



A Global Solutions Exchange Event

Innovations in Civil Society and other Locally-Led Efforts to Prevent Violent Extremism and Build Social Cohesion and Resilience
#GSX2017

21 September 2017

Roosevelt Hotel
45 E. 45th St.
New York, NY 10017

CONCEPT NOTE

Purpose: To provide policymakers, practitioners, experts, and civil society actors at the global, regional, and national levels with concrete recommendations and effective solutions for preventing violent extremism and promoting peace, equality, and pluralism based on a “whole of society” approach.

Context: Community engagement and resilience are essential for preventing violent extremism (PVE) and civil society – particularly youth-led and women-led organizations – and local authorities have a central role to play in this effort. This has been among the core themes of the PVE agenda since it became a global priority in 2015. It was further emphasised in the former UN Secretary-General’s PVE Plan of Action. The plan highlighted the importance that civil society organizations (CSOs) and other local actors play in the design and implementation of a “whole of society” effort to prevent violent extremism from taking root in communities, addressing the lifecycle of radicalization, and promoting social cohesion and inclusive peace.

Yet, with more countries feeling the impact of terrorism, violent extremist threats continuing to spread, and publics and politicians often demanding immediate, security-focused responses to these challenges, there is a risk that the attention for PVE and the importance of a “whole of society” approach will decrease. There is also a risk of growing disconnect between the global and state-based approaches that lean towards securitized responses, and the local civil society approaches that aim to provide positive, inclusive alternatives that address the psycho-social, cultural, economic, and security dimensions of violent extremism, including by pursuing a gendered approach to addressing the challenge.

We are unfortunately witnessing a negative cycle, where the impulse to exclude and marginalize certain individuals or groups in the name of countering terrorism is actually stoking grievances and engendering mistrust. These trends make it all the more important for civil society and other local actors to preserve and seek to build on the gains made on the PVE agenda over the past years. Doing so will require more policy and programmatic focus and cooperation among a range of governmental and non-governmental actors, developing a better understanding of the impact of the growing number of relevant locally-led



interventions, and highlighting the need for authorities to provide the necessary political and legal space for CSOs and local actors such as cities and municipalities to maximize their contributions to PVE.

The Event: Marking one year since the launch of the [Global Solutions Exchange \(GSX\)](#) at the opening of the 71st UN General Assembly (UNGA), this one-day event during the 2017 UNGA High-Level week will highlight the recent progress in advancing a “whole of society” effort to preventing and countering violent extremism, with a particular focus on the contributions and innovative solutions of civil society and other local actors, the critical gendered dimensions of PVE, and the need to ensure local actors have the necessary political and legal space to contribute to PVE.

The event will be organized by the steering group of the GSX: The [Prevention Project](#), the [International Civil Society Action Network \(ICAN\)](#) spearheading the Women’s Alliance for Security Leadership (WASL), [the Global Center on Cooperative Security \(Global Center\)](#), [the Royal United Services Institute \(RUSI\)](#), [the Geneva Centre for Security Policy \(GCSP\)](#), and [Search for Common Ground \(SFCG\)](#). Since its launch in September 2016 and expansion in February 2017, the GSX steering group members have been collaborating to bolster civil society and other locally-led responses to violent extremism. They have also established new efforts to connect local actors and initiatives in a more systematic and strategic manner with national governments and multilateral bodies and platforms, and ensure the full participation of women-led and youth organizations in all regional and thematic exchanges.

The convening will enable a wide range of local and national civil society actors from across the world to interact and share strategies with each other and with representatives of Member States attending the UN General Assembly, as well as UN officials and experts, including from the newly established Office of Counter-Terrorism. The event will be open to the press, and include a high-level opening panel that includes remarks from ministers and senior officials from a select number of countries. The opening will be followed by discrete thematic, moderated sessions that aim to generate a conversation among the panelists and with the diverse stakeholders in the audience. Two side-sessions will be organized during lunch to allow for more in-depth focus on two issues of critical importance to advancing the PVE agenda: 1) strengthening partnership between governments and civil society on the development and implementation of national PVE plans of action and 2) youth-led PVE innovations. Throughout the day, participants will have the chance to network and share their ongoing work, including in a dedicated EXPO zone. The working language of this event is English.

Draft Agenda

08:30-09:00 **Registration/coffee**

09:00-09:15 **Word of Welcome**

GSX co-chairs will set out goals for the day, highlighting the progress made on the PVE agenda in 2017 from the perspective of civil society, as well as some of the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead.



09:15-10:00 **Opening Session**

Moderator: Eric Rosand, Director, The Prevention Project

- **Speakers**
 - H.E. Anders Samuelsen, Foreign Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Denmark
 - Ambassador Manuel Sager, Director General, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
 - H.E. Manar Dabbas, Director of Political Affairs Division, Royal Hashemite Court, Jordan, TBC
 - United Nations, Senior Official, TBC
 - Steve Killelea, Founder & Executive Chairman, Institute for Economics & Peace

10:00-11:45 **Session I | A “Whole of Society” Approach to Prevention**

Highlighting practical ways CSOs and communities, including women, families, and youth, are working on preventing violent extremism, enhancing community resilience, and providing positive alternatives.

Moderator: Sanam Naraghi Anderlini, Co-Founder and Executive Director, International Civil Society Action Network (ICAN)

- **Speakers:**
 - Omezzine Khelifa, Mobduin, Creative Youth, Tunisia & WASL member
 - Bjørn Ihler, Extremely Together, Norway
 - Shahrazad Magrabi, Libyan Women Forum, Libya & WASL Member
 - Lamia Al Saket, CBO Musa Saket, Jordan
 - Arifur Rahman, Young Power in Social Action, Bangladesh
 - Bushra Hyder, Qadims Lumiere School and College, Pakistan

11:45-13:15 **Session II | Supporting the Rehabilitation and Reintegration of Violent Extremists**

Exploring how CSOs and communities can best support the rehabilitation and reintegration of violent extremist offenders and returning foreign terrorist fighters, and how they can most effectively cooperate with the authorities on this.

