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**Malta**

2023-2024

UNITED NATIONS  
SECURITY COUNCIL



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## Concept Note

**United Nations Security Council Arria-formula meeting organised by Malta and co-sponsored by Costa Rica, Jordan, Mexico, Mozambique, New Zealand, and Spain**

***Enhancing the capacities of Member States to ensure a gender-responsive approach to counter-terrorism***

Monday, 26 June 2023, 3pm-6pm, Conference Room 1, UNHQ

### **I. Background**

Security Council resolution 2242 (2015) calls for greater integration by Member States and the United Nations of their agendas on Women, Peace and Security (WPS), counter-terrorism and countering violent extremism conducive to terrorism; and urges Member States and requests relevant UN entities to conduct and gather ‘gender-sensitive research and data collection on the drivers of radicalisation for women, and the impacts of counter-terrorism strategies on women’s human rights and women’s organisations’.<sup>1</sup> Resolution 2242 (2015) also requests the Security Council Counter Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED) to integrate gender as a cross-cutting issue throughout its activities, with the Council reaffirming this request in CTED’s subsequent mandate renewal resolutions, including resolution 2395 (2017) and 2617 (2021).<sup>2</sup>

In resolution 2617 (2021), the Council reaffirmed the need to increase attention to women and youth in all work on threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts and noted the importance of ensuring full, equal, and meaningful participation of women and youth in developing strategies to prevent and counter-terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism.

<sup>1</sup> S/RES/2242 (2015)

<sup>2</sup> S/RES/2395 (2017) and S/RES/2617 (2021)



The Security Council further recognises that terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism have differing impacts on the human rights of women and girls and that, in turn, counter-terrorism strategies may have a differential impact on women, including women's human rights and women's organisations.<sup>3</sup> Gender-responsive approaches are therefore essential, not only in assessing and responding to the impacts of counter-terrorism measures on women and girls, but to strengthening the effectiveness of prevention and counter-terrorism efforts and respect for human rights. Effective measures to prevent and counter terrorism and respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms, and the rule of law are complementary, mutually reinforcing and constitute an essential part of successful counter-terrorism efforts.

Ensuring a gender responsive approach to preventing and countering terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism requires a number of elements, including, *inter alia*, a focus on: (i) how structural and systematic gender inequalities can create conditions conducive to terrorism and violent extremism; (ii) how the ideology, strategy, and funding of terrorist groups are shaped by different understandings of gender roles and norms, including misogyny and militarised masculinities; (iii) the gendered impacts and forms of violence carried out by terrorist groups; (iv) the gendered dimensions and impact of counter-terrorism legislation and national security measures; and (v) the WPS Agenda and women's roles in counter-terrorism efforts and national security strategies.

Although awareness of the need to ensure gender-sensitive counter-terrorism practices has grown, the implementation of such approaches at the global, regional, and national levels continues to encounter numerous challenges.<sup>4</sup> These challenges are wide-ranging and include lack of Member State capacity, such as lack of understanding and specialised expertise in responding to the gendered dynamics underpinning terrorism and violent extremism; and weak rule of law and justice sector institutions.

For instance, lack of Member States' capacity to build fair and effective criminal justice systems, with respect for human rights, can hamper efforts to hold terrorists accountable for crimes against women and girls, including crimes of sexual and gender-based violence. While the Security Council recognises that acts of sexual and gender-based violence are used as a tactic of terrorism,<sup>5</sup> there continues to be near-complete impunity for human trafficking and sexual violence perpetrated in a terrorism context.<sup>6</sup>

Accountability for sexual and gender-based violence perpetrated by security forces engaged in counter-terrorism operations also remains low. Ensuring a gender-responsive approach to preventing and countering terrorism includes building the criminal justice capacities of Member States to address gaps in the investigation and prosecution of sexual and gender-based violence in terrorist contexts, violence which disproportionately affects women and girls.

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<sup>3</sup> S/RES/2242 (2015), preamble and paragraph 12

<sup>4</sup> Global survey of the implementation of Security Council resolution 1373 (2001) and other relevant resolutions by Member States, S/2021/972 (2021), paragraph 730, available at

[https://www.un.org/securitycouncil/ctc/sites/www.un.org.securitycouncil.ctc/files/2021105\\_1373\\_gis.pdf](https://www.un.org/securitycouncil/ctc/sites/www.un.org.securitycouncil.ctc/files/2021105_1373_gis.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> S/RES/2242 (2015), S/RES/2331 (2016) and S/RES/2388 (2017)

<sup>6</sup> Global survey of the implementation of Security Council resolution 1373 (2001) and other relevant resolutions by Member States, S/2021/972 (2021), paragraph 740



A range of UN entities offer capacity-building support to strengthen gender-responsive approaches to the prevention and countering of terrorism and violent extremism, including UN Women, the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, the UN Office of Counter Terrorism and the UN Office of Drugs and Crime. Capacity-building assistance is also provided by other multilateral organisations, both on the international and regional levels. One such organisation is the International Institute for Justice and the Rule of Law, whose creation was inspired by the Global Counter-Terrorism Forum.

