Human Rights & Prevention of Violent Extremism

Seminar Proceedings of the 18th Informal ASEM Seminar on Human Rights (ASEMHRS18)

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Now more than ever, multilateral and multi-regional cooperation is needed to tackle the underlying societal and security causes of violent extremism as we work towards its prevention. The 18th Informal ASEM Seminar on Human Rights (ASEMHRS18) provided an opportunity to discuss Human Rights and Prevention of Violent Extremism. Over 100 civil society and government representatives from across Asia and Europe came together for the Seminar. It is hoped that the joint recommendations, best practices and the different viewpoints shared will reach an even wider audience through this publication and work towards enhancing a rights-based approach to preventing violent extremism across Asia, Europe and beyond.

Our thanks must first go to all of the participants who generously shared their experiences and expertise and contributed to fruitful discussions. Without them, ASEMHR18 and its findings would not have been possible. It is our sincere hope that the discussions in Yogyakarta were just the start, and that the connections forged over the three days of the Seminar will result in future collaborations, exchanges, and enhancing of networks between Asia and Europe.

We are deeply grateful to the Directorate of Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) of the Republic of Indonesia for hosting the Seminar in Yogyakarta. We would especially like to thank Dr Abdurrahman Mohammad FACHIR, the Vice Minister of the MFA; Mr Febrian Alphyanto RUDDYARD, Director General of Multilateral Cooperation of the MFA; Ambassador Soemadi BROTDININGRAT, Governor of ASEF for Indonesia; and Mr Achsanul HABIB, Director of Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs along with their colleagues, for their assistance in bringing this Seminar to life.

We were fortunate to work with the Sunan Kalijaga State Islamic University of Yogyakarta who partnered with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia to host ASEMHR18.

We would like to extend special thanks to our keynote speakers: Ms Kate GILMORE, the Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), Mr Steven SIQUEIRA, the Deputy Director of the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force Office and Counter-Terrorism Centre at the United Nations, and Mr Michael O’FLAHERTY, the Director of the European Union Fundamental Rights Agency. Their engaging and informative presentations at the opening of the Seminar set the tone for the ensuing frank and cooperative discussions.

Thanks go also to H E Mr Stephan HUSY, Ambassador-at-Large for International Counter-Terrorism of the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, and to Ms Barbara LOCHBIHLER, Member of the European Parliament, for their contributions to the official welcome and opening. Furthermore, we extend our thanks to Dr Dinna WISNU, Indonesian Representative to the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR), to Mr Rafael Jose de BUSTAMANTE TELLO, from the EU delegation to Indonesia and Brunei Darussalam, and to Ms Maria Amelita C. AQUINO of the Department of Foreign Affairs for the Philippines for their contributions to the closing of ASEMHRS18.

Our warmest gratitude goes to Ms Irene M. SANTIAGO and Dr Theo GAVRIELIDES for their tireless work as the main rapporteurs. Not only did they provide a comprehensive background paper which was instrumental in orienting discussions, but they also assisted in compiling the final Seminar Report included in this publication. We also note the hard work of Ms Faiza PATEL and Professor Lynn DAVIES in accurately recording the exchanges within their respective working groups.
Our thanks also go to the moderators of the working groups. The firm and expert guidance of Dr Irfan AHMAD, Dr Mohammad Najib AZCA, Professor Noorhaidi HASAN, and Dr Melissa JOHNSTON helped facilitate constructive debate and discussion.

We would also like to express sincere gratitude to our co-organisers, the Raoul Wallenberg Institute, the French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs and the Department of Foreign Affairs of the Philippines, who together with the members of our Steering Committee provided valuable support and advice to ensure a strong and relevant programme.

Finally, we also thank the secretariat team at the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) for their tireless work in bringing this Seminar from planning to execution: Dr Genevieve BARRÉ, Ms Armi AARNI, Ms Iulia LUMINA, Ms Trishia OCTAVIANO, Ms Liz DY, Ms Franzisca DOSER and Ms Megan WAKEFIELD.

Ambassador Karsten WARNECKE
Executive Director
Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF)
HUMAN RIGHTS MUST BE AT THE CORE OF EFFORTS TO COUNTER VIOLENT EXTREMISM

Stephan HUSY, Ambassador-at-Large for Counter-Terrorism, Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, Switzerland

(Welcome address at the 18th Informal ASEM-Seminar on Human Rights)

Mr Vice Minister, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen

In the name of the co-organisers, the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF), the Raoul Wallenberg Institute (nominated by the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs), the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Philippine Department of Foreign Affairs, and the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs I would like to welcome you to the 18th edition of the Informal ASEM Seminar on Human Rights.

I would like to thank the Government of Indonesia for hosting this year’s seminar on such an important topic: Human Rights and the Prevention of Violent Extremism, or PVE.

Indonesia’s engagement in countering and preventing violent extremism is well appreciated. In the Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF), Indonesia together with Australia is co-chairing the CVE Working Group. Under its leadership, many good practices documents have been developed which are an important source of inspiration for this seminar.

The Asia-Europe Meeting is an ideal platform for dialogue and cooperation between Asia and Europe. Switzerland and the co-organisers attach particular importance to the Informal ASEM Seminar on Human Rights. Human dignity is the core value of humanity and civilisation, and the respect, protection and fulfilment of human rights is the basis for global stability, peace and prosperity. This seminar fosters dialogue not only between Asia and Europe, but also between governments and civil society.

When I started working as Ambassador-at-Large for International Counter-Terrorism in March 2014, preventing and countering violent extremism were not considered a priority. However, the recognition that a counter-terrorism response cannot be confined to security measures is not new. The 2006 UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy includes measures addressing the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism (Pillar I) and measures to ensure respect for human rights for all and the rule of law as the fundamental basis for the fight against terrorism (Pillar IV).

PVE got traction mid-2014 in relation to the rise of The Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and the Foreign Terrorist Fighters (FTF) phenomenon. Thousands – mainly young men but a good number of women as well and whole families – from all over the world, including 5,000 from Europe, travelled to Syria and Iraq to join the so-called caliphate proclaimed in June 2014. The following question arose: What drives these people to turn to extreme ideologies resulting in shocking brutality? Today, ISIL is defeated – or almost defeated – in Syria and Iraq, but there is still radicalisation and recruitment to the murderous ISIL and Al-Qaeda ideologies and networks.

In the last few years, PVE has become a priority topic on the international agenda. An excellent reference document is the Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism of the UN Secretary-General, published in December 2015. The UN PVE Action Plan does not define violent extremism. However, the Secretary General cautions that although definitions of ‘terrorism’ and ‘violent extremism’ are the prerogative of Member States, they must be consistent with their obligations under international law, in particular international human rights law. This is an important comment as even well intended, non-coercive preventive measures can be intrusive and raise serious human rights concerns.
I am looking forward to the next three days’ presentations and discussions, and I am convinced that this seminar will make an important contribution to our common understanding of the drivers of violent extremism and how to respond to violent radicalisation in an efficient and effective way, putting human rights at the core of all our activities.

Thank you for your attention.
THE FOUR PRECONDITIONS FOR DEMOCRACY TO PREVENT VIOLENT EXTREMISM

A.M FACHIR, Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia

(Opening remarks at the 18th Informal ASEM Seminar on Human Rights)

Ambassador SOEMADI, ASEF Governor of Indonesia; HE Mr Stephan HUSY, Switzerland’s Ambassador-at-large for Counter-Terrorism; Mr SUN Xiangyang, Deputy Executive Director of ASEF; Ms Kate GILMORE, Deputy High Commissioner of Human Rights; Distinguished Speakers and Participants, I am pleased to be here among colleagues who are at the forefront of promoting the values of human rights.

Indonesia is proud to, once again, host the ASEM Seminar on Human Rights. This Seminar has brought together relevant stakeholders in the two continents for dialogue. Indeed, advancing human rights implementation is more effective if we apply inclusivity and dialogue, the two principles that Indonesia always upholds in all aspects of its national life, including in its work on human rights.

Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen, I cannot stress enough how timely today’s seminar is. Even in the aftermath of the successful campaign to eliminate the Islamic State, new trends and challenges emerge: first, acts of terrorism committed by foreign terrorist fighter returnees; secondly, regionalisation of terrorists, and weaponization of women and children.

The UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy explicitly addresses prevention of terrorism and measures to tackle violent extremism. Yet what about the national measures? Indonesia believes that there is no clear definition of violent extremism, as it is neither new nor exclusive to any region, nationality, religion or belief. In consequence, there is no one-size-fits-all formula to address violent extremism. A comprehensive approach is the only solution, consisting not only of security-based counter-terrorism measures, but also preventive ones.

However, there is a single common root cause that should be our focus. That is a deficiency in human relationships. For wherever there is inequality and exclusion, there can only be tension and conflict. This is what we see when the killing of innocent Palestinians continues. As long as the inalienable right of the Palestinians to self-determination is being violated with impunity, there can be no lasting peace.

Ladies and Gentlemen, we need to constantly remind ourselves, and each other, that all human beings are of equal worth and have basic rights before the law of God and human law. In Indonesia’s experience, this underlying value can only be sustained through ‘democratic response’. As a diverse nation with a population greater than 260 million people, including 714 ethnic groups and more than 1,100 local languages, Indonesia has relentlessly pursued the difficult process of reform and democratisation. We are a vibrant country, where Islam, democracy, the advancement of women, and modernity can go hand-in-hand.

In our view, there are four preconditions for democracy to prevent violent extremism.

First, democracy should deliver results, particularly economic welfare. We should ensure that democracy promotes development. It is also important for democracy to equip countries in addressing political and security challenges, in a manner consistent with, and respectful of, human rights values. In terms of addressing terrorism, these values are reflected in the revision of the Counter Terrorist Law, in which all efforts must not violate human rights and fundamental freedom.
Secondly, inclusivity. Democracy signifies greater participation of all elements of the society, including the marginalised ones. The government, parliament, civil society and the media should all walk on the same path towards the goal of democratic society. Inclusivity also means women empowerment at the community level. One example is the Peace Village initiative carried out by the Wahid Foundation in Indonesia. Its main purpose is to empower women in villages to build resilient communities.

Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen, the third precondition is capacity building for democratic institutions. Even in the most advanced democratic society, democracy continues to evolve. It is imperative for governments to adapt constantly to face new challenges. In this regard, capacity building for democratic institutions is key. This capacity building effort should also be supported by other democracies around the world. Indonesia is actively involved in building this partnership. One of them is by co-chairing the Countering Violent Extremism Working Group in the Global Counter-Terrorism Forum together with Australia. It aims to strengthen countries’ capacity and capability to create and run programmes on countering violent extremism.

Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen, the fourth precondition is investing in regional mechanisms. Indonesia’s democratic response to prevent violent extremism and combat terrorism over the past decade has been mirrored by changes within ASEAN. Indonesia believes that democracy and respect of human rights at the national level can only be sustained if it finds a conducive regional setting. In terms of South East Asia, ASEAN is currently developing the “ASEAN Plan of Action to Prevent and Counter the Rise of Radicalisation and Violent Extremism”.

Ladies and Gentlemen, in conclusion, I would like to reiterate that the basic principle of democracy is universal in nature. This is not in any way inconsistent with the fact that each nation has its own tradition, history, and views. In this regard, dialogue and frank discussions become important to build understanding. This informal seminar is designed to achieve that. I wish you a fruitful discussion. I thank you.
UPHOLDING SECURITY MUST BE MATCHED BY THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN DIGNITY & HUMAN RIGHTS

Kate GILMORE, United Nations Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights

(Keynote address at the opening plenary of the 18th Informal ASEM Seminar on Human Rights)

With warm thanks also to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, to all those who have supported and otherwise helped organise this 18th Informal Asia Europe Meeting Seminar on Human Rights, I express the deep appreciation of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Michelle Bachelet, for the privilege of the invitation to join you here, and her warm thanks too for making this timely and needed conversation possible.

Excellencies, Colleagues, Friends,

What we have done – what we are doing – in the name of preventing violent extremism must answer hate, not spread it; enhance personal security for people living insecure lives, not weaken it; be rooted in building trust and connection between and within communities, not tear trust down. We must deepen the foundations for sustainable inclusive societies, not take measures that worsen our prospects of peace and prosperity.

Good law and good policy do good – and good for all, not merely some. But if not rooted in clearly defined terms; if defying international legal obligations, norms or standards; when breeching by law, the rule of law, if denying equal rights, obstructing recourse, remedy and reparation – then the instruments of governance are not good - because good they won’t do.

If our efforts to prevent violent extremism are to do the good intended – human rights compliance may well not be sufficient – but it is essential. For, as the Secretary-General has emphasised “an utter disregard for human rights has often made things worse.”

Friends, rights go wherever people go. Rights are the operating manual of our human condition being that with which we all are born and that from which no one can legitimately separate us – no matter how tough the times, complex the circumstances, how elusive are the solutions.

Acts of violent extremists – and we have to recognise, regrettably, in many instances our responses to them – are undermining the rights of people the world over.

Cruel, unconscionable acts by armed groups; the callous, criminal acts committed by those peddling fear; the atrocities perpetrated by individuals crazed with hate – these have pummelled fear, pain and grief into communities, large and small, the world over.

It cannot be acceptable that our responses to these heinous crimes should perpetuate the very fear that they too perpetrate, or cause to the very communities we claim to protect, even more harm.

Yet, around the world, efforts to prevent extremism are rolling back rights.

In a rush to demonstrate muscular response, some States have adopted draconian detention policies; revised – for the worse – criminal justice rules and practices; and imposed unprecedented limitations on freedoms of expression, peaceful assembly and movement.
In domestic laws and policies, vague, elastic notions of ‘radicalisation’ are casting chilling effect on dissent; targeting whole groups of people rather than specific conduct; invading people’s right to privacy via broad-reaching surveillance practices. With few procedural safeguards in place – these ingredients concoct suspicion: loosening protections and fostering a climate of impunity; working, in other words, against the very grain of effective prevention.

State policies to counter financial flows to terrorism are also driving funds away from those doing important trust building work in local communities. Measures that may appear neutral bring discriminatory outcomes. Under shadow of repressive laws, women’s organisations and other human rights defenders are being caught in a mucky middle – caught between authorities’ suspicion and repression on the one hand and the intimidation, even open attack, of hate peddling, violent extremist groups, on the other.

An injudicious tolerance of intolerable conduct, by religious extremists and paramilitary groups alike, is driving not justice closer to the violent but violence closer to people simply for who they are – violence that is against LGBTI persons, indigenous women, journalists, lawyers, activists, artists. Human rights defenders are on the frontlines of this often vicious human rights erosion – targeted by both state and non-state actors alike, with women human rights’ defenders at particular risk.

One almost wonders if this does not suit violent extremists very well – after all, their aim is not to unleash a violent event, but to provoke reactions that destabilise, disrupt and distort.

Yet it is clear that we are born loving and with an irrepressible desire to be loved. But hate? All hate is learned. And as Nelson Mandela explained, it thus can be and must be unlearned.

We must ask ourselves “how do we ensure that we are not doing exactly what the extremist seeks?” And we must answer this with greater courage.

Trust and confidence are being undermined. Our wiser response would be to set about to rebuild exactly that – to rebuild trust in the State by those under its jurisdiction, and to reinforce the confidence of the people in systems of governance and of law.

For that, we must strengthen, not weaken, rights. We must:

- Focus prevention on behaviour, not opinion or beliefs
- Investigate promptly, impartially and thoroughly alleged human rights violations
- Put the rights of victims of violence at the centre of our responses
- End gender-based and other discrimination – including racial and religious profiling
- And we must step up efforts to dismantle inequalities – accelerate advance of economic, social and cultural rights for everyone, on an equal basis – that would provide the strongest life-line by which to immunise people against the rhetoric of violent extremism. In this cause, human rights-based implementation of sustainable development goals has a major part to play
- We must further invest directly in the resilience of communities. Counter to many States’ practices today, it is a free, confident, independent and diverse civil society – both in the virtual and the physical domains – that is the fastest, surest path to societies better able to navigate disputes and better able to sustain an equilibrium of peace. In this, particular effort is needed to include young people.

Friends, violent extremism is the offspring of many parents – of discrimination, injustice – actual and perceived; of political disenfranchisement and economic inequality; it’s more febrile when young people are left with little but their exclusion; when a faith meets only contempt; when an identity is deprived of dignity; when belonging is denied.

None of this remotely excuses the contemptible acts of the violent extremist, but nor do these complex causes excuse wrongful action in response by the rest of us.
Yes, there are critical differences between the root, the seed and the soil, but all must be present for something to grow. Planted in the soil of inequality, the seeds of intolerance, prejudice and bigotry readily grow into hate whose perverse fruit then is the violence that we now seek to prevent in us all. We must dig far deeper if we are to root out this reprehensible harvest more conclusively.

Some claim a rights framework is not tough on crime. Wrong. A rights framework asks us all to answer to the same standards. If we offer impunity to state law enforcers as we seek an end to it for violent extremists – how on earth is the goal of ending impunity to be served.

Friends, prevention of violent extremism is not for the faint-hearted. Thin-skinned leaders unable to stomach dissent, unwilling to be accountable for their human rights promises and duties: they are not the leaders who will bring an end to extremism.

Seventy years ago, writing in 1948 his dystopian novel 1984, the English author George Orwell set out in words the nightmare that is a State rooted in hyper-securitisation and relentless in its pursuit of ‘thought crime’.

But in that same year, 70 years ago, Member States set out its antidote – proclaiming in the words of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UHDR) – that “whereas it is essential, if we are not to be compelled to have recourse, as a last resort, to rebellion against tyranny and oppression, that human rights should be protected by the rule of law.”

Today, violent extremism, and our responses to it, threaten so much and so many, once more. Once again, we must not allow fear and hate to push rights aside. The grave duty of States to uphold security must be matched by – be accompanied by – the grave duty of States to protect human dignity and human rights.

