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**United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and Cultural  
Organization (UNESCO)**

***Topic area A: "Prevention of violent  
extremism through education".***



**UNIVERSITY OF MACEDONIA**  
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## ***Topic area A: “Prevention of violent extremism through education”.***

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## 1. Welcoming letter by the Board members

Dear delegates,

It is an honor to officially welcome you to ThessISMUN 2018, which is going to be held in Thessaloniki from 11th to 15th of April, and more specifically to the UNESCO Executive Board. It is our utmost pleasure and privilege to serve as your Board and we are looking forward to our interaction, communication and cooperation, prior and during the debates of our Committee. Our task can be characterized as challenging, since we are going to elaborate on two important contemporary issues that have to be efficiently and comprehensively addressed.

Our first agenda item focuses on the “prevention of violent extremism through education”. Violent extremism is one of the most prevalent and contemporary issues that the international community faces nowadays. Education can play a vital role in tackling violent extremism worldwide. Thus, security measures along with deterring solutions could be efficient towards eradicating extremism; an educated individual is less likely to join an extremist group or commit acts of terrorism. That is the reason for which practical solutions with an educational direction need to be implemented by UNESCO.

Regarding topic area B, the issue of endangered languages in the context of promoting intercultural dialogue is of utmost importance in today’s society. Language as an integral part of culture needs to be preserved in order for the cultural singularity of its speakers’ to be a part of a continuously globalized international community. The issue of endangered languages and dialects is as contemporary as ever, given the fact that it is becoming increasingly difficult for minorities and indigenous peoples to ensure the linguistic continuation of their communities, as new generations cease to speak their mother tongues and instead choose to learn more widespread languages, contribute to the cultural expense of their own. However, one should bear in mind that extinct languages are a loss for the international community, since they carry along a unique cultural heritage, a distinctive viewpoint of the world and knowledge that cannot be retrieved after their extinction.

As a result, the upcoming sessions are going to give all of us a unique opportunity; the opportunity to combat crucial issues, always contemplating that diplomacy, cooperation, respect for everyone, accurate information and honest dialogue are the keys to success. A decent start, shall be the review of your study guides as a stepping stone for expanding your research, as we urge you to thoroughly research on the Topics, study your country’s policy, start brainstorming on possible solutions and proposals, as well as passionately raise your voice. Do not hesitate to contact us for your possible queries!

Best regards,

The UNESCO Executive Board Presidency.

## 2. Mandate of UNESCO

Nowadays, our world is facing and has to deal with different economic and humanitarian crises, the United Nations and more specifically, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), continue to set goals and achieve them by working hard towards the protection of fundamental human rights and freedoms. UNESCO's mission is to enable people to create and use knowledge for just and inclusive societies, and of course in order to build long-lasting peace worldwide.<sup>1</sup> As stated in Article 1 of its Constitution, the organization's main purpose is *"to contribute to peace and security by promoting collaboration among the nations through education, science and culture in order to further universal respect for justice, for the rule of law, and for the human rights and fundamental freedoms, which are affirmed for the peoples of the world, without distinction of race, sex, language or religion, by the Charter of the United Nations"*.<sup>2</sup>

UNESCO pursues its objectives through five major programs: education, natural sciences, social and human sciences, culture and communication/information. Projects sponsored by UNESCO include literacy, technical, and teacher-training programs, international science programs, the promotion of independent media and the freedom of press, regional and cultural history projects, the promotion of cultural diversity, translations of world literature, international cooperation agreements to secure the world's cultural and natural heritage and to preserve human rights, and attempts to bridge the worldwide digital divide. It is also a member of the United Nations Development Group.<sup>3</sup>

Bearing all the above into consideration, UNESCO's aim is "to contribute to the building of peace, the eradication of poverty, sustainable development and intercultural dialogue through education, the sciences, culture, communication and information". Other priorities of the organization include attaining quality Education for All and lifelong learning, addressing emerging social and ethical challenges,

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<sup>1</sup>Unesco.org. (2018). *About us | United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization*. [online] [Accessed 4 Jan. 2018]. Available from: <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/social-and-human-sciences/about-us/>

<sup>2</sup>UNESCO. (2018). *Learning to Live Together*. [online] [Accessed 4 Jan. 2018]. Available from: <https://en.unesco.org/themes/learning-live-together>

<sup>3</sup>"[UNDG Members](#)". United Nations Development Group. Archived from [the original](#) on 11 May 2011. Retrieved 8 August 2011.

fostering cultural diversity, a culture of peace and building inclusive knowledge societies through information and communication.<sup>4</sup>

To sum up, UNESCO is one of the organizations, in which current global issues are discussed and may be solved by efficient solutions proposed by skilled and educated people, in respect of all Treaties and the existing legal framework, especially the documents concerning the respect of human rights.

### 3. Introduction to Topic Area A

Violent extremism consists one of the most notable issues that global community faces today. Although the term “terrorism” is more commonly used than the term “violent extremism”, they have slight differences; violent extremism is simply considered to be a more expansive and politically correct term for terrorism<sup>5</sup>. In the post 9/11 era, many accounted terrorism as the world's prime threat, taking into account the huge number of reported attacks conducted by violent extremist groups over the past years.<sup>6</sup> Terrorism incidents have been importantly increased since 2011<sup>7</sup>. The grave issue that international community faces today is how difficult it is to carve a comprehensive approach towards the “Hydra” of terrorism. As international community bear witness of countless tragedies all over the continents, it is indisputable that violent extremism knows no boundaries.

Active prevention of future terrorist attacks has proven to be equally as important as directly countering violent extremism. That is why soft power, such as education and especially relevant, inclusive and equitable quality education is required<sup>8</sup>. Moreover, one of the most important aspects that is being neglected is the fact that young people are the more vulnerable ones. According to the Assistant Director-General for Education Mr. Qian Tang *“They are the main targets of recruitment strategies and fall victim to extremist violence; This phenomenon alerts us to the risk of losing a generation of youth, to despair and disengagement.”*<sup>9</sup> It needs to be clarified that

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<sup>4</sup>[UNESCO • General Conference; 34th; Medium-term Strategy, 2008–2013; 2007”](#) (PDF). Retrieved 8 August 2011.

<sup>5</sup> Neumann, P. (2017). Countering Violent Extremism and Radicalisation that Lead to Terrorism: Ideas, Recommendations, and Good Practices from the OSCE Region. [online] p.15, Osce.org. Available at: <http://www.osce.org/chairmanship/346841?download=true> [Accessed 6 Jan. 2018].

<sup>6</sup> Nünlist, C. (2015). Cite a Website - Cite This For Me. [online] Cite.ethz.ch. Available at: <http://www.cite.ethz.ch/content/dam/ethz/special-interest/gess/cis/center-for-securities-studies/pdfs/CSSAnalyse183-EN.pdf> [Accessed 6 Jan. 2018].

<sup>7</sup> Our World in Data. (n.d.). Terrorism. [online] Available at: <https://ourworldindata.org/terrorism/> [Accessed 6 Jan. 2018].

<sup>8</sup> Globalcenter.org. (2013). The Role of Education in Countering Violent Extremism. [online] Available at: [http://globalcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/Dec13\\_Education\\_Expert\\_Meeting\\_Note.pdf](http://globalcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/Dec13_Education_Expert_Meeting_Note.pdf) [Accessed 6 Jan. 2018].

