

organizations (CSOs) to support government efforts — has become increasingly acknowledged.² In its resolution 1624 (2005),³ the Security Council stressed the importance of the role of civil and religious society, among other actors, in fostering an environment which is not conducive to incitement to terrorism. In its resolution 2178 (2014),⁴ the Council encouraged States to engage relevant non-governmental actors in developing strategies to counter violent extremist narratives that can incite terrorist acts and to address the conditions conducive to the spread of violent extremism.⁵

One area in which CSOs may ultimately be most impactful is in supporting the management of VEPs and preventing radicalization to violence within prisons. This has been recognized in a number of instruments, including Security Council resolution 2396 (2017), which underscores the role that CSOs may play in rehabilitation and reintegration and calls on Member States to work with local communities, mental health and education practitioners, and other relevant CSOs to address the challenges posed by returnees. CSOs may be well placed to provide specialized support to women in prison, as well as to provide support to minority groups and indigenous peoples, including in the form of gender-sensitive assistance, in order to facilitate their transition from prison to liberty.⁶ They may also be well-placed to address the age-specific needs of juveniles, who may be particularly vulnerable to radicalization to violent extremism. Member States are encouraged to establish mechanisms for cooperation among prison staff, community-based service providers, civil society, and families, as appropriate.⁷

Although Governments continue to bear the primary responsibility for countering terrorism and violent extremism, CSOs have the potential to be vital partners in those efforts. Yet, despite growing evidence of the utility of increased CSO engagement in countering violent extremism (CVE), CSOs are regularly excluded from involvement in a range of areas relating to VEPs and populations vulnerable to radicalization to violence in prisons. Their strengths (including their

² Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED), *Technical Guide to the Implementation of Security Council resolution 1373 (2001) and other relevant resolutions* (2017) (S/2017/716), available from <https://www.un.org/sc/ctc/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/CTED-Technical-Guide-2017-compressed.pdf>.

³ S/RES/1624 (2005), available from <http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/doc/1624>.

⁴ S/RES/2178 (2014), available from https://www.un.org/sc/ctc/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/SCR-2178_2014_EN.pdf.

⁵ The role of civil society in countering terrorism and violent extremism is recognized not only in Security Council resolutions 1624 (2005) and 2178 (2014), but also in numerous other United Nations resolutions and instruments, including in the UN Plan of Action to

knowledge of local contexts, their relevant expertise, and their perceptions of credibility among both prisoners and communities) therefore remain underutilized.

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