increasing oversight of school curricula and sermons delivered in religious institutions. Such measures should be consistent with the Security Council resolutions [1624 \(2005\)](#) and [2354 \(2017\)](#). Religious leaders of several States have attended study programmes in other countries, including a programme established by Morocco on non-violent interpretations of religious doctrine.

Box 2

Regional spotlight: Nigeria

The Counter-Terrorism Centre established in the Office of the National Security Adviser of Nigeria leads the implementation of the policy framework and national action plan for preventing and countering violent extremism (“Partnering for Safer and Resilient Communities”). Adopted in 2017, the policy framework was formulated through an inclusive consultative process that involved several meetings of a dedicated working group that cut across line ministries, civil society, religious leaders, women’s groups, youth representatives, law enforcement agencies and the media. Input from state governments and other stakeholders was solicited to help to ensure a comprehensive, whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach that was locally relevant and culturally sensitive.

The policy framework contains a series of guiding principles and identifies the key core constituencies that should partner with the Government in its implementation. Prior to the framework adoption, the Office of the National Security Adviser had worked with civil society to build trust and create strategic alliances, such as the Partnership against Violent Extremism, which is currently involved in relevant programmes for preventing and countering violent extremism. The national action plan consists of four components, including a component focused on the coordination of efforts to prosecute, rehabilitate and reintegrate terrorist suspects in accordance with Security Council resolutions [2178 \(2014\)](#) and [2396 \(2017\)](#). The Counter-Terrorism Centre houses the Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism Unit, which coordinates the implementation of the policy framework.

5. Central Africa

(Angola, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon and Sao Tome and Principe)

38. **Prohibition of incitement of terrorist acts.** In the subregion, the States’ level of implementation in prohibiting by law incitement to commit a terrorist act or acts is low. Only one State appears to have adopted legislation specifically for that purpose. Other States have generic incitement provisions and other laws that could be applied against acts of incitement.

39. **Freedom of expression.** There are concerns that provisions applicable against incitement in several States may be vague or overbroad. In some States, measures criminalizing the glorification of acts of terrorism could lead to human rights violations. In the preamble of resolution [1624 \(2005\)](#), the Security Council repudiated attempts at the justification or glorification of terrorist acts that might incite further terrorist acts, but international human rights mechanisms have cautioned that the

concept could be applied against speech that, while repugnant, did not rise to the level of incitement.

40. **International cooperation and border control.** States of the subregion generally lack measures specifically aimed at denying safe haven to those suspected of being guilty of incitement. However, more information is needed in that regard.

41. **Preventing incitement of terrorist acts, countering violent extremism and countering terrorist narratives.** At least two States of the subregion have established programmes designed to counter violent extremism. The national strategy for countering violent extremism of one State includes elements aimed at promoting interreligious dialogue and understanding; engaging with young people; and developing effective counter-narratives, including in religious education. Other States have developed programmes that are tied more closely to post-conflict rebuilding strategies. Despite the general absence of comprehensive strategies for countering violent extremism, interreligious dialogue is a significant policy goal for several States.

B. Asia

1. Pacific Islands

(Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Nauru, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu)

42. **Prohibition of incitement of terrorist acts.** Seven of the 12 States of the subregion have adopted legislation to prohibit incitement to commit a terrorist act or acts. Four others have generic provisions that could be used for the same purpose.

43. **Freedom of expression.** The anti-incitement provisions of most States of the subregion appear to pose little risk of application in violation of the right to freedom of expression. Several States expressly exclude non-violent acts of advocacy or protest from their definitions of terrorist acts and terrorist incitement. A few States, however, have provisions that are vague or overbroad and could raise human rights issues.

44. **International cooperation and border control.** There are few provisions in the subregion on the denial of safe haven to those suspected of being guilty of incitement and maintaining effective border control in that respect.

