

**CTED**

UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL
COUNTER-TERRORISM COMMITTEE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTORATE

PRESS RELEASE

CTED publishes Analytical Brief on “Countering Terrorist Narratives Online and Offline”

New York, 29 April 2020 – Today, the United Nations Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED) published a new Analytical Brief on “[Countering Terrorist Narratives Online and Offline](#).” Terrorist narratives are designed to achieve multiple strategic communications objectives and target several types of audience, which range from those unaware of the underlying terrorist ideology to devout ideological adherents seeking avenues for engagement in violent activity.

Terrorists have continued to use both large and small Internet platforms to spread propaganda and maximize the online virality of their attacks, with a quantitative analysis of more than 45,000 URLs across more than 330 platforms showing that half of the top 50 platforms used by ISIL since 2014 were small and micro platforms. As a consequence, Member States have been forced to expand their efforts to combat terrorist communications beyond merely blocking or removing online terrorist propaganda and have increasingly emphasized countering terrorist narratives.

In May 2017, the Security Council adopted its [resolution 2354](#) (2017), which welcomed the Counter-Terrorism Committee’s “Comprehensive International Framework to Counter Terrorist Narratives.”¹ In accordance with the Framework, Member States and other stakeholders should not only emphasize terrorists’ inhumanity and the flaws in their arguments, but also develop positive or alternative narratives that promote a holistic worldview and encourage non-violent pathways to address grievances and feelings of powerlessness and alienation.

CTED’s analysis has found that many government programmes do not sufficiently take into account audience perceptions of their credibility. In these cases, audiences may dismiss the counter-narratives altogether, particularly in States where human rights are violated in the context of countering terrorism or where government actions are not matched by words, thereby leading to a decline in credibility and trust.

The present *Analytical Brief* was prepared by the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED) in accordance with [Security Council resolution 2395 \(2017\)](#), which directs CTED to conduct analytical work on emerging issues, trends and developments and to make its analytical products available throughout the United Nations system.²

¹ See [S/2017/375](#) for more information.

² The present *Analytical Brief* has been prepared in support of [S/RES/2354 \(2017\)](#), which directs the Counter-Terrorism Committee to, inter alia, identify and compile existing good practices in countering terrorist narratives and contribute to United Nations efforts to develop models for effectively countering terrorist narratives, both online and offline, and as a follow-up to the open meeting of the

CTED Analytical Briefs aim to provide the Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee, United Nations agencies, and policymakers with a concise analysis of specific issues, trends or developments, as identified through CTED's engagement with Member States on their implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions. The *Analytical Briefs* also include relevant data gathered by CTED, including through engagement with its United Nations partners; international, regional and subregional organizations; civil society organizations; and members of the CTED Global Research Network (GRN).³

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Background

Established by the Security Council, the **Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate (CTED)** is a Special Political Mission of the United Nations, tasked with assisting the Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee in monitoring the effective implementation of Security Council resolution 1373 (2001) and other relevant counter-terrorism resolutions. CTED conducts on site country assessment visits with Member States' approval to identify progress made and remaining challenges in addressing threats posed by terrorists to international peace and security. The findings of the assessment visit also constitute the basis for the concerned technical assistance and capacity-building projects. **Michèle Coninsx** was appointed Assistant Secretary-General (ASG) and Executive Director of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED) by United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres on 11 August 2017.

The **Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC)** was established by Security Council resolution 1373 (2001), which was adopted unanimously on 28 September 2001 in the wake of the 11 September terrorist attacks in the United States. The Committee, comprising all 15 Security Council members, was tasked with monitoring implementation of resolution 1373 (2001), which requested countries to implement a number of measures intended to enhance their legal, institutional and operational abilities to counter terrorist activities at home, in their regions and around the world. On 28 February 2020, **H.E. Mr. Tarek Ladeb**, Ambassador and Deputy Permanent Representative of the Republic of Tunisia to the United Nations, was appointed Chair of CTC.

Committee on "Countering terrorist narratives and preventing the use of the Internet for terrorist purposes", held at United Nations Headquarters, New York, on 28 January 2020.

³ See [GRN newsletter](#) for more information.