<sup>9</sup> Unesdoc.unesco.org. (2017). Preventing violent extremism through education Sustainable Development Goals United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization A guide for

education is not just a necessity for developing countries; anti-extremist education must also be introduced in the West. Western countries face issues such as the recruitment of youth to extremist groups.<sup>10</sup> Introducing anti-extremist education into developing nations can be a difficult task, if we take into account the fact that the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) continues to constitute a beacon of influence for vulnerable people.<sup>11</sup>

Preventing violent extremism through education is not as simple as it seems, and all the aforementioned should be taken into consideration, in order to comprehensively tackle the issue under discussion. In the direction of properly conceptualizing, addressing and comprehending these issues, the present guide has been divided as following: firstly, there are definitions of specific terms for the effective understanding of the topic, then, there is an analysis on the historical and legal background of the topic. Lastly, some issues that can be characterized as vital, such as the lack of quality education, ignorance and the active engagement of youth through arts and sports, are addressed. Finally, the present guide concludes on a couple of recent actions and underline the general dilemmas that remain to be resolved by UNESCO.

## 4. Definition of key words regarding the Topic Area

### a) Education

Education can be defined as “the act or process of imparting or acquiring general knowledge, developing the powers of reasoning and judgment, and generally of preparing oneself or others intellectually for mature life and the act or process of imparting or acquiring particular knowledge or skills, as for a profession”.<sup>12</sup> It is important to highlight that education apart from the transition of knowledge, includes the establishment of a system of values and character.

### b) Extremism

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policy-makers. [online] Available at: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0024/002477/247764e.pdf> [Accessed 6 Jan. 2018].

10 Pdfs.semanticscholar.org. (2009). RECRUITMENT AND RADICALIZATION OF SCHOOL-AGED YOUTH BY INTERNATIONAL TERRORIST GROUPS. [online] Available at: <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/c664/9103b3d86b13fa58b2c1a2942b5b7ada91d7.pdf> [Accessed 6 Jan. 2018].

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Dictionary.com. (2018). the definition of education. [online] Available at: <http://www.dictionary.com/browse/education> [Accessed 6 Jan. 2018].

The term extremism stands for “the quality or state of being extreme” or the “advocacy of extreme measures or views”<sup>13</sup>. Today, the term is commonly used in a political or religious manner<sup>14</sup>, to refer to an ideology that is characterized as out of the box regarding the mainstream attitudes of society.

### c) Violent extremism

There is no internationally agreed-upon definition of violent extremism. The most accepted understanding of the term is that it refers to the beliefs and actions of people, who support or use violence with an aim to achieve ideological, religious or political goals.<sup>15</sup>

### d) Terrorism

The United Nations have not managed to agree on a common definition of terrorism yet. This failure is mainly based on two causes, which constitute kind of objections. The first one is the support of the idea that any definition should include States’ use of armed forces against civilians. The second one underlines that people under foreign occupation have the right to resistance and a definition of terrorism should not override this right (self-determination).<sup>16</sup> The most recent attempt to define terrorism was by the UN Security Council Resolution 1566 (2004)<sup>17</sup>, according to which terrorist acts are “criminal acts, including against civilians, committed with the intent to cause death or serious bodily injury, or taking of hostages, with the purpose to provoke a state of terror in the general public or in a group of persons or particular persons, intimidate a population or compel a government or an international organization to do or to abstain from doing any act”.<sup>18</sup>

### e) Radicalization

The term “radicalization” is highly debated when used in the context of violent extremism. Concerning the efforts to prevent violent extremism, “radicalization” is

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<sup>13</sup> Merriam-webster.com. (2018). Definition of EXTREMISM. [online] Available at: <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/extremism> [Accessed 6 Jan. 2018].

<sup>14</sup> TheFreeDictionary.com. (2018). extremism. [online] Available at: <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/extremism> [Accessed 6 Jan. 2018].

<sup>15</sup> Living Safe Together, 2016, What is Violent Extremism.. <http://www.livingsafetogether.gov.au/aboutus/Pages/what-is-violent-extremism.aspx> (Accessed on 6 Jan. 2018)

<sup>16</sup> Human rights voices, “There is no UN definition of terrorism” Available at: [http://www.humanrightsvoices.org/eyeontheun/un\\_101/facts/?p=61](http://www.humanrightsvoices.org/eyeontheun/un_101/facts/?p=61) (Accessed 6 Jan. 2018).

<sup>17</sup> For a UN report on terrorism you can see; <http://www.un.org/News/dh/infocus/terrorism/sg%20high-level%20panel%20report-terrorism.htm> (Accessed 6 Jan. 2018).

<sup>18</sup> S/RES/1566 (2004).

commonly used to describe the processes through which a person adopts extreme views or practices to the point of legitimizing the use of violence.<sup>19</sup>

## f) Comprehensive Approach

Comprehensive approach was firstly introduced by NATO and it appears to be a global concept that is often associated with civil-military cooperation. According to NATO's Topic Page on the Comprehensive Approach, "NATO's new Strategic Concept, adopted at the Lisbon Summit in November 2010, underlines that lessons learned from NATO operations show that effective crisis management calls for a comprehensive approach involving political, civilian and military instruments. Military means, although essential, are not enough on their own to meet the many complex challenges to Euro-Atlantic and international security. Allied leaders agreed at Lisbon to enhance NATO's contribution to a comprehensive approach to crisis management as part of the international community's effort and to improve NATO's ability to contribute to stabilization and reconstruction."<sup>20</sup>

## 5. Historical background

Terrorism is not a modern concept,<sup>21</sup> but a modern pit threatening to swallow peace, security and prosperity. Although the common perception is that the majority of recent terrorist attacks have been committed by Islamic extremists, there are also examples of domestic terrorism in Western nations, such as the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing. This occurred, when a truck packed with explosives killed 168 people and injured hundreds in Oklahoma City. The incident conducted by anti-government militant Timothy McVeigh<sup>22</sup>.

Since 2001, there has been an escalation of violent extremist movements. Groups such as al-Qaeda, "Islamic State" (IS), Boko Haram, and al-Shabaab have managed to withhold despite the international efforts. The invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan and the introduction of Western values in traditional cultures are just some of the potential reasons of the surge in terrorism. Al-Qaeda denounced Western influence and began on focusing to terminate those influences.<sup>23</sup> On September 11th, 2001, the worst

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<sup>19</sup> A. Jamieson and J. Flint, 2015, *Radicalisation and Terrorism: A Teacher's Handbook for Addressing Extremism*, Brilliant Publications. (Accessed 6 Jan. 2018).

<sup>20</sup> NATO. (n.d.). Comprehensive approach. [online] Available at: [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics\\_51633.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_51633.htm) [Accessed 6 Jan. 2018].

<sup>21</sup> Our World in Data. (n.d.). Terrorism. [online] Available at: <https://ourworldindata.org/terrorism/> [Accessed 6 Jan. 2018].

<sup>22</sup> HISTORY.com. (n.d.). Oklahoma City bombing - Facts & Summary - HISTORY.com. [online] Available at: <http://www.history.com/topics/oklahoma-city-bombing> [Accessed 6 Jan. 2018].

