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Seventy-sixth year****The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy****Letter dated 6 August 2021 from the Permanent Representative of
Mexico to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General
and the President of the Security Council**

I have the honour to transmit herewith the Chair's summary of the Arria-formula meeting convened by Mexico, Estonia, Norway, the United Kingdom and the United States on 28 July, entitled "Preventing terrorism and violent extremism through tackling gender stereotypes, masculinities and structural gender inequality" (see annex).**

Copies of the statements delivered by Member States and by the briefers – Michèle Coninsx, Executive Director of the Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate, David Duriesmith, a lecturer in gender and politics at the University of Sheffield, and Fauziya Abdi Ali, President of Women in International Security-Horn of Africa – are also provided.

I would kindly request that you circulate the present letter and its annex as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 123, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) **Juan Ramón de la Fuente**
Permanent Representative of Mexico to the United Nations

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** Circulated in the language of submission only.



Annex to the letter dated 6 August 2021 from the Permanent Representative of Mexico to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

Security Council Arria-formula meeting

“Preventing terrorism and violent extremism through tackling gender stereotypes, masculinities and structural gender inequality”

Wednesday, 28 July 2021

3 p.m.

Chair’s summary

Mexico, in co-sponsorship with Estonia, Norway, the United Kingdom and the United States, convened a Security Council Arria-formula meeting with the objective of discussing and analysing how a focus on masculinities, gender stereotypes and gender equality can allow for a more comprehensive gender approach by the UN Security Council to tackle the issue of radicalization to violence and to more effectively prevent terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism.

The meeting was chaired by Ambassador Juan Ramón de la Fuente, Permanent Representative of Mexico to the United Nations, and was open to all Member States of the UN, Permanent Observers, and non-governmental organizations. The meeting took place virtually and was webcast live on the UN Web TV platform. Recordings of the meeting have been made available online.

Three briefers participated in the meeting: Ms. Michèle Coninsx, Assistant Secretary-General and Executive Director of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED); Dr. David Duriesmith, lecturer in gender and politics at The University of Sheffield; and Ms. Fauziya Abdi Ali, President of Women in International Security – Horn of Africa.

In her remarks, Ms. Coninsx described how relevant resolutions of the Security Council request CTED to integrate gender as a cross-cutting issue throughout its activities, as terrorist groups exploit ideas about femininity and masculinity in their narratives, recruitment strategies and operational methods, affirming there is a growing awareness that integrating gender into counter-terrorism and countering violent extremism (CVE) must therefore include a focus on masculinities. She further stressed that in our counter-terrorism and CVE responses, consideration of gender perspectives and efforts to address the role of gender inequality in violent extremism conducive to terrorism must be strengthened, while being careful not to perpetuate gender stereotypes, as insufficient reflection of notions of masculinity has led to harmful practices, for example, when in some existing policies and programs young men and boys are predominantly seen as a group of risk of radicalization to violence, and girls stereotyped as exclusively passive victims, reinforcing existing feelings of alienation and marginalization among many young people, regardless of their gender.

Next, Dr. Duriesmith explained what should be understood by “masculinities” and described how masculinities that shape an individual man’s life will differ among social groups, each placing certain pressures on them, setting standards for what behaviour is acceptable, and often resulting in punishment for failure to live up to these expectations. He shared that research tends to suggest three interrelated ways that masculinities shape men’s participation in violent extremism: the first one regarding societal expectations which contribute to men’s participation in violence; the second one, relating to the organizational subculture of violent extremist groups; and the third one, which responds to individual factors on a person’s life-history that might lead him to join a violent network. He affirmed that we can work with men to

appeal to different gendered desires, such as fatherhood, employment or respect in the community as a way to create alternative pathways to affirming their status as men that do not involve violence.

Finally, Ms. Abdi Ali stated that, while sometimes there is a tendency to assume that all men are equal, the reality is that access to opportunities is different, resulting in diverse ways in which each group tries to exercise their power and control. Based on her experience in the field, specifically in Somalia, she narrated that communities have a notion about gender issues involving only women, stressing out the importance of changing this notion by explaining that it also involves men and the importance of working with them to address inequalities in the communities, by creating networks and addressing toxic masculinities and privileges. She said this could be done by providing role models, among different actions, such as putting men in gender strategic roles, leading policies to prevent young boys from participating in violent extremism.

After these presentations, Ambassador de la Fuente expressed that despite the fact that there is no reference to gender in the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, there is a collective understanding that terrorism and violent extremism cannot be prevented and tackled without the full enjoyment of human rights and gender as cross-cutting elements. He also stated that while much emphasis has been made on the need to have a holistic gender approach, the notion of “masculinities” has not been incorporated neither to the narrative nor assessment of these issues, both at the General Assembly and the Security Council, even when terrorist groups themselves deliberately exploit ideas and stereotypes about masculinities in their propaganda and recruitment efforts. Therefore, the UN needs to address this issue frontally and with full transparency in order to close a key gap in the current processes of radicalization to violence by young men, and to understand the role that misogyny plays in the processes of radicalization and within the ideology of terrorism groups. He concluded by pointing out that the notion of masculinity is not in itself negative, rather that it is important to build and consolidate positive masculinities in order to achieve gender equality and resilient societies with shared values.

In addition to Mexico, a total of 23 Member States of the UN expressed their positions, including the 4 co-sponsors, the remaining 10 members of the Security Council and other member States, plus one permanent observer and one non-governmental organization.¹

In general, all participants agreed on the importance of discussing and placing this important matter in the counter-terrorism and PVE agenda, and thanked Mexico and the co-sponsors for convening the meeting. They all shared their considerations regarding diverse aspects on this matter.

The vast majority of Member States made reference to the way terrorist organizations use negative hyper masculine stereotypes directed at vulnerable groups to recruit young men, spreading their radical ideologies through narratives on identity formation. They also agreed on the necessity of further analysing and understanding the needs of young men in order to prevent radicalization, and described the ways in which each one of them is tackling the situation through the implementation of

¹ Co-sponsors (in order of participation): Norway, United States, Estonia, United Kingdom. Other members of the Security Council (in order of participation): Viet Nam, Niger, Tunisia, Ireland, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Kenya, India, China, Russia and France. Permanent Observer: European Union; Other Member States (in order of participation): Australia, Ecuador, Germany, Ukraine, Malta, United Arab Emirates, Canada and Liechtenstein. Non-governmental organization: Global Center on Cooperative Security.

policies in line with the Security Council's resolutions, the Woman, Peace and Security Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Some of them also made reference to their specific experiences in dealing with terrorism and terrorist attacks, recognizing the harmful influence of ideologies based on patriarchal gender roles, which aim to bring back old values based on male dominance, women repression and discrimination against all forms of diversity, such as members from the LGBT+ community. Many participants also mentioned the need to keep working closely with civil society organizations, mainly at the local level in order to identify the specific vulnerabilities in each community, rather than trying to build solutions based on a one-size-fits-all approach. They also mentioned that the upcoming 20th anniversary of Resolution [1373 \(2001\)](#) and the establishment of the Counter-Terrorism Committee is a good opportunity to keep reflecting upon this issue.

The Global Center on Cooperative Security suggested that, to ensure equitable participation and leadership of women, girls and people with diverse gender identities in countering terrorism and preventing violent extremism, the following issues should be addressed: language: stronger gender-related language in CT and PVE resolutions; resources: hire experienced gender experts and achieving gender parity; research: mainly on the way gender dynamics play a role in terrorism and extremism; and partnerships: between the UN and humanitarian actors representing diverse gender identities.

In closing the session, the briefers answered questions asked by some Member States, and reaffirmed that, in order to tackle radicalization, research is fundamental as it allows obtaining grounded knowledge which is necessary to develop a holistic and careful approach for each culture. They also emphasized on the importance of prevention.

After thanking all participants, including the three briefers, Ambassador de la Fuente indicated that this was the beginning of the conversation and that follow up actions would be considered and proceeded to adjourn the meeting.

Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED)

Security Council Arria-formula meeting

“Preventing terrorism and violent extremism through tackling gender stereotypes, masculinities, and structural gender inequality”

Wednesday, 28 July 2021, 3.00 p.m. EDT

Statement of

**Assistant Secretary-General Michèle Coninsx,
Executive Director, CTED**

Thank you, Mr. President.

In its resolutions 2242 (2015) and 2395 (2017), the Security Council requests CTED to integrate gender as a cross-cutting issue throughout its activities.

Gender mainstreaming is thus an extremely important aspect of CTED’s mandate in working on behalf of the Counter-Terrorism Committee.

The term *gender* refers to socially constructed identities, attributes and roles for women and men and the resulting social, cultural and economic power dynamics between and among men and women.

Gender mainstreaming is a strategy for ensuring that women’s and men’s experiences are an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes, so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated.

CTED strives to ensure that this full meaning of gender mainstreaming is integrated into all its work.

We have highlighted the role of masculinities in several of our analytical publications.

Last November, CTED worked with the International Peace Institute to organize a series of consultations with academics, policymakers and practitioners to reflect on the ways in which the consideration of masculinities can be more meaningfully integrated into counter-terrorism efforts.

Mr. President, Excellencies, distinguished participants,

Terrorist groups themselves are very aware of the power of gender.

They exploit ideas about femininity and masculinity in their narratives, recruitment strategies, and operational methods.

There is a growing awareness that integrating gender into counter-terrorism and CVE must therefore include a focus on masculinities.

This is reflected in a growing body of research into the relevance of masculinity to various aspects of terrorism and counter-terrorism.

Terrorist groups across the ideological spectrum have shown themselves to be highly adept at tapping into gendered grievances.

ISIL employs concepts of masculinity to address male feelings of disempowerment, resentment and marginalization in various local contexts.

ISIL glorifies violence against women, offering sex and sexual slavery as spoils of war, with the aim of reinforcing notions of hyper-masculinity and attracting male recruits.

Violent masculinity is also a core element of terrorism based on xenophobia, racism and other forms of intolerance, or in the name of religion or belief.

We are all aware of the deeply misogynistic ideas that underpin the ideology of such movements, including rape culture, violence against women and control over female reproductive health.

