

Press release

UN EVENT EMPOWERS YOUTH TO COUNTER HATE SPEECH AND VIOLENT EXTREMISM ONLINE

New York, 18 Feb 2022 – In a wake of growing hate and division online, the United Nations is empowering young religious leaders and content creators to take action against hate speech through interreligious/interfaith dialogue, youth empowerment, and by countering terrorist narratives.

As a step towards this direction, the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism, the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Center (UNOCT/UNCCT) and the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC) hosted an event entitled “Leveraging Interfaith networks for the Prevention of Hate Speech and Violent Extremism” on 17-18 February in The Westin New York.

The two-day event was attended by young people from Europe and the MENA region and marked the closing of the EDIN (“Empowering Dialogue and Interfaith Networks”) project, a pilot initiative jointly launched by UNOCT and UNAOC in January 2021. Project participants presented the outcome of the project’s peer-to-peer training sessions, pitched creative social media campaigns on interfaith harmony to representatives of member states and faith-based organizations and exchanged views on good practices and lessons learned, in view of potential future iterations of the project.

UNOCT Under-Secretary-General Mr. Vladimir Voronkov stressed the vital need to involve youth in the process of countering terrorist narratives online and incorporate their perspectives to ensure an inclusive and effective approach to prevention efforts of violent extremism. *“These young people are building coalitions and communities online and offline to provide alternatives to terrorist narratives of hate and division. We have much to learn from their experience.”*

“The campaigns implemented by EDIN participants take the social media users on a journey to peaceful coexistence and interfaith harmony, fulfilling UNAOC’s motto, ‘Many Cultures. One Humanity’,” H.E. Mr. Miguel Ángel Moratinos, Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations added.

More information of the EDIN project, the participants and their campaigns is available at: <https://edin.uncct.unaoc.org>

For more information:

- Ms. Laurence Gerard (gerardl@un.org), Public Information Officer, UNOCT
- Ms. Nihal Saad (saadn@un.org), Chief of Cabinet and Spokesperson for the High Representative, UNAOC

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