But it requires that we all step up to where our fore mothers and fore fathers, including leaders from both Asia and the European States, stood 70 years ago – when faced with the gravest consequences of the most violent extremism the world has ever seen: Like them, just as they did through the UDHR, we must first lower our fists, to extend our hands and then together again stand up for universal, indivisible human rights. I wish you every success with your stand for human rights here at the ASEM forum. Thank you.
GLOBAL PROBLEM OF VIOLENT EXTREMISM NEEDS RESPONSES TAILORED AT THE REGIONAL AND NATIONAL LEVEL

Steven SIQUEIRA, Deputy Director, United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism

(Keynote address at the 18th Informal ASEM Seminar on Human Rights)

His Excellency, Mr Abdurrahman Mohammad FACHIR, Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs of Indonesia,

His Excellency, Mr Stephan HUSY, Ambassador-at-large for Counter-Terrorism, Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, Switzerland

My Distinguished Colleague, Ms Kate GILMORE, Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

Mr Achsanul HABIB, Director of Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to sincerely thank ASEM for inviting me to speak to this 18th Informal ASEM Session on Human Rights, and to the Government of Indonesia for the hospitality and warm welcome to Yogyakarta, a city that genuinely represents the rich cultural and religious traditions of this vast country.

I am here today representing Mr Vladimir VORONKOV, the Under-Secretary-General for Counter-Terrorism. Mr VORONKOV sends you his warmest regards and his regrets that he could not attend this week.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Around the world, we are witnessing an increased interest in the human rights dimensions of countering terrorism and preventing the violent extremism that can be conducive to terrorism.

On November 16, 2017, Secretary-General GUTERRES delivered a landmark address on human rights and counter-terrorism.

He identified the need to combat the global threat of terrorism without compromising our respect for human rights, while recognising this as one of the most difficult and challenging issues of our time.

In his address, he stated: “Terrorism thrives when disenfranchised people meet nothing but indifference and nihilism. It is deeply rooted in hopelessness and despair. That is why human rights, all human rights, political and civil rights, but also economic, social and cultural rights, are unquestionably a part of the solution in fighting terrorism.”

In June of this year, the United Nations General Assembly reviewed, for the 6th time, the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and adopted, by consensus, resolution A/RES/72/284, which calls on Member States and the United Nations to continue to promote, protect and respect human rights and the rule of law in all their counter-terrorism efforts.
Also during this first Counter-Terrorism Week in June, the Secretary-General hosted the first ever High Level Conference of Heads of Counter-Terrorism Agencies, which brought together security, intelligence and law enforcement officials, diplomats, civil society and international and regional organisations to discuss practical and operational counter-terrorism issues.

The Conference underlined the need for Member States to share critical information to detect, identify, disrupt and prosecute terrorists in a lawful way consistent with human rights standards.

In September, Under-Secretary-General VORONKOV spoke at the Human Rights Council on the importance of respecting human rights while countering terrorism.

As we speak, my office is exploring the establishment of a new unit in the Office of Counter Terrorism that would support greater engagement with civil society organisations on counter-terrorism issues, including human rights organisations.

This seminar, therefore, comes at an important time, and I believe we have some momentum.

While we continue to take stock of global efforts to counter and ultimately prevent terrorism and violent extremism, globally sanctioned terrorist groups such as ISIL (Da’esh), Boko Haram and Al Shabaab continue to represent a major threat to international peace, security and development.

We need to constantly evaluate how we can strengthen our human rights responses to this ever-changing threat.

Sadly, this region is not immune to the threat, a threat which is compounded by the return and relocation of foreign terrorist fighters after the collapse of ISIL (Da’esh) in Iraq and Syria.

No region can address this threat alone. The threat from terrorism affects every country and every region, albeit in different ways.

Ladies and Gentlemen, recognising the importance of stronger action to counter and ultimately prevent terrorism and violent extremism, Secretary-General GUTERRES created the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT) as his first major reform.

Established in June 2017 by the General Assembly, the Office seeks to enhance the coordination and coherence of counter-terrorism efforts of over 36 UN entities, in addition to Interpol and the World Customs Organisation, while also delivering capacity-building assistance to Member States.

Our mandate originates from the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, which was first adopted by the General Assembly in 2006. The Strategy aims to enhance national, regional, and international counter-terrorism efforts through a balanced and comprehensive approach outlined by its four pillars.

- The first pillar addresses conditions conducive to the spread of the terrorism;
- The second, countering and preventing terrorism;
- The third pillar focuses on international cooperation; and
- The fourth pillar, and most pertinent to our discussions here today, focuses on the importance of upholding human rights and the rule of law while countering terrorism.

Ladies and Gentlemen, the respect and protection of human rights continues to be the guiding principle of UNOCT’s work.
UNOCT has further reinforced this commitment through the Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact that will provide new impetus and leadership for the coordination and coherence of the UN’s work on countering and preventing terrorism and violent extremism. The Compact will also further help to mainstream human rights into the work of the Compact entities and its relevant Working Groups.

The 2016 United Nations Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism emphasised that the need for a comprehensive approach to countering terrorism and violent extremism must go beyond “law enforcement, military or security measures to address development, good governance, human rights and humanitarian concerns.”

The Plan recognised that human rights violations including the denial of the right to work, education and the enjoyment of one’s own culture also often exist as conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism.

Prevention therefore should continue to be the first line of defence against violent extremism and terrorism.

In implementing an effective approach to preventing violent extremism, or PVE, we need to address the conditions conducive to violent extremism, and the human rights and gender dimensions related to these drivers.

We must understand and take action to address the circumstances in which violent extremism may flourish, including a deeper appreciation of the linkage between a lack of respect for human rights and the conditions conducive to violent extremism.

This approach is based in solid research. UNDP, the United Nations Development Programme, released a study last year focused on Africa, which specifically set out to discover what pushed a handful of individuals to join violent extremist groups, when many others facing similar sets of circumstances did not.

The tipping point, or the transformative trigger that pushes individuals decisively from the ‘at-risk’ category to actually embracing violence, was ‘government action’, including the ‘killing of a family member or friend’ or ‘arrest of a family member or friend’, as the incident that prompted 71% of the respondents to join groups that were committed to violence.

These findings throw into stark relief the question of how counter-terrorism and wider security functions of governments in at-risk environments conduct themselves with regard to human rights and due process. State security-actor conduct is revealed as a prominent accelerator of recruitment, rather than the reverse.

Ladies and Gentlemen, to be effective, national and regional PVE measures, including strategies and action plans, must abide by the three main tenets of international law – international humanitarian, human rights, and refugee law. Our responses need to be in line with our commitments under international law, and the measures we take should not disproportionately impact racial, ethnic and religious groups.

We must understand and address endemic discrimination, particularly within judicial systems and law enforcement. We must address poverty and lack of economic opportunity and we must combat social exclusion and marginalisation.

This means that to effectively prevent violent extremism, we need to base our efforts on the promotion of tolerance, pluralism, inclusion and the participation of all communities in a society, including through the engagement of women and youth.
Ladies and Gentlemen, this is a lot to ask of Member States, as the principal role for implementation of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy is assigned to Member States.

However, the UN is here to help. In practice, the UN’s Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact entities, together with my Office, are doing our utmost to support Member States to implement their commitments.

Let me give you a few examples of how the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT) is deeply committed to strengthening our efforts.

First, the UN Counter-Terrorism Centre, UNCTC, which serves as the capacity-building arm of the UNOCT, is increasing our human-rights and PVE-related activities, particularly in terms of the technical assistance support we provide to Member States.

This assistance has extended to such issues as human rights in the context of border security and management, human rights-based treatment of children accompanying Foreign Terrorist Fighters (FTFs), strengthening the capacity of national technical and vocational training institutes to support young adults acquire marketable skills to find and retain decent employment, and the use of social media and the internet to prevent and counter the FTF phenomenon.

Second, UNOCT is redoubling our efforts to mainstream human rights into the work of other pillars of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. For example, as part of our border security and management programme, we are working with OHCHR to develop a human rights training module for border security officers.

Finally, UNOCT is prioritising the important issue of victims of terrorism to promote and protect the rights of victims and survivors of terrorism, fully consistent with Pillar IV of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. Victims and survivors of terrorism are powerful messengers in our fight to counter terrorism and we must continue to give them a platform from which they can be integral members of our efforts to prevent violent extremism.

Ladies and Gentlemen, although terrorism and PVE is a global issue, our responses need to be tailored at the regional and national levels.

We must use the regional instruments at our disposal. The ASEAN Human Rights Declaration (2012) is a good start. But we need stronger and increased commitment.

The UN is already making excellent progress through the ASEAN-UN partnership in implementing the first ASEAN-UN Plan of Action (2016-2020), where counter terrorism and preventing violent extremism remain high on the agenda. We also look forward to welcoming an ASEAN-wide comprehensive strategy to effectively prevent violent extremism.

Most of all though, we need to learn from each other. In our efforts to prevent and counter terrorism and violent extremism, we can share experiences and emerge stronger and wiser, gaining important experiences, and together, develop better policies, programmes, and practices that can be shared across countries and regions.

I therefore look forward to the deliberations being conducted over the course of these three days, and to learning from each of you.

Thank you.
TO TACKLE EXTREMISM, GO LOCAL, TAKE A GENDERED APPROACH & INVEST IN THE YOUNG

Michael O’FLAHERTY, Director of the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights

(Video Message at the 18th Informal ASEM Seminar on Human Rights)

Hello, my name is Michael O’FLAHERTY. I’m Director of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights. The co-organisers and the government of Indonesia kindly invited me to participate in this informal ASEM seminar. I had hoped to attend but I so sincerely apologise that it did not prove possible.

