

The heads of UN Office of Counter-Terrorism and UNDP strengthen collaboration to prevent violent extremism

Oslo, 23 May 2018 – Today, UNDP Oslo Governance Centre (OGC) started a two-day meeting on Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE) entitled, *‘Assessing Progress Made, and the Future of Development Approaches to Preventing Violent Extremism’*, in partnership with the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Oslo, Norway. The sessions will include discussions on lessons learned on the role of the media, women and youth in preventing violent extremism, as well as effective reintegration of disengaged terrorist fighters.

The objective of this global meeting on PVE is to assess progress made on research, programming and policy support since the last meeting held in 2016 and to offer new recommendations aimed at enhancing UNDP’s future efforts and the global drive towards PVE research, policy-development and programmatic interventions as part of the UNDP Global Programme on Development Solutions for the Prevention of Violent Extremism (2017–2020).

The meeting gathered leading policymakers, practitioners, national governments, civil society organizations, multilateral institutions, academics and think tanks from a wide array of countries.

“Security responses alone are not enough to tackle the root causes of violent extremism. When young people cannot find jobs, experience cycles of conflict and poverty, and see no hope for their future, they are very susceptible to joining extremist groups,” said Mr. Achim Steiner, UNDP Administrator. “By working together, the UN’s counter-terrorism and development arms can tackle the complementary issues of risk, response, and prevention of violent extremism, and better support countries in addressing this growing threat and achieving their development aspirations.”

UN assistance in PVE is a demand driven process with a growing number of Member States from all regions of the world requesting the UN to support them through the sharing of good practices and concrete capacity building projects. More than two thirds of the initiatives of UNOCT are dedicated to addressing the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism. Fifteen UN entities, including UNDP are implementing more than 260 PVE projects in 84 countries.

The UN promotes an “all of society” approach to PVE in order to be more effective and to achieve impact by drawing on the expertise and capacities of civil society organizations, the private sector, think tanks, as well as with governments at national and local levels.

Reiterating that terrorism should not be associated with any religion, ethnicity or race, Mr. Vladimir Voronkov, the head of the Office of Counter-terrorism (UNOCT) said that preventing conflict and sustainable development are the first line of defense against terrorism. He further stressed the need to

better coordinate UN efforts in order to avoid overlap and duplication while maximizing the impact of efforts on the ground.

In this regard, Mr. Achim Steiner and Mr. Voronkov signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) on the margins of the meeting in order to enhance collaboration between UNOCT and UNDP. Concretely, the MOU will improve cooperation in three key strategic areas: information sharing, outreach and support to the development and implementation of National PVE Action Plans to requesting Member States.

Mr. Voronkov praised the support of UNDP's country teams through indispensable field knowledge and close established relationships with Governments. "I hope through the conclusion of the new Memorandum of Understanding, we will further strengthen our common efforts to support Member States more effectively and make a real difference in the field," he said.

Mr. Voronkov and Mr. Steiner held joint bilateral meetings with senior Norwegian government officials and paid tribute to the victims of the 2011 terrorist attack.

Background information:

- [UNDP Second Global Meeting on Preventing Violent Extremism Concept Note](#)
- [Journey to Extremism in Africa: Drivers, Incentives and the Tipping Point for Recruitment](#)
- [Pathways for Peace: Inclusive Approaches to Preventing Violent Conflict](#)

The United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism was established in June 2017 to provide leadership to the implementation of General Assembly counter-terrorism mandates, to enhance coordination and coherence, and to strengthen the delivery of the United Nations counter-terrorism capacity building assistance to Member States. (www.un.org/counterterrorism)

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