



## PRESS RELEASE

### **THE 2<sup>ND</sup> U.S.-AU CVE WEEK IS HELD AT THE AU HEADQUARTERS**

**Addis Ababa, 1 November 2018:** The 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual United States–African Union Week on Countering Violent Extremism was held from 29 October to 1 November 2018, at the AU Headquarters. This annual event builds on the outcomes of the 1<sup>st</sup> U.S.-AU CVE Week that was held in 2017, and on the broader partnership between the AU and U.S. in peace and security.

The event, which was organized in partnership with the Institute for Security Studies, and provided a platform for civil society organizations, academia, youth from the Interfaith Dialogue on Violent Extremism (iDove) and U.S. Department of State International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP), drawn from the Lake Chad Basin, the Horn of Africa and the Sahel region, as well as Regional Economic Communities and regional organizations, for 4 days of interactive sessions that enabled sharing of experiences and best practices, and building powerful partnerships that will contribute to addressing the drivers of violent extremism.

The CVE Week featured a two-day conference, from 29-30 October and a two-day communications-focused capacity building workshop for grassroots CVE practitioners, from 31 October to 1 November.

The Conference featured informed presentations and discussions on key topics, including on countering violent extremism, such as the key global trends in countering violent extremism (CVE), reintegration of youth, women and girls extremists within communities, the role of youth in combatting violent extremism and education as a mechanism of CVE, drawing on the experiences and best practices shared based on the various country specific projects and initiatives. The discussions also explored how civil society organizations can work better with regional and international organizations, and Governments.

Some of the key messages and outcomes that emerged from the discussions showed the need to integrate more holistic and blended- hard and soft -approaches in CVE initiatives through the identification, intervention and monitoring phases. The need to develop clear policies and procedures for reintegration of disengaged fighters was highlighted as urgent. The need to map possible areas of return and prepare communities through sensitization activities in advance to facilitate their reintegration within the society was also highlighted.

The workshop aimed at building and strengthening the capacities of the participants in developing and implementing community-based communications and outreach strategies. The presentations and discussions featured the role of strategic communication in preventing and countering violent extremism, the need to understand the audience of the communication, the expected response of the audience, the content of the communication, the role of the radio, and the role of films in countering violent extremism.

The need to build strong partnerships with governments in preparing and disseminating counter and alternative messages to the extremist narrative was highlighted as key, and would also ensure consistency and sustainability.

The CVE week is held as a human security and community involvement approach to counter and prevent terrorism and violent extremism within the framework of the African Union Master Roadmap of Practical Steps to Silence the Guns in Africa by 2020