

UN enlists youth in combat against violent extremism in Jordan, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia

With one in four of the world's 1.2 billion youth affected by some sort of violence or armed conflict, the United Nations on Tuesday launched a project to support new, youth-driven initiatives in education, science, culture and the media to prevent violent extremism in Jordan, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia

Vladimir Voronkov, who heads the UN's counter-terrorism office ([UNOCT](#)) met in Paris with Audrey Azoulay, head of the UN cultural agency, to initiate the [joint project](#), 'Preventing Violent Extremism through Youth Empowerment in Jordan, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia.'

"Working at the local level with young people [is important] to identify the best ways to prevent violent extremism and win youth's hearts and minds," Mr. Voronkov said, adding that the UN places youth high on its agenda.

The project supports young women and men to become responsible citizens, resilient to any form of abuse or manipulation – including violent extremism – and to address hate-related issues.

Mr. Voronkov commended the innovative work of youth-led peace and security networks, and stressed the value of young people's ideas to improve our world.

Ms. Azoulay, the Director-General of the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), added that the UN is working "with youth and for youth" to achieve this goal.

UNESCO aims to create opportunities for young women and men to be change-makers and peacebuilders in their own communities and wider societies as well as leaders in addressing hate-related issues.

Youth organizations, educators and media professionals will be mobilized around programmes to include cross-cultural youth dialogues, training in conflict-sensitive reporting and critical thinking labs.

Mr. Voronkov invited Ms. Azoulay and youth representatives to attend a follow-up event in New York, on the margins of the Secretary-General's High-Level Conference of Heads of Counter-Terrorism Agencies of Member States, which will take place from 28 to 29 June.

Taking advantage of Mr. Voronkov's visit, Ms. Azoulay [signed](#) the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact, which will further seal the collaboration between both entities.

The agreement between the Secretary-General and 36 UN entities

plus the International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol) and the World Customs Organization, the largest UN coordination framework, aims bolster counter-terrorism capacity-building support to Member States in implementing the [UN Nations Global-counter-Terrorism Strategy](#), which UNOCT coordinates.