I am particularly sorry because I know the ASEM Human Rights seminar series. I have participated in a few and I see their high value. I see their importance, for example, in sharing practice across our regions. We continue to learn so much from each other’s experience and we, in Europe, continue to have so much that we should take, in terms of good practice, from Asian countries. We are after all in Europe. Europe, in the words of Kate GILMORE, Europe in the world.

There’s a second, to my mind, very important value of the ASEM informal seminar series. And that is the extent to which it allows us to come together, to gain energy from each other, to reassure and to empower each other in what are very challenging times.

Let me now turn to the topic of this year’s seminar. And, if you’d allow, I’d like to begin with three bare statements.

The first statement is that efforts to combat radicalisation and extremism must always respect human rights. It’s not ‘may’ they or ‘should’ they respect human rights; it’s a non-negotiable. They must respect the human rights commitments of our States.

Secondly, efforts to combat extremism and radicalisation will only be effective if they respect human rights.

And third, if human rights are hardwired into their design and their delivery, then they will deliver better security and society outcomes.

We know this in the European Union from the repeated work, the surveys, the analysis and the research of the Fundamental Rights Agency. We feed these and related insights into efforts in the European Union to combat radicalisation and to tackle extremism as it manifests itself in our societies.

What sort of data do we produce that’s useful for the policy maker in this area? For example, we know from our surveys that newly arrived migrants into our societies here in Europe have a higher degree of trust in the institutions of the State than does the general population. That’s a remarkable fact that gives us very valuable material on which to work.

It also tells us that migrants are not the problem in Europe; rather, our migrant communities require a greater investment of resources and of confidence by the State than might currently be the case in at least some European countries.

More generally, across the European Union, we can do a better job of supporting the integration of newly arriving communities. We can do a better job of investing in language training, in supporting the movement into the workplace, in the education context, and with regard to non-segregated housing.
A few weeks ago, here in Vienna, we convened a major event, the Fundamental Rights forum, that brought together 700 mainly young people to look at many of the great human rights issues that are relevant right now today. We embraced all of the themes that you’re discussing in the informal seminar. And so I think that some of the outcomes of the forum are of direct interest for you. Indeed, I’m reassured because the three points I would like to emphasise are already explicit in your programme.

What are they? Well, the first is the very welcome emphasis by you and by our participants in the forum of the need to separate the experience of women, focus on the particular dimensions of human rights and women, in the context of the seminar, but also much more broadly in human rights. We must always gender our analysis and our work in the area of human rights.

Secondly, as you emphasise so strongly in your own programme, we must get local as we understand issues of extremism but also as we identify how to ensure human-rights appropriate and effective responses. We’ve got to get from the abstraction of the capital right down to the specific of the village. And I’m so glad, that right across the world in 2018, there’s a new emphasis on this principle of going local.

Third and finally, our 700 participants at the forum here in Vienna reminded us that we must invest in young people. You too have identified the particular issues of young people for your seminar series. And I know that you, as with our participants, will not problematise young people but rather see young people as the solution. It is with their idealism, their hopes, their vision, but also their smart ideas, that we will navigate the great challenges of today.

I thank you and I wish you a most successful event.
PARLIAMENTARIANS MUST ENSURE THAT MEASURES TO COUNTER VIOLENT EXTREMISM DO NOT VIOLATE HUMAN RIGHTS

Barbara LOCHBIHLER, Member of the European Parliament, Vice-Chair of the Parliament’s Subcommittee on Human Rights, Member of Delegation for relations with the countries of Southeast Asia and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)

(Address at the 18th Informal ASEM Seminar on Human Rights)

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen

First of all, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the organisers of this event. You have arranged a very important and interesting programme on Human Rights and the Prevention of Violent Extremism with excellent contributions from distinguished speakers.

As a Member of the European Parliament, a strong focus of my work relates to the Human Rights Committee. Further, I am a board member of the Parliamentarians for Global Action (PGA), an international network of committed legislators all over the world, advocating for human rights, the rule of law, democracy, human security, non-discrimination, and gender equality.

Therefore, I would like to draw your attention to the Milan Plan of Action on Preventing Violent Extremism and Mass Atrocities that was adopted at a meeting of PGA in November 2017. With this Plan of Action, parliamentarians from more than 50 countries committed themselves to use their legislative and political prerogatives to prevent violent extremism and mass atrocity crimes at the local, national, regional and international level.

The Milan Plan of Action reiterates key messages from strategies, policy papers and resolutions that regional and global organisations like the EU and the UN have issued. In this regard, I would like to point out some key messages, namely:

• Any measures against violent extremism have to be carried out in compliance with international human rights standards;

• Prevention of violent extremism is crucial, but root causes for violent extremism are complex.

Relevant root causes that are frequently identified include the following:

• Marginalisation and discrimination;

• Radicalisation in prisons and other deficiencies of States’ response to crime;

• Lack of or limited socio-economic opportunities, education, social cohesion, etc.

We can observe that nowadays – at least in Europe – the phenomenon of ‘violent extremism’ is often understood to refer mainly to radical violent Islamic extremism. This focus emerged with the 9/11 attack in 2001 and the declared ‘War on Terrorism’ by the US administration. This focus has been maintained with the emergence of the Islamic State.
It is obvious that totalitarian approaches to and fundamentalist interpretations of religious beliefs or political ideologies are conducive to violent extremism. However, it is important to reiterate that violent extremism is not confined to a certain region, ethnicity, religion or ideology. In addition to several attacks by the Islamic State, one of the deadliest attacks in Europe in recent years was the murder of 69 participants of a youth camp in Norway by the right-extremist Anders Breivik.

Attacks by violent extremists have cost the lives of too many people. Such attacks severely affect individuals and the community. Therefore, it does not come as a surprise that a recent Eurobarometer survey (May 2018) finds that 49% of EU citizens rank the fight against terrorism as the top priority of the EU. Further, 77% of EU citizens voice a clear demand for increased EU intervention on the issue.

The EU has frequently revised its Counter-Terrorism Strategy now referred to as the “Strategy for Combatting Radicalisation and Recruitment to Terrorism”. It has taken a range of concrete measures, including several aiming at the exchange of experience and information to prevent violent extremism.

A best practice example in this respect is the so-called Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN) that was set up by the European Commission in 2011. RAN is an EU-wide umbrella network connecting first-line practitioners and local actors around Europe working on a daily basis with those vulnerable to radicalisation, as well as those who have already been radicalised. As teachers, social workers, community police officers, etc. they are engaged in preventing and countering radicalisation and violent extremism in all its forms, or in reintegrating formerly violent extremists. Participants include NGOs, representatives of different communities, think tanks, academia, law enforcement agencies, government representatives and consultancies. RAN also fosters an inclusive dialogue between practitioners, policy-makers and academics.

While the exchange of experience and best practices, including at national, regional and international level, is generally welcome, the sharing of intelligence and personal data is more problematic. On the one hand, there is the general reluctance of security entities to share intelligence as can be observed amongst the 28 EU Member States. On the other hand, we have to be cautious about the sharing of information on individuals as this may violate fundamental rights.

As the technological developments potentially increase the efficiency, they also increase the challenges. Policy responses towards mass surveillance and generalised suspicion are ineffective and threaten the defining features of an open society, where freedom, privacy and the presumption of innocence are respected.

To give just one example: In 2016 the EU decided to establish a Passenger Name Record (PNR) system particularly aimed to prevent and investigate terrorism and other serious crimes. Although the European Parliament voted in favour of the PNR system, my political group (The Greens) opposed it. We criticised that it fails to address the terrorist threat, whilst undermining the fundamental rights of EU citizens.

Further, our concerns on the PNR-systems were supported by an opinion of the Court of Justice of the European Union that, in July 2017, concluded that certain provisions of a draft agreement for the exchange of PNR data between the EU and Canada “do not meet the requirements stemming from the fundamental rights of the EU”.

In its action to prevent violent extremism, the EU puts a strong emphasis on the importance of cross regional cooperation.

Particular attention is given to fragile and conflict-affected countries, countries in transition and those characterised by weak governance. For example, following the emergence of the “Islamic State” in Syria and Iraq, the EU produced a special strategy on both countries. Strategies to prevent radicalisation and violent extremism are also incorporated into traditional development cooperation tools and instruments.
Further, EU delegations are advised to take action to promote preventive strategies and to identify opportunities for the involvement of civil society organisations in projects to prevent violent extremism.

I am certainly supportive of measures that include strong involvement of civil society organisations. However, this also requires that civil society is able to act freely and independently. Unfortunately, we observe that the EU cooperation with third countries on security is not systematically linked to the human rights situation on the ground.

During a recent mission to an African country (Sudan), I met with human rights defenders. They reported that the increasing interest of the EU in security cooperation coincides with less attention given to the human rights situation in the country. This is surely a mistake!

In numerous countries, we can observe that vaguely worded anti-terrorism legislation is misused for a crackdown on civil society. Our role as parliamentarians – whether in Asia or in Europe – is to ensure that measures aimed to counter violent extremism are not violating human rights.

