



2023 Counter-Terrorism Week SIDE EVENTS

19–23 JUNE 2023

UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS • NEW YORK



ICAN International
Civil Society
Action
Network
For women's rights, peace and security



Promoting PVE through Fostering Peace, Resilience, Equality, and Pluralism (PREP) in collaboration with Community-Based Actors

Wednesday, 21st June 2023 | 11:00AM (Virtual)

Concept Note

I. Introduction

Against the backdrop of today's compounding risks and uncertainties, violent extremism is one of the most pressing threats to peace and stability that disrupts hard won development gains. According to the latest Global Terrorism Index, approximately 2 billion people live in conflict-affected countries, and in 2022, 88 percent of terrorist attacks and 98 percent of deaths from terrorism occurred in countries with active conflicts.¹ The lethality of attacks has risen by 26 percent in comparison with previous years and the 10 countries most impacted by terrorism in 2022 were also involved in an armed conflict.²

Despite clear lessons on the limitations and risk of heavy-handed hard security approaches, which often result in counter-productive outcomes, militarized approaches remain the predominant response to violent extremist threats. UNDP's flagship publication, 'Journey to Extremism: Pathways to recruitment

¹ Institute for Economics & Peace, *Global Terrorism Index 2023: Measuring the Impact of Terrorism* (Sydney, 2023). Available at <https://www.visionofhumanity.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/GTI-2023-web-170423.pdf>.

² Ibid.

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www.un.org/counterterrorism/CTweek2023-SE
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and disengagement (2023)³ highlights that 71 percent of voluntary recruits cited a specific government action as their ‘tipping point’ towards violence—showing that government action accompanied by human rights abuses continue to trigger, fuel and accelerate recruitment into violent extremism, as already described in the previous version of the study in 2017. These findings align with the experiences of the women peacebuilders of the Women’s Alliance for Security Leadership (WASL), spearheaded by the International Civil Society Action Network (ICAN), who have long been cautioning against these ‘uncomfortable truths’⁴.

To mitigate these effects, efforts are made to advocate for development approaches addressing the root causes of violent extremism. Aligned with the UN 2016 Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism, UNDP has been a vanguard to pilot PVE interventions at the community level, including trust-building efforts between civil-military levels and strengthening the relationship between governments and citizens. Similarly, the joint 2019 study by ICAN and UNDP ‘Invisible Women: Gendered Dimensions of Return, Reintegration and Rehabilitation’⁵ outlines the necessity of gendered, integrated, multi-stakeholder approaches that enable state and civil society to work together and leverage their comparative advantages. In 2022, ICAN and UNDP again joined efforts to implement the project ‘Developing women peacebuilder capacities to prevent violent extremism in the context of Iraq’, which underscored the potential of whole-of-society approaches and advocated for interventions that propose non-violent, positive alternatives to extremisms. At last, the ongoing joint EU-UN initiative ‘Strengthening Resilience Against Violent Extremism in Asia’ (STRIVE Asia) aims at strengthening the local resilience of at-risk communities through the support of community led initiatives in the P/CVE area in five countries in Central Asia, namely Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan.

II. Session Outline

Objective

Through a conversational-style panel, the proposed side event aims to convey how the international, national and local stakeholders, with different but complementary perspectives, effectively collaborate to address violent extremism at the local level with a preventative and human security lens. This whole-of-society approach recognizes the role of local actors in identifying sources and causes of violent extremism, and solutions based on socio-economic and cultural approaches that foster peace, resilience, equality, and pluralism, thus offering a positive alternative to violent extremist groups. The speakers will convey how policies are transitioning from top-down security apparatus to a bottom-up approaches with local actors including civil society organisations. The speakers will also share concrete examples of the

³ UNDP, Journey to Extremism: Pathways to Recruitment and Disengagement, 2023, <https://journey-to-extremism.undp.org/enter/v2>

⁴ ICAN, [Uncomfortable Truths, Unconventional Wisdoms - WASL Security Brief - ICAN \(icanpeacework.org\)](#), 2016

⁵ ICAN and UNDP, [Invisible Women: Gendered Dimensions of Return, Rehabilitation and Reintegration from Violent Extremism - ICAN \(icanpeacework.org\)](#), 2019

impacts, challenges, and lessons learned, which highlight the value of inclusive, youth and gender-responsive and multi-sectoral approaches to address the root causes of violent extremism.

Programme Agenda

Time (90 mins)	Activity	Comments
Moderator: Nika Saeedi, PVE Team Leader, CPPRI, Crisis Bureau, UNDP Ted-talk interview format, interactive discussions		
11:00 – 11:05	Welcome remarks by the moderator	
Session 1: Opening Remarks		
11:05 – 11:10	Opening remarks by Maria Rosa Sabbatelli, Head of Unit, Foreign Policy Instruments (FPI), European Commission	
Session 2: Guiding question A		
11:10 – 11:35	Stories from the field: Making the case for community-based partnerships	Through human-centered stories and taking inspiration from their experience in the field, the speakers will make the case for partnerships with community-based actors and groups to foster peace, resilience, equality and pluralism.
Session 3: Guiding Question B		
11:35 – 12:00	Ensuring community-based engagement: Guiding principles for PVE practitioners	Building on their previous intervention, each speaker will present one key practical recommendation for engaging community-level partners, providing guidance to practitioners on how to implement impactful PVE interventions.
Session 4: Q&A		
12:00 – 12:25	Q&A from the audience	All speakers will answer the questions from the audience.
Session 5: Closing Remarks		
12:25 – 12:30	Closing remarks by the moderator	

Speakers

1. Nika Saeedi, PVE Team Leader, Conflict Prevention, Peacebuilding, Responsive Institutions (CPPRI), Crisis Bureau, UNDP (moderator)
2. Maria Rosa Sabbatelli, Head of Unit, Foreign Policy Instruments (FPI), European Commission
3. Sanam Naraghi Anderlini MBE, CEO & Founder of the International Civil Society Action Network (ICAN)
4. Fatima Al-Bahadly, Director of Al-Firdaws Society in Iraq and founding member of the Women's Alliance for Security Leadership (WASL)
5. Elnura Kalybaeva, Project Coordinator, Eurasia Foundation of Central Asia
6. Moncef Kartas, Head of Maiduguri Sub-Office, UNDP Nigeria

Logistics

The event will be held virtually via ZOOM. To confirm your participation, kindly RSVP via [ZOOM Registration](#). Kindly be informed that simultaneous interpretation in Arabic and English will be provided.

For any questions, regarding this event, kindly contact Joelle-Seme Park, UNDP Crisis Bureau Programme Specialist at joelle-seme.park@undp.org