45. **Preventing incitement of terrorist acts, countering violent extremism and countering terrorist narratives.** There are no comprehensive programmes or policies in the subregion specifically aimed at preventing incitement or countering violent extremism conducive to terrorism. This is undoubtedly due to the generally low threat level and limited resources of States in the subregion.

2. South-East Asia

(Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Timor-Leste, Thailand and Viet Nam)

46. **Prohibition of incitement of terrorist acts.** Eight of the 11 States of the subregion have adopted legislation to prohibit incitement to commit a terrorist act or acts. Three others do not appear to have introduced provisions that are readily applicable to terrorist incitement.

47. **Freedom of expression.** Several States have introduced vague or unclear definitions of incitement or terrorist acts, which create a risk that they could be used against communications deserving protection under international human rights law.

At least one State provides for the possible application of the death penalty for incitement, which appears severely disproportionate and could threaten the right to life.

48. **International cooperation and border control.** Most States of the subregion face challenges in denying safe haven to those suspected of being guilty of incitement. Effective border security in this respect is also a challenge, owing in part to the subregion's lengthy maritime borders. A few States, however, have relatively strong border control regimes.

49. **Preventing incitement of terrorist acts, countering violent extremism and countering terrorist narratives.** A few States have established programmes for countering violent extremism, including with an emphasis on partnerships with civil society organizations, women and youth groups and other non-governmental partners. However, most States of the subregion have not. Those States with such programmes have also introduced mechanisms to enhance interreligious dialogue. One State has supported multicultural youth camps aimed at enhancing dialogue and understanding, acting in partnership with civil society organizations. However, mistrust between Governments and civil society organizations, as well as relevant human rights concerns, create certain challenges in the subregion. One State supports a think tank that is an international leader in analysing and promoting effective counter-narratives.

Box 3

Regional spotlight: Philippines

During its assessment visit to the Philippines in 2019, the Committee learned about the country's national action plan for preventing and countering violent extremism. Adopted earlier that year, the action plan reflects the stated commitment of the Government of the Philippines to addressing the threat of violent extremism leading to terrorism through a comprehensive, whole-of-government approach and through partnerships with non-governmental actors, including civil society organizations, academic experts, faith-based organizations and local communities. The action plan was adopted following consultations with a range of governmental and non-governmental stakeholders.

One of the main aims of the action plan is to develop innovative approaches to the local "push-and-pull" factors that may be conducive to violent extremism leading to terrorism. Intervention programmes are led by the Department of the Interior and Local Government but are based on a multisectoral approach. During its visit, the Committee learned of the Government's commitment to maintaining transparency in the implementation process. All relevant governmental departments, offices and agencies are encouraged to develop partnerships with civil society organizations, religious leaders and other stakeholders in implementing relevant projects through a "whole-of-nation" approach. The development of the action plan included a strong gender element, which continues to be a key focus (with support being provided by the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women)).

3. South Asia

(Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka)

50. **Prohibition of incitement of terrorist acts.** Four of the eight States of the subregion have adopted legislation to prohibit incitement to commit a terrorist act or acts. Three others have generic provisions that could be applied against incitement.

51. **Freedom of expression.** Most States of the subregion have definitions of incitement or terrorism that appear to be vague or overbroad. This creates a risk that anti-incitement provisions could be used against conduct deserving protection under international human rights law (e.g. human rights advocacy or the peaceful expression of contrary political views). The use of vague terms such as “instigating” and “encouraging” is also a cause of concern.

52. **International cooperation and border control.** Most States of the subregion have significant gaps in their measures to deny safe haven to those suspected of being guilty of incitement and to control their borders against entry by such persons effectively.

53. **Preventing incitement of terrorist acts, countering violent extremism and countering terrorist narratives.** Several States have established formal programmes or policies for countering violent extremism that include commitments to engaging with civil society organizations, youth groups, academia and other non-governmental actors. However, there is significant mistrust between Governments and civil society organizations in some States. Dedicated governmental departments of several national ministries of the interior work specifically on counter-extremism and counter-radicalization programmes. In one State, the ministries of information and culture have developed television and radio programmes that challenge terrorist narratives, and they have encouraged private media to broadcast content with the same purpose.

