



# General Assembly

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## Seventieth session

Agenda items 16 and 117

## Culture of peace

### The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy

#### **Letter dated 22 December 2015 from the Secretary-General to the President of the General Assembly**

Violent extremism is a scourge of our times. I am appalled by the attacks and atrocities committed by terrorist groups such as Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant, Boko Haram and Al-Shabaab, and by violent extremists inspired by them, against innocent civilians around the world. These groups spread hatred and violence and can destabilize countries and entire regions.

We must act now to prevent the further spread of violent extremism. The international community needs to adopt a comprehensive approach which encompasses not only ongoing essential security-based counter-terrorism measures, but also systematic preventive measures which directly address the drivers of violent extremism at the local, national, regional and global levels.

To address this challenge, I am putting forward a comprehensive Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism ([A/70/674](#)) for the consideration of the General Assembly. The Plan of Action was developed through an extensive United Nations inter-agency process and is based on the outcomes of high-level meetings of the Assembly and the Security Council, interactive briefings with Member States and outcomes of international and regional meetings.

The Plan of Action recommends that each Member State develop its own national plan of action to prevent violent extremism, with a focus on seven priority areas:

1. Dialogue and conflict prevention
2. Strengthening good governance, human rights and the rule of law
3. Engaging communities
4. Empowering youth

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\* Reissued for technical reasons on 6 January 2016.



5. Gender equality and empowering women
6. Education, skill development and employment facilitation
7. Strategic communications, including through the Internet and social media

In addressing these strategic priority areas, the Plan of Action puts forward an interdisciplinary “All-of-society” and “All-of-government” approach to addressing the drivers of violent extremism.

The United Nations also has a role to play. In this regard, I intend to implement an “All-of-United Nations” approach which will be applied at both Headquarters and in the field. All relevant entities will collaborate in developing specific deliverables in the seven priority areas identified in the Plan of Action. They will enhance the support they can offer to Member States. United Nations missions and country teams will support Member States when developing national plans of action and will review their own activities to ensure that they are doing everything possible to address the local drivers of violent extremism.

I am also looking at how the United Nations system could be better organized to support the “All-of-United Nations” approach to promote more comprehensively the prevention of violent extremism.

The core duty and purpose of the United Nations are to forge unity in the face of threats that undermine the principles of its Charter. I count on your able leadership in galvanizing unified action to prevent violent extremism. The General Assembly is the one body that can speak with a global voice wherever violent extremists seek to spread intolerance and division. We must use this universal appeal to send forth a resounding call for peace, justice and human dignity.

*(Signed)* **BAN Ki-moon**

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