**Open meeting of the Counter-Terrorism Committee
on the implementation of Security Council resolution 2354 (2017)
on countering terrorist narratives**

*Tuesday, 29 May 2018, United Nations Headquarters, New York
Conference Room 4*

Remarks by
Mr. David Wells, Political Affairs Officer, CTED

I'd like to make a few brief remarks on CTED's work on trends, including some insights relevant to this morning's discussions. I'll keep it short, as we have a fantastic panel of world-leading researchers who I'm sure you're very keen to hear from.

CTED's mandate on trends stems from Resolution 2129 (2013), in which the Security Council directed CTED to

- Identify emerging issues, trends and developments, and;
- Enhance its partnerships with academia and other entities in conducting research, information gathering and identifying good practices.

As a result, in February 2015, CTED launched its Global Research Network, or GRN, with the aim of:

- Helping keep CTED abreast of emerging terrorism trends and challenges; and,
- Identifying and sharing good practices in the implementation of Security Council counter-terrorism resolutions.

Since February 2015, the GRN has grown from an initial 28 members into a flourishing network of over 100 leading research institutions from across the globe, including many of the institutions represented here today. And indeed, each member of this panel.

Subsequent resolutions - including Resolution 2354 on countering terrorist narratives and CTED's latest mandate, Resolution 2395 - have recognised CTED's essential role in identifying and assessing trends. And acknowledged the value of CTED working with the wide range of stakeholders we have with us today, including the GRN.

CTED's trends analysis is embedded throughout all our work, and we continue to enhance our sharing of this analysis. In the last two months, we have published two analytical products, both of which are available on the CTC website:

1. **Firstly, CTED's research digest**: This aims to provide the CTC and CT policy-makers with a regular insight into the latest research from the GRN. The next digest on the crime-terror nexus is due to be published this week.

2. **Secondly, CTED trends reports**: In April, we published our second trends report looking at the challenge of returning and relocating foreign terrorist fighters. The report was primarily-based on research from the GRN, again ensuring that CT policy-makers have access to CTED's analysis of the latest and best research on critical policy challenges.

Turning then to trends and developments in terrorist narratives and Member State responses, our engagement with the GRN has identified three key trends:

Firstly, despite a decline in propaganda outputs, **ISIL continues to demonstrate its resilience and ability to innovate**. Following its near total loss of territory, ISIL's narrative has pivoted, with an increased focus on nostalgia for the so-called Caliphate.

In the years ahead, ISIL could exploit the vast

Secondly, alongside this narrative pivot, researchers have also seen **a shift in where and how ISIL and its supporters are communicating**. Official ISIL propaganda is harder than ever to find on mainstream online platforms, driven in large part by the actions of Member States and public-private partnerships, such as Tech Against Terrorism.

It has not completely disappeared however. Nor has the appetite for this material. Instead, terrorist propaganda is appearing on smaller or newer online platforms. And it is more diverse in its nature. ISIL supporters are producing and sharing unofficial propaganda, not all of which is explicitly violent or in breach of terms of service. Yet this material can help to normalize or validate ISIL's core narratives. As a result, researchers have suggested that Member State responses should be nuanced, and include a broad range of measures.

Finally, as access to terrorist narratives online reduces, researchers have highlighted the importance of **developing a better understanding of terrorist narratives offline**.

Their research suggests that in many of the countries most affected by terrorism, the internet has not played a significant role in propagating terrorist narratives. Peer-to-peer radicalisation and recruitment is typically occurring offline, while we've also seen the priority given by ISIL and other terrorist groups to indoctrinating children under their control.

CTED will continue to work with the GRN and research community to help develop a better understanding of these trends and challenges, and I'm sure we'll hear more about each of these trends throughout today.