We also see how those ideas intersect with, and reinforce, the racist, Islamophobic and anti-Semitic ideas of such groups.

Incorporating a focus on these constructions of masculinity into our analysis and policies is thus an essential part of addressing the root causes of radicalization to terrorism.

In our counter-terrorism and CVE responses, we must continue to strengthen our consideration of gender perspectives, as well as our efforts to address the role of gender inequality in violent extremism conducive to terrorism.

Yet, as we collectively seek to better integrate these issues into our work, we must be careful not to perpetuate gender stereotypes and cause gendered harms.

Insufficient reflection on notions of masculinity and on how those notions intersect with racial, ethnic and religious stereotypes has led to harmful practices in some cases.

For example, in some existing policies and programmes, young men and boys are predominantly, or even exclusively, seen as a group at risk of radicalization to violent extremism.

This approach stigmatizes these young men and boys.

In turn, girls are often stereotyped as passive victims.

Such “blanket” assumptions reinforce existing feelings of alienation and marginalization among many young people, regardless of their gender, and fail to safeguard their rights.

We must therefore work to ensure that all policies and programmes developed in this area include robust monitoring of their gender and human rights impact.

Mr. President, Excellencies, distinguished participants,

CTED remains committed to assisting Member States to implement effective, human rights-compliant, and gender-responsive counter-terrorism measures that prioritize addressing the conditions conducive to terrorism and violent extremism, including gender inequality.

Thank you, Mr. President.

In order to have an effective, ethical and sustainable response to violent extremism it is essential to address the role of masculinities. When using the term masculinities, it might be easy to get the impression that we are refereeing to some biological, inherent or immutable qualities of men. This is not what scholars mean by it. Rather by masculinities we mean the range of expected standards about how men should behave, idealized notions about what men might strive to be like, the structures that shape those notions and the practices that embody them.

Importantly, scholars who work on this topic use the term masculinities to indicate that there is no single universal masculinity, or a linear spectrum from feminine to masculine. There are multiple, contested and competing forms of masculinity in any given society and significant variation between societies. This means that the ideas about what makes someone manly, the institutions that police his behavior and the practices that are seen to demonstrate manliness will likely not be the same for a young builder in Brooklyn as they will be for an elder statesman in the United Nations headquarters.

The masculinities that shape an individual man's life will differ, but each will place certain pressures on them, set standards for what behavior is acceptable and often result in punishment for failure to live up to this expectation. The understanding of masculinities as plural means that most researchers would not draw a neat distinction between the 'toxic masculinity' of some violent men, and the valorous masculinity of good men. Rather masculinities are primarily about larger social institutions that guide men towards particular behavior rather than their individual morality.

Due to this understanding, research tends to suggest three interrelated ways that masculinities shape men's participation in violent extremism. First there are societal expectations which contribute to men's participation in violence. If societies send the message that when men are humiliated they should respond with violence, that it is their role to violently protect others and that they should fight for their peers no matter what, then society will create masculinities that are conducive to VE.

Second we can think about how masculinities shape the organizational sub-culture of violent extremist groups, networks and social milieus. Violent extremist groups often express distinct ideas about how men and women should behave, what is honorable, what is cowardly, and what is an appropriate response to certain experiences. In one context the rise of women's rights might be seen as a threat to men's role in society and solicit the kind of violence we see from Incels. Or the expectation for men to protect the weak against oppression may convince others to join a foreign fighter networks. These sub-cultures foster particular masculinities, they reward certain practices as the height of manliness, punish others and demand demonstrations of machismo from their members.

Finally there are the individual factors on a person's life-history that might lead him to join a violent network. These can include a desire to be a real man or be tough among one's peers. At each of these levels masculinities matter. It is not just the flawed 'toxic masculinity' of some men that is at play, it is the way in which mainstream expectations, structures and practices are shape men's participation in VE.

Finally, existing P/CVE efforts overwhelming focus on changing men's relationship with violence. By targeting masculinities we have the capacity to develop new tools in addressing this intractable problem. While masculinities contribute to men's likelihood to participate in VE, shape how they participate when they join and create barriers to their leaving, masculinities are not fixed or unchangeable. Both individual's men's relationship with masculinities and masculinities in society at large change.

Men are often striving to live up to contradictory standards of what it means to be a man, with competing obligations and desires. This means that we can work with men to appeal to different gendered desires, such as fatherhood, employment or respect in the community as a way create alternative pathways to affirming their status as men that do not involve violence.

Alternatively we might work to weaken the importance of publicly demonstrating one's manliness all together. This work requires us to interrogate and challenge ideas that are often left invisible in a society where men's behavior is still seen as natural, inevitable and unchangeable. It requires us to address gender in P/CVE work not only in relation to women and girls, but to work with men as men. In doing this we can create new opportunities for men to interrogate their own relationship with violence or may even challenge the associations between being a man and using violence in society at large.

If P/CVE work is to be effective, ethical and sustainable masculinities and how they shape men's lives must be addressed. Thank you.

Response to questions

Thank you very much for all the thoughtful engagements with this difficult topic. There is a real need for more specific and clear language around men and masculinities in WPS work.

Current terminology often relies on fairly vague terminology like engaging and enlisting men and boys. But engaging and enlisting men and boys in what? My own research on efforts to engage men and boys in WPS globally have suggested that very often practitioners and policy makers don't necessarily know what men and boys have to do with WPS or what they are meant to do with the language of engaging and enlisting. We need to be much more clear about what that work is trying to achieved. As in engage men as allies to support women, but also work with men to shift their own practices and relationships with gender and violence.

To the question from Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and many others on localization, this is absolutely essential. My own work on the topic is in collaboration with Dr Noor Huda Ismail from Indonesia and works with Indonesian practitioners on the ground. You can't do this work in a way that is universalized. This is why my own research tries to avoid using toxic masculinity because sometimes it can give the impression that we are talking about the same manifestation of masculinity across all these instances. There are connections in the way that these masculinities are patriarchal and center violence but they are not exactly the same. I will very briefly end with a comparison of two individuals to hopefully give this a concrete example. Some of the work I did with Indonesian foreign fighters we were talking with a young man who had been recruited as a foreign fighter and had been involved with terrorist attacks. He was recruited not through an ideological commitment to the cause. He was involved with motorcycle gangs in Jakarta and was hanging out with male friendship groups. At the time he began sleeping in a mosque and was encouraged to begin to participate in study groups. He

viewed this as a way to become more respectable because he came from a poor background and was not given much status as a man. At the same time the appeals that were made to him were drawing on the history of anti-colonial resistance in Indonesia and reframing those narratives in inaccurate ways that justified violence. In this case this led him to be involved in the conflict in the Philippines, to be involved in attacks on police officers and a range of other violence. That manifestation of masculinity reflects the particular history and dynamics in Indonesia. In comparison I think about my own home of Australia and the example of Brenton Tarrant who committed the Christchurch attacks in New Zealand. The way in which far right radicalization in Australia functions as shown by academics like Mario Peucker, Debra Smith and Muhammad Iqbal reflects the particular history of white supremacy and violence in the Australian context. When you think about both these figures, the man I am talking about in Indonesia and Brenton Tarrant they are both motivated by masculinity. They are both motivated by what Michael Kimmel might refer to as aggrieved entitlement, but their masculinities are not necessarily all that similar. The myths they are appealing to, the role models they are looking up to, their practices they read as being masculine are not the same and we need much more locally grounded knowledge, research and engagement about how this functions in specific locations, specific groups and communities. It has to be focused on structures as you say but it needs to be wholistic and careful in our attention. There would be a real risk if we started to treat this as there being one terrorist masculinity and we just need to go out and find it then address it. Because that is not what the research so far has been suggesting. Thank you for the opportunity to speak and I look forward to seeing where these conversations go in the future.

UNSC Open Arrria Formula Meeting

Talking Points

Fauziya Ali

Theme: Preventing terrorism and violent extremism through tackling gender stereotype, masculinities and structural gender inequality

Objective: To discuss and analyze how a focus on masculinity, gender stereotypes and gender inequality can allow for a more comprehensive gender approach by the security council to tackle the issue of radicalization of violence and to more effectively prevent terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorists.

Salutations

It is really a pleasure to be here to discuss the issue of masculinity - the other side of gender.

It is a topic seldom discussed in forums and how it intersects particularly with gender inequality.

1. Patriarchal masculinity sustains gender inequality and also social inequality.

Issue of hierarchy amongst men: Perception that all men are equal, however this is not the case. Not all men can access the same social, economic and political gains. This leads to frustrations as those who are unable to access the same level of socio political and economic gains as others in their communities. For some frustrations especially when seeking to reinforce their own power and control, perpetuate violence against women and girls.

To understand how masculinity shapes violence towards women and girls means understanding tools used by VE to assert power over its members.

For Somalia, violent extremist group uses subjugation and commodification of women and girls as a strategy to achieve control and domination of the population. Marriage became a tool for continued promotion of subjugation and promotion of gender inequality.

Women who owned businesses were denied opportunity to make a living. "Khat" (Qat) was one of the micro enterprises for women especially those living in low-income neighborhoods. At the heart of taking away livelihoods was also to create dependency towards spouses and male relatives in the households. This was a method to promote dominance as men were considered breadwinners and protectors of the family and community.

As for education, access to education and form of education as also controlled which also promoted gender inequality and instrumentalization of women in particular.

2. Privileges of Masculinity

Thinking masculine as superior is one of the foundations of gender inequalities. It allows for a few to continue to benefit in being associated with privileges of masculinity, including increasing

responsibilities and power dynamics for those who embody toxic masculinities even in contemporary society today.

As long as women continue to be considered “weaker beings” and therefore in need of male protection, violence towards women will continue. This is because this makes it an entry point as it increases vulnerability of women towards male violence. This is also the case when toxic masculinity is perpetuated and lauded, resulting in skewed notions of what it means to be a “man” increasing vulnerability to recruitment into violent groups including gangs.

3. Working with communities – Transformative approaches

Gender is still a concept that is considered to be about women especially at community level. From the onset, the need to demystify the concept of gender being only about women and the need to collectively address gender inequalities in our communities and the benefits of equal society. This is why as WIIS, sisters without borders network was formed.