In addition, the Security Council underscores that neutral, expert assessment of the implementation of resolutions 1373 (2001), 1624 (2005), 2178 (2014), and other relevant resolutions, is the core function of CTED, and that the analysis and recommendations from these assessments are an invaluable aid to Member States in identifying and addressing gaps in implementation and capacity. They call on UNOCT, all other relevant United Nations funds and programs, Member States, donors, and recipients to use these expert assessments as they design technical assistance and capacity-building efforts, including in furthering the balanced implementation of the Global Counter Terrorism Strategy across all four of its pillars.<sup>7</sup>

## **II. Objectives and Guiding Questions**

The meeting aims to consider the importance of building the capacity of Member States to ensure gender-responsive, human rights-compliant approaches to preventing and countering terrorism. In this regard, the meeting seeks to identify the challenges experienced by Member States in mainstreaming gender in counter-terrorism responses and the capacity needs of Member States in this area. The event will also highlight good practices and capacity-building supports available to Member States in ensuring gender-responsive approaches to prevent and counter-terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism, including the investigation and prosecution of terrorist crimes against women and girls.

In consideration of the objectives of the meeting, the following questions may help guide interventions by Member States, which are also encouraged to share good practices and lessons learned in ensuring gender-responsive criminal justice approaches to terrorism and counter-terrorism:

1. How can gender equality, which is central to a human rights-based approach, contribute to the prevention and countering of terrorism and violent extremism?
2. What additional steps can the Security Council, including through its Counter Terrorism Committee, take to ensure support greater gender mainstreaming by Member States in their counter-terrorism measures and policies?
3. What challenges do Member States experience in mainstreaming a gender-responsive approach to preventing and countering terrorism? What capacity-building supports are available to address these challenges and what additional supports are needed?

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<sup>7</sup> S/RES/2617 (2021), OP4



4. What good practices and lessons learned can Member States share regarding their efforts to mainstream gender, respect human rights, and uphold the rule of law in efforts to counter and prevent terrorism and violent extremism?
5. How can UN entities and other international and regional organisations which help build the capacity of Member States to counter and prevent terrorism ensure greater attention to gender considerations? How can the UN Global Counter Terrorism Strategy ensure greater focus to this issue?

### III. Format

The Arria-formula meeting will take place on Monday 26 June from 3pm to 6pm in Conference Room 1, UN Headquarters in New York. H.E. Ambassador Vanessa Frazier, Permanent Representative of Malta to the United Nations, will chair the meeting.

Briefers:

- Ms Sarah Hendriks, Deputy Executive Director a.i. for Policy, Programme, Civil Society and Intergovernmental Support, UN Women
- Ms Aleksandra Dier, Gender Coordinator, Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate
- Mr Steven Hill, Executive Secretary, International Institute for Justice and the Rule of Law
- Civil Society Representative (tbc)

This meeting is open for participation by all Member States and Permanent Observers. Following opening remarks by the Permanent Representative of Malta, briefers will be invited to make their statements. This will be followed by interventions and questions by Members of the Security Council. The floor will then be opened to other Member States. To allow as many interventions as possible, each statement is limited to three minutes.

Requests for inscription to the list of speakers are invited to be made at the e-mail address of the Permanent Mission of Malta: [unsc.newyork@gov.mt](mailto:unsc.newyork@gov.mt) with the subject line 'CT Security Council Arria meeting'. Inscription to the list of speakers closes at 12pm on Friday, 23 June. The list of speakers will be distributed to the participants ahead of the meeting. All speakers, including those inscribed in the list of speakers who may be unable to take the floor due to time constraints, are invited to submit their statements in writing at the e-mail address: [unsc.newyork@gov.mt](mailto:unsc.newyork@gov.mt) during the course of the day of Monday, 26 June.

A compilation of statements submitted in writing will be distributed to the UN member states after the meeting. The meeting will be held in English with simultaneous translation into the other five official languages of the UN.

For any questions, please contact the Permanent Mission of Malta at the following e-mail address: [unsc.newyork@gov.mt](mailto:unsc.newyork@gov.mt).