

**Launch of the Global Study on the Impact of Counter-Terrorism on Civil Society and Civic Space**  
**Ms. Franziska Praxl-Tabuchi**  
**Check against delivery**

Your excellencies, colleagues,

On behalf of the Global Center on Cooperative Security, I want to congratulate the Special Rapporteur, Megan Manion, Alyssa Yamamoto and all your partners and contributors on the launch of the Global Study on the impact of counterterrorism on civil society and civic space. Your work and dedication resulted in an extremely valuable document that we hope will become a frequently used resource for future UN counterterrorism programming and policy efforts.

The Global Center, in partnership with Rights & Security International, is currently conducting a scoping project to facilitate civil society exchanges and discussion on the need and potential avenues for, viability of, and interest in, independent engagement with relevant UN bodies and mechanisms on counterterrorism issues, including the Global Compact. Even though we are only halfway through the consultation process, there is ample testimony that the challenges civil society are facing are increasingly severe, threatening their lives and livelihoods.

One of the many impacts of this downward spiraling trend, is that many civil society organizations see too high a risk in engaging with the United Nations on counterterrorism policy and programming. As widely recognized however, inclusive civil society engagement in multilateral counterterrorism efforts is imperative for lasting and impactful counterterrorism efforts. As such one of the key recommendations that will come out of our scoping project is that the enabling environment for civil society to engage with the United Nations must significantly improve. The United Nations and its member states have a responsibility to protect all civil society and promote its engagement. This includes protection of retaliation from the United Nations system as well as individual governments.

While many recommendations have already been highlighted, I wanted to offer some very practical recommendations that already can be implemented to break down barriers of participation:

- a) Information has to be made accessible to external stakeholders, including civil society. This requires the consideration of translation and interpretation needs, as well as the strengthening of feedback loops for information. Often civil society is being called on to input in an ad hoc manner into a process or attend a meeting has become a box ticking exercise, with no clarity on the impact of their contributions and what is being done with the information they provided.
- b) And secondly, the UN system and member states must develop better protection measures for civil society to engage in policy conversations and decision-making processes. This is important to protect the ones participating in events and meetings but also supports the diversification and regularization of participating civil society. Other practical considerations include lengthy visa application processes, and the lack of external communication regarding opportunities for engagement.

We are looking forward to releasing our outcomes documents later this year. I thank you for your time, and once again congratulations to the Special Rapporteur and her team on the launch of the Global Study.