Let us be clear: There is no security without human rights!
COMMUNITY-LED INTERVENTIONS ARE CRUCIAL IN ALL EFFORTS TO DEAL WITH VIOLENT EXTREMISM

Report of the 18th Informal ASEM Seminar on Human Rights (ASEMHRS18)

Introduction

Over the last decade, violent extremism has featured prominently in policy, political and academic debates internationally. These debates tend to revolve around two axes: security and human rights.

The 18th Informal ASEM Seminar on Human Rights took place on 5-8 November 2018 in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, focusing on the theme of Human Rights and Prevention of Violent Extremism. The seminar was co-organised by the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF), the Raoul Wallenberg Institute (nominated by the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs), the French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, the Philippines Department of Foreign Affairs and the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs. The host of the 18th Informal ASEM Seminar on Human Rights was the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Indonesia.

Four simultaneous closed-door working groups addressed the following topics in detail:

• WG1 – Push & Pull Factors of Violent Extremism
• WG2 – Targeting Violent Extremism at the Local Level
• WG3 – Violent Extremism: Women's Involvement, Rights and Security
• WG4 – Youth, Education & Prevention of Violent Extremism

The seminar ran for three days and representatives from governmental and civil society organisations attended, bringing expertise from research, policy and frontline practice. As anticipated, the debates during the workshops were passionate and the plenaries and Q&A sessions engaging.

This year, a total of 118 people participated in the Informal ASEM Seminar on Human Rights. Of these, 64 were from Asian ASEM Partner countries and 50 were from Europe, with four additional participants from international organisations. Overall, a total of 38 ASEM Partners were represented at the Seminar.

This report summarises and synthesises the seminar presentations, discussions and conclusions. The report includes summary reports prepared by the four rapporteurs assigned to each of the seminar working groups: Dr Theo GAVRIELIDES, Founder and Director of The IARS International Institute and the Restorative Justice for All Institute (RJ4All); Ms Faiza PATEL from the Brennan Centre for Justice (US); Ms Irene M SANTIAGO, Lead Convener of #WomenSeriously; and Professor Lynn DAVIES from the University of Birmingham (UK).
Key Messages

Several key messages emerged from the seminar, the most prominent of which was one of hope and unity. The mere presence of so many stakeholders and the engagement of key decision makers and government officials demonstrated in practice that under the leadership of ASEF, Asia and Europe are determined to tackle the societal, security and human rights issues that are associated with both the idea, reality and myths surrounding violent extremism. Human rights were also portrayed not as a hindrance to anti-radicalisation policies and laws, but as strong levers that can rebalance power, which is a key determinant in the prevention of extreme attitudes that lead to violence.

Similarly, in all debates that involve complex and living notions such as violent extremism and human rights, the issue of definitions was raised. The seminar acknowledged that a more nuanced delineation of key terms is needed. It also agreed that these terms are often not transferable into simple matters of writings. However, consensus was reached that violent acts of extremism warrant definition when it comes to their prosecution. The elasticity of legal terms and the lack of clarity of what constitutes terrorism and violent extremism can easily be misused, exploited or manipulated by law enforcement agencies and the powerful.

Therefore, one must ask why definitions are important before dedicating time and resources to trying to narrow down phenomena that might be best addressed and indeed prevented within a wider conceptual framework. What was also clear from the debates was that violent extremism includes many forms and these are not exclusively motivated by the misuse of faith, but also by beliefs such as anarchy, and by right and left-wing narratives as well as nationalist and separatist ideologies.

The extent to which the manifestation of the phenomenon of violent extremism is apparently spreading must be viewed critically. For example, in 2017 in the EU, 205 attacks were stopped, failed or completed. The general impression is that this number is much larger. Terrorism accounts for 0.03 deaths out of 100,000, a statistic similar to that of death by lightning strike. In fact, one must ask where these attacks took place and understand the reasons behind them.

This led to a debate about the narrative that has been adopted since the September 11 attacks. Counter terrorism was framed as a ‘war on terror’, putting emphasis on security and national borders. In combination with public misinformation, this narrative created an environment where nationalism, extreme views and hate attitudes and speech came to the fore. This created a vicious cycle of division between ‘the bad’ and ‘the good; ‘them’ and ‘us’. The delegates welcomed the conceptual shift from ‘war on terror’ to ‘prevention of violent extremism’, embodied in the UN Secretary-General’s 2016 Plan of Action on Prevention of Violent Extremism. With this, the emphasis was now placed on addressing the root causes of violent extremism and on adherence to human rights and the rule of law. This shift enabled more actors, especially civil society organisations involved in peace efforts, humanitarian assistance, human rights and development, to contribute to the many processes that are needed to prevent violent extremism. In a ‘whole-of-society’ approach to prevention from national to sub-national levels, the local European and Asian communities can now provide a strong basis for any plan of action.

The strong community voice at the seminar showed that communities are rising. Their role in the prevention of violent extremism was not only discussed extensively but also highlighted through best practice in both continents. Local groups and people do matter when it comes to addressing fears and feelings of isolation and hate. The need to work responsibly with these groups was highlighted

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2 In 2015, the terrorism death rate in Europe was approximately 0.034 per 100,000 people. According to the Igarapé Institute using statistics from 2013 (or latest available year), death by lightning in Europe was 0.005 per 100,000 people. More information can be found on the World Economic Forum website, https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2017/06/europes-terror-threat-is-real-but-our-cities-are-much-safer-than-you-think/
particularly when it comes to issues of funding. Governments and regional bodies must include these community voices and acknowledge their distinct contributions in the design and delivery of strategies, at all stages from pre-radicalisation, radicalisation, engagement in violent extremism, rehabilitation, and reintegration.

The challenge in this approach is how to ensure its effectiveness, as security sector strategies run alongside civil society community-led efforts without each cancelling out each other’s gains.

The empowerment of the community and individual action is where human rights were seen to be most relevant. “Where, after all, do universal human rights begin? In small places, close to home – so close and so small that they cannot be seen on any maps of the world. Yet they are the world of the individual person”, as Eleanor Roosevelt noted during the signing of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Seventy years since humanity came together to collectively say ‘no more’, the ASEM seminar reignited a debate on the value of the universality of human rights and their practical application at the local level.

Participants also agreed that effective policies to counter violent extremism must include considerations of women’s role in the prevention of, and participation in, violent extremism. Their role can be seen as both victims and as agents of violent radicalisation. It is now increasingly evident that women are playing a variety of roles in promoting violent extremism, including as propagandists, recruiters, fundraisers, educators, and suicide bombers. Recent cases of female suicide bombers, in particular, as well as evidence of a growing number of females leaving home to join violent extremist groups, did much to dispel the notion that violence is a male business, with women only entering the picture as victims in need of protection. Raising awareness about women’s involvement in violent extremism, and improving understanding of the motivators behind women’s decisions to join it, is certainly important and effective from a prevention perspective. Some of these motivators have been shown to be gender specific, such as strategies based on traditional gender roles used by violent extremist groups to recruit women. The involvement of women and girls in violent radicalisation narratives and actions can only be addressed by women empowering themselves to build counter-narratives to the conservative and misogynistic views often linked to violent extremism activities.

The discussion on what the literature has called ‘pull and push factors’ was also extensive and, as expected, inconclusive. Consensus was, however, achieved in accepting that there is a gap between the academic literature and actual practice. Practitioners highlighted that linear divisions and categorisations by academics do not reflect the complexity of their reality and the multi-faceted reasons that lead to violent extremism. For example, while poverty, social exclusion, victimisation, oppression, misuse of beliefs, cultural and ethnic differences, and political ideologies were all mentioned, these were not presented as single factors for violent radicalisation.

There was an interesting discussion on democracy, and a question mark raised on whether democracy does act as a bulwark to radicalisation or whether political systems make little difference. Within this debate the question of power and state terrorism emerged, with the majority of participants bringing forth examples whereby the state, through its actions, provided the ‘push’ to violent extremism. There was a consensus on the necessity to respect separation of powers, rule of law, independence of justice and constitutional rights of suspects. The necessity to ensure the protections of human rights in jail systems was also considered as a key point to prevent propaganda and recruitment for violent extremism.

How state and other power is used is paramount in changing the world views that foster extreme ideologies. The issue of abuse of state power was particularly prominent in the Asian delegates’ arguments. They also discussed the need for human rights training to be part of the curriculum for security agencies. Concerns were expressed, however, as to whether there are sufficient mechanisms in place for monitoring effectiveness in sensitising security agencies to human rights concerns. It was suggested that local civil society groups could be part of the monitoring process for such programmes. There remains scope for further discussion on the potential of cross-border collaboration for Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE).
Looking into the future, the role of education and the implications of current action for young people were discussed. There was agreement that current practices are alienating the European and Asian youth population which is often portrayed as the problem rather than the hopeful, new generation that can bring an end to current divisions. Building resilience and empowering through education were the key messages coming out from the related workshop. Evidence was presented that this resilience can be built through formal and informal education as it can act as the vehicle for engagement even with the most vulnerable of youth.
General recommendations to ASEM countries:

1. Countries should be encouraged to have **stronger legislation** or statutory guidance in order to ensure government compliance with human rights. This legislation should include compulsory **human rights education** and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (both in schools and for government officials); and legislation on equality, diversity and anti-discrimination.

