



## **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**

**Roosevelt Hotel  
45 E. 45<sup>th</sup> St., New York, NY**

**21 September 2017**

#### **Side Event: Preventing Violent Extremism through Youth Innovations 13:15-15:00**

##### **Purpose:**

The 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.

##### **Format:**

- 13:15 – 13:20: Introduction by the Chair, Saji Prellis, Director, Children & Youth Programmes, Search for Common Ground & Co-Chair, UN-Civil Society Inter-Agency Working Group on Youth and Peacebuilding
- 13:20 – 13:30: Keynote remarks: Jayathma Wickramanayake, UN Secretary-General’s Envoy on Youth, United Nations, TBC
- 13.30 – 14.20: Speakers from a diversity of youth and youth-led/focused organizations
- 14.20 – 14.50: Q&A session with a focus on detailing practical examples of youth-led contributions to PVE across civil society and concrete recommendations for future policy and programming.
- 14.50 – 15.00: Summary

##### **Context:**

Two years ago, young people from around the globe gathered in New York for the Global Youth Summit against Violent Extremism. The [action agenda](#) produced at the summit’s conclusion recognized that too many PVE initiatives frame youth as either perpetrators of violent extremism or as possible victims of recruitment into violent groups and that “this narrative fails to capture the fact that most young people are part of the solution. They are not turning to violence. Young people around the world are working to build peace and prevent violent extremism.” This agenda, which was reinforced by [Security Council Resolution 2250](#), stresses that “more than ever before, the response to violent extremism needs



meaningful youth participation at all levels... [and that to] effectively address the drivers of violent extremism and promote peace, youth must be engaged as partners in the design and implementation of relevant programs and policies.

In 2016, as part of its review of the UN's peacebuilding architecture, the Security Council [underscored](#) the important role youth can play in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and as a key aspect of the sustainability, inclusiveness and success of peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts. The council called on all Member States to increase the participation of youth in peacebuilding efforts, which of course include PVE.

Building on the momentum generated by these multilateral efforts, a growing number of youth-led or focused PVE or PVE-relevant initiatives, including new networks, have recently been launched. These efforts have included all aspects of PVE, including rehabilitation and reintegration of former violent extremists. Member States continue to be reminded of the importance of including meaningful participation of youth representatives in the development of national PVE action plans.

Nevertheless, despite the increased focus on the positive role of youth in PVE and peacebuilding more broadly, questions remain as to whether governments have taken the necessary steps to allow for effective engagement and participation of youth in the democratic political process and/or to ensure the voices of young people and youth-focused organizations are heard by policymakers in discussions around violent extremism and the design and implementation of policies and programs that aim to prevent and counter it.

The 21 September side-session will highlight some of the recent youth-led or -focused innovations in this area and identify steps that could be taken by governments and other stakeholders to up-scale or replicate effective efforts. The session will take place during the wider, full-day Global Solutions Exchange (GSX) event focused on "Innovations in Civil Society and other Locally-Led Efforts to Prevent Violent Extremism and Build Social Cohesion and Resilience." Outcomes from the side-session will be included in the GSX event report.