Moderator: Eelco Kessels, Executive Director, Global Center on Cooperative Security

- **Speakers**
 - Sureya Roble, Advocacy for Women in Peace and Security, Kenya & WASL Member
 - Harouna Abdoulaye, COPAVE, Niger
 - Judy Korn, Violence Prevention Network, Germany
 - Achaleke Christian, Local Youth Corner, Cameroon
 - Edit Schlaffer, Women without Borders, Austria



13:15-15:00 **Lunch and Side-Events**

Side Event session | National Action Plans on Preventing Violent Extremism: Partnership and leadership across Civil Society and National Governments (Co-Hosted by the United Kingdom and the GSX) The side-event will bring out positive opportunities for effective collaboration between national governments and civil society and other local actors on the development and implementation of National Action Plans. Speakers will share key experiences in developing and implementing NAPs, highlighting the effective roles which government and civil society have taken, and can take, in that process. Participants will exchange proposals for expanding existing and developing new avenues for partnership and collaboration between government and civil society and other local actors. Discussions will help to guide the evolving work of the Hedayah-Global Center on Cooperative Security National Action Plans Task Force as well as other efforts to support NAP development.

Moderator: Alistair Millar, President of the Fourth Freedom Forum and Founder and Howard S. Brembeck Fellow of the Global Center on Cooperative Security

- **Opening remarks:**
 - Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon, Minister of State for the Commonwealth and the UN, Foreign Office, United Kingdom
 - Commodore Yem Musa, Counterterrorism Coordinator, Office of the National Security Adviser, Nigeria
 - UNDP Senior Official, TBC
- **Speakers:**
 - Halima Mohamed, Women's CVE chapter, Kenya & WASL member
 - Catherine Udida, Head of CVE, Office of the National Security Adviser, Nigeria
 - Neila Feki, Vice-President of the National Counter Terrorism Commission of Tunisia
 - Mohammed Ngubdo Hassan, Herwa Community Development Initiative, Nigeria
- **Discussant:**
 - Alastair King-Smith, Head of International Counter-Extremism, FCO, UK

Side Event session | Innovative youth-led contributions to PVE

This side session will highlight innovative ways young people and youth-led and/or – focused organizations and networks are contributing to local, national and regional PVE efforts. It will showcase examples of effective youth-led PVE initiatives across the different stages of the PVE spectrum, as well as lessons learned and opportunities for replicating and up-scaling, where appropriate.

Moderator: Saji Prelis, Director, Children & Youth Programmes, Search for Common Ground



- **Opening remarks:**
 - Jayathma Wickramanayake, UN Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth, United Nations, TBC
- **Speakers**
 - Hajer Sharief, Extremely Together, Libya
 - Aly Jetha, Big Bad Boo, USA
 - Fatima Benoughazi, Youth Leaders Council of Tangier, Morocco
 - Elvira Hadzibegovic Bujanja, Forum MNE, Montenegro
 - Rayene Bouzitoun, Member of the Prime Minister's Youth Council, Canada
- **Discussant**
 - Noella Richard, Youth Global Programme Manager, UNDP

15:00-16:45 **Session III | Engaging Cities, Local Authorities, and Grassroots Prevention Networks (Hosted by the Strong Cities Network)**

Showcasing examples of effective local and municipal-led PVE efforts focusing on cities in different regions, which have built local risk profiles, set up civil society partnerships, and delivered effective mitigation efforts at the local level.

Moderator: Jonathan Birdwell, Head of Policy and Research, Institute for Strategic Dialogue (facilitator of the Strong Cities Network)

- **Speakers**
 - Chadi Nachabe, Municipality Council Member Tripoli, Lebanon
 - Eng. Mohammad el-Zawahreh, Head of Local Development Unit Aaz-Zarqa Municipality, Jordan
 - Maye Seck Sy, Urban Security Advisor, Dakar
 - Ghayda Hassan, SHERPA-RAPS Project, Canada
 - Fitore Pacolli Dalipi, Mayor's Cabinet, Pristina, Kosovo
 - Omar Mattar, ZAYEDES, Zanzibar, Tanzania

16:45 -18:00 **Session IV | Safeguarding the Legal, Political, and Operational Space for Civil Society and Other Local Actors to Engage in PVE**

Discussing the challenges of governments and CSOs working together to ensure the necessary legal, political, and operational space for a "whole of society" PVE approach.

Moderator: Eric Rosand, Director, The Prevention Project

- **Speakers:**
 - Hussein Khalid, HAKI Africa, Kenya
 - Emna Jebblaoui, Institute for Human Development, Tunisia
 - Victoria Ibezim Ohaeri, Spaces for Change, Nigeria
 - Bahey El Din Hassan, Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies, Egypt



18:00-18:30 **Closing Session**

Highlighting the key elements of a “whole of society” approach to PVE, from prevention to rehabilitation and reintegration and from the community to the government, as well as noting recommendations for 2018 and beyond.

Speakers: Eric Rosand, Director, The Prevention Project and Sanam Anderlini, Co-Founder and Executive Director, ICAN

Closing remarks: Ms. Tone Skogen, Deputy Foreign Minister, Norway, TBC

19:00-21:00 **Informal Reception** (hosted by the Global Center on Cooperative Security and member of the GSX Steering Group), Vermilion, 480 Lexington Ave, New York, NY 10017