<sup>23</sup> Cassman, D. (2015). Al Qaeda | Mapping Militant Organizations. [online] Web.stanford.edu. Available at: <http://web.stanford.edu/group/mappingmilitants/cgi-bin/groups/view/21> [Accessed 6 Jan. 2018].

terrorist attack in modern American history occurred, leaving almost 3,000 people dead.<sup>24</sup> Shortly after the attacks, the American president George W. Bush declared “War on Terror” involving military operations, new security legislation, and efforts to block the financing of terrorism. The U.S. called other states to join the fight against terrorism and led an international coalition resulting in the Afghanistan War and the War in Iraq.<sup>25</sup> The aforementioned actions triggered the proliferation of new extremist groups around the globe. The situation became even worse in 2002, when President Bush identified his famous “axis of evil”<sup>26</sup> (Iran, Iraq and North Korea), three rogue states that challenged the international order with terror and weapons of mass destruction.

The notion of violent extremism gained increasing traction in 2015 among state actors and has come to be perceived as a crucial component of a sustainable counterterrorism strategy in responding to contemporary threats, such as but not limited to the Islamic State and the phenomenon of Foreign Terrorist Fighters. Terrorist attacks in Europe further demonstrated the threat that violent extremists pose and the need for a more comprehensive approach.

### Historical Timeline<sup>27</sup>

**September 11, 2001:** 19 members of terrorist group al-Qaeda hijacked four American airplanes and used them to attack various targets of the United States.

**September 8, 2006:** The UN General Assembly adopted by consensus the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.<sup>28</sup>

**April 15, 2013:** Two bombs exploded during the 2013 Boston Marathon. Over 200 people were injured; it was one of the largest terrorist attacks on US soil since 9/11.<sup>29</sup>

**April 14, 2014:** Boko Haram, a Nigerian terrorist organization, kidnapped 276 female students from the Government Secondary School in Chibok, Nigeria.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> HISTORY.com. (n.d.). 9/11 Attacks - Facts & Summary - HISTORY.com. [online] Available at: <http://www.history.com/topics/9-11-attacks> [Accessed 6 Jan. 2018].

<sup>25</sup> The Balance. Whose Spent More on War? Bush, Obama or Trump?. [online] Available at: <https://www.thebalance.com/war-on-terror-facts-costs-timeline-3306300> [Accessed 6 Jan. 2018].

<sup>26</sup> The Economist. (2002). George Bush and the axis of evil. [online] Available at: <http://www.economist.com/node/965664> [Accessed 6 Jan. 2018].

<sup>27</sup> FOSTER, A. (2017). Terror attacks timeline: From Paris and Brussels terror to most recent attacks in Europe. [online] Express.co.uk. Available at: <https://www.express.co.uk/news/world/693421/Terror-attacks-timeline-France-Brussels-Europe-ISIS-killings-Germany-dates-terrorism> [Accessed 6 Jan. 2018].

<sup>28</sup> Un.org. (n.d.). UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy | Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force. [online] Available at: <https://www.un.org/counterterrorism/ctitf/en/un-global-counter-terrorism-strategy> [Accessed 6 Jan. 2018].

<sup>29</sup> ELIGON, J. and COOPER, M. (2013). 2 Blasts at Boston Marathon Kill at Least 3 and Injure More Than 100. [online] Nytimes.com. Available at: <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/04/16/us/explosions-reported-at-site-of-boston-marathon.html?pagewanted=all> [Accessed 6 Jan. 2018].

**2015:** UNESCO Member States adopted the decision “UNESCO’s role in promoting education as a tool to prevent violent extremism” to improve UNESCO’s capacity and to provide assistance to states to combat violent extremism.<sup>31</sup>

**January 7, 2015**<sup>32</sup>: The French satirical newspaper *Charlie Hebdo* was attacked for its allegedly Islamophobic cartoons. The attackers killed 12 people and identified themselves as affiliated with Al-Qaeda. France took extreme anti-terrorism actions after the attack.

**November 13, 2015**<sup>33</sup>: A series of terrifying attacks in Paris killed 130 victims and injured hundreds of others. It was the deadliest assault on France since World War II.

**2016:** UNESCO committed to the UN Secretary-General’s Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism.<sup>34</sup>

**March 22, 2016**<sup>35</sup>: The Brussels bombings killed 32 people and wounded more than 300 other victims. There were two suicide bombings at Brussels Airport and another bombing at a Metro station in the Belgium capital.

**July 14, 2016**<sup>36</sup>: A terrorist in a lorry killed 84 people and injured hundreds of others on the promenade in the seaside town of Nice.

**December 19, 2016**<sup>37</sup>: A terrorist drove a lorry into a packed Christmas market IN Berlin, killing 12 people and injuring more than 60.

**May 22, 2017**<sup>38</sup>: A suicide bombing occurred in Manchester, England, following a concert by pop star Ariana Grande. 22 people were killed and 59 were injured -

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<sup>30</sup> Winsor, M. (2017). Nigeria marks 3 years since 276 Chibok schoolgirls abducted by Boko Haram. [online] ABC News. Available at: <http://abcnews.go.com/International/nigeria-marks-years-276-chibok-schoolgirls-abducted-boko/story?id=46774809> [Accessed 6 Jan. 2018].

<sup>31</sup> Unesdoc.unesco.org. (2015). DECISIONS ADOPTED BY THE EXECUTIVE BOARD AT ITS 197th SESSION. [online] Available at: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0023/002351/235180e.pdf> [Accessed 6 Jan. 2018].

<sup>32</sup> BBC News. (2015). Charlie Hebdo attack: Three days of terror. [online] Available at: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-30708237> [Accessed 6 Jan. 2018].

<sup>33</sup> BBC News. (2015). Paris attacks: What happened on the night. [online] Available at: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-34818994> [Accessed 6 Jan. 2018].

<sup>34</sup> Un.org. (n.d.). Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism | Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force. [online] Available at: <https://www.un.org/counterterrorism/ctitf/en/plan-action-prevent-violent-extremism> [Accessed 6 Jan. 2018].

<sup>35</sup> Cbsnews.com. (2016). Deadly explosions rock Brussels airport, subway. [online] Available at: <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/reported-explosions-at-brussels-airport-in-belgium/> [Accessed 6 Jan. 2018].

<sup>36</sup> BBC News. (2016). Attack in Nice: What we know. [online] Available at: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-36801671> [Accessed 6 Jan. 2018].

<sup>37</sup> Lawther, F., Oltermann, P., Connolly, K. and Rawlinson, K. (2016). Police investigate deadly Berlin truck crash as 'presumed terrorist attack'. [online] the Guardian. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/dec/19/berlin-truck-crashes-into-christmas-market> [Accessed 6 Jan. 2018].

<sup>38</sup> Chan, R. (2017). Ariana Grande Manchester Concert Ends in Explosion, Panic and Death. [online] Nytimes.com. Available at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/05/22/world/europe/ariana-grande-manchester-police.html> [Accessed 6 Jan. 2018].

including children as young as eight years old. Later, ISIS claimed responsibility for the attacks. It was one of the more recent and most devastating attacks the United Kingdom experienced.

**June 3, 2017**<sup>39</sup>: The London terror attack killed eight people and injured many others in London.

**August 17 2017**<sup>40</sup>: A terrorist ploughed a van into crowds, killing 13 people and injuring more than a hundred, in Barcelona's Las Ramblas.

## 6. Legal Framework

### 6.1. United Nations Security Council Resolution 1373

After the unequivocal terrorist acts that took place in New York, Washington D.C. and Pennsylvania on the black day of September 11<sup>th</sup> 2001, the Security Council unanimously adopted a wide-range and comprehensive resolution<sup>41</sup> with strategies aiming to combat and oppose international terrorism. Also, the council called all States to act and report their actions about the aforementioned implementations, no later than 90 days. Under the specific resolution, it has been decided that every State should prevent and suppress the financing of terrorism and also criminalize the willful provision or collection of funds for such acts. Furthermore, it has also been decided that financial assets, economic resources and funds of those participate or are affiliated in any way or form with terrorist's acts, should be frozen without delay. Also, under the desecration of the council, States should refrain from providing support to entities or persons involved in terrorist acts (deny safe havens), as well as prevent them from using their respective territories, in order to facilitate their actions against other States and citizens. According to the text of the resolution, States should ensure that those acts are established as a high criminal offence in their domestic laws and regulations. Additionally, the council called upon all states to accelerate the exchange of information regarding terrorist actions or movements, specifically concerning arms, communication, technologies and the possible possession of weapons of mass destruction. It is expected from them to take action when and if necessary, in order to suppress and prevent terrorist acts. States should become parties to and fully implement the relevant conventions and protocols to combat terrorism. Moreover, all parties should take the appropriate measures –

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<sup>39</sup> BBC News. (2017). Seven killed in London terror attack. [online] Available at: <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-40146916> [Accessed 6 Jan. 2018].

<sup>40</sup> Topping, A. (2017). Spain terror attacks: 13 killed and 100 injured – as it happened. [online] the Guardian. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/live/2017/aug/17/barcelona-attack-van-driven-into-crowd-in-las-ramblas-district> [Accessed 6 Jan. 2018].

<sup>41</sup> Un.org. Resolution 1373. [online] Available at: [https://www.un.org/en/sc/ctc/specialmeetings/2012/docs/United%20Nations%20Security%20Council%20Resolution%201373%20\(2001\).pdf](https://www.un.org/en/sc/ctc/specialmeetings/2012/docs/United%20Nations%20Security%20Council%20Resolution%201373%20(2001).pdf) [Accessed 6 Jan. 2018].

regarding refugee status- so as to ensure that asylum seekers had not any affiliation to terrorism. The Council also took into consideration the close and ever-growing connection between international terrorism and organized crime. Some examples are money and illicit drugs laundering, as well as trafficking of weapons. For that, the Council emphasized on a close regional, sub-regional and international coordination and efforts, in order to increase the international response against the threat to our common security. Likewise, the Council capitalized, in accordance with the Charter that every State should reaffirm to the need to combat by all means, threats to international peace and security caused by unlawful terrorist acts.<sup>42</sup>

## 6.2. United Nations Security Council Resolution 2178

At one of the most important UN summits in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, presided over by United States Former President Barack Obama, opened by United Nations Former Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, the Security Council called all States to urgently act in order to prevent the international flow of terrorist fighters to and from conflict zones. Through Resolution 2178 (2014)<sup>43</sup> that has been adopted unanimously during a meeting in which a plethora of speakers condemned violent extremism, the Member States decided that they shall prevent “recruiting, organizing, transporting or equipping of individuals, who travel to a State other than their States of residence or nationality for the purpose of the perpetration, planning of, or participation in terrorist acts”. Undermining their concern, having to do with the establishment of international terrorist networks, the Member States stressed the “particular and urgent need” to impede the travel and support foreign fighters linked with terrorist organizations such as the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), Al-Nusra Front (Jabhat Fateh al-Sham) and other affiliates or splinter groups of Al-Qaeda. The Council, under this resolution, decided that every State shall ensure its legal system provided the appropriate framework for the prosecution of financing or facilitating of such criminal activities. Also, it has been decided that entry or transit through Member State’s territory, of any individual for whom information of terrorism linked activities exist, is out of order. For this purpose, the resolution required that States should be provided with passenger lists from the airlines. Outlining further measures for international cooperation in order to counter international terrorism and forestall the growth of violent extremism, the resolution voiced readiness to designate additional individuals

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<sup>42</sup> Un.org. (n.d.). SECURITY COUNCIL UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTS WIDE-RANGING ANTI-TERRORISM RESOLUTION; CALLS FOR SUPPRESSING FINANCING, IMPROVING INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION | Meetings Coverage and Press Releases. [online] Available at: <https://www.un.org/press/en/2001/sc7158.doc.htm> [Accessed 6 Jan. 2018].

<sup>43</sup> Un.org, (2014). Resolution 2178. [online] Available at: [http://www.un.org/en/sc/ctc/docs/2015/SCR%202178\\_2014\\_EN.pdf](http://www.un.org/en/sc/ctc/docs/2015/SCR%202178_2014_EN.pdf) [Accessed 6 Jan. 2018].

for sanctions' listings, and guided subsidiary United Nations counter-terrorism bodies to devote their focus on foreign fighters and the great threat they posed.<sup>44</sup>

Following the adoption of the aforementioned document, former Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon stated that *“the world is witnessing a dramatic evolution in the nature of the terrorist threat”*. He also mentioned that millions of civilians –the vast majority of them Muslims- lost their life, maimed, sexually harassed or displaced by terrorists, from Afghanistan to Somalia to Nigeria, from Iraq to Libya to Mali. Furthermore, according to the former Secretary General, it constitutes a fact that more than 13,000 foreign fighters coming from more than 80 Members States had joined ISIL, Al-Nusra as a consequence of the conflict in Syria. It is essential that such terrorism acts shall be defeated, but it is also “clinical” to avoid further radicalization and civilian losses. Such results require a multilateral, multifaceted strategy beyond the immediate security approach. Ending his speech mister Ban Ki-Moon concluded that *“over the long term, the biggest threat to terrorists is not the power of missiles, it is the politics of inclusion”*<sup>45</sup>.

### 6.3. United Nations Security Council Resolution 2250

Taking into consideration the great threat to stability and development caused by the rise of radicalization among young people, the Council urged for a greater voice in decision-making to be given amongst the youth, in a local, national, regional and international level. Under the adoption of resolution 2250, the Security Council urged States to create mechanisms that promote the meaningful youth participation in peace process and dispute resolution. Jordan's representative, Dina Kawar mentioned: *“What we seek is to draw the world's attention to ensure that young people are given the attention they deserve at a time when the world is a theatre for an increasing number of negative issues”*<sup>46</sup>. The aforementioned resolution, and in that extent the Council, recognized that today's generation of youth is the largest the world has ever seen. They constitute a large number of civilians affected by armed conflict, refugees, as well as displaced persons. Moreover, a concern has been expressed about the use of the internet by terrorists and people affiliated to their cause, in order to recruit young

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<sup>44</sup> Un.org. (2015). Implementation of Security Council resolution 2178 (2014) by States affected by foreign terrorist fighters. [online] Available at: [https://www.un.org/sc/ctc/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/FTF-Report-1-3\\_English.pdf](https://www.un.org/sc/ctc/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/FTF-Report-1-3_English.pdf) [Accessed 6 Jan. 2018].

<sup>45</sup> Un.org. (2014). Security Council Unanimously Adopts Resolution Condemning Violent Extremism, Underscoring Need to Prevent Travel, Support for Foreign Terrorist Fighters | Meetings Coverage and Press Releases. [online] Available at: <https://www.un.org/press/en/2014/sc11580.doc.htm> [Accessed 6 Jan. 2018].

<sup>46</sup> Un.org. (n.d.). Security Council, Unanimously Adopting Resolution 2250 (2015), Urges Member States to Increase Representation of Youth in Decision-Making at All Levels | Meetings Coverage and Press Releases. [online] Available at: <https://www.un.org/press/en/2015/sc12149.doc.htm> [Accessed 6 Jan. 2018].

members into their ranks. It has been described as an essentiality for the members to increase cooperation between them and prevent terrorists from exploiting new technologies.

It is of great importance, youth to be actively engaged in shaping and contributing to peace justice and reconciliation. In the end, youth represents “a unique demographic dividend that can contribute to lasting peace and prosperity”. For this reason, the Council encouraged States to engage youth in local actions and NGO’s “in developing strategies to counter the violent extremist narrative that can incite terrorist acts”. In some extent, the resolution called for a greater participation and views of young people to be under consideration during the negotiation process and the implementation of peace agreements, as their marginalization would be unfavorable to building sustainable peace in such aspects as repatriation and resettlement.<sup>47</sup>

## 7. Discussion of the Topic Area

### 7.1. Education as a tool for integration and socio-economic development

Many socioeconomic factors play a vital role in the rise of violent extremism. Apparently, economic grievances play a large role in social anger as the rise of the Nazi Party in the 1930s can be characterized as an indicative case.<sup>48</sup> Moreover, instability can also facilitate the rise of terrorist activities. The Arab Spring, during which instability and political upheaval, helped the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) to rise to power<sup>49</sup>, is a prime example. In Syria, the civil war led civilians to join terror groups. Nigeria is another example in which social, political, and economic factors created the ideal ground for the rise of violent extremism within the state. Also, extreme poverty, social differences, and political unrest led to the rise of the anti-Western terror group Boko Haram.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Unoy.org. (n.d.). SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 2250 ANNOTATED AND EXPLAINED. [online] Available at: <http://unoy.org/wp-content/uploads/2250-annotated-and-explained.pdf> [Accessed 6 Jan. 2018].

<sup>48</sup> ThoughtCo. (2017). How Treaty of Versailles Contributed to Hitler's Rise to Power. [online] Available at: <https://www.thoughtco.com/treaty-of-versailles-hitlers-rise-power-1221351> [Accessed 6 Jan. 2018].

<sup>49</sup> the Guardian. (2014). How Isis came to be. [online] Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/aug/22/syria-iraq-incubators-isis-jihad> [Accessed 6 Jan. 2018].

<sup>50</sup> Aljazeera.com. (2016). Boko Haram: Behind the Rise of Nigeria's Armed Group. [online] Available at: <http://www.aljazeera.com/programmes/specialseries/2016/11/boko-haram-rise-nigeria-armed-group-161101145500150.html> [Accessed 19 Jan. 2018].

Young people may initially turn to violent extremist groups to find a sense of recognition, and identity.<sup>51</sup> Youth may also join these groups because they offer forms of assistance that meet their material and sociopsychological needs, e.g., money, protection, and solidarity.<sup>52</sup> This is the reason why there is a close relation between youth unemployment and violent activity. The impacts of the economic crises faced by many States in terms of poverty and unemployment highly contribute to leading young people to choose violent extremism as a response.<sup>53</sup>

A proper educational system is expected to help each society meet its people's needs. Education should be able to empower people from all backgrounds to enter the workforce and select a profession that suits them, in accordance with each one's talent. If the educational system established provides quality education and encourages knowledge, it will stand able to produce an active workforce that will help combat unemployment and will provide a massive support to an unstable society. Furthermore, it cannot be denied that education can contribute in establishing a system of values. If the system prioritizes the values and rights that are more important to each particular society, education can provide support to democracy, leading to a stable society that can function and promote equality and democracy.

## 7.2. Lack of Quality Education/ Infrastructure

Access to education needs to be guaranteed, and lack of it needs to be combated. The problem seems to be multiplied especially when referring to the much-troubled African continent, where illiteracy remains a great obstacle.<sup>54</sup> Lack of proper infrastructure -within rural areas- continues to be a main cause of the problem. It comes without saying, that specific programmes and initiatives under the frame of education, aiming to combat violent extremism, cannot be launched, especially when basic education is not guaranteed in the first place. Nevertheless, it should be underlined that Non-Governmental Organisations and several UN bodies offer assistance to several countries by initiating educational projects. There is no doubt in the assumption that funding such projects can –in some point- lead to the regulation or even elimination of the problem. Nevertheless, it constitutes a fact that funding is a sensitive matter and has to be addressed in a proper manner.

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<sup>51</sup> Osce.org. (n.d.). Youth Engagement to Counter Violent Extremism and Radicalization that Lead to Terrorism. [online] Available at: <http://www.osce.org/secretariat/103352?download=true> [Accessed 6 Jan. 2018].

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> HuffPost. (2017). Fighting violent extremism & radicalization: Community engagement, Work, Belonging & Empathy. [online] Available at: [https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/fighting-violent-extremism-radicalization-community\\_us\\_59b51c66e4b0d0c16bb52d7a](https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/fighting-violent-extremism-radicalization-community_us_59b51c66e4b0d0c16bb52d7a) [Accessed 6 Jan. 2018].

<sup>54</sup> Unesco.org. (n.d.). Literacy | United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. [online] Available at: <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/dakar/education/literacy/> [Accessed 6 Jan. 2018].

Moreover one can observe that education may be accessible to a large number of civilians, but usually may not be of proper quality. There are indications of several systems (education systems) and practices that solely focus on academic goals, forgetting the concept of all-around “Humanistic goals” education should provide. In other words, it has to be ensured that individuals’ values and attitudes should be included into each State’s broader education system and goals.<sup>55</sup> Following, the matter of the level of training and adequacy of pedagogues has to be addressed, since often a great deal of them does not have the expected qualifications and requirements to address issues of grave importance, such as violent extremism. It comes as a fact that a degraded school system may reinforce ignorance and intolerance as opposed to promoting living together.<sup>56</sup>

### 7.3. Ignorance and lack of information as a fuel of violent extremism

Arguably, at the heart of racial discrimination and xenophobia lie two concepts; those being ignorance and fear.<sup>57</sup> To that extent, everyone may adopt or experience an attitude based on some kind of “pre-judgment”, which is quite possible to be based on ignorance or lack of information.<sup>58</sup> In fact, prejudice can operate in three separate stages.<sup>59</sup> The first one is related to the cognitive level, in which an individual creates false images and follows wrongful stereotypes and generalisations brought up to life and supported within society, without evidential basis. Following, the second level is the quite obvious emotional one. Into this spectrum, fear, caution or hatred poses a leading role, and it is usually developed by a sole person based on what he/she has been experienced as an individual. Thirdly, there is the behavioural level, in which an individual engages into discriminatory and racial behaviour.<sup>60</sup> Thus, the level, in which education holds a considerable role, is the cognitive level, the deep root of every problem, since a sole person should be well-informed and educated, in order not to evolve the aforementioned stereotypic comportment, which eventually will lead to the already mentioned second and third levels. Education offers “filter” through which stereotypes and racial discrimination will be encountered. Only if addressing xenophobia and racism, irritated individuals may be discouraged to join extremist groups and radicalize as a part of a reflex reaction.

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<sup>55</sup> Facultyweb.cortland.edu. (2018). Principles of Humanistic Education. [online] Available at: <http://facultyweb.cortland.edu/andersmd/HUMAN/PRINC.HTML> [Accessed 6 Jan. 2018].

<sup>56</sup> Osce.org. (n.d.). Youth Engagement to Counter Violent Extremism and Radicalization that Lead to Terrorism. [online] Available at: <http://www.osce.org/secretariat/103352?download=true> [Accessed 6 Jan. 2018].

<sup>57</sup> Gorski, P. (2015). *The Undergirding Factor is POWER: Toward an Understanding of Prejudice and Racism*. [online] Edchange.org. Available at: <http://www.edchange.org/multicultural/papers/caleb/racism.html> [Accessed 6 Jan. 2018].

<sup>58</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>59</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>60</sup> *ibid.*

## 7.4. Active Engagement of Youth through Arts and Sports

Arts and sports initiatives can contribute to the promotion of intercultural dialogue, community engagement, social cohesion and integration<sup>61</sup>, as radicalization is often considered as the result of isolation and exclusion from society and social interaction. Arts and sports are part of a comprehensive approach to prevent violent extremism. For example, the European Commission recommended to the European Parliament in January 2014 that sports should be included in broader education efforts to build resilience against violent extremism<sup>62</sup>. Additionally, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) issues that the arts and sports can be used as civic or community engagement tools.<sup>63</sup> Both arts and sports have a positive influence on young generations. Not only do they offer youth the opportunity to be engaged in social and purposeful activities, but also, they help them develop and improve their skills and talents, as well as raise their confidence and self-esteem and help build bridges between divided groups and communities. Furthermore, arts and sports initiatives provide valuable opportunities to engage youth, women, and communities in an open and secure environment, which ensures broad participation. They can also assist in involving vulnerable youth, who may otherwise choose to join violent extremist groups<sup>64</sup> as a way to channel their frustrations.

## 8. Actions that have already been taken

### 8.1. UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy<sup>65</sup>

The Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy was adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on 8 September 2006. The Assembly reviews the specific strategy every two years, marking it as a living document attuned to the priorities every State

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<sup>61</sup> Hedayahcenter.org. (2015). Thinking Outside the Box Exploring the Critical Roles of Sports, Arts, and Culture in Preventing Violent Extremism. [online] Available at: <http://www.hedayahcenter.org/Admin/Content/File-23201692017.pdf> [Accessed 6 Jan. 2018].

<sup>62</sup> European Commission, "Preventing Radicalisation to Terrorism and Violent Extremism: Strengthening the EU's Response," [http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/e-library/documents/policies/crisis-and-terrorism/radicalisation/docs/communication\\_on\\_preventing\\_radicalisation\\_and\\_violence\\_promoting\\_extremism\\_201301\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/e-library/documents/policies/crisis-and-terrorism/radicalisation/docs/communication_on_preventing_radicalisation_and_violence_promoting_extremism_201301_en.pdf). [Accessed 6 Jan. 2018].

<sup>63</sup> Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, "Preventing Terrorism and Countering Violent Extremism and Radicalization that Lead to Terrorism: A Community-Policing Approach" <http://www.osce.org/atu/111438?download=true> [Accessed 6 Jan. 2018].

<sup>64</sup> Rutter, T. (2016). Sport and extremism: 'If young people are excluded, they're easier to radicalise'. [online] the Guardian. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/public-leaders-network/2016/oct/24/football-boxing-extremism-young-people-excluded-radicalise-brussels> [Accessed 6 Jan. 2018].

<sup>65</sup> Un.org. UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy | Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force. [online] Available at: <https://www.un.org/counterterrorism/ctitf/en/un-global-counter-terrorism-strategy> [Accessed 6 Jan. 2018].

should set for its counter-terrorism policy. The strategy is considered to be a unique instrument in the hands of every State, in order to enhance regional and international efforts to counter terrorism. Furthermore, the importance of these documents is symbolic, as it constitutes the first effort of the UN Member States to agree on a common strategic and operational approach against terrorism. It sends a message that terrorism, in any way, form and manifestation, is unacceptable and every State is committed to fight against it. For this reason, the States have agreed upon a number of individual or collective practical steps to prevent and combat it. “Those practical steps include a wide array of measures ranging from strengthening state capacity to counter terrorist threats to better coordinating United Nations system’s counter-terrorism activities”<sup>66</sup>.

The Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy is composed of 4 pillars<sup>67</sup>.



## 8.2. UNESCO’s Role in Promoting Education as a Tool to Prevent Violent Extremism (Decision 197EX/46)<sup>68</sup>

UNESCO supports countries in order to deliver adequate education programs that help to create resilience to extremism and moderate the phenomenon. Such specific projects have been undertaken under the framework of Global Citizenship

<sup>66</sup> Un.org. United Nations General Assembly Adopts Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy | Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force. [online] Available at: <https://www.un.org/counterterrorism/ctitf/en/united-nations-general-assembly-adopts-global-counter-terrorism-strategy> [Accessed 6 Jan. 2018].

<sup>67</sup> Un.org. UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy | Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force. [online] Available at: <https://www.un.org/counterterrorism/ctitf/en/un-global-counter-terrorism-strategy> [Accessed 6 Jan. 2018].

<sup>68</sup> Unesdoc.unesco.org. (2015). UNESCO’S ROLE IN PROMOTING EDUCATION AS A TOOL TO PREVENT VIOLENT EXTREMISM. [online] Available at: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0023/002348/234879e.pdf> [Accessed 6 Jan. 2018].

Education<sup>69</sup> and support the implementation of UNESCO Executive Board Decision 197 EX/Decision 46: “UNESCO’s role in promoting education as a tool to prevent violent extremism”. UNESCO’s fight to impede violent extremism through education targets to reinforce the national education systems to suitably and efficiently contribute to national prevention efforts. This includes supplying learners, of all ages, and especially young people, with knowledge, correct values, attitudes and expected behaviors, which nurture responsible global citizenship, also critical thinking and the much-needed ability to take action to fight violent extremism. The areas in which UNESCO is operating are the following<sup>70</sup>:

*i) Global Advocacy*

UNESCO works with several experts and specialists in the field of Education all around the world. The Organization is responsible for the creation of an international consensus focusing on the need for an engagement of the education as a crucial partner in the fight against violent extremism. Furthermore, UNESCO identifies and examines comprehensive education sector responses to the threats of violent extremism.

*ii) Development of guidance*

Moreover, UNESCO offers help to several education-policy makers, in order to implement efficient and appropriate education-related actions, contributing to national prevention of violent extremism (PVE) efforts. This kind of work includes supporting teachers in managing classroom discussions in relation to PVE and radicalization, and creating a classroom that is inclusive and conducive to respectful dialogue, open discussion and critical thinking.

*iii) Capacity-building*

Finally, UNESCO is also responsible to develop capacity-building initiatives for professionals in education on how to handle cases related to violent extremism through global citizenship education and genocide prevention, collaborating with the

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<sup>69</sup> UNESCO. (n.d.). Global Citizenship Education. [online] Available at: <https://en.unesco.org/gced> [Accessed 6 Jan. 2018].

<sup>70</sup> UNESCO. (n.d.). Education as a tool to prevent violent extremism. [online] Available at: <https://en.unesco.org/preventing-violent-extremism/edu-as-tool> [Accessed 6 Jan. 2018].

UNESCO International Institute for Capacity Building in Africa<sup>71</sup> (IICBA) and the Asia-Pacific Centre of Education for International Understanding<sup>72</sup> (APCEIU).

### 8.3. Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism

On 24 December 2015, UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon created the Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism<sup>73</sup>, which he presented on 15 January 2016 to the General Assembly<sup>74</sup>. The Plan is based on the results of high-level meetings of the General Assembly and Security Council and outcomes of international and regional meetings and underlined the need to prevent the further spread of violent extremism by addressing the root causes. The recommendations presented merged the actions of international, regional and national stakeholders. On 9 February 2016, the General Assembly adopted a resolution<sup>75</sup> that “welcomes the initiative by the Secretary-General, and takes note of his Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism”. The General Assembly decided to “give further consideration to the Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism beginning in the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy review in June 2016 as well as in other relevant forums”.

The Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism contains more than 70 recommendations and can be characterized as an ambitious shift towards tackling the root causes that lead to radicalization. The Secretary-General issues a comprehensive approach including -apart from security-based counter-terrorism measures- preventive mechanisms that can tackle the circumstances driving individuals to radicalize and turn to violent extremist groups. In other words, the Plan emphasizes the significance of prevention, the necessity of respecting human rights and the obligation that each Member State develop a National PVE Plan of Action with UN assistance.

There are four key components to the Plan.<sup>76</sup>

<sup>71</sup> Unesco-iicba.org. (2018). Unesco International Institute for Capacity Building in Africa – Strengthening Teacher Development in Africa. [online] Available at: <http://www.unesco-iicba.org/> [Accessed 6 Jan. 2018].

<sup>72</sup> Wfuna.org. (2018). Asia-Pacific Centre of Education for International Understanding | World Federation of United Nations Associations | WFUNA. [online] Available at: <http://www.wfuna.org/partner/asia-pacific-centre-of-education-for-international-understanding> [Accessed 6 Jan. 2018].

<sup>73</sup> Un.org. (n.d.). Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism. [online] Available at: [http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=A/70/674](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/70/674) [Accessed 6 Jan. 2018].

<sup>74</sup> Un.org. (n.d.). Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism | Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force. [online] Available at: <https://www.un.org/counterterrorism/ctitf/en/plan-action-prevent-violent-extremism> [Accessed 6 Jan. 2018].

<sup>75</sup> Un.org. (2016). Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism. [online] Available at: [http://www.un.org/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=A/70/L.41](http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/70/L.41) [Accessed 6 Jan. 2018].

<sup>76</sup> Cic.nyu.edu. (n.d.). Preventing Violent Extremism by Protecting Rights And Addressing Root Causes | Center on International Cooperation. [online] Available at:

- 1) National Prevent Violent Extremism (PVE) Plans of Action: each Member State should adopt its own plan that addresses local supporters of violent extremism in a way that complements any existing national counter-terrorism strategies. It also encompasses issues such as Foreign Terrorist Fighter threat, preventing the financing of violent extremist and terrorist groups, and coordination of national policies with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- 2) Regional PVE Plans of Action: regional cooperation needs to be reinforced by strengthening regional and sub-regional organizations.
- 3) Seven Priority Areas for Action: the Plan identifies as priorities dialogue and conflict prevention; strengthening good governance, human rights and the rule of law; engaging communities; empowering youth; gender equality and empowering women; education, the Internet and social media.
- 4) Backing Member States, Regional Bodies and Communities through the United Nations: while noting that the prime responsibility to prevent violent extremism rests with Member States, the Plan of Action asks for the adoption of an “All-of-UN” approach.

#### **8.4. Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development - Sustainable Development Goals 4, 10, 16**

UN Member States unanimously adopted Resolution 70/1, “*Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*” on 25 September 2015.<sup>77</sup> It can be characterized as an initiative that dates back to June 2012 and is implemented via “Rio+20” Conference on Sustainable Development, in which states expressed their commitment to develop global Sustainable Development Goals, including issues, such as natural resources management, sustainability, effective institutions and provisions of achieving universal education.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development<sup>78</sup>, which is non-legally binding, lays out the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, which strive to encompass issues related not only to economy, society and culture, but also to important aspects concerning environment, management of natural resources and the right to development. The

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[http://cic.nyu.edu/news\\_commentary/preventing-violent-extremism-protecting-rights-and-addressing-root-causes](http://cic.nyu.edu/news_commentary/preventing-violent-extremism-protecting-rights-and-addressing-root-causes) [Accessed 6 Jan. 2018].

<sup>77</sup> Un.org. (2015). United Nations Official Document. [online] Available at: [http://www.un.org/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/70/1](http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/70/1) [Accessed 6 Jan. 2018].

<sup>78</sup> Ec.europa.eu. (2017). The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and SDGs - Environment - European Commission. [online] Available at: [http://ec.europa.eu/environment/sustainable-development/SDGs/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/sustainable-development/SDGs/index_en.htm) [Accessed 6 Jan. 2018].

new Agenda does not disregard national realities and capacities, while it recognizes the challenges that can potentially hinder the process of sustainable development. At the same time, it perceives local, national and international institutions as key players in implementing the Agenda in a coherent, holistic and comprehensive way.

Its universal applicability and its importance in shaping development priorities constitute vital characteristics, as the Agenda is expected to strongly influence global and national policies relating to both developed and developing countries over the next 15 years.

As it has already been mentioned, the 2030 Agenda for “*people, planet, prosperity, peace and partnership*” integrates the three dimensions of sustainable development: (i) economic, (ii) social and (iii) environmental, and consists of four pillars: (i) a political Declaration, (ii) a set of 17 Sustainable Development Goals and 169 targets, (iii) means of Implementation, and (iv) a framework for follow up and review of the Agenda.<sup>79</sup>

As far as the important issue of the prevention of violent extremism is concerned, emphasis should be put on Sustainable Goals 4, 10, and 16, which effectively incorporate sub-clauses dealing with tackling violent extremism through education.

### **Goal 4: Quality education: “Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all”**



Entering the second millennium, there has been a great progress in achieving the target of universal primary education. The total enrolment rate in developing countries reached 91 percent in 2015, and the worldwide number of children out of

<sup>79</sup> Enb.iisd.org. (2015). ENB Report | Summary of the Post-2015 Intergovernmental Negotiations (Intergovernmental Negotiations on the Outcome Document) | 7th and 8th Sessions | POST2015-IN7-IN8 | 20-24 July and 27 July - 2 August 2015 | UN Headquarters, New York | IISD Reporting Services. [online] Available at: <http://enb.iisd.org/vol32/enb3220e.html> [Accessed 6 Jan. 2018].

school has dropped by almost half.<sup>80</sup> Although basic literacy levels have improved, more efforts are needed, so as to make important steps towards Sustainable Development Goal 4. For instance, the world has accomplished equality in primary education between girls and boys, while achieving that target at all levels of education remains a great challenge.<sup>81</sup>

Achieving inclusive and quality education for all underlines the common belief that education constitutes one of the most powerful tools for sustainable development, as it is the foundation of improving people's lives. Moreover, it is not only a key piece of the puzzle for poverty eradication. Education can also help in training the future workforce, fostering innovation and generating stable and prosperous societies.

Concluding, Sustainable Development Goal 4 has Seven Outcome Targets encompassing many different aspects of education. These targets are<sup>82</sup>:

- 4.1 Universal primary and secondary education
- 4.2 Early childhood development and universal pre-primary education
- 4.3 Equal access to technical/vocational and higher education
- 4.4 Relevant skills for decent work
- 4.5 Gender equality and inclusion
- 4.6 Universal youth literacy
- 4.7 Education for sustainable development and global citizenship

Additionally, there are three means of implementation: a) effective learning environments, b) scholarships, and c) teachers and educators.

### **Goal 10: Reduced inequalities: “Reducing inequality within and among countries”**

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<sup>80</sup> Sustainable Development Goals Fund. (n.d.). Goal 4: Quality education. [online] Available at: <http://www.sdgfund.org/goal-4-quality-education> [Accessed 6 Jan. 2018].

<sup>81</sup> United Nations Sustainable Development. (n.d.). Education - United Nations Sustainable Development. [online] Available at: <http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/education/> [Accessed 6 Jan. 2018].

<sup>82</sup> UNESCO. (2018). Sustainable Development Goal 4 and its targets. [online] Available at: <https://en.unesco.org/education2030-sdg4/targets> [Accessed 6 Jan. 2018].



Although the international community has accomplished significant positive results towards lifting people out of poverty, inequalities still exist. One can observe large disparities remain, for example in accessing to health and education services.<sup>83</sup> Moreover, while inequality under the spectrum of income between states may in some extent have been reduced, inequality within States has unfortunately risen. There is a growing consensus that economic growth is not sufficient to reduce poverty, if it is not inclusive, and if it does not involve the three dimensions of sustainable development – economic, social and environmental.<sup>84</sup> In order to reduce inequality, States should be compliant with universal -in principle- policies, caring and providing to the needs of disadvantaged and marginalized populations. As United States senator Bernie Sanders said, “*a nation will not survive morally or economically when so few have so much, while so many have so little*”.<sup>85</sup>

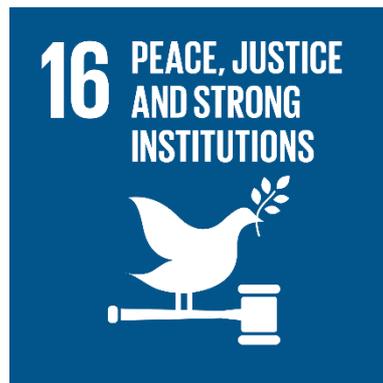
**Goal 16: Peace, justice and strong institutions: “Promote just, peaceful and inclusive societies”**

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<sup>83</sup> Un.org. (n.d.). EQUALITY: WHY IT MATTERS. [online] Available at: [http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/16-00055j\\_Why-it-Matters\\_Goal10\\_Equality\\_new-icon.pdf](http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/16-00055j_Why-it-Matters_Goal10_Equality_new-icon.pdf) [Accessed 6 Jan. 2018].

<sup>84</sup> United Nations Sustainable Development. (n.d.). Reduce inequality within and among countries - United Nations Sustainable Development. [online] Available at: <http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/inequality/> [Accessed 6 Jan. 2018].

<sup>85</sup> Sanders, B. (2013). 2014: Seize the Moment. [online] HuffPost. Available at: [https://www.huffingtonpost.com/rep-bernie-sanders/2014-seize-the-moment\\_b\\_4518335.html](https://www.huffingtonpost.com/rep-bernie-sanders/2014-seize-the-moment_b_4518335.html) [Accessed 6 Jan. 2018].



Central to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is the need to promote peaceful and inclusive societies based on respect for human rights, the rule of law and transparent, effective and accountable institutions.<sup>86</sup> Although huge steps have been taken towards this direction, considerable challenges need to be dealt with, including various forms of violence against children and other vulnerable groups, access to justice and ensuring transparency.<sup>87</sup>

The inclusion of SDG 16 in the post-2015 development agenda underlines the common belief that peace and security are crucial for sustainable development and poverty eradication. The increasing numbers of armed violence and insecurity pose a threat on a country's development, damage economic growth and often result in insecurity and outrage that last for generations. The SDGs' aim to significantly reduce all forms of violence, and work with governments and communities to find lasting solutions to conflict and insecurity.<sup>88</sup>

## 9. Points to be addressed

- ✚ Do the already existing measures address all the aspects of the issue under discussion?
- ✚ Which direction should be taken, so as to create a more comprehensive framework and a holistic response for the prevention of violent extremism through education?

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<sup>86</sup> Division, U. (n.d.). Goal 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels — SDG Indicators. [online] Unstats.un.org. Available at: <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2016/goal-16/> [Accessed 6 Jan. 2018].

<sup>87</sup> Ibid.

<sup>88</sup> UNDP. (2018). Goal 16: Peace, justice and strong institutions. [online] Available at: <http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/sustainable-development-goals/goal-16-peace-justice-and-strong-institutions.html> [Accessed 6 Jan. 2018].

- ✚ Which is the role of Member States and UNESCO in establishing a sustainable program for the prevention of youth in joining violent extremist groups?
- ✚ How can national legal framework be adapted to the international one?
- ✚ How can we prevent radical groups from dismantling anti-terror education programs?
- ✚ Should there be any differences between anti-terror education programs in developed and developing nations?
- ✚ Which measures should be taken in order to adequately address the issue of preventing violent extremism in countries characterized by weak institutions and problems deriving from them?
- ✚ How can the problem of lack of infrastructure and ignorance be properly addressed under the UNESCO mandate?
- ✚ Which actions should be taken by the international community in order to properly educate, raise public awareness, and efficiently tackle violent extremism?
- ✚ How can anti-terror education be effective in nations affected by war?

## 10. Conclusion

It is indisputable that education is critical in countering violent extremism among youth. Young people should be equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to understand and reject any possible affiliation with violent or terrorist activities. They need to understand that violent extremism and terrorism are not the solution to the injustices and conflicts they encounter or identify with. It is imperative for terrorist radicalization among youth to be prevented, starting at an early age, in formal schools' settings. On the contrary, while radicalization is interpreted with a negative connotation, youth should be radicalized towards peace and democracy. Youth should be encouraged to embrace and actively promote peace, tolerance and democracy although these may be held as radical ideas in their communities.<sup>89</sup>

Unfortunately, while the outburst of violent extremism and terrorism continues, actions to persuasively combat the aforementioned threat have not matched either the gravity or the seriousness of the problem. Nevertheless, they underscore failures of implementation, commitment and limited practical impact of the agreements on the topic. The topic of preventing violent extremism through education remains always at the top of UNESCO's agenda, given the recent adoption of the "Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism" by the General Assembly on 9 February 2016.

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<sup>89</sup> Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, "Preventing Terrorism and Countering Violent Extremism and Radicalization that Lead to Terrorism: A Community-Policing Approach <http://www.osce.org/atu/111438?download=true> [Accessed 6 Jan. 2018].

Through the work of this committee, delegates shall forge and implement solutions to properly address the real nature, scale and scope of the problem and at the same time to take into consideration all different national perspectives in a coherent manner. It is an opportunity to form an adequate legal framework that could constitute a beacon of hope, lighting up the path that States need to follow in order to ensure a better future for the generations to come.

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## 12. Further resources

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