



## Recommendations from the Black Sea Region's Youth on Preventing Violent Extremism

**We**, the young people from the Black Sea Region, gathered in Chisinau, Republic of Moldova, on 1-3 February 2017, at "Youth and the Prevention of Violent Extremism: Perspectives from the Black Sea Region" seminar, organized by the Austrian OSCE Chairmanship and held under the umbrella of the OSCE "United in Countering Violent Extremism" (#UnitedCVE) campaign, stress the vital role of young people in the prevention and fight against violent extremism and radicalization that lead to terrorism (VERLT).

As a group of youth workers, representatives of civil society organizations, researchers, activists and professionals, coming from different backgrounds in the Black Sea Region – Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russia, and Turkey, engaged at local and national levels in activities focused on empowering young people:

**Define Extremism** as a fundamental rejection of democracy, pluralism, equality and universal human rights and that can be also be defined as intolerance to differences (beliefs, ethnicity, cultures, religions, political affiliation or views, sexual orientation, etc.);

**Consider Violent Extremism** to be the process whereby an individual or a group of people resort to violence in the pursuit of their extremist views;

**Emphasize** that **Violent Extremism** in the Black Sea Region is not being limited to religious ideology, but is also inspired by far right ideology or ethno-separatism.

### **And we demand governments and other stakeholders to take action in the following key areas:**

#### **I. EDUCATION**

- Enhance media literacy, critical and analytical thinking amongst young people through school and national/international campaigns, in order to promote the reporting of hate speech or of fake news or any incitement to violence.
- Develop prevention and intervention of preventing and countering VERLT and peer education programs designed for vulnerable individuals/groups in order to facilitate their interaction with people that were previously exposed to extremism.
- Introduce periodic educational courses on human rights and preventing and countering VERLT to ombudspersons, parliamentarians and other decision-makers.

#### **II. MEDIA AND PUBLIC DISCOURSE**

- Provide methodologies, accredited and courses for journalists, TV moderators and media outlet owners on how to avoid and instantly sanction hate speech and any other incitement to violence.



- Criminalize the promotion and dissemination of fake news made by journalists and other actors generally involved in creating fake news content, in strong collaboration with the ombudsperson institutions as well as law enforcement agencies.
- Deconstruct negative stereotypes by presenting counter-narratives and successful stories in relation to those who are most often the targets of hate speech, hate crime or violent extremism.

### **III. PARTNERSHIP IN PREVENTING AND COUNTERING VERLT (STAKEHOLDERS, POLICY MAKING, IMPLEMENTATION, TRUST, TRANSPARENCY)**

- Develop regional strategies in preventing and countering VERLT involving young people in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation processes.
- Establish small granting schemes, in strong collaboration with the corporate sector, intended to fund youth-led innovations in preventing and countering VERLT.
- Recommend to participating States to develop national plans for the implementation of UNSCR2250, which emphasizes the role of young people in promoting and ensuring peace and security and specifically in preventing and combating violent extremism.

### **IV. HUMAN RIGHTS, SOCIAL AND POLITICAL INCLUSION**

- Proper investigation of the acts of violent extremism in accordance with fundamental principles and rules of international law in order to prevent a partial and subjective interpretation of the national law concerning violent extremism.
- Data collection and public presentation of hate crimes as a separate manifestation of violent extremism.
- Provide legal service and aid to vulnerable and marginalized groups in order to ensure their equal access to the justice system and to address their grievances.
- Invest, as national governments, in rehabilitation, reintegration and counselling programs for young people - who became or are vulnerable to become victims or offenders of violent extremism, based on human rights principles and with the involvement of civil society organizations.

### **V. RESEARCH/ACADEMIA**

- Establish the allocation of entry positions for junior researchers and policy advisors on violent extremism in universities and similar institutions.
- Foster closer cooperation among practitioners from the Black Sea Region countries, who are involved in advocacy, research and policy making regarding the issue of violent extremism, to ensure evidence-based initiatives and policies on aforementioned topics.
- Facilitate research into youth identity dynamics to support better targeted preventive initiatives and to curb government overreach/overreaction.

### **VI. PEACE AND CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION**

- Ensure diverse forms of intercultural dialogue among the young people from the conflict-affected areas - representatives of different ethnic and religious communities.
- Use a variety of alternative tools and methods for promoting peace, such as music, painting and other forms of art expression.
- Build capacity of non-governmental organizations and other local actors to use social media tools and campaigning for promoting peace and for reducing potential drivers of conflict at different levels within the societies.