The network began working with women peace builders in the communities. Despite the network being called “sisters without borders” it includes male champions of gender. In societies such as the ones we work, it is critical to work with men in promotion of gender equality.

4. Policies

For a long time, policies and instruments around gender such as the UNSC 1325 and National Action Plans have not addressed the impact of environmental shocks including climate change. It is only recently that governments have included how climate change is impacting peace and security.

For women, especially nomadic communities such as my own, during famines and drought, we note an increase in early marriages and school dropouts. Boys are pulled out of schools to support their parents in seeking alternative livelihoods and greener pastures for animals. Girls are forced into early marriage as a “form of protection” as well as gains for the family, making them vulnerable to abuse. Reactions to environmental shocks can deny both boys and girls their Rights to education, psychological wellbeing and health.

It is critical as member states when crafting policies and interventions to broaden that scope of inquiry into gender roles and putting context when it comes to conflict cycles.

The 7th Global Counter Terrorism Strategy revisions were issued recently. I would like to commend the fact more stakeholders including civil society were included in the revision process of the strategy.

(Example on the great approach by UN Women to have civil society include their recommendations to the revisions through a global digital consultation held with 140 civil society partners from across the 43 countries)

In comparison to the 2018 version and the more recent version, it is notable the changes done. The 2018 version had not set a high bar to be frank, it had gender biases and barely mentioned women rights.

As we collectively work together to improve the lives of societies, it is important that our resolutions, policies, strategies and instruments address the critical aspects of inequality wholistically.

Without addressing the toxic masculinities and the privileges of masculinity we will never have an equal society and so the transformative approach should really look into providing concrete, participatory and comprehensive interventions including but not limited to economic opportunities for disempowered young men, and supporting women peace builders who are in the frontlines of promoting peace in our societies but are often forgotten or invisible!

When you empower men, positively (e.g male leadership programs), you are also empowering women! You create a society that reduces vulnerabilities and reduces the risk of violence against women. A society that accepts violence towards women and girls is a society that is ripe for violent extremism to take hold!

This is also a challenge to those member states that are not providing male role models/person who leads on gender docket. Applauding the gains made so far in many countries that have more women in key positions including critical ministries such as Defense, finance etc. It is important to also change perceptions of gender ministries to be led by women! Men too can lead these positions while ensuring women too have leadership positions.

(Give example of Kenya that champions gender equality if time permits ...I come from a great country, Kenya where even the president himself is championing gender equality. When you look at who is the heads/ cabinet secretaries in different African states who are leading gender, it is still women who are given those positions. I think its time also men are given those positions so that they can talk on issues to do with gender and promote gender equality at that level.)

Thank you very much.

Thank you to Mexico for organizing an Arria on this important topic, one that deserves our attention. And thank you to the briefers for sharing your insights.

Consideration of your views will help us to better address this driver of terrorism and violent extremism.

Colleagues,

Taking a gender-transformative approach means not only considering women and girls—but also analysing violence committed by, and against, *men and boys*.

As well as addressing: patriarchal gender norms, harmful stereotypes, and expressions of power and control.

In this respect, let me specify a few areas where we see that particular attention is needed:

First, we must address harmful masculinities that fuel radicalisation to violent extremism.

My country sadly knows this all too well.

Last week marked the 10-year anniversary of the 2011 terrorist attack in Norway, perpetrated by a right-wing extremist who was deeply Islamophobic, and desired the restoration of patriarchal gender roles.

From these kinds of experiences, it is clear that we must recognize violent masculinities, and fears of emasculation, as drivers of radicalisation.

Second, we must counter extremist organizations' strategic use of gender stereotypes and harmful masculinities to spur recruitment.

This includes the use of hyper-masculine images, trafficking, sexual slavery, and, as Special Rapporteur Ní Aoláin [*“Nii-Ai-Lân”*] has pointed out: promises of “access to sexual gratification, marriage and guaranteed income” as part of their gendered propaganda to attract recruits.

And third, recognising that both men and women have a diversity of roles in extremist organizations: Men are not exclusively perpetrators. And women are not only victims.

Women recruit, radicalise, and enact horrific attacks, yet are often left out of de-radicalisation and DDR processes.

While men and boys are also victims of sexual violence by extremist organizations, yet they are often left without adequate psychosocial resources or protection.

Comprehensive gender analysis is needed throughout the design, implementation, and reporting of CT and PVE processes to take these factors into account.

Colleagues,

We must build upon the work already undertaken at the UN on these issues.

Lessons learned from studies on gender roles and stereotypes—like those lead by UNDP—should be integrated into the UN’s wider approach to PVE and CT.

Our CT and PVE approaches must also be specifically gender-transformative.

And, at an absolute minimum, not reproduce gender stereotypes and inequalities.

A truly gender-transformative approach would ensure the full, equal, and meaningful participation of both women and men- with a particular focus on youth - in all CT and PVE strategies.

We look forward to continuing this important discussion.

**And I wanted to close with a question to the briefers:
if they could perhaps expand on how this approach
also could help strengthen the WPS aspect of PVE?**

Thank you.

Ambassador Jeffrey DeLaurentis
Senior Advisor for Special Political Affairs
New York, New York
July 28, 2021

AS DELIVERED

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman Juan Ramón. And the United States is pleased to co-sponsor today's discussion with Mexico, Estonia, Norway, and the United Kingdom. We thank Ms. Abdi Ali for the work she is doing in Kenya and across East Africa to amplify the voices of women in building peace and security, and preventing and countering violent extremism. We are also grateful for the participation of Dr. Duriesmith and CTED Executive Director Coninsx. Thank you all very much for your interesting and thought-provoking presentations.

When the United States passed the Women, Peace, and Security Act of 2017 we became the first country in the world to have a comprehensive law aimed at improving the participation of women in peace and security processes, conflict prevention, peace building, and decision-making institutions in line with Security Council Resolution 1325. This was followed, two years later, by the U.S. Women, Peace, and Security Strategy, which advanced our efforts a bit further. The Strategy focuses on ensuring women are empowered to contribute to and lead peace and security efforts, and they're equipped with the skills and resources to succeed.

And following that, in 2018, the United States released a Strategy to Support Women and Girls at Risk from Violent Extremism and Conflict. This strategy aims to limit the destabilizing effects of violent extremism, including the risks it poses to women and girls, by supporting them as actors in preventing terrorist radicalization in their families, communities, countries, and online. The strategy also recognizes that men are not the only ones at risk of radicalization. It looks to prevent women and girls from being radicalized. And for those who have already been impacted by radicalization, it underscores the importance of targeted programs to intervene, disengage, rehabilitate, and reintegrate women foreign terrorist fighters.

It's important that we recognize the role that gender stereotypes play in radicalization. In June, the White House released our first National Strategy for Countering Domestic Terrorism, which highlights the threat from racially or ethnically motivated violent extremism. It notes the need for specialized analysis, including on ways gender-motivated violence can have implications for domestic terrorist threats. So, in our view, the international community must focus more on addressing how gender norms – including conceptions of masculinity – play a role in recruiting, maintaining, and expanding the influence of violent extremists.

We have created gender analysis tools to better understand how gender norms, and societal conceptions of masculinity and femininity, contribute to conflict and violence. And we would urge Member States to similarly expand the application of gender analyses to inform their domestic and foreign policy strategies on countering violent extremism and terrorism. Similarly, we encourage the UN to develop gender analysis tools and guidance specific to violent extremism and terrorism.

The United States will continue our efforts to advance our understanding of this complex issue – it's a blind spot none of us can afford to ignore. And, of course, we look forward to collaborating with UN and Member States to develop and advance more effective approaches to counter violent extremism and terrorism.

Thank you very much.

**United Nations Security Council Open Arria Formula Meeting Preventing
terrorism and violent extremism through tackling gender stereotypes,
masculinities, and structural gender inequality**

Estonia is honoured to co-sponsor today's Arria on the important topic of preventing terrorism and violent extremism alongside Mexico, the US, the UK and Norway. I would like to thank the briefers for their insightful briefings.

The Security Council has been committed to the Women, Peace and Security agenda for over two decades. A year after the adoption of the seminal resolution 1325, the Council also adopted the comprehensive resolution on countering terrorism. It is now good to see the Council's own gender-sensitive approach to devote attention to the notion of masculinity.

If we are to effectively prevent terrorism, we need more understanding of **how terrorism is enabled and perpetuated**.

As we have heard today, certain masculinities play a role in **radicalization to violence** and are related to the **uninhibited** spread of terrorist ideology among people vulnerable to respective narratives. Narratives that shape perceptions of the world, guide the processes of identity formation and play an important part in establishing group identity. It is important to become aware of the potentially harmful effects of these identity building blocks.

For preventing terrorism and violent extremism more widely, we need to become aware of the ways in which these masculinities come to play - as employed by terrorists, including in the recruitment efforts, and also in the counter-terrorism framework, on local and international levels.

Radicalized identities are difficult to dismantle. Recourse could be found in rendering communities more resilient, based on fully respecting gender equality.

I want to underline the obvious - that any strategies for greater diversity, meaningful participation and action, need to be **human rights-compliant**.

It is also essential we **engage meaningfully with civil society groups and the private sector**. The voice of youth, women, religious and community leaders should be heard, and we are very glad that this is the case today.

Finally, the United Nations has a central role in leading the global Counter Terrorism effort, from setting standards to delivering technical assistance. As an advocate for the **One-UN approach** in countering terrorism, it is clear that going forward, the approaches of the United Nations need to fully take into account issues pertaining to gender equality, gender stereotypes and masculinities that hamper Counter Terrorism efforts on the ground.

Thank you.

Your Excellency, thank you to Mexico for hosting this important discussion that the UK is pleased to co-sponsor and thank you also to Executive Director Coninsx, Dr David Duriesmith and Ms. Fauziya Abdi Ali for their informative briefings.

We are often caught up by the immediate global responses to tackling terrorism. But a focus on the issues that contribute to the root causes of radicalisation can be much more impactful. Gender inequality, stereotyping and the notion of masculinity are issues we must incorporate into our counter terrorism and preventing violent extremism efforts. We welcome the increased focus on the issue within academia as well as by CTED as it examines best practices for Member States and for UNOCT programming.

