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Assessing Progress Made, and the Future of Development Approaches to Preventing Violent Extremism

Report of the United Nations Development Programme Second
Global Meeting on Preventing Violent Extremism, 'Oslo II'



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United Nations Development Programme

Oslo Governance Centre

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23-24 May 2018
Fornebu, Norway

I. Acknowledgements

UNDP's Oslo Governance Centre is grateful to all those who participated in the 'Oslo II' meeting, as well as in the development of this report.

The opening statements made by Nicolas Astrup, Minister for International Development for Norway, Achim Steiner, UNDP Administrator, Vladimir Voronkov, Under-Secretary General of the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism, Somia Okoued, State Minister of Sudan as well as a video message from Jayathma Wickramanayake, United Nations Secretary General's Envoy on Youth, contributed to the content of this report. The lead author was Jide Okeke. In addition to UNDP colleagues in Oslo, New York and the regional hubs, thanks are due to a number of participants for specific inputs to this report.

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II. Executive Summary

This report provides an analytical reflection of the content, observations and recommendations of the second global meeting on preventing violent extremism ('Oslo II' meeting), 'Assessing Progress Made and the Future of Development Approaches to Preventing Violent Extremism', held on 23-24 May 2018 in Fornebu, Norway. After an introduction, it contains four further sections: the first section provides a synopsis of the critical milestones that have been achieved primarily by UNDP as well as other relevant stakeholders since the first global meeting held in March 2016. The second section provides an overview of cross-cutting findings that emerged from the meeting. The third section represents thematic findings based on the various sessions held during the meeting. The final section provides a brief conclusion on the way forward for PVE work.

Building on the first global meeting, the Oslo II meeting was organised jointly by UNDP and the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs to take stock of progress made, share experiences and distil lessons on policy-development, research and programming on preventing violent extremism (PVE). The meeting revealed that progress has been made on research and knowledge production on preventing violent extremism especially in the areas of: drivers of extremism, youth perceptions and the recognition of the roles of young people in PVE, reintegration of disengaged fighters and returnees, the role of media including online pathways to radicalisation, gendered analysis of violent extremism as well as the role of women. In addition, formal and informal partnerships have emerged on PVE between the United Nations system and other relevant stakeholders. United Nations Member States are also championing the development and implementation of National Action Plans (NAPs) on PVE, including through the mechanism of the Group of Friends on PVE and through the twin resolutions on sustaining peace by the General Assembly (A/RES/70/262) and the Security Council (S/RES/2282). Furthermore, UNDP is leading the process of developing tools that could be adapted across contexts, to measure the impact of PVE programming. As a result of these developments, the Oslo II meeting reinforced the view of an emerging PVE community of practice.

Despite different methodologies and thematic focus often adopted by PVE community of practice, there are broad agreements on the principles that underpin PVE work, based on an understanding that PVE work is closely aligned with both the 2030 Agenda and sustaining peace agendas. There is emerging consensus on: the centrality of rule of law and rights-based approach to PVE; promoting an inclusive and multi-sectoral approach; integrating gender in PVE; and the importance of locally rooted research and documentation on PVE.

The many recommendations that emerged from the Oslo II meeting are documented in the main body of this report, at the end of each section. However, some **key recommendations** across the thematic areas are as follows:

- a. Focus interventions locally, at city and municipality levels, supported by research on local drivers of conflict and peace, and link local initiatives and activism to national and international efforts;
- b. Conduct more research and analysis on reintegration and rehabilitation trends and forms, including on the various types of returnees and their specific needs;
- c. Media and communication are a critical component of PVE, and lessons should be drawn from current programmes, including initiatives implemented by the private sector;



Photo Credit: UNDP Oslo Governance Centre

- d. Support local women's peacebuilding organisations and their initiatives with sustained funding, as they are at the forefront of preventing extremism and have the necessary trust from their community, as well as skills and knowledge of the context to implement effective and sustainable initiatives;
- e. Put the end-users of NAPs at the centre of the process, with the international community playing a supporting role;
- f. Ensure that funding mechanisms are structured to support young people and their leadership, including by engaging with the philanthropic community and via advocacy efforts with donors;
- g. Recognise that working with religious actors requires special expertise, sound religious literacy and a capacity to collaborate with a diverse range of faith-based actors.

III. INTRODUCTION

In March 2016, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Oslo Governance Centre organised a global meeting on *Preventing Violent Extremism by Promoting Inclusive Development, Tolerance and Respect for Diversity*. The 'Oslo I' meeting brought together 135 experts and practitioners from national governments, civil society, multilateral institutions, academia and think-tanks from across 47 countries, and served as a substantive contribution to UNDP's development of this area of work, as well as an opportunity to validate the organisational strategy paper [Preventing Violent Extremism through Inclusive Development and the Promotion of Tolerance and Respect for Diversity](#). This strategy paper provided a conceptual understanding of UNDP's approach to preventing violent extremism (PVE), and subsequently informed the development of the UNDP Global Programme on Development Solutions for the Prevention of Violent Extremism (2017-2020), currently being implemented.¹ It also contributed to the development of the UNDP Strategic Plan (2018-2021), which makes explicit reference to PVE as part of its result framework.

Two years on, UNDP and the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs convened a second global meeting to take stock of progress made, share experiences and distil lessons on policy-development, research and programming on PVE. This meeting took place at the Quality Expo Hotel in Fornebu, Norway, from 23 to 24 May 2018. It brought together 170 experts, practitioners from national governments, regional organisations, civil society, academia and think tanks. The meeting was opened by Nicolas Astrup, Minister for International Development for Norway, Achim Steiner, UNDP Administrator, Vladimir Voronkov, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism, Somia Okoued, State Minister of Sudan as well as a video message from Jayathma Wickramanayake, United Nations Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth. The agenda is contained in Annex I of this document.

This report provides an analytical reflection of the content, observations and recommendations from the Oslo II meeting. It contains four further sections: the first provides a synopsis of the critical milestones that have been achieved primarily by UNDP as well as other relevant stakeholders since the first global meeting drawing from both the high-level opening statements as well as the technical discussions. The second section provides an overview of cross-cutting findings that emerged from the meeting. The third section represents thematic findings and recommendations based on the various sessions held during the meeting. The final section contains a brief conclusion on the way forward on PVE work.

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