54. Several States attach high importance to monitoring communications over the Internet and other ICT media to counter terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism, but resources are generally scarce and there are human rights concerns relating to the identification, blocking and removal of some content. In some States, ministries of religious affairs and cultural institutions actively oversee the content of textbooks and classroom curricula in religious schools and closely monitor religious messages. However, a major concern in several States is that many schools are unregistered and therefore unregulated. Several States have invested in strengthening youth resilience through educational and vocational training programmes. One State has established a council for cultural relations that is mandated to promote cultural exchanges with other States. Some States support counter-narratives and alternative narratives, including online, by law enforcement and intelligence agencies that involve moderate elements from various religious communities, intellectuals and religious leaders. One State maintains an emergency response team to take immediate countermeasures to combat the growing use of cyberspace for spreading communal hatred.

4. Central Asia and South Caucasus

(Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan)

55. **Prohibition of incitement of terrorist acts.** Six of the eight States of the subregion have adopted legislation to prohibit incitement to commit a terrorist act or acts. Two others have laws that may be suitable for that purpose.

56. **Freedom of expression.** The anti-incitement provisions of some States of the subregion present possible concerns regarding respect for the right to freedom of expression. Those concerns are mainly linked to the use of vague or overbroad language and definitions, including such terms as “extremism” and “extremist activity” without expressly being linked to terrorism or violence conducive to terrorism.

57. **International cooperation and border control.** Most States of the subregion appear to have relatively effective legal provisions aimed at denying safe haven to those credibly suspected of being guilty of incitement and maintaining effective border control in that respect.

58. **Preventing incitement of terrorist acts, countering violent extremism and countering terrorist narratives.** There are some programmes aimed at preventing incitement and countering violent extremism conducive to terrorism in the subregion. At least four States have developed programmes for countering violent extremism (managed primarily by ministries of education) that include elements intended to strengthen critical thinking and the resilience of young people to violent extremism conducive to terrorism. Several States have supported the development of counter-narratives through the production of films and other media outputs. One State has paid particular attention to enhancing the roles of women (including women who have returned from conflict zones) and young people in counter-narrative campaigns. The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe supports several related initiatives in the subregion.

59. In at least four States, national programmes for countering violent extremism emphasize action at the community level. Several States support programmes aimed at strengthening intercultural understanding, including through structures that bring together people from various cultures for dialogue and experience-sharing. Some States seek to empower civil society organizations in the implementation of their strategies for countering violent extremism, although there is significant mistrust between Governments and civil society. The Governments of several States devote considerable resources to monitoring communications over the Internet and other ICT media, which could raise significant human rights issues.

5. Western Asia

(Bahrain, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syrian Arab Republic, United Arab Emirates and Yemen)

60. **Prohibition of incitement of terrorist acts.** Five of the 12 States of the subregion have adopted legislation to prohibit incitement to commit a terrorist act or acts. The others do not appear to have introduced specific legislation in this area, but at least three have generic provisions that could likely be used against terrorist incitement.

61. **Freedom of expression.** In several States, anti-incitement provisions, combined with vague or overbroad national definitions of terrorist acts, create risks with respect to the right to freedom of expression. Some States rely on vague concepts (e.g. “instigation”, “subverting national principles” and “glorification”) that could pose problems in this regard. The use of the death penalty in the subregion raises a serious concern that persons convicted of incitement under overbroad laws could be executed, in violation of the right to life.

62. **International cooperation and border control.** There is uneven progress in the subregion in adopting provisions to deny safe haven to persons who may be guilty of incitement. Border controls are also uneven. Some States have effective systems

for that purpose, but others do not (whether because of lengthy unpopulated border regions or lack of government capacity).

