



## Press release

### **NEW UN REPORT EXAMINES NEXUS BETWEEN VIDEO GAMES AND VIOLENT EXTREMISM**

#### **Study finds over 80% of gamers have encountered violent or hateful content in gaming spaces, but also find positive support from gamer communities**

**New York, 5 October 2022** - The United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT) convened a high-level event to launch its new research report titled [‘Examining the Intersection between Gaming and Violent Extremism’](#). Commissioned by UNOCT’s UN Counter-Terrorism Centre (UNCCT), the report addresses the issue of exploitation of gaming spaces by terrorists and violent extremists and potential vulnerabilities to radicalisation among gaming communities. The report also sets out the potential for the use of gaming to prevent and/or counter violent extremism (PCVE).

The research found that, while for most gamers, gaming is overwhelmingly positive and has more benefits than drawbacks, over 80% of respondents have encountered some violent or hateful content in gaming spaces. More than 30% of respondents reported frequent exposure to Misogyny, Racism/Xenophobia, or Homophobia, and around two-thirds of the respondents indicated they have seen extremist content in gaming environments. Most gamers ignore such content and do not report it. Many gamers criticize gaming companies for not sufficiently moderating content on gaming platforms, in-game chats, and live streams.

Evidence of extremists exploiting gaming spaces has been sparse, limited in scope, and largely anecdotal until now. The research presented today provides, for the first time, an evidence-based understanding of how extremists and terrorists use video games.

Addressing the virtual launch event for the publication, **Mr. Vladimir Voronkov, Under-Secretary-General for Counter-Terrorism**, stressed the timeliness of the research on the nexus of video games and violent extremism and the importance of partnerships in leveraging the positive aspects of gaming. “We must face the reality that terrorists and violent extremists seek to exploit digital gaming environments, including to radicalize and recruit young people. (...) We should be looking at ways of developing methods of safeguarding against video game abuse by bad actors – and we are looking at those ways”, he said.

The launch event gathered representatives from the Extremism and Gaming Research Network (EGRN - which UNOCT recently joined as a member), the Global Internet Forum to Counter

Terrorism, RUSI Europe, Moonshot, Fair Play Alliance, Take This, as well as distinguished speakers from the academic community, experts from the gaming industry, and themselves.

The study on 'Examining the Intersection between Gaming and Violent Extremism' was launched in 2021 and led by **Dr. Amarnath Amarasingam**, Assistant Professor, Queen's University and **Linda Schlegel**, Founding Member of the Extremism and Gaming Research Network (EGRN), utilizing a mixed methods approach, including expert consultations and focus groups with gamers.

As gaming is growing in popularity, access, and audience share throughout the world, UNOCT is partnering with EGRN to continue exploring the gaming space in a non-stigmatizing manner. The Office is also looking to expand the focus of its research in other regions and languages, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa and Southeast Asia to increase global understanding on this topic.

To access the [full report](#) and [executive summary](#), please visit:  
<https://www.un.org/counterterrorism/publications>

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For more information:

Ms. Laurence Gerard ([gerardl@un.org](mailto:gerardl@un.org)), Public Information Officer, UNOCT  
[@UN\\_OCT](#) | [UNiteToCounterTerrorism](#)