2. While laid out in Pillar IV of the UN Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism, **human rights must be a cross-cutting concern** in all four pillars. There is a need to continue the dialogue between Asia and Europe to strengthen capacity and understanding of the applicability of human rights as the foundational norms of any programmatic action to prevent violent extremism.

3. Legislation and state action alone will not address the problem of violent radicalisation. Governments must work closer with communities as well as champions of peace, humanitarian assistance and human rights. The **whole-of-society** approach requires building trust and relationship between government and civil society, NGOs, the private sector, academia, faith-based groups, and women’s and youth organisations. To this end, mechanisms are required to strengthen civil society’s capacity. This includes public consultations and debates, and the empowerment of women and the youth. Young women and men can conduct their own training and spread messages about prevention. There should be a youth-led platform for speaking more loudly about local issues, and also about political no-go areas such as state terrorism, genocide, the culture of impunity and the way youth are used for lucrative purposes.

4. There is confirmation of the need for **National Action Plans on Preventing Violent Extremism**. These would include legislation, as above, but also strategies and finance to provide opportunities for marginalised or disaffected groups, whether in cities or in remote areas. It would include support for inter-ethnic and inter-faith exchanges in order to build **community cohesion** and community solidarity. It would also include support for grassroots organisations (NGOs, teachers, families, religious leaders, women) who are tackling violent extremism or working to combat vengeance. For effectiveness and sustainability, young people and civil society should be meaningfully engaged at all stages. Additionally, cross-border cooperation and dialogue on plans and policy would help to further their impact.

5. The misuse of state and other power was noted as a major factor in shaping world views and the attitudes that then impede our ability to live together and foster extreme ideologies. Human rights are the only universally accepted lever that can rebalance this misuse, and thus more emphasis is needed to promote them at all levels. In this regard, **good and accountable governance** is key to ensuring that human rights are promoted, protected and fulfilled even in times of high pressure.

6. A considerable amount of resources has been dedicated to defining and normatively understanding ‘violent radicalisation’ and associated terms. The benefits of the level of this scrutiny are questioned in light of the need to understand more critically the phenomenon locally. In order to promote **critical thinking**, there should be a strengthening of political education: this means a **rights-based education**, learning about religious and ethnic conflict in one’s own country, and stressing different narratives and perspectives on history. Critical thinking is also enhanced by enabling communities to participate in decision-making through user-led methods of democratic engagement.

7. Women’s critical role in preventing violent extremism should be placed within a **gender framework** in order to understand better how gender stereotypes are manipulated for violent extremism. Since socially constructed norms and behaviours of women and men in a society are used to recruit and mobilise women and men, it is important to understand how gender may be used in destructive or constructive ways. Context-specific study and analysis of ‘pull’ narratives based on gender will lead to more effective prevention efforts as will commitment to ensuring women’s human rights are protected and fulfilled.
WORKING GROUP REPORTS
Working Group 1 Report:
Pull & Push Factors of Violent Extremism

This working group aimed to look at what the extant literature has named ‘pull and push’ factors of violent extremism, putting them in the context of human rights. The group consisted of 26 participants from Asia and Europe. Notes were taken by Rika Iffati Farihah and Irsa Wafiatul Qisthi, and facilitation was carried out by Dr Irfan AHMAD (Max Planck Institute for the Study of Religious and Ethnic Diversity, Germany).

The discussion was extensive, passionate and, as expected, inconclusive. Consensus was, however, achieved in accepting that there is a gap between the academic literature and actual practice in understanding and dealing with the factors that lead to violent extremism. Practitioners highlighted that linear divisions and categorisations by academics do not reflect the complexity of their reality and the multi-faceted reasons that lead to violent extremism. For example, while poverty, social exclusion, victimisation, oppression, misuse of beliefs, cultural and ethnic differences and political ideologies were all mentioned, these were not presented as single factors for violent radicalisation. However, it was agreed that how state and other power is used is paramount in changing the world views that foster extreme ideologies, and gradually lead to violent, extremist acts.

Key Messages

- Understanding the pull and push factors that lead an individual to violent extremism requires putting them in our respective European/Asian, local, historical and societal context.

- Factors that can lead to violent radicalisation can be:
  - Micro – the individual
  - Meso – the society
  - Macro – the political

- Citizens’ expectations and relations with their governments are linked with macro factors.

- Economics and the current financial situation faced by both Europe and Asia provide context for push and pull factors. This includes the level of financing security measures vs Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE) initiatives and the community.

- There are shared experiences in the two continents and, despite the cultural and social differences, power imbalance is the common variant that leads to segregation and acts of violence and extremism.

- Human rights can act as levers for balancing the distortion of power. However, they must be seen and applied as universal values and not as a hidden form of colonial power or as a Westernised product.

Key Challenges faced by Asia & Europe

- The terminology of ‘pull and push’ factors is not always helpful or clear especially in the world of practice. Participants acknowledged that a more nuanced delineation of key terms such as extremism and terrorism is needed. It also agreed that these terms are often not transferable
into simple matters of writings. However, consensus was reached that violent acts of extremism warrant definition when it comes to their prosecution. The elasticity of legal terms and the lack of clarity of what constitutes terrorism and violent extremism can easily be misused, exploited or manipulated by law enforcement agencies and the powerful.

- What was also clear from the debates was that violent extremism has many forms and it is not exclusively motivated by the misuse of faith, but also by anarchists, right and left-wing narratives as well as nationalist and separatist ideologies.

- The universality of human rights is currently being challenged.

- The conceptual framework of terrorism vs violent radicalisation is not clear.

- Nationalism and isolation are breeding, and these are the key factors that lead to violent extremism.

- Issues of state accountability were raised especially in relation to holding states to account for acts that could breed extremist views and attitudes.

- Politicians often use PVE as a distraction from addressing poverty and other equality related policies.

**Key Recommendations**

- In dealing with pull and push factors, it is important to give voice – democratic representation - to minority groups.

- Acknowledge individual as well as collective trauma and how they both impact on the process of violent extremism.

- Encourage civil society to push governments and help governments understand that they cannot deal with the issue of violent extremism on their own.

- There is a need to shift educators and policy makers’ mindset from managing people as risks to seeing them as talents that can be nurtured, tapping into their humanity and encouraging empathy.

- The use of formal/informal education is important for preventing the pull and push factors that lead to hate attitudes.

- Inform and engage funders (national/regional) about the role of the community in preventing pull and push factors at the individual and state level.

- Deal with local fears and trauma at the political level; this will gradually lead to healing and restoration.

- Encourage media literacy, better social media regulation and influence their business model.

- Include ‘state terror’ in PVE strategies.

- Address the root causes of hate and the attitudes that lead to violent extremism including nationalism and feelings of isolation.

- It is important to measure progress and the impact of PVE initiatives including the ASEM Human Rights Seminar.
Working Group 2 Report:
Targeting Violent Extremism at the Local Level

The discussion was based in part on selected questions drafted by ASEF in the seminar's concept paper and focused on four main topics. First, the need for participation and representation in the design and execution of PVE programming. Second, the role of economic issues, both in providing incentives for individuals to join violent groups and as part of programmes aimed at rehabilitation. Third, how to centre human rights in PVE programmes. And, finally the challenge of addressing all forms of violent extremism. Prof Noorhaidi HASAN (Sunan Kalijaga State Islamic University, Yogyakarta, Indonesia) moderated this working group.

Throughout the discussions, the participants raised current and emerging challenges, expressed critical and though-provoking views on the issues, and shared positive examples and good practices with the group.

Participation & Representation

The first topic tackled by the group was the need for participation in PVE programmes, which is relevant both for their success and legitimacy and for strengthening democratic participation generally. The group focused on the need to involve a range of voices and the challenges in doing so. Government representatives suggested a model of consultation where national plans were devolved to discussions at the regional and local level in order to develop an agenda that reflected the views of a range of key actors. It was also noted that many countries have either not developed PVE plans or that the plans have been gathering dust in capitals and have not been implemented. These views were echoed by some civil society participants.

A related issue discussed by the group was how to identify community representatives who were best positioned to participate in these types of activities. Participants highlighted the problem of government officials reaching out to the same few groups, who may or may not have legitimacy within the communities they are trying to reach. One government official pointed out that countries that provide funding to PVE programmes are faced with civil society groups that are over-funded (i.e., all donors are focusing on them) or are too small. In addition, civil society actors are sometimes naïve in how they engage on PVE issues and can cause more harm than good, especially if they do not have proper safeguards in place. The group discussed the hostility of some government actors to engaging with civil society at all, reflective of the power structures in the country. Participants provided examples of instances in which civil society had been prevented from contributing constructively in addressing issues of violence. Several civil society participants highlighted problems with governments dictating the PVE agenda.

Financial Incentives

The group discussed the ways in which financial incentives may cause individuals to join violent groups and how they can be used to help people leave a life of violence. One participant highlighted the example of the group Boko Haram, noting the vast discrepancy between perceptions of what motivated individuals to join Boko Haram (82% believed it was religion) versus the results of surveys of these individuals (only 8% reported religious motivation; economic and political factors were far more important). The group also discussed discrimination against Muslims in employment in some European countries, with participants highlighting studies showing that people with Muslim names applying for jobs are often rejected and the difficulties faced by women wearing hijab in obtaining employment. Finally, the group discussed the role of employment and economic opportunities in rehabilitating and reintegrating individuals who had renounced violence, with participants providing some concrete examples of how this had worked at the local level (e.g., in Pakistan). However, the
number of successful examples presented was quite limited and it is not clear that they could be scaled up in any meaningful way.