63. Preventing incitement of terrorist acts, countering violent extremism and countering terrorist narratives. Almost all States of the subregion devote significant resources to preventing incitement and countering violent extremism (although some States' programmes are more fully developed than others). Most States strictly control religious messaging in places of worship and the content of religious curricula, through their ministries of religious affairs. In some cases, religious sermons must be pre-approved. These and related measures raise issues concerning compliance with international human rights obligations and commitments, including the rights to freedom of religion and expression.

64. Two States are home to advanced centres of excellence established to analyse and counter terrorist narratives. Other States are engaged in countering terrorist narratives through messages broadcast over various media channels. At least one State promotes the role of women (murshidahs) in delivering religious guidance. In some States, former members of terrorist groups have been involved in developing counter-narratives. Some States implement comprehensive policies for countering violent extremism that involve both governmental and non-governmental actors, including young people. Several States actively support initiatives to promote interreligious dialogue and understanding, at both the national and global levels. Most States apply rigorous oversight of communications over the Internet and other ICT media, sometimes raising significant human rights concerns.

6. East Asia

(China, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Japan, Mongolia and Republic of Korea)

65. Prohibition of incitement of terrorist acts. Four of the five States of the subregion have adopted legislation to prohibit incitement to commit a terrorist act or acts, and the fifth has generic provisions that could serve the same purpose.

66. Freedom of expression. The anti-incitement provisions introduced by States of the subregion raise possible issues concerning respect for the right to freedom of expression. This is mainly due to the use of vague or overbroad terms, which creates a risk that they could be used against speech deserving protection under international human rights law.

67. International cooperation and border control. States of the subregion have varying levels of capacity to deny safe haven to those suspected of being guilty of incitement and maintain effective border controls in that respect. Some States have introduced relevant laws and have enhanced border security.

68. Preventing incitement of terrorist acts, countering violent extremism and countering terrorist narratives. States of the subregion take different approaches to preventing incitement and countering violent extremism. Two States have strategies that are based on whole-of-government and whole-of-society involvement. Those include roles for cultural, educational and religious institutions, the media and local communities in strengthening counter-terrorism publicity and education. One State has a legal provision stipulating that, to be effective, relevant measures must address both the symptoms and root causes of terrorism, using legal, cultural, educational and other means.

69. Some States also promote interfaith and intercultural dialogue, including to counter violent extremism conducive to terrorism. The law in one State provides that religious and non-religious citizens must respect each other and coexist in harmony. Religious leaders in some States have organized interfaith activities based on a declared commitment to respect for religious freedom and diversity. States generally

implement strict oversight of communications over the Internet and ICT media, raising human rights concerns.

C. Latin America and the Caribbean

1. Mexico and Central America

(Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua and Panama)

70. **Prohibition of incitement of terrorist acts.** Two of the eight States of the subregion have adopted legislation to prohibit incitement to commit a terrorist act or acts. At least four others have generic prohibitions on incitement of criminal conduct, which could potentially be applied against terrorist incitement.

71. **Freedom of expression.** The anti-incitement provisions of at least four States of the subregion appear to be vague or overbroad. In at least one State, those concerns are linked to the use of the term “apología” (glorification). Proposed anti-incitement legislation in one State was withdrawn on grounds that it was too broad.

72. **International cooperation and border control.** The legislation of most States of the subregion contains gaps with respect to denying safe haven to those suspected of being guilty of incitement and maintaining effective border controls in that respect.

73. **Preventing incitement of terrorist acts, countering violent extremism and countering terrorist narratives.** There are few national projects or programmes aimed at countering violent extremism in the subregion, reflecting the relatively low risk level. Several States are pursuing initiatives to promote dialogue and understanding with indigenous communities. There are concerns in some States with respect to the human rights of persons working with civil society organizations.

2. Caribbean

(Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Haiti, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Trinidad and Tobago)

74. **Prohibition of incitement of terrorist acts.** At least 9 of the 13 States of the subregion have adopted legislation to prohibit incitement to commit a terrorist act or acts. Four others have generic provisions that could serve the same purpose.