Integrating a gender perspective and promoting gender equality are prerequisites for success in CT. The UK's National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security, for example, helps us ensure the participation and leadership of women and women's organisations in developing strategies to counter terrorism and violent extremism. Last year, the UK supported women-led organisations implementing peacebuilding and preventing and countering violent extremism programs through the International Civil Society Action Network.

Today, we have heard why considering masculinities is also vital. We have seen examples across the globe of violent extremist groups exploiting gender stereotypes to recruit individuals and incite violence. When recruiting men, terrorist groups often use hyper-masculine stereotypes in posters and campaigns. They exploit dissatisfaction and wider social grievances to offer vulnerable and frustrated recruits the chance to fulfil their perception of a masculine identity. We therefore call on Member States to work with vulnerable communities and individuals to ensure that dissatisfaction and social grievances do not lead to increased radicalisation as a form of validating masculinity.

Collaboration with, and respect for, civil society should be embedded in national CT and PVE policies and strategies. And efforts that engage communities must be initiated and maintained with a diverse group of women, men, girls and boys. This ensures we will reach marginalised and vulnerable populations effectively, and address root causes of violent extremism. The UK's partnerships with governments across East Africa to identify and mentor vulnerable individuals, for example, were designed to address the needs of women, men, girls, and boys, rather than retrospectively try to integrate them into one-size-fits-all template.

In our efforts to effectively counter terrorism and prevent violent extremism, we must not overlook these social causes of radicalisation. We must strengthen the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda and integrate this into our global response to tackle terrorism at its roots.



البعثة الدائمة للجمهورية التونسية
لدى منظمة الأمم المتحدة
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United Nations Security Council Open Arria Formula Meeting

**Preventing terrorism and violent extremism through tackling
gender stereotypes,
masculinities, and structural gender inequality**

**Date: 28 July 2021
Time: 3:00 – 6:00 p.m.
Venue: VTC**

Statement of Tunisia

**Mr. President,
Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,**

I thank Mexico, Estonia, Norway, the United Kingdom and the United States for the organization of this important Arria Formula Meeting.

I also thank Ms. Michèle Coninsx and Professor. Michael Kimmel for their valuable briefings.

Mr. President,

The international community has consistently highlighted, through several Security Council resolutions and through the UN Global Counter Terrorism Strategies, the need to understand and tackle the root causes of radicalization. Indeed, considerable efforts have been deployed to this effect by Member States, UN entities and other stakeholders to analyze what drives individuals towards terrorism and violent extremism and what we can do to prevent such scourges.

However, international efforts have often wrongly disregarded or underestimated the gender dimensions in their analysis and actions.

In the meantime, terrorism-related gender manifestations are becoming increasingly apparent. All terrorist groups, whether affiliated to ISIL and Al-Qaida or emerging from the right-wing terrorism, share at least one thing in common: their ideologies are based on anti-State sentiments that promote the idea of returning to some kind of a glorious past, mostly an alternative model of society that's re-establishes predated social order, including male dominance, gender stereotypes and patriarchal norms.

Terrorist groups place the subordination of women even more directly at the center of their tactics by using sexual and gender-based violence, including trafficking, slavery, forced marriages, forced pregnancies and kidnapping of women and girls to terrorize communities, promote their ideologies and generate income.

Mr. President,

While progress has been made in the establishment and implementation of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda during the past two decades, its greater integration within the CT and PVE agendas is needed. Council resolutions, including 2242 and 2467 have established this link. However, further recognition of the direct inter-relation between the gender dimension and the CT/PVE dimension is needed.

Promoting gender equality and ensuring women effective participation and leadership in peace processes and in CT and PVE efforts would help us better analyze and better respond to terrorism.

More specifically, we need to better understand the gendered appeal of terrorist ideologies and recognize the differentiated nature of the drivers of radicalization between men and women. We must also better understand the gendered impact of terrorism. In this endeavor, it is essential to move away from a unidimensional depiction of men and women, whether they are victims or actors of terrorism, as a homogenous group, and provide specific and tailored gender responsive solutions.

In seeking to achieve this, Tunisia developed its National Action Plan in accordance with Resolution 1325 (2000), followed by specific sectorial action plans specifically dedicate to the WPS Agenda in the fields of Prevention of Violent Extremism, law enforcement and security.

This allowed us to have a framework that is both comprehensive and multi-faceted. It also provided more room for different stakeholders involved in each sectorial action plan to actively participate and benefit from each other's best practices and lessons learned.

Mr. President,

Once again, we welcome this opportunity to share reflections on challenges, gaps and best practices on this important matter and we hope to continue building on today's discussion in future processes to ensure that we don't leave any stone unturned when it comes to effectively preventing and countering terrorism and violent extremism.

Thank you.



THE SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIET NAM
PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

STATEMENT

by Ambassador Dang Dinh Quy, Permanent Representative of Viet Nam
at the Arria-formula meeting of the Security Council

Preventing terrorism and violent extremism through tackling gender
stereotypes, masculinities, and structural gender inequality

New York, 28 July 2021

I thank the briefers for their informative and insightful briefings.

I thank you, *Chair*, for raising this important topic.

Several resolutions have made clear the commitment of the Security Council to integrate women, peace and security into all its thematic agendas. Nowadays, it is hard for any counter-terrorism strategy not to recognize the multiple roles of women as victims or active participants in and against terrorist acts. Women also have potential roles as a resource to counter violent extremism, whether as mothers, sisters, police and law enforcement officers or community leaders. Therefore, it is crucial to integrate gender dimensions into all counter-terrorism and violent extremism efforts, including countering drivers of radicalisation, prevention and response, prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration programmes. The empowerment, participation and leadership of women should become a core component of counter-terrorism and violent extremism programmes, as well as the prevention and resolution of armed conflicts and peacebuilding efforts. In this regard, we encourage CTED to further incorporate gender sensitivities into its work, including in its assessment and country visits and in capacity building programmes.

At the same time, it is equally important that counter-terrorism strategies engage the role of men. The gender perspective should include not

only focusing on the role of women, but also the experience of male victims and the notions of masculinities and gender stereotypes in terrorist narratives, mobilization and recruitment. We welcome sharing of practice in integrating gender in national counter-terrorism and violent extremism policies and programmes. We are supportive of further in-depth understanding of the gender dynamics in counter-terrorism, such as through this Arria formula meeting.

Mr. Chair,

Viet Nam endorses a whole-of-society approach that involves the participation of all stakeholders and those at the grassroots level. Comprehensive counter terrorism strategies should address the underlying causes of terrorism and prevent radicalisation through economic development, national reconciliation, and building a balanced, tolerant and cohesive society that is resilient to radicalisation. Our response to terrorism and violent extremism must comply with the purposes and principles of the UN Charter and relevant obligations under international law.

I thank you. /.



**Preventing terrorism and violent extremism through tackling gender
stereotypes, masculinities, and structural gender inequality**

Statement by Ambassador Brian Flynn

28 July 2021

1. Thank you Chair, and I thank Mexico for their initiative in bringing this important topic to the Council's attention. We also thank the briefers for their informative presentations.
2. Chair,
3. A nuanced and comprehensive gender perspective of counter-terrorism considers the multiple roles of women, men and people of diverse gender identities, as well as the impact of structural gender inequality.
4. Too often within the counter-terrorism context, gender remains a short-form for women.
5. For counter-terrorism responses to be effective, we should avoid a one-dimensional conception of gender and advance a more holistic understanding, including through the consideration of hegemonic masculinities.
6. Terrorist groups of different ideological backgrounds use misogynistic rhetoric and notions of hegemonic masculinity to appeal to potential recruits, often with a focus on the subjugation of women and girls, and primacy of the patriarchal family structure.

7. In particular, the Secretary General has reported that many terrorist groups, including ISIL and Boko Haram, use the promise of marriage and access to sex to recruit men and boys, whilst also engaging in trafficking and other practices that promote and reinforce violent masculinities.
8. We have seen such groups undermine gains made in achieving gender equality, including through the abduction of girls in school and targeting maternity hospitals and sexual health clinics.
9. Additionally, terrorist and extremist propaganda elevates physical strength and aggressiveness, portraying terrorists as “warriors” and “defenders” - often of women - from the ideological “other”. These narratives are designed to appeal to young men experiencing disenfranchisement and emasculation. Education to counteract this recruitment propaganda is central to a gender-sensitive counter-terrorism response.
10. Chair,
11. We must move beyond binary gender stereotypes, which view men as perpetrators of terrorism and women as victims. Failure to recognise that women can also support, facilitate, and perpetrate terrorism undermines any gender-responsive approach to prevention.
12. Likewise, as we have already heard today, biased presumptions of men and boys in conflict zones as combatants or otherwise “dangerous”, undermines their human rights and disregards the many roles men play in effective prevention efforts. It can also lead to a lack of understanding about men, including gay, bisexual and transgender men, as victims of terrorism.
13. This Council recognises that acts of sexual and gender-based violence are part of the strategic objectives and ideology of certain terrorist groups.
14. Though such violence disproportionately affects women and girls, we must also consider the gender-specific experiences and needs of male victims of sexual violence in this context.

15. For example, security actors have used gender-specific forms of violence in the name of counter-terrorism, including sexual violence designed to emasculate and humiliate male detainees.

16. Finally Chair, male perspectives shape counter-terrorism responses, with men often dominating decision-making on counter-terrorism policies. The negative impacts of existing counter-terrorism policies on women and girls underline the need for the full, equal and meaningful participation of women in counter-terrorism processes.

17. Allow me to conclude Chair by reiterating Ireland's willingness to work with you and other Council members in furthering and promoting understanding of this important topic.

18. Thank you.



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Statement

by

H.E. Dr. Halimah DeShong

Second Deputy Permanent Representative

**Arria Formula – Preventing terrorism and violent extremism through
tackling gender stereotypes, masculinities, and structural gender inequality**

Security Council

Wednesday 28th July 2021
New York

Check against delivery

Thank you Chair,

We thank Mexico and all co-sponsor for organising today's meeting. We also thank our distinguished briefers for their critical insights.

Today we will focus on three issues, related to the theme.

First, if the intention is to enhance the analytical approach applied to creating actions and arrangements which will eliminate terrorism and violent extremism, then we recommend a more robust framework for performing gender analysis. In many ways, we believe that reference to "stereotypes" flattens the analysis of what are far more complex relations. The structural, institutional and social relations which produce violent extremism are in fact grounded in histories of racism, colonial violence and religious extremism. How these appear at the individual level, where we see mostly young men being recruited and performing acts of terrorism and violent extremism, must be understood as part of the operation of racialized, gendered and socio-economic arrangements. We must therefore engage actions which address a combination of beliefs, practices, arrangements and structures that create the pathways for violent extremist recruitment and radicalization to violence.

Secondly, the focus on men and masculinities must be situated within larger gender systems, which are historically and geographically diverse. While we acknowledge the need to examine men as gendered beings, since young men are the overwhelming majority of those who perpetrate acts of terrorism, we suggest the more expansive analyses offered by Indigenous, Black, Caribbean, African, Latin American, Asian and other global South feminist thinkers, who call attention to the multiple and intersecting forms of domination which produce violent extremism. It is unsettling and hard, but necessary work. We must be willing to connect the multiple valences of power and difference in operation, lest we continue to maintain the conditions which produce violent extremism. In doing this critical PVE work, we must also make the critical link to how gendered and sexual violence against women, girls and boys is magnified with increased extremist violence.

Our final point relates to the urgency of engaging those young men and women made most vulnerable to being targeted for radicalization. There is no better source from whom we can learn, than the young people themselves, who are recruited, lured and victimised. As our briefers have stressed, our gender analysis must account for why specific young men are overwhelmingly targeted, to better support critical PVE work. The call for national and community-level ownership of PVE actions is important, given the varied experiences across countries and regions, globally. In this regard, we must address both the socio-economic exclusion and marginalization facing youth, as well as the institutionalised racism out of which various forms of violent extremist actions and rhetoric are maintained.

I thank you.



The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Kenya to the
United Nations, New York
Security Council - 2021-2022

OPEN ARRIA FORMULA MEETING

PREVENTING TERRORISM AND VIOLENT EXTREMISM THROUGH TACKLING GENDER
STEREOTYPES, MASCULINITIES, AND STRUCTURAL GENDER INEQUALITY

28 July 2021 AT 03:00 P.M

STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR MICHAEL KIBOINO, DPR

1. I thank you Chair for convening this meeting. A also thank our briefers ASG Michèle Coninsx, Prof. Michael Kimmel and Fauziya Abdi Ali, for the insightful presentations.
2. Radicalisation into violent extremism continues to be a key challenge in tackling the escalating threat of terrorism. Over the years terrorist groups have exploited gender stereotypes to advance their propaganda, ideology and recruitment efforts.
3. While there has been focus on the role of women in counter-terrorism, there is a growing need to address the stereotypes revolving around men and masculinity in these efforts.
4. The question of masculinity continues to be a challenge for young men who are increasingly grappling with identity crises especially as women get more and more empowered. Terror groups have exploited these challenges to advance their recruitment agendas by convincing young men to commit acts of terror in order to reclaim their masculine identity.
5. In addition, religious and cultural tenets often place men in the forefront of war because of the perception that they can withstand rigorous warzone demands. As such, the role of women is more often than not, relegated to that of offering auxiliary support to their male counterparts.

6. However, women are increasingly playing greater roles among terrorist group organisations, serving as motivation or inspiration to the men. In some cases women have been used in operational roles such as suicide bombers, scouts, intelligence gathering and couriers of messages.
7. Against this backdrop, gender sensitive approaches to Counter Terrorism and Violent Extremism should contain a number of elements including:
 - (i) Placing women at the forefront in advocacy. Deliberate women led effort should be made to empower women to influence their sons and spouses by insulating them against radicalization and recruitment into terrorist networks.
 - (ii) CVE programmes should be tailored in a manner that promote the role of both parents to actively participate in mentoring their children from an early age. In some cultures, rites of passage tend to serve as training grounds where boys are taught to perceive women as inferior and weaker from whom no meaningful advice can come.
 - (iii) CVE programmes should be incorporated in educational institutions, correctional facilities and other institutions in which alternative ways of proving “masculinity” such as sports, performing arts and labour-intensive economic activities are emphasized.
 - (iv) Gender sensitive CVE programmes should be incorporated in Demobilization, Disarmament and Reintegration programmes in conflict plagued regions. This would help to unlearn existing ideological tenets that place a premium on masculinity and impart into the ex-combatants a gender accommodative ideology.
 - (v) Finally, the full implementation of Resolution 2242(2015), particularly paragraph 13 which inter alia, urges Member States and the United Nations to ensure the participation and leadership of women in the development strategies to counter terrorism and violent extremism is critical in efforts to incorporate the notion of masculinity in the Security Council agenda including WPS and YPS, for greater positive impact on peace and security.

I thank you.

**Arria-Formula Meeting on
'Preventing Terrorism and violent Extremism through Tackling Gender
Stereotypes, Masculinities, and Structural Inequalities'
Wednesday, 28 July 2021; 1500 hrs EDT)**

India Statement

Mr. President,

At the outset, I would like to thank Mexico, Norway, the United Kingdom, the United States and Estonia for organizing this meeting. I also thank the briefers for sharing their valuable insights.

Mr. President,

2. Despite the increased focus on the Women Peace and Security (WPS) agenda, and the evolving normative framework during the last two decades, women and children continue to be major victims of terrorist acts. The heinous crimes perpetrated against humanity by terror networks such as ISIS in West Asia, Boko Haram in parts of West Africa, or Al Shabaab in East Africa, especially against women and children, are stark reminders of the serious challenges that need to be resolutely overcome by the international community.

3. However, over emphasis on the role of gender stereotypes in terrorist recruitment risks downplaying the complex threat of terrorism. We should not soften our stand on terrorism under the premise of gender narratives. The threat posed by terrorism and violent extremism is not constrained to any specific gender. The international community must not fall prey to incorrect gender narratives. No grievance or motivation can justify terrorism. Terrorists have a single ideology, which is to use terrorist acts to kill innocent people, in order to achieve political goals. Therefore, it is crucial that we remain united in our fight

against terrorism, and not let incorrect gender narratives blur our fight against terrorism.

Mr. President,

4. It is also important to understand the vital role that women can play in the development of effective counter violent extremism (CVE) strategies. We have seen that when women are involved in peace processes, they broaden discussions to address the underlying reasons that contribute to extremism and violence. Women are role models and educators of future generations. They are highly influential in shaping the ideologies of their families, and in many cases, entire communities. Their role in decision-making helps develop stability in the society and strengthens efforts towards preventing terrorism. Hence, we strongly support gender responsiveness, as appropriate, in measures to counter terrorism.

5. The international community needs to urgently and collectively adopt a policy of zero-tolerance towards terrorism. Our collective condemnation of terrorism must be loud, clear and unambiguous.

I thank you, Mr. President.



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**Statement by Ambassador Abdou ABARRY,
Permanent Representative of Niger to the United Nations**

**United Nations Security Council Open Arria Formula Meeting:
Preventing terrorism and violent extremism through tackling
gender stereotypes, masculinities, and structural gender
inequality**

New York, 28 juillet, 2021

I begin by thanking the Permanent mission of Mexico, with Estonia, Norway, the United Kingdom, and the United States for hosting today's Arria formula meeting. I extend our thanks to Ms. Michele Coninsx, Professor Kimmel, and Ms. Fauziya Ali for the quality of their exposés.

Excellences, Dear Colleagues,

If there is a lesson to be learned from the coronavirus health crisis, it is that that our system of collective security and economic expansion established after the Second World War is far, very far from perfection. The epidemic has come to highlight all its limits and fragilities.

To effectively defeat terrorism and violent extremism, the current context requires that States and international institutions adopt a more global and holistic approach that takes into account the social, economic, and political reasons for radicalization. This approach must be comprehensive and incorporate a full understanding of gender dynamics including the dimension of masculinities, gender stereotypes and gender inequality, all of which serve as a precursor to the manifestation of the worst cases of violent terrorism.

Most of the youth engaged in terrorist activity are men, which is why it is critical to understand how and why terrorist groups exploit notion of masculinities to recruit young men into their ranks. What we stress however is that these questions must be addressed within their context – violence, while irrational, rarely happens in isolation. While this is not the only trend, studies have found that terrorists recruit from among the most vulnerable populations. We must also not forget that terrorist fighters are also employees of the organizations that employ them. Many, particularly the youth lured, do not work in the name of a religious ideology than for monetary gains.

Excellences, Dear Colleagues,

We have listened with great attention to the exposé by the experts and wish to make the following points:

- **First**, given the importance of this topic in furthering our understanding of questions of violent extremism, it is crucial that studies be conducted in various contexts and across ideological and racial groups. We however caution against broad generalization that may be detrimental and erode trust especially in communities that have faced historic and systemic injustices.
- **Second**, as the presenters have previously outlined, addressing masculinities in the context of counterterrorism and preventing violent extremism could offer an avenue for reinforcing prevention efforts. The focus on prevention is where our efforts should lie, but these efforts must be conducted in ways that do not further marginalize groups.
- **Third**, it is worth paying attention to localized shocks that may render communities, and young men, more vulnerable to recruitment. As the current pandemic has shown, terrorist groups may have taken of the pandemic to gain ground at a time when the attention of many governments is focused on fighting the disease.

I thank you for your attention.

Remarks at the Arria Formula Meeting

(28 July 2021, 3pm)

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I wish to thank Mexico for convening today's meeting. I also thank Ms. Michele Coninsx, Executive Director of CTED and other briefers for their informative briefings.

The theme of today's meeting offers a new perspective of gender consideration for our efforts in countering terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism. Our discussion will help further explore different approaches to assess terrorism threats and identify gender-sensitive counter-terrorism measures.

It is necessary to take a comprehensive gender approach in UN peace and security agenda. As terrorist groups exploit more tactics in propaganda and recruitment including deliberate misinterpretation of masculinities, we need to consider incorporating such element into our counter-terrorism efforts. That said, any specific ideas or proposals need further, in-depth research and discussion before translating into actions.

Mr. Chair,

Terrorist groups are exploiting challenges brought by the pandemic to peddle terrorism and violent extremism propaganda and narratives. Strengthen national capacity through support and assistance accommodating to the country's actual needs remains the top priority on international counter-terrorism agenda. The potential risks and challenges brought by emerging technologies also warrant more attention.

Preventing terrorism and violent extremism requires an integrated approach to address the root causes and to strengthen coherence between political, economic, social and judicial dimensions to eliminate conditions conducive to terrorism and extremism. We need to make more efforts to support socioeconomic development and incorporate poverty eradication and social inclusiveness in preventive efforts.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Mr Chair,

Thank you for giving me the floor and providing the opportunity to exchange views on the topic of countering terrorism in a gender perspective. We listened with interest to presentations made by ASG Michele Coninsx, Dr. David Duriesmith and Ms. Fauzia Abdi Ali.

Terrorism is the scourge that is equally devastating for men and women, boys and girls, youth and elderly. Terrorist attacks do not differentiate victims. Although it is generally assumed that women are less involved in terrorist acts as perpetrators, in reality it is not exactly the case. The phenomenon of foreign terrorist fighters serves as a proof that men and women may be equally susceptible to terrorist narratives, incitement and radicalization. In some cases female terrorist fighters have been tasked with preparation and perpetration of large-scale attacks.

The law enforcement authorities of States and academic community research the nuances of radicalization and victimization processes taking into account various factors, gender aspects being one of them. The level of importance of this factor among others continues to be an issue for discussion.

In this regard it must be noted that this meeting is held in the aftermath of comprehensive consideration of various aspects of ensuring counter-terrorism security and preventing the diverse range of factors contributing to radicalization and violence during the second United Nations Counter-Terrorism Week. However, the resolution on the seventh review of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy (GCTS), which was designed to reflect on the outcomes of these debates, does not, for instance, recognize masculinity as one of the aforementioned conditions.

It is important to stress that gender stereotyping leading to discrimination as any other forms of stereotyping which are not in line with our international obligations and national legislation are not acceptable. However it does not necessarily mean that this issue is central to the counter-terrorism efforts.

At the same time not enough attention is given to the dire conditions in camps in Northern Syria, where women and girls continue to struggle for survival. We must unite our efforts to promote and facilitate their urgent repatriation to the countries of origin with a view to rehabilitating and reintegrating them back into society. In some cases, of course, this may involve appropriate vetting and prosecution. The same applies to men. We are convinced that this problem must be the focus of international attention in the fight against terrorism at this stage.

I thank you Mr. Chair.

A/s : réunion en format arria sur : *Preventing terrorism and violent extremism through tackling gender stereotypes, masculinities, and structural gender inequality*

I would like to thank the speakers, Ms. Coninsx, Dr. Duriesmith, and Ms. Abdi Ali. The contribution of academia and civil society in general to the work of the United Nations is essential.

As we have just renewed the global counter-terrorism strategy, this meeting allows us to highlight the importance of fighting against all gender roles and stereotypes, in all contexts.

The fight against terrorism must be global and therefore take into account gender bias, both in analyzing the threat and in building the response. The use of the Internet by terrorist groups, reinforced since the pandemic, has allowed terrorist groups to refine their recruitment methods according to their audience. They prey on the young and those in vulnerable situations. They appeal to women's projected compassion using emotional blackmail. With men, they appeal to their ego and romanticize warfare and personal gains. Through these recruitment strategies but all the more on the ground, they attribute obsolete, rigid and toxic gender roles. They perpetuate gender bias. Promoting gender equality and deconstructing gender roles and stereotypes must be an integral part of prevention.

France adopted its first plan exclusively dedicated to the prevention of radicalization in 2018. It mobilized nearly 20 ministerial departments, including the one for Equality between women and men in order to take into account the gendered dimension of the issue. Measures range from the development of a specific counter-narrative to the follow-up of radicalized women prisoners. Opposing gender bias also means recognizing that some women can play a role in the radicalization of their families and the recruitment of children. The follow-up of radicalized women, especially after their release from detention, is essential. Specific prevention actions are also necessary, as we have seen several cases of teenage girls radicalizing among friends. In order to ensure this follow-up as well as this prevention, we must ensure a holistic approach as well as the involvement, on the ground, of women's rights and child protection actors.

I would like to ask several questions to the speakers:

- First, to Michèle Coninsx, the gender dimension is well taken into account in CTED visits but how do you evaluate the attention that States give to this issue? Can we say that it is mostly taken into account? In the case of a State that has no gender dimension in its counter-terrorism policy, what recommendation can you make to ensure that it is integrated? Can you provide examples of actions taken alongside UN Women? How can we ensure that the protection of women in the counter-terrorism context doesn't comfort stereotypes that they are weaker or vulnerable by essence?

- To Dr. Duriesmith, an effective counter-narrative must be based on principles and values shared by the whole of society in order to reintegrate the person in the process of radicalization, but it must also be responsive to the individual according to : age, sex, gender, age or sexual orientation. In your opinion, how can this fragile balance be maintained?

**Preventing terrorism and violent extremism through tackling gender stereotypes,
masculinities, and structural gender inequality**

UNSC Arria Formula Meeting, 28 July 2021

- Thank the host for organizing this meeting, which deals with a topical issue. Also thank the briefers for their thought-provoking remarks.
- To start, I would like to underline that **gender mainstreaming** is a priority across all external activities of the European Union. Ensuring the same rights to all empowers our societies. Our external assistance across all sectors, including infrastructure, digital, energy, agriculture and blended funds integrates a gender perspective and supports gender equality. The promotion, protection and respect for human rights of women and girls will continue to guide our work.
- When it comes to countering terrorism and preventing violent extremism, the European Union supports a "**whole-of-society**" approach, one which takes a **gender responsive approach** and provides opportunities for youth to strengthen resilience against radicalisation.
- The **gender dimension of violent extremism** is constantly being addressed by the European Commission, especially in the areas of prevention of radicalization in prison, among Foreign Terrorist Fighters returnees, and in exit programs.
- With that in mind, the European Commission organises and funds the **Radicalization Awareness Network (RAN)**. Established in 2011 as a network of frontline practitioners, the RAN aims at raising awareness among practitioners about radicalization and to discuss ways to tackle this issue at practitioners and policy level.
- The RAN has been organizing workshops, webinars, trainings and has developed support material on the gender dimension of violent extremism. In particular, the RAN has explored **challenges related to the radicalization of women**, the specific roles of women within terrorist and violent extremist groups, as well as the particular difficulties and peculiarities encountered by practitioners when dealing with radicalized women or women at risk of radicalization.
- While many **pull and push factors towards radicalization** are similar to those related to male counterparts, researchers and practitioners have identified some peculiarities when it comes to women and their links to violent extremism, e.g. the need for empowerment, romantic experiences and adventures.
- Also, when it comes to exit programs for returning FTFs and prison leavers, the RAN found that the **approach should be adjusted according to gender components** - for

instance women may be more subject to stigmatization and sense of guilt or special treatment in prison may be advised.

- RAN has also looked into the **role that gender and masculinity play in extremist groups**, and how gender influences P/CVE work and can be utilized for a more effective approach. The practitioners suggested **addressing rigid perception of masculinity in former fighters**, as an important factor in men's radicalization.
- The RAN has also started to explore threats related to **involuntary celibates** who, due to the grievances faced for not being able to find a woman, approve of and often call for violent behavior against women. **Toxic masculinity** is strongly linked to involuntary celibates' frustrations and violent behavior, as they are prone to glorifying masculinity, while despising femininity and, especially, feminism.
- In closing, the European Union considers that **gender plays a role** in preventing and countering violent extremism and that a **gender-sensitive approach** is key in that regard.
- I thank you.



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The United Nations Security Council Open Arria Formula Meeting: Preventing terrorism and violent extremism through tackling gender stereotypes, masculinities, and structural gender inequality

28 July 2021

**Statement by H.E. The Hon. Mitch Fifield,
Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Australia to the
United Nations**

As delivered

On behalf of Australia, I thank the United Nations Security Council for convening this Open Arria Formula Meeting. This is a good opportunity for open discussion.

Australia is committed to embedding gender-sensitive approaches to countering violent extremism and counter terrorism. Gender analysis has been integrated into CT and Countering Violent Extremism policies and programs for some time, recognising the varied roles that women and girls play across the spectrum of violent extremism and terrorism. As victims of terrorism, actors who prevent violence and counter narratives, to people who sympathise with violent extremist ideologies, and active supporters and perpetrators of violent extremism and abhorrent terrorist acts.

This is a matter of hard-edged, practical CT effectiveness. So it's important that we continue this work to ensure we get it right.

The evolving COVID-19 pandemic has also shifted the nature of global CT efforts as nations weigh up and respond to these competing priorities. Violent extremists have similarly adapted their activities around tightening borders and targeted new audiences online. This demands a gendered CT approach which reduces harmful gender norms and recognises both women and men can take on the role of victim, survivor or perpetrator.

Challenging the institutions and beliefs which seek to minimise this role and make it difficult to identify and counter the drivers of radicalisation unique to women is a critical aspect of Australia's regional and global stance on CT and CVE. Understanding what draws men to terrorist and violent extremist groups in the first place and the barriers to leaving is also an important part of the gender analysis.

Addressing terrorism with a gender bias is dangerous because it blinds us to the full picture. We know that terrorist groups exploit this blindness and use gender stereotypes as a motivator and a recruitment tool.

Australia has a leading role in the Global Counterterrorism Forum as co-chair of the GCTF Countering Violent Extremism Working Group with Indonesia. The CVE Working Group is doing important work supporting the development of a Gender and Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism Policy Toolkit.

The Toolkit aims to provide the best practical, action-oriented guidance on designing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating gender-sensitive CVE policies and programs.

Australia continues to promote gender equality, protect the human rights of women and girls, and secure their full, equal and meaningful participation in peace and security processes, reaffirming Australia's commitment to the WPS Agenda.

As global pandemic-related pressure points ease and nations, including Australia, grapple with a vastly changed terrorism landscape, we will continue to lead and prioritise CT and CVE efforts. Australia, with our partners, will continue to modernise our approaches to gender stereotypes and structural inequalities as drivers of terrorism.

Thank you.

Word count: 462



Misión Permanente del Ecuador ante las
Naciones Unidas en Nueva York

Statement by H.E. Ambassador Cristian Espinosa,
Permanent Representative of Ecuador,

United Nations Security Council Arria Formula Meeting on

"Preventing terrorism and violent extremism through tackling gender stereotypes,
masculinities, and structural gender inequality"
28 July 2021, 3-6pm

-
1. I congratulate Mexico and all the cosponsors for providing us with the opportunity to evaluate how the focus on masculinities, gender stereotypes and gender inequalities can allow for a more comprehensive gender approach to effectively prevent terrorism.
 2. I thank the briefers for their insightful and substantive presentations.
 3. In less than two months we will be commemorating the 20th anniversary of the 9/11 attacks. The Security Council should not spare any effort to address every single dimension of terrorism.
 4. We are all responsible for adopting effective and decisive measures to achieve the prompt and definitive elimination of international terrorism.
 5. I welcome the Security Council engagement in efforts related to Women, Peace and Security, including with its resolution 1325.
 6. It is important to continue strengthening a Culture of Peace and a preventive diplomacy. We need to produce a comprehensive assessment of every relevant factor that could undermine peace and security.
 7. Ecuador acknowledges that the Security Council has actively promoted the inclusion of a gender perspective in countering terrorism and violent extremism. Many resolutions of the Council include provisions on Gender.
 8. However the notions of Masculinity and gender stereotypes in the mobilization and recruitment of men are yet to be taken into consideration, as noted by the United Nations Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED).



Misión Permanente del Ecuador ante las
Naciones Unidas en Nueva York

9. Noting that the General Assembly recently adopted the Seventh Review of the Counter-Terrorism Strategy, I wish to underline that the Action Plan to prevent Violent Extremism also emphasizes the importance of identifying the causes of the problem.
10. As Member States we recently urged the Secretary General to assess the need to better integrate the rule of law, human rights and gender, as cross-cutting elements of that Strategy.
11. A gender-sensitive approach is central and applicable to all cross-cutting variables such as age, ethnicity, and religion groups, among others. As gender systems established in different socio-cultural contexts determine what is expected, allowed and valued in women and men, gender roles are relevant in this discussion.
12. Addressing toxic masculinities could strengthen approaches to countering violent extremism, and to prevent the mobilization and recruitment of men.
13. Finally, Ecuador joined today's meeting, with the understanding that this open discussion in a Security Council Arria Formula is a starting point and that this analysis will continue, with the participation of civil society and Academia.

I thank you



UN Security Council Open Arria Formula Meeting (VTC)
“Preventing terrorism and violent extremism through tackling gender stereotypes, masculinities, and structural gender inequality”
Statement by the United Arab Emirates

Wednesday, 28 July 2021

Thank you, Mr. Chair,

I would like to thank today's co-hosts [Estonia, Mexico, Norway, the UK, and the US] for convening this meeting on a matter of great importance to the UAE. I would also like to thank the briefers for sharing their valuable expertise with us, and the Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate for consistently seeking ways to counter extremism and terrorism more effectively.

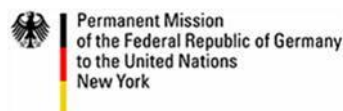
The UAE believes that the prevention of radicalization is the most effective method to counter extremism and terrorism. However, in order to prevent radicalization, we must first understand the underlying motivations behind it. The Women, Peace and Security agenda can fill missing gaps by including gender analysis in CVE and CT agendas. The UAE adopted a similar approach in its National Action Plan for the implementation of UN Security Council resolution 1325, which was adopted in March 2021.

The UAE therefore strongly supports a holistic approach to prevent and counter extremism and terrorism that addresses the specific needs of both women and girls and men and boys.

Additionally, the UAE maintains that structural problems require structural solutions. As we have heard today, stereotypes about masculinities often fuel the radicalization of men and boys. The UAE believes that equal societies that empower women and men to expand their roles will contribute to overcoming such stereotypes. Therefore, investing in gender equality should lie at the heart of all matters relevant to peace, security, and development.

Ultimately, the UN system and member states should consider how masculinities are used by terrorist groups to radicalize and recruit. Doing so is critical to understanding the root causes of extremism and terrorism.

In conclusion, both the WPS and PVE/CT agendas will be two of the UAE's main priorities during our Security Council term in 2022-2023, and we look forward to collaborating with all members on this important matter.



July 28, 2021

**Statement by Ambassador Günter Sautter at the Arria Formula Meeting on
“Preventing terrorism and violent extremism through tackling gender
stereotypes, masculinities, and structural gender inequality”, July 28**

Check against delivery

We thank CTED and the members of the Security Council co-sponsoring this event for bringing this important topic to the attention of so many. Women are too often looked at as if they were either victims of terrorism or in some cases as perpetrators – the latter rather being the exception. However, it is important that we talk about structural gender inequality and violent masculinity, also when it comes to counterterrorism efforts. We see this related to our work in the field of Women, Peace, and Security and we would like to highlight five points:

1. Bigger focus on prevention: We need to learn how to create livelihoods in local communities for both men and women. Economic hardship and lack of opportunity are among the main reasons for young people to join extremist groups.
2. We need to combat structural inequalities. Only by combatting wrong and violent notions of masculinity and gender stereotypes, empowering women and girls in their communities, and including women's voices in counter terrorism policy development, can we combat violence, including terrorism and extremism.
3. Encourage women to join male dominated spaces, such as the security forces and we need to create the necessary conditions for them to effectively participate in the security sector.
4. Include (women-led) grassroots and community organizations in international and national policy decisions that concern PVE.
5. The UN system and MS need to make a stronger effort to include a focus on masculinity in their approach to CT and CVE. Germany is encouraged by CTED's efforts on implementing existing resolutions, particularly resolution 2242, and would welcome CTED to continue working on these important issues.

Thank you very much.

As prepared

**Statement of Deputy Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the UN
Mr. Yuriy Vitrenko at the United Nations Security Council Open Arria Formula Meeting
“Preventing terrorism and violent extremism through tackling gender stereotypes,
masculinities, and structural gender inequality”**

(28 July 2021)

- Ukraine welcomes the work conducted by the UN Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED) focused on integrating gender in counter-terrorism (CT) and countering violent extremism (CVE) agendas, including on the concept of “masculinity”. At the same time more should be done to move from research on this important issue to policy and practical implementation.
- During the past decades a number of important achievements were made with a view to advance new counter-terrorism standards as well as to further amplify international response to both existing and emerging terrorist threats. At the same time, there is a need to further mainstream gender perspectives when preventing violent extremism and countering terrorism.
- The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly exacerbated the gender risks. We have often witnessed that women and girls do not have the same access to resources, digital technologies, education, job and business opportunities as men. Moreover, certain terrorist groups have systematically targeted women and girls and their rights, including in conflict situations, displacement contexts and other circumstances in which women and girls are particularly vulnerable to the effects of extremist violence.
- For more than 7 years Ukraine is suffering from an armed aggression of the Russian Federation, with devastating humanitarian and gender-related consequences. Due to the Russia’s armed aggression Ukraine has ranked 9th in the world for the number of IDPs, which currently stands at 1.5 million. 60% of them are women. Unprotected population in the temporarily occupied territories faces intimidation, detention and ill-treatment, physical and sexual violence. The occupied territories have become home to discriminative practices, gender inequality and gender stereotyping that limits women’s capacity to develop their personal abilities and professional careers as well as to make choices about their lives. The COVID-19 here has only worsened an already appalling situation.
- Still, Ukraine is doing its best to “build back better”. On the eve of the 20th anniversary of the SC resolution 1325 “Women, Peace, Security”, we adopted the second National Action Plan for implementing this historic document. This plan aims, in particular, at combating gender-based and conflict-related sexual violence. It focuses on achieving greater participation of women in decision-making, in particular in national security, defense and peacemaking.
- Recently the Parliament of Ukraine adopted a Law on Enforcement of International Criminal and Humanitarian Law. It will enable Ukraine to achieve accountability for international crimes committed in temporarily occupied parts of Donbas and Crimea as a result of the ongoing international armed conflict, offering an efficient domestic recourse to justice to victims of atrocities, including gender-based violence. From now on the Ukrainian criminal legislation will cover a full list of war crimes and crimes against humanity, such as sexual violence.
- Since gender equality has several dimensions, it is equally important to focus on reducing needs, risks and vulnerabilities for people through closer humanitarian, educational and development collaboration. Ukraine is committed to enhance international cooperation in the development of gender-sensitive rehabilitation and reintegration programmes, in accordance with international law. It is our primary responsibility to ensure that victims and survivors have all the assistance and support they need to fully recover, and are able to reintegrate in their societies.



**PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALTA TO
THE UNITED NATIONS**

Statement by the Republic of Malta

**UN Security Council Open Arria Formula Meeting
Preventing Terrorism and Violent Extremism through tackling Gender
Stereotype Masculinities and structural Gender Inequality
28 July 2021**

Mr President,

I begin by thanking Mexico and the co-organisers, Estonia, Norway, UK and the US, for convening this Arria-formula meeting.

Malta aligns itself with the statement delivered by the European Union and would like to add some remarks in its national capacity.

Preventing radicalisation and violent extremism is at the top of our priorities when it comes to combatting terrorism in all its forms, and the connection between gender stereotypes and structural gender inequality and violent extremism is a field which deserves more attention and analysis. This will improve the way we tackle radicalisation collectively.

Gender mainstreaming is a priority for Malta across multiple policy fields. Even when it comes to combatting terrorism and violent extremism, we must acknowledge that a gender sensitive approach is necessary to better understand the specific gender roles and stereotypes which come into play in the dissemination of radical ideologies, recruitment, and promulgation of violence.

Malta agrees that there is a need to address the gender responsiveness gap in our understanding of violent extremism and in policy making. A close analysis of available data infers a strong pattern whereby terrorist groups are not only targeting racial, ethnic and ideological divides in society to further their cause and attract new recruits, but are also exploiting gender roles, stereotypes, and masculinities. This can lead to societal

disenfranchisement and disillusionment which is being clearly exploited by terrorist groups. Addressing masculinities can strengthen approaches to countering violent extremism (CVE), since this plays an important part in the recruitment and radicalisation of young men.

A gender sensitive approach, as mirrored in today's discussion, coupled with an increased focus on youth engagement, can help us formulate CVE policies which pull young men away from radicalisation.

More work needs to be done to better understand the role of gender and masculinity in extremist groups and how gender effects CVE work. This also includes the challenges related to the radicalisation of women and girls and the specific roles that they have within terrorist groups.

A truly effective CVE strategy requires that we not only understand the role of women and girls when it comes to radicalisation but that we also make sure that women are included in a equal, effective and meaningful way when policies and solutions are being formulated.

I thank you.

Security Council Arria Formula on Terrorism and Gender Stereotypes
**“Preventing terrorism and violent extremism through tackling gender stereotypes,
masculinities, and structural gender inequality”**
Wednesday 28 July, 2021

Allow me to echo thanks to the Permanent Mission of Mexico, Estonia, Norway, the United Kingdom, and the United States for convening this meeting.

I'd also like to thank all the briefers for their insightful presentations.

As speakers have noted, gender stereotypes, masculinities, femininities, and gendered inequalities have long been exploited by violent extremist and terrorist groups to their own ends.

Too often, gender stereotypes distort the collective understanding of this issue. Women may be seen solely as victims; static and devoid of agency. In reality, it is well documented that women have varied and dynamic roles - as victims, recruiters, perpetrators and peacebuilders.

Violent extremist and terrorist groups know and extort these unfortunate realities to their advantage including to recruit and maintain membership and support, and to identify gender gaps in state security measures and exploit these weaknesses in their operational planning.

It is imperative that we continue working together to raise awareness of this phenomenon and advance comprehensive gender-responsive approaches to more effectively and sustainably counter terrorism and prevent and counter violent extremism.

We must ensure that gender is not conflated with women. Men also have gender and violent extremists and terrorists expertly manipulate and exploit these gendered realities too.

In Canada, gender driven violent extremism is a sub-category of ideologically motivated violent extremism (IMVE), along with xenophobic and anti-authority driven violence. While misogynist views are often a common characteristic of violent extremist and terrorist groups across the spectrum, they have also been the central driving motive behind several attacks, in Canada and elsewhere. We remember too well the 1989 École Polytechnique massacre and the 2018 Toronto Van Attack, where perpetrators were motivated by a hatred of women.

This is terrorism. Our collective counter-terrorism response is strengthened through recognition of these gendered realities. As such, we must continue efforts to demonstrate the utility and necessity of looking at issues from a gendered and intersectional perspective and using this information to guide our approaches.

In this regard, Canada has recently commissioned 5 case studies relating to gender and counterterrorism. These case studies cover multiple countries across several regions and demonstrate the nuances of effective gender approaches and concrete actions to address related challenges. We aim to share these case studies with our international partners later this year.

Canada supports international efforts encompassing not only security-based CT and PCVE measures but also preventive steps to address the underlying conditions that drive individuals to join violent extremist and terrorist groups.

As the world recovers from the COVID-19 pandemic, we must strive to ensure that the measures taken to support economies address the underlying drivers of violent extremism. This includes addressing the needs of the most vulnerable communities, in particular women and youth, who have been disproportionately and negatively affected by the pandemic.

I will conclude by reiterating Canada's commitment to supporting the work of the UN and to our constructive engagement with you, Member States, to counter terrorism and violent extremism. To be effective and sustainable, our efforts will be sure to effectively incorporate gender dimensions.

Thank you for your kind attention.

**PERMANENT MISSION OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN
TO THE UNITED NATIONS NEW YORK**

NEW YORK, 28 JULY 2021 CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY SECURITY
COUNCIL - OPEN ARRIA FORMULA MEETING

**PREVENTING TERRORISM AND VIOLENT EXTREMISM THROUGH TACKLING GENDER
STEREOTYPES, MASCULINITIES, AND STRUCTURAL GENDER INEQUALITY
STATEMENT BY Ms. MYRIAM OEHRI, FIRST SECRETARY**

Excellencies,

I thank you for convening today's meeting with its interesting nexus. Structural gender inequalities are not only human rights violations themselves, but they are also conducive to different crimes. Harmful gender stereotypes and abusive power dynamics are used to radicalize men and women as well as girls and boys and to recruit them to violent extremist groups. They are furthermore the root cause of sexual and gender-based violence which is used as a weapon of war, to terrorize civilian populations, and to break societies, communities, and families. Sexual and gender-based violence affects women and girls disproportionately, but the underlying stereotypes also impair men and boys as well as LGBTI+ people. All too often sexual and gender based violence remains underreported, especially when committed against men and boys, owing to fear of retaliation and rejection, cultural taboos or stigma, such as the perceived incompatibility between masculinity and vulnerability. This prevents men and boys from reporting violence and seeking psychosocial and medical support, as also documented by the Liechtenstein-based human rights organization All Survivors Project. And all too often the full picture of the violence faced by men and boys in conflict is obscured: It is for instance mischaracterized or limited to torture, cruel treatment or inhumane acts without acknowledging sexual and gender-based crimes.

Security Council Resolution 2467 and its comprehensive survivor-centered approach is an important step forward for the Women, Peace and Security agenda and for gender equality more generally. Its implementation is key as is the inclusion of gender as a cross-cutting topic in the work of the Security Council.

The international justice system remains key in ending impunity for such crimes but also in responding to structural gender inequalities. The Rome Statute of the ICC has had a

pioneering role in establishing a gender-sensitive framework to respond to different crimes. The Court has done groundbreaking work on crimes we are discussing today, and it has contributed to breaking up gender stereotypes. As an example, the trial of Congolese warlord Bosco Ntaganda marked the first time a militia leader was charged with sexual and gender-based crimes. It was also a milestone verdict as it recognized equally sexual and gender-based violence against both male and female child soldiers.

I thank you.



ON COOPERATIVE SECURITY Check Against Delivery

Remarks at

**UN Security Council Arria Formula Meeting
Preventing terrorism and violent extremism through tackling gender
stereotypes, masculinities, and structural gender inequality**

**Eelco Kessels
Executive Director, Global Center on Cooperative Security**

28 July 2021

Thank you Chair. Excellencies, colleagues,

Thank you to the Permanent Missions of Mexico, Norway, the United Kingdom, the United States, and Estonia for organizing today's very important arria formula meeting and for allowing me to share some insights and recommendations based on the work of the [Global Center on Cooperative Security](#) (Global Center). Among other efforts, we are currently developing a [Gender and Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism \(P/CVE\) Toolkit](#) that will be released in March 2022, which will provide practical guidance to policymakers and practitioners in their efforts to design and implement gender-sensitive counterterrorism and P/CVE approaches.

Drivers of violent extremism, engagement in acts of violence, and the impact of political violence vary enormously across groups of boys, girls, men, women, and people of diverse gender identities and expressions. Gender plays a substantial role in mediating relationships to power and in the allocation of and access to goods, services, rights, and responsibilities. Gender inequalities are at the heart of social and economic injustice. Violence, marginalization, and discrimination against women, girls, and gender-diverse populations are systemic and structural.

Femininities and masculinities play influential roles in notions of self and other, and in determining social marginalization and exclusion. Gender stereotypes and particular perceptions of femininities and masculinities are actively deployed in recruitment efforts by violent extremist groups and can play a central role in their ideology and operations.

Mainstreaming gender-sensitivity into the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of counterterrorism and P/CVE efforts is crucial for their success and sustainability. This is not just a matter of ensuring the participation of women and girls. It is about ensuring the equitable participation and leadership of people of diverse gender identities. It is also about accounting for the experiences, needs,

and challenges of people based on their gender identity *and* other intersecting identities such as socio economic status, age, disability, and ethnic and cultural identities.

By taking an intersectional identity approach, the United Nations and its member states can actively ensure that lived experiences are at the center of the development of counterterrorism and P/CVE policies and programs. Please allow me to suggest four areas that should be specifically addressed in this regard:

- **Language.** Stronger gender language should continue to be mainstreamed throughout counterterrorism and P/CVE-related resolutions as well as the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and actively promoted, rather than relegated to a few paragraphs. A more sophisticated, intersectional approach to gender issues will ensure that different experiences, effects, impacts, and needs of women, girls, men, boys, and other gender identities are more fully taken into consideration.
- **Resources.** In addition to rhetorical support, the United Nations and its member states should commit additional resources to advancing gender-sensitive counterterrorism and P/CVE approaches. Hiring experienced gender experts in fulltime positions, achieving gender parity, [mainstreaming gender-sensitivity](#), and deploying projects that explicitly focus on advancing diverse gender engagement are critical.
- **Research.** While there is [growing research](#) on how gender dynamics play a role in violent extremism and P/CVE efforts, more localized studies are needed that look at grievances, sympathies, and ideological inclinations that contribute to support for or participation in terrorist and violent extremist groups. Gender, as a social construct, needs to be understood in relation to the specific locality, society, and culture. Research could include a further examination of the tentative correlation between gender-based discrimination and violence and violent extremism, as well as gender stereotypes that are being leveraged for recruitment purposes.
- **Partnerships.** The United Nations and its member states should ensure that Women, Peace & Security, humanitarian, development, and human rights actors are meaningfully engaged within the processes and structures established to develop and implement counterterrorism and P/CVE efforts. It is also critical that civil society actors representing diverse gender identities have an avenue to share their inputs and experiences, as well as the freedom, space, and protection needed to operate independently. Arria formula meetings like today's offer important opportunities to learn from these experts.

The Global Center looks forward to continuing our collaboration with you in pursuit of these important efforts. Thank you for your attention.