Centring Human Rights

Given the focus of the seminar, the group spent a considerable amount of time discussing how PVE programmes could centre human rights and the possibility for the involvement of local civil society actors in the process.

Civil society participants from Asia expressed concern about police rounding up large numbers of young men as part of counterterrorism operations and expressed scepticism that these individuals were actually violent actors. They proposed better training for law enforcement actors on the need to respect human rights. Other participants pointed out that any change of culture in law enforcement needs to come from the top and that the human rights imperative must be inculcated in them. The group discussed the need for human rights training to be part of the curriculum for security agencies. Concerns were expressed, however, as to whether there are sufficient mechanisms in place for monitoring whether the training is effective in sensitising security agencies to human rights concerns. It was suggested that local civil society groups could be part of the monitoring process for such programmes.

Civil society actors highlighted the need to translate broad commitments to human rights into policy and practice. There is a need for civil society to develop the capacity to provide concrete recommendations on how to protect human rights in order to turn these commitments into reality as well as to ensure that policymakers are focused on these issues.

The group addressed the particular challenges of situations where PVE is focused on a distinct minority population. In these types of situations, concerns about discrimination and religious and ethnic stereotypes raise specific human rights concerns that must be addressed.

Addressing all Forms of Violent Extremism

The last topic addressed by the group was the range of threats that could be addressed under the rubric of PVE. While most discussions of PVE have focused on the threat posed by ISIS, Al Qaeda and local variants, participants noted that the prevalence of the threat from the far right, as well as the targeting of Rohingya in Myanmar and Muslims in India. In terms of the threat of far-right violence, it appears to be addressed primarily as an issue of anti-Semitism, hate crimes and the prevention of genocide. Both the United Nations and European institutions have longstanding programmes directed at these types of threats. But, as participants noted, these threats are not yet considered in the same framework as that posed by ISIS/Al Qaeda and the responses seem quite different. Some participants pointed out the problem of state support for different types of violent extremism, especially with respect to the far right.

Conclusions

A few key themes emerged from the discussion. The first is the complexity and variety of the PVE space, which is exacerbated by the lack of a clear understanding of what types of programmes should come under its umbrella. The result appears to be a smorgasbord of initiatives, some of which are only tangentially related to the stated goal (although they are often worthy initiatives on their own terms). Second, there was a recognition – particularly among civil society participants – of the risk of human rights abuses under the guise of PVE and the need to better integrate human rights into the policy and practical frameworks of these programmes. Finally, there is a need to measure the impact of PVE programmes. This is obviously a challenging matter since measuring what has been prevented is far harder than measuring what has been achieved. Addressing these three issues is critical to the sustainability and success of the PVE approach.
Working Group 3 Report: Violent Extremism: Women’s Involvement, Rights and Security

To start the discussions, there was an attempt to define violent extremism. However, the group opted instead to discuss their experiences with gender in their various contexts – in the communities, in government, academia, work with migrants and internally displaced people, the UN, in conflict areas, in religious-faith organisations, the justice system, and social media. Facilitation was carried out by Dr Melissa JOHNSTON (Monash University, Australia).

How Gender Works in PVE

After the discussion of their experiences, the group decided to reframe the workshop title to ‘How Gender Works in PVE’ to understand better how gender is used in the various processes related to PVE.

They agreed that manipulation of gender stereotypes is evident in the recruitment and mobilisation of women and men to violent extremism.

They agreed, however, that gender may be used in both destructive and constructive ways. Some examples of the destructive ways include:

- Using the stereotype ‘men protect women’. This leads, for example, to rape as an instrument to humiliate the enemy by taunting the men for not being able to protect their women.
- Not acknowledging that men, precisely because they are expected to protect their women and in this instance are unable to do so, tend to seek revenge resulting in another cycle of violence (the victim now becomes the perpetrator).
- Restricting and controlling women’s mobility, behaviours, physical appearance, and choices to indicate the essential elements of the envisioned society the group is striving for.
- Overemphasising women’s role as mothers in preventing violent extremism resulting in excluding other roles such as women as political and religious leaders, organisers and mobilisers, media representatives, advocates, etc.

On the other hand, there are constructive ways in which gender is used such as:

- Women as mothers having an important role in radicalising or de-radicalising their children.
- Women expanding their roles by becoming political and religious leaders with authority in their communities and in other areas of influence.
- Women establishing platforms and networks where they are able to amplify their voices in the public space.
- Women having ample economic security and thus the capacity for independent decision-making.

The effective approach therefore is to decrease the destructive manipulation of gender stereotypes that lead to violent extremism and to increase the constructive use of gender for addressing the roots of violent extremism in its political, economic and social dimensions.

Gender is therefore key to undertaking accurate analysis as well as to planning effective interventions. It is, however, important to bear in mind that analysis and planning must always consider context.
Recommended Actions

1. Conceptual

- Redefine masculinities and femininities so that they are based on human rights of men and women and not merely on their culturally-defined roles. Violence as an essential element of being masculine must be countered with active nonviolence in order to remove violence as an option to bring about social change.

- Consider that women are not a monolithic group but belong to all sectors with diverse experiences.

- Religious counter-discourse to fundamentalist notions of what constitutes women’s purpose for their existence, their roles and behaviours must be articulated in various fora by credible messengers.

2. Technical

In pursuit of the ‘whole-of-society’ approach articulated by the UN Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism, policies and programmes must be provided to expand women’s choices and roles by building their capacities (skills, knowledge, resources) to be leaders and equal partners with men.

3. Political

Effective political action must use the ‘More People, Key People’ approach to social change, in this case in achieving the goal of women exercising leadership and agency in society. Focusing only on ‘more people’ at the personal or individual level (such as stand-alone projects for women) will not have any impact on the patriarchal manifestations of violent extremism unless these are combined with actions that lead to changes in socio-political institutions and mechanisms that impact on the lives of women and men whose grievances against these structures of inequality fuel radicalisation. Key people who are decision-makers in government, the private sector, academe, religion, etc. must also be involved in setting policy, legislation, and programmes to ensure women’s perspectives and priorities are taken seriously.

Therefore, support must be provided for the building of women’s networks and platforms to increase their capacity to influence changes in policies, structures, mindset, and behaviours.

Other actions include the following:

- The State’s robust application of its obligation to fulfil women’s human rights and equality in PVE.

- Accountability and access to justice in case of physical and mental abuse of women.

- Accountability measures for abuses by military and other security forces.

- Stopping the cycle of revenge (violence) is one important way to prevent violent extremism to avoid victims becoming perpetrators.

- Transitional justice mechanisms must be in place and gendered.

- Recognition of women not just in leadership but also in authority.
Working Group 4 Report: Youth, Education & the Prevention of Violent Extremism

The importance of addressing violent extremism with regard to its impact on youth and the role of education has gained global attention and been underscored in a number of UN and EU resolutions and declarations. In relation to the main theme of the seminar, this working group aimed to look at the specific aspect of human rights in education for PVE – an interlocking triangle of focus.

The group, moderated by Dr Mohammad Najib AZCA (University of Gadjah Mada, Yogyakarta, Indonesia), had 28 members from a range of governmental and civil society organisations from 19 different countries. The group began with outlining their expectations for the day, in order to frame the discussion and pitch it at the appropriate level. It was clear that a high level of critical debate was to be forthcoming, in their phrases such as ‘problematise education’ and ‘the importance of different contexts’, ‘the intersectionality of gender, ethnicity and religion’, as well as ‘the failure of democracy’.

Key Challenges

The group was then asked to identify the challenges of this field. These included identity politics, ethno-nationalism, government policies (for example relating to the Rohingya), the different ways youth coalesce (around the older generation, elites or business), the long histories of conflict, division or sectarianism in a country which determine learned attitudes, failure to recognise the positive contributions of youth, and the predictable concern about on-line communication and fake news.

However, a number of important debates emerged. One was around the family – whether this was one of the key roots of vulnerability to radicalisation, or whether the importance of family was overstated or over-simplistic. This linked in part to the discussion on the centrality of poverty and unemployment in propelling youth towards extremist groups, or whether this was not in fact a universal feature of propensity to join movements, and there was little real evidence. There was an interesting discussion on democracy, and a question mark raised on whether democracy did act as a bulwark to radicalisation or whether the political system made little difference. The contested role of religion and teaching religion also started to emerge.

The group then split into two, one to discuss policies on youth, human rights and education, and the other to talk about working with youth, i.e. approaches that were more top down or bottom up.