75. **Freedom of expression.** The anti-incitement provisions of most States of the subregion appear to pose little risk of violation of the right to freedom of expression. A few States use vague terminology, such as “suggesting”, “instigating” and “glorifying”. Several States provide for severe penalties of 15 or even as much as 25 years’ imprisonment for incitement. This could raise concerns with respect to proportionality.

76. **International cooperation and border control.** There are few provisions in place in the subregion aimed at denying safe haven to those suspected of being guilty of incitement and maintaining effective border control in that respect. This is likely due to the relatively low threat level.

77. **Preventing incitement of terrorist acts, countering violent extremism and countering terrorist narratives.** Some States are moving towards the adoption of policies for countering violent extremism. One State established a steering committee in 2018 to develop a strategy for countering violent extremism that would form part of its national counter-terrorism strategy. Another finalized a draft strategy for countering violent extremism in 2019. Some States have developed related programmes, based in part on outreach to community and civil society representatives

and faith leaders, which include elements aimed at supporting young people at risk and countering online radicalization to terrorism.

78. Regional organizations are supporting relevant initiatives in this area. Several States participate in the “Champions for Change” programme of the Caribbean Community, which is designed to build social resilience among primary school students and could serve to prevent terrorist recruitment in schools. A series of virtual dialogues have been organized in the subregion, under the leadership of the Inter-American Committee against Terrorism, to raise awareness of the threat of violent extremism leading to terrorism. Civil society organizations have also participated in related events organized by the Commonwealth Countering Violent Extremism Unit.

3. South America

(Argentina, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname, Uruguay and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of))

79. **Prohibition of incitement of terrorist acts.** Two of the 12 States of the subregion criminalize incitement to commit a terrorist act or acts. At least six others have generic incitement provisions that could be used for that purpose.

80. **Freedom of expression.** There are concerns that the anti-incitement provisions of several States of the subregion may be vague or overbroad. In respect of three States, concerns have been raised over the inclusion in relevant legislation of the term “apología”, which could lead to criminal sanctions violating the right to freedom of expression.

81. **International cooperation and border control.** Most States of the subregion have shortfalls with regard to denying safe haven to those suspected of being guilty of incitement and ensuring effective border security in that respect. However, more information is needed in that regard.

82. **Preventing incitement of terrorist acts, countering violent extremism and countering terrorist narratives.** There are few initiatives in the subregion specifically aimed at countering incitement or violent extremism conducive to terrorism, as a likely result of the relatively low risk level. A couple of States support peacebuilding programmes that actively involve local communities and civil society organizations. Several States have also established programmes that promote enhanced dialogue and understanding with indigenous communities. Some States also support programmes of interfaith dialogue.

Box 4

Regional spotlight: Peru

During its assessment visit in 2019, the Committee learned about the national multisectoral approach of Peru to combating terrorism, which incorporates elements related to countering violent extremism. Led by the Ministry of the Interior, the development of the policy included consultations with 13 institutions and representatives of civil society. Those consultations led to the adoption of a national multisectoral policy to combat terrorism for 2019–2023, which has three major objectives: (i) to reinforce a culture of peace in society; (ii) to restore the exercise of the rights of individuals affected by terrorism; and (iii) to neutralize terrorist acts and related national and transnational phenomena on the national territory, all under the umbrella of a holistic approach focused on prevention.

The multisectoral policy addresses the many structural issues (including poverty, discrimination and lack of development) that could create conditions conducive to radicalization leading to terrorism. During its visit, the Committee learned that the Sustainable Development Goals had been an important source of inspiration for drafting the policy, which also includes a rigorous monitoring and evaluation component. The Government considers that a commitment to tackling economic, social and cultural issues and other human rights concerns is an important part of its comprehensive approach to countering terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism.

