Check Against Delivery

Remarks at the
Second United Nations High-Level Conference on Counter-Terrorism
Breakout Session C: The critical roles of civil society and local actors in building partnerships
for prevention

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Thank you

community elders, religious lead                                        clubs,                              The positive contributions of civil society to peace and security have been well documented, including their delivery of a more context-sensitive, human security-driven approach to preventing and countering violent extremism and terrorism. Increased references to their many roles can be witnessed in successive reviews of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, including in its seventh version which is anticipated to be adopted this Wednesday.

: they need to be actively and meaningfully engaged and supported in the development, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of counterterrorism and PVE policies, interventions, and capacity development programs. They can help ensure these are evidence-based, context-sensitive, follow a do no harm approach, include gender and age considerations, and account for individual risks and needs. Civil society also holds those with decision making power accountable to their human rights and international law obligations, including governments and private sector companies who are deploying transformative technologies.

Civil society often fills roles where governments do not have the necessary capacity, trust, or expertise. In so doing, they bring greater attention to the grievances experienced by communities and shine a light on how a lack of good governance and socioeconomic and political marginalization have served to drive extremist violence. At the same time, while it is critical that civil society is meaningfully engaged and included, they should not be expected to take over a                                                  essential services.

Peacebuilders, human rights defenders, and other civil society actors work under extremely difficult circumstances. Over 95 percent of all deaths related to terrorism occur in countries with ongoing violent conflict; the ten countries most affected by terrorist attacks are all engaged in at least one armed conflict. Thus, a wider array of civil society and humanitarian partners are having to navigate more complex operating environments as counterterrorism laws and policies influence and govern their actions.

Shrinking Civic Space
Civic space has been shrinking steadily over the last decade, alongside a deterioration of other rights such as the freedom of expression and association; 87 percent
now

recognize