Policies on Youth, Human Rights & Education

The first group, on policies, identified five major areas for preventative work:

- Legislation education (Race, Minority and Equality Acts; legal provision of human rights and Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) as compulsory in schools; laws on internet use
- Curriculum (National, Human Rights education, diversity/gender, critical thinking, different narratives of history, local language, culture)
- National level plans or strategies – National Action Plans on PVE, or strategies to provide opportunities for marginalised and disaffected youth
- Empowerment and participation of youth – in decision-making, and in designing their curriculum
- Support/funding for the ‘filters’ or supporters at grassroots levels – NGOs, teachers, families, religious leaders.
What emerged however was a concern about what might be called ‘the elephant in the room’ – the big issues everyone knows about but are cautious about drawing attention to. For this group, these issues include state terrorism, genocide, religious conflict, impunity, and the need for a curriculum which teaches about conflict, justice and reconciliation in one’s own country.

**Working with Youth**

The second group touched on a number of concerns and solutions:

- That human-rights-sensitive education is not supported.
- The clash between freedom of speech and freedom of religion.
- There should be regulation of hate speech, religious sermons on TV.
- Counter narratives and critical thinking.
- Learning about local community culture, good or bad.
- Building positive culture, anti-vengeance.
- Building up trust, and connecting young people with social policies.
- Participation; youth conducting training and spreading messages.
- Bring in minorities and those with disabilities to the training.
- Work with private sector.
- Different learning media such as board games, video, music, art, sport, ‘peacetival’, comedy.

After feedback from groups, the final exercise began with ‘If I Ruled the World’ – that is, what the top priority or priorities would be for change in this area of youth, HR and education for PVE. The group was also asked to state who or what would be responsible for driving this. The conclusion was that, along with international organisations and networks such as ASEM, UN, SAARC, ASEAN or the Commonwealth, both governments and smaller or local players should be involved. Seven major themes emerged, summarised as follows: (The responsibility column sometimes has to be divided into two, as there was debate about the prime starting point or effectiveness).
## Top Priorities for Change

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>How? Who?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Engage youth in decision-making, leadership</td>
<td><strong>Govt:</strong> Implement CRC in legislation, create structures &amp; platforms for participation at local, regional &amp; national levels. Consider the impact of any policy design on family &amp; youth in PVE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stop racial/religious discrimination, messages of inclusion; care for the marginalised</td>
<td>Legislation on equality &amp; diversity; Sanitising textbooks; Infrastructure for remote areas; Using business, developing the economic system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human rights education in schools from an early age; education on the rule of law</td>
<td>Compulsory education in HR &amp; CRC Build a global HR University/institute that all countries &amp; citizens could share Training of government officers on HR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hateful &amp; violent internet content</td>
<td>Legislation to manage internet providers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teach negative aspects of VE</td>
<td>Invite victims of terror or refugees into schools, visit camps; role models of extremists who have changed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Build a culture of love, peace</td>
<td>Inter-faith groups, inter-ethnic exchanges, bringing youth together for music or sport. Learning from Herstory, the contributions of women in history</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil society inclusion Culture of trust</td>
<td>Public consultations &amp; debate, youth solidarity, mapping potential youth leaders, women’s empowerment Speedy judiciary Speaking more loudly about the negative impacts of impunity &amp; lucrative engagement with youth.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Key Messages

Action is indicated at four levels or sites:

1. Countries should be encouraged to have stronger legislation or statutory guidance in order to ensure compliance with human rights norms. This legislation should include compulsory education on human rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (both in schools and for government officials); legislation on equality, diversity and anti-discrimination; and regulation of hate speech and religious disinformation, including legislation on internet providers to filter hate speech and violent content.

2. There is confirmation of the need for National Action Plans on Preventing Violent Extremism. These would include legislation, as above, but also strategies and finance to provide opportunities for marginalised or disaffected youth, whether in cities or in remote areas. It would include support for inter-ethnic and inter-faith youth exchanges, whether in music, sport etc, in order to build community cohesion and youth solidarity. It would also include support for grassroots organisations (NGOs, teachers, families, religious leaders) who were tackling violent extremism or were working to combat vengeance. For effectiveness and sustainability, young people and civil society should be meaningfully engaged at all stages.

3. In order to build trust, mechanisms are required to strengthen civil society and the voice of youth within this. This includes public consultations and debates, the empowerment of females and mapping potential youth leaders. Youth can conduct their own training and spread messages around PVE. There should be a youth platform for speaking more loudly about local issues but also political no-go areas such as state terrorism, genocide, the culture of impunity and the way youth are used for lucrative purposes.

4. At school level, there should be learning to build digital resilience, and resilience to being drawn into extremist groups, using outside speakers but also peer-to-peer learning and different interactive media designed to raise awareness of violent extremism. In order to promote critical thinking, there should also be a strengthening of political education: this means a rights-based education, learning about religious and ethnic conflict in one’s own country, and stressing different narratives and perspectives on history. Critical thinking is also enhanced, enabling youth to participate in decision-making about their curriculum or their school ethos of inclusion.
CONCLUSION

Following the September 11 attacks, the security narrative of Western and Asian governments changed to that of referring and responding to an open ‘war on terror’. Legislation, policies and strategies were drafted at national and international levels that legitimated the restriction of basic human rights in the name of security. These high-level changes were then interpreted in practice through law enforcement, public service provision and indeed how we all treat and see each other. They were also exercised in the name of communities and marginalised groups. The reasons that fostered the hate attitudes that led to humanity’s most shameful acts of terror, the two World Wars, were forgotten.

At a critical historical moment in the world, the ASEM seminar generated much needed hope. The mere presence and, indeed, the commitment of over 100 individuals from two continents working together on a shared issue was testament of a desire for change. Their arguments and papers showed that communities in both continents are rising and responding to this and numerous other narratives (economic, gender, political, and so on). They collectively acknowledged that the conceptual shift from ‘war on terror’ to ‘Prevention of Violent Extremism’ has opened the space to the critical participation and leadership of communities and civil society in the prevention of violent extremism.

A key conclusion from the seminar is that with a ‘whole-of-society’ approach to PVE, from national to sub-national levels, the local European and Asian communities can now provide a strong basis for any plan of action. There is no doubt that, in a globalised world, the underlying drivers of radicalisation and violent extremism are intimately manifested at the local level. Community-led interventions supported by local government authorities, the private sector, leaders of communities, professionals, women’s and youth organisations, families, faith-based groups, and social service providers, among others, are crucial to any interventions at all stages from pre-radicalisation, radicalisation, engagement in violent extremism, rehabilitation, and reintegration.

The challenge in this approach is how to ensure its effectiveness, as security sector strategies run alongside civil society and community-led efforts without them cancelling out each other’s gains. Instead, the road that we have taken in both continents is encouraging international society to become more polarised than ever, while the ‘them’ (criminals – terrorists) and ‘us’ (victims) rhetoric dominates political speeches and media presentations. And we have to ask: what will it take for society to finally raise the mirror of responsibility and look deeply at its reflection? We are the real architects of the social fabric that generates extremist ideologies, which then gradually corrupt universal values such as tolerance and the respect for life, dignity and solidarity among human beings. The extremist ideology that leads those men, and women, many of them young, to inhumane actions is not an alien virus of unknown origin, but a product of our way of living and the structures we have created in our society.
BACKGROUND ON HUMAN RIGHTS & THE PREVENTION OF VIOLENT EXTREMISM

Dr Theo GAVRIELIDES and Ms Irene SANTIAGO

Chapter 1: Context & Definitional Agreements

1.1 Paper’s impetus, context and structure

This background paper is written within the context of the 18th Informal ASEM Seminar on Human Rights. The paper aims to:

- inform and prepare the delegates in advance of attending the ASEM seminar
- provide the current state-of-the-art in Europe & Asia in relation to the four workshops that will be held during the seminar, in particular:
  
  (a) Pull and push factors of violent radicalisation
  
  (b) Preventing violent extremism at the community level
  
  (c) Violent extremism & gender
  
  (d) Youth, education & prevention of violent extremism

- contribute towards a better mutual understanding of violent extremism & its underlying causes
- discuss the human rights impact of measures adopted to prevent violent extremism
- identify good preventive initiatives that are aligned with human rights standards.

The paper has been divided into four chapters. The first aims to achieve definitional agreements around key terms impacting on the Seminar debates. The second chapter provides a descriptive and critical account of the current-state-of-the art around the four themes of the seminar focusing on Europe. The third part replicates the aims and structure of the second part focusing on Asia. The final part brings the paper into conclusion by presenting some analytical thinking for critical analysis and debate during the seminar.

1.2 Human Rights: Definitional agreements

According to the Universal Declaration on Human Rights (UDHR) “Human rights refer to the basic rights and freedoms to which all humans are entitled”, or as Article 1 states: “All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.” Human rights are minimum standards that are available to everyone simply because of their humanity. Concepts such as citizenship and democracy are not prerequisites for someone’s right to be human or the enjoyment of those standards that protect this qualification.

However, definitions are hardly helpful in unravelling the complexities of living notions and practices that have indeed travelled through centuries to finally play a role in law and order in society today. Looking at human rights as an umbrella concept encompassing the various values that now underlie it,
the Enlightenment and the French Revolution are considered by many to be the key historical catalysts that introduced them to our vocabulary. This may explain the traditional division of human rights into three generations as it follows the French Revolution’s three watchwords: Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité.

These watchwords were used by Rene Cassin and the other drafters of the UDHR to construct its four pillars of human dignity, liberty, equality and brotherhood. Each of these pillars represents