

Human Rights Council – 40th Session

Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of
human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering Terrorism

1 March 2019

Australian Statement

Australia thanks the Special Rapporteur for her presentation.

Terrorism is a shared transnational challenge requiring sustained regional and global partnership. Australia's approach to counter-terrorism is consistent with, and in support of, international human rights obligations.

We agree with the Special Rapporteur that diverse and independent civil society actors should be proactively and constructively engaged on counter-terrorism and preventing violent extremism. Australia's National Counter-Terrorism Strategy emphasises the importance of effective partnership with civil society to protect against violent extremist influences. We also encourage engagement by civil society in international fora, such as through Australia's co-chairmanship with Indonesia of the Global Counter-Terrorism Forum's CVE Working Group.

Australia is pleased to support civil society as agents of change in countering terrorism and violent extremism. During the 2018 Australia-ASEAN counter-terrorism conference, the Southeast Asia Network of Civil Society Organisations shared best-practice on social and community-based initiatives to counter violent extremism.

We agree with the Special Rapporteur on the need for safeguards on counter-terrorism regulatory measures. Australia's counter-terrorism laws appropriately balance the need for community safety with safeguarding individual rights and freedoms. They contain important human rights safeguards, and are subject to ongoing review by independent third parties, such as the Independent National Security Legislation Monitor, to ensure they are reasonable, necessary and proportionate.

We would welcome the Special Rapporteur's views on best practice engagement between civil society and governments on countering terrorism.

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