D. Europe and North America

1. Eastern Europe

(Belarus, Czechia, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, Slovakia and Ukraine)

83. **Prohibition of incitement of terrorist acts.** All 11 States of the subregion have adopted legislation to prohibit incitement to commit a terrorist act or acts.

84. **Freedom of expression.** The anti-incitement provisions of some States of the subregion may pose a risk to the right to freedom of expression, owing to vague or unclear terminology. In some States, the use of the term “extremism” is a potential issue of concern.

85. **International cooperation and border control.** Most States have effective measures in place for denying safe haven to those suspected of being guilty of incitement and maintaining effective border security in that respect.

86. **Preventing incitement of terrorist acts, countering violent extremism and countering terrorist narratives.** Several States of the subregion have developed comprehensive programmes to counter violent extremism conducive to terrorism that are supported by inter-agency committees and other mechanisms, reflecting a whole-of-government approach. The programmes emphasize active community engagement, including at the local level, and attention to local concerns and conditions that could be conducive to violent extremism leading to terrorism.

87. Several States of the subregion also pay close attention to countering forms of terrorism, including on the basis of xenophobia, racism and other forms of intolerance. Those States implement programmes to enhance dialogue and understanding among different ethnic and religious populations on their territory and to support the integration of ethnic minorities. Some States use traditional media, including television and radio, to counter hate and disseminate narratives to counter violent extremism conducive to terrorism. Several States exercise strict oversight of communications over the Internet and other ICT media, taking the position that this is in accordance with the call by the Security Council in resolution [1624 \(2005\)](#) to adopt measures to prohibit and prevent incitement to commit acts of terrorism. Some of those measures raise concerns regarding the resolution provision on the compliance of States with their obligations under international law.

2. Western Europe, North America and other States

(Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal,

San Marino, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and United States of America)

88. **Prohibition of incitement of terrorist acts.** Twenty-two of the 30 States of the subregion have adopted legislation to prohibit by law incitement to commit a terrorist act or acts. The eight remaining States have generic provisions on incitement or related criminal offences that would allow for prosecution of incitement to commit a terrorist act or acts.

89. **Freedom of expression.** The anti-incitement provisions of some States present possible issues with respect to the right to freedom of expression. Several States criminalize the glorification of acts of terrorism. In the preamble of resolution [1624 \(2005\)](#), the Security Council repudiated attempts to committing such offences, stating that they may incite further terrorist acts. However, United Nations human rights mechanisms have expressed concern that legal provisions based on “glorification” may be overbroad, possibly allowing for punishment of expression that does not create an objective risk of incitement. Other concerns include the use of vague terms, such as “promotion” and “terrorist purposes”. One State has raised human rights concerns through its use of the concept of “reckless” incitement, thereby dispensing with strict mens rea requirements. Another State has raised significant concerns through its use of anti-incitement provisions against academics, human rights defenders and other civil society actors. Several States, however, have introduced clear definitions of the offence that also contain exclusion clauses specifying that acts of peaceful advocacy or protest cannot be considered as acts of terrorism or incitement to commit terrorist acts.

90. **International cooperation and border control.** Most States of the subregion have effective measures in place with respect to denying safe haven to those credibly suspected of being guilty of incitement to commit terrorist acts and maintaining effective border security in that respect.

91. **Preventing incitement of terrorist acts, countering violent extremism and countering terrorist narratives.** Many States of the subregion have developed comprehensive programmes to counter violent extremism conducive to terrorism and terrorist narratives. Most States have formally adopted national strategies for countering violent extremism. Several States actively support programmes of community dialogue aimed at better understanding local concerns. Some States also support enhanced interreligious dialogue and intercultural understanding.

92. Several States emphasize the importance of engaging with young people in schools to strengthen resilience to radicalization leading to terrorism. However, concerns have been raised that some of those programmes could stigmatize or target certain ethnic or religious populations and risk placing educators and other social service professionals in security roles. Several States actively support counter-narrative efforts in partnership with civil society organizations, including with the involvement of individuals who have been rehabilitated and integrated and, in some cases, victims associations. Some counter-narrative programmes are directed towards persons who could be susceptible to incitement to commit terrorist acts based on xenophobia, racism and other forms of intolerance.

93. Several States support programmes to facilitate the integration of minority and immigrant populations into society, although concerns have been raised in some cases over the possible stigmatization of certain communities. Some States invest resources in religious oversight programmes aimed at ensuring that religious and cultural institutions are not subverted by terrorists and their supporters. One State has established a programme in its religious affairs authority to monitor religious sermons and analyse the narratives disseminated by terrorist organizations in order to counter

them more effectively. It also offers relevant training to religious and government officials of other States.

Box 5

Regional spotlight: Australia

Australia, which was visited by the Committee in July 2018, has adopted a comprehensive and multilayered approach to countering violent extremism under the coordination of the Department of Home Affairs. The national counter-terrorism plan of 2017 included a specific section on countering violent extremism in its chapter on “prevention”, with reference to three key objectives: (i) building resilience; (ii) supporting the diversion of individuals at risk; and (iii) rehabilitating and reintegrating violent extremist offenders. Those objectives were further developed at the Commonwealth-level through the adoption of a nationwide programme for countering violent extremism for the period 2014–2018 entitled “Living Safe Together”, which emphasized early intervention, community engagement and addressing online radicalization. Elements of that programme continue to be implemented. The programme also encourages awareness-raising for front-line officials, including school leaders, law enforcement agents and health workers, aimed at facilitating early intervention with respect to individuals at risk of becoming radicalized to violent extremism conducive to terrorism. The Government uses a range of online and open media channels to provide information to the public on the range of national strategies, policies and programmes for countering violent extremism.

Related programmes developed at the State level are often underpinned by an evaluation framework and further reinforced by strategic communication activities. Specific programme elements include: (i) the establishment of a helpline and online support services called “Step Together”, aimed at assisting members of the community who are seeking help with respect to vulnerable individuals; (ii) the provision of awareness-raising resources and specialist advice to schools; and (iii) the creation of dedicated teams working within law enforcement. One state government has created an office to promote community harmony and social cohesion through cooperation between government and civil society, focusing on community resilience, youth engagement and conflict resolution. Another has adopted a multicultural policy statement and provides related funding aimed at reinforcing social cohesion and community resilience. A prominent civil society organization created to support multiculturalism has developed pioneering online tools to raise the awareness of service providers and community organizations on issues relating to terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism.

3. South-East Europe

(Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Romania, Serbia and Slovenia)

94. **Prohibition of incitement of terrorist acts.** Six of the nine States of the subregion have adopted legislation to prohibit incitement to commit a terrorist act or acts. The others have generic prohibitions on the incitement of criminal conduct.

95. **Freedom of expression.** Some States of the subregion appear to have well-defined anti-incitement provisions, but definitions in others appear to be vague or overbroad, creating a risk of human rights abuse.

96. **International cooperation and border control.** Most States of the subregion appear to have effective measures in place to safeguard their borders against those credibly suspected of being guilty of incitement. Others appear to lack relevant legislation. However, more information is needed in that regard.

97. **Preventing incitement of terrorist acts, countering violent extremism and countering terrorist narratives.** At least three States have adopted national strategies for countering violent extremism, with implementing mechanisms to conduct research and promote interfaith understanding and assist in the reintegration of former foreign terrorist fighters. Several States pay close attention to vulnerable young populations and are implementing programmes to strengthen resilience in schools. Some States are investing resources in the promotion of dialogue and understanding among cultures, as well as measures to counter hate and xenophobia against immigrants and refugees. Several States emphasize the importance of engaging with faith leaders and civil society organizations (although, in some cases, civil society groups operate in insecure conditions). At least one State implements a media strategy and is developing counter-narratives against intolerance through a department of interreligious dialogue.
