

Civic Space and Counter- Terrorism

“ Global Counter Terrorism Strategy:

Encourages Member States and the Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact entities to continue engagement with civil society in accordance with their mandates, to support the role of civil society actors in the design, implementation and monitoring of the Strategy, and encourages Member States to create and maintain an enabling environment for civil society, including a legal framework that protects and promotes human rights, in accordance with international human rights law. ”

Through their participation as part of the democratic process, civil society actors make vital contributions to efforts, at all levels, from local to global, to prevent and counter terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism. The UN Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and international human rights law provide for meaningful, inclusive, and safe civil society participation in public affairs, freedoms of opinion and expression, of association and peaceful assembly, and privacy.

— COUNTER-TERRORISM MEASURES HAVE NEGATIVELY IMPACTED CIVIC SPACE ONLINE AND OFFLINE. THEY:

- Wrongfully label and criminalize **civil society** as “terrorists”, “extremists”, “foreign agents”, “sympathizers of terrorist groups” or “associated with terrorism”.
- Impose **burdensome registration** requirements, restrictions on funding, travel bans, revocation of citizenship, deportation and sanctions.
- Lead to **undue interference** based on allegedly “terrorism-related” content.
- **Unduly invade privacy**, including through targeted surveillance.
- **Restrict peaceful assemblies** and criminalize peaceful protesters.
- Lead to **harassment, physical attacks, arrests and killings** of civil society actors.
- Are used to cover up **reprisals** and intimidation for cooperation with regional and international organizations, including the UN.

+ CIVIL SOCIETY ACTORS AND HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS CONTRIBUTE TO PREVENTING AND COUNTERING TERRORISM ONLINE AND OFFLINE. THEY:

- + Channel grievances from grassroots levels and **help identify priorities for policy making.**
- + **Provide expertise** and lead initiatives to address the drivers of terrorism and violent extremism.
- + **Enhance dialogue** and act as bridge between authorities and different communities, including those that are historically divided, to build trust and promote mutual respect.
- + **Promote accountability** for human rights violations and assist with access to justice for victims of terrorism, including victims of sexual and gender-based violence.

COUNTER-TERRORISM WILL BE EFFECTIVE IF BASED ON HUMAN RIGHTS

