



2023 Counter-Terrorism Week SIDE EVENTS

19-23 JUNE 2023

UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS • NEW YORK



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ON HUMAN RIGHTS
AND COUNTER-TERRORISM



SECURITY POLICY ALTERNATIVES NETWORK



Launch of the Global Study on the Impact of Counter-Terrorism on Civil Society & Civic Space

Date: 21 June 2023 | **Time:** 15:00-16:30 | **Location:** ECOSOC, UN Headquarters
Simultaneous Interpretation provided in Arabic, French, English & Spanish

Concept Note

The United Nations Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, Fionnuala Ní Aoláin, will bring together Member States, civil society, the United Nations and other stakeholders during the Third United Nations Counter-Terrorism Week to launch the Global Study on the Impact of Counter-Terrorism on Civil Society & Civic Space. The side event is co-sponsored by the Federal Republic of Germany, the Permanent Mission of Spain to the United Nations, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Foundation (NY), and civil society coalitions including the CSO Coalition on Human Rights and Counter-Terrorism, the Security Policy Alternatives Network, and the Global NPO Coalition on FATF.

The Global Study will be made available at <https://defendcivicspace.com/>.

Background on the Global Study

2023 COUNTER-TERRORISM WEEK

www.un.org/counterterrorism/CTweek2023-SE
[@UN_OCT](https://twitter.com/UN_OCT) | [#CTWeek](https://twitter.com/CTWeek) | [#UNiteToCounterTerrorism](https://twitter.com/UNiteToCounterTerrorism)

The Global Study centers the daily, lived experiences for civil society from across the globe operating amidst closing civic space and the widespread misuse of counter-terrorism and preventing and countering violent extremism (P/CVE) measures to restrict their exercise of human rights and fundamental freedoms and curb their legitimate activities. The Study builds from the ground-up in the collection and collation of data driven by civil society, including through a participatory, civil society-engaged-and-led process—comprising 13 civil society consultations across regions, 108 written inputs, including 76 by civil society, and 2 civil society surveys—alongside a commitment to mainstream gender equality and women’s rights from its inception.

The goals of the Global Study are three-fold:

1. To amplify the far-reaching and diverse evidence and findings of local, national, regional, and international civil society organizations, UN entities, and other sources on the impacts of counter-terrorism and P/CVE measures on civil society and civic space— and link them together into a comprehensive evidence base;
2. To identify the challenges as well as progress made on the meaningful participation and leadership of civil society in efforts to counter terrorism and violent extremism at the local, national, regional, and international levels; and
3. To provide insights and recommendations to Member States, the UN, and other stakeholders on how counter-terrorism and P/CVE programming and practice can integrate stronger human rights due diligence safeguards to foster participatory, inclusive, and vibrant civic space in compliance with international law in direct response to the concrete challenges faced by civil society today.

For decades, civil society organizations and UN human rights mechanisms have communicated the persistence and challenge of the misuse of counter-terrorism and P/CVE measures, but in truth such information has remained at the margins of counter-terrorism and security conversations. Previous data points have been dismissed and argued to be a ‘bad-apple’ problem, not a systemic association of counter-terrorism measures with the abuse of human rights and evidenced costs to civil society. The Study is intended to bring together the vast research and evidence bases on the interface of counter-terrorism and P/CVE practice with civil society and civic space, and to draw normative and policy conclusions and recommendations from that collective evidence. **The Study is grounded in recognizing the enormous benefits that an active, diverse, functional, and vibrant civil society brings to communities and societies. Societies where civil society is absent, afraid, cowed, unable to emerge are societies made weaker, less participatory, and vulnerable to the conditions conducive to terrorism and violence.** Despite the virtues and benefits of fostering civil society and the civic space that accompanies it, both have experienced significant challenges across the globe in recent decades. The Study provides a comprehensive assessment of these co-relational trends and seeks to understand the full consequences of increasingly layered and cumulative counter-terrorism and P/CVE measures and practices, including the compounded effects when such measures are experienced together or sequentially by civil society actors. The Study also demonstrates the resilience, capacity, and innovation of civil society and their myriad contributions to societies premised on the dignity and equality of the human person despite the immense pressures they face.

The Global Study was made possible through the generous support of Member State contributions to the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism (Special Rapporteur), specifically the Government of Germany and the Government of Spain. The Global Study was further supported by the Friedrich Ebert-Stiftung Foundation and the International Center for Not-for-Profit Law. Each of these contributions enabled the full, equal, and meaningful participation of civil society across numerous regions and country-settings, ensuring the Global Study was rooted in a ‘bottom-up’ approach.

Programme

- 3:00 PM – 3:15 PM **Opening & Welcome Remarks**
1. **Fionnuala Ní Aoláin**, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights & fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism (Chair)
 2. **H.E. Thomas Zahneisen**, Ambassador and Deputy Permanent Representative of Germany to the United Nations
 3. **H.E. Ana Jimenez de la Hoz**, Ambassador and Deputy Permanent Representative of Spain to the United Nations
- 3:15 PM – 3:25 PM **Presentation & Findings of the Global Study in Defence of Civic Space**
- Fionnuala Ní Aoláin**, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights & fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism
- 3:25 PM – 4:10 PM **Civil Society Presentations – Regional Consultations & Coalition Building**
- Speakers**
1. **María Martín**, Advocacy Coordinator of the Mesoamerican Initiative of Women Human Rights Defenders (IM Defensoras) | Latin America & the Caribbean
 2. **Tuan Nguyen-M**, BUILD Program Manager, Initiatives for International Dialogue & **Mabel**, Representative from Regional Consultation | Asia & the Pacific
 3. **Nikica Kusinikova**, Executive Director, Association Konekt | Central & Eastern Europe
 4. **Alexis Thiry**, Legal Advisor MENA Rights Group | Middle East & North Africa
 5. **Sally Maforchi Mbouien**, Comagend Cameroon | West, East & Central Africa

6. **Hina Shamsi** Director, National Security Project, American Civil Liberties Union | North America (ACLU)

4:10 PM – 4:25 PM

Interventions from the Floor

To be inscribed and confirmed in advance of the meeting.
Please keep interventions from 2-3 minutes.

4:25 PM – 4:30

Closing Remarks

Fionnuala Ní Aoláin, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights & fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism