



UNAOC Focal Points Meeting
Friday, January 15 2016, ECOSOC Chamber, UNHQs

Concept Note

Session 1 “Building Trust: The Nexus to Preventing Violent Extremism”

The rising wave of radicalization, violent extremism and terrorist attacks committed in the name of religion, have heightened the sense of the widening cultural divide and the absence of universal values of tolerance, mutual respect of religious beliefs and cultural diversity. Nonetheless, the phenomenon does not arise in vacuum. The current backdrop was complicated by already existing conditions that include, but are not limited to, political instability, marginalization and economic inequity. These drivers provided a fertile soil for extremist groups and terrorists to recruit young people and gain their empathy for their pervert ideologies.

It would be stating the obvious to say that the recent spate of terrorist attacks have further contributed to the erosion of trust between diverse societies and cultures. Violent extremism undermines the efforts of the international community towards fostering peace and security, human rights and sustainable development.

The need for a comprehensive and united action to counter and prevent violent extremism has been acknowledged by both the General Assembly and the Security Council (See General Assembly resolution 68/276), in Assembly resolution 68/127, and during the high-level thematic debate of the General Assembly on the topic “Promoting tolerance and reconciliation: fostering peaceful, inclusive societies and countering violent extremism” which the UNAOC High Representative convened jointly with the President of the 69th session of the General Assembly and the United Nations Secretary-General on 21-22 April, 2015. Similarly, the Security Council stressed the need for such measures in its resolution 2178 and during the high-level open debate of the council on the topic “The role of youth in countering violent extremism and promoting peace” in which UNAOC participated and its High Representative addressed the Council on the topic.

In this context, the United Nations Secretary-General initiated a United Nations Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism (<http://www.un.org/Docs/journal/asp/ws.asp?m=A/70/674>). The Plan specifically addresses the drivers of violent extremism, which are recurrent and common among a wide array of countries. These were identified as the drivers or root causes conducive to violent extremism. UNAOC has actively engaged with the adhoc interagency committee that put together the United Nations Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism.

The Alliance’s projects and activities tailored around education, migration, media and youth, the 4 pillars identified by the High Level Group ten years ago, addresses those drivers.

This session aims at discussing means of advancing the role of UNAOC in contributing to international efforts in the prevention of violent extremism and restoring and building trust, as well as re-invigorating existing partnerships and exploring new ones in the efforts to preventing violent extremism.