



Respect for Human Rights while Using Artificial Intelligence to Counter Terrorism

Launch of the Position Paper of the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism

Date: 20 October 2025 | **Time:** 1.15-2.30 pm ET | **Location:** UNHQ, Conference Room 6

Background

The use of artificial intelligence (AI) in countering terrorism and violent extremism presents stark new challenges to human rights, civic space, and the rule of law. Governments are increasingly using AI for surveillance, law enforcement, biometric identification, border management, threat detection and military targeting. AI's ability to rapidly process vast amounts of data and automate decision-making is intensifying concerns about surveillance, privacy and even the right to life. There are risks of algorithmic bias and a lack of transparency and accountability in AI systems, as well as concerns about the degree of human supervision and control. It is vital to examine how the use of AI in countering terrorism may impact on human rights, including by disproportionately affecting marginalized groups.

Generative AI has been observed to manipulate and coerce users, yet how this is achieved is still little understood. More research is needed to better understand the implications for human agency and the inherent risks of radicalization, especially for children. Commercial interests and competition to swiftly implement novel AI capabilities, often absent sufficiently stringent testing, place further pressures on compliance with human rights, undermining established mechanisms that regulate emerging technologies. Deficiencies in the explainability of the outputs of AI systems raise concerns for victims of human rights violations seeking access to remedies, where opacity and impenetrability obscure the reasoning behind their operation. Furthermore, the recursive nature of AI also greatly heightens the risk that initial transgressions could quickly escalate, potentially with catastrophic results.

Given the risks associated with the development, use and transfer of AI-based technologies while countering terrorism, it is critical to develop effective strategies to mitigate the potential adverse effects on human rights.

Objective

The launch of this position paper aims to convene key interlocutors, including from Member States, international organizations, policy makers, academia and civil society to reflect on the human rights impacts of using AI to counter terrorism and to provide preliminary recommendations to guide States in respecting human rights.

Information and registration

- The event will be conducted in English. Participants are kindly requested to register via the following link no later than 16 October 2025: <https://forms.office.com/e/wBmCDD0PC1>.
- Kindly address any questions or concerns regarding this event to Alexandra Lily Kather, Legal Adviser, Special Rapporteur on Counterterrorism and Human Rights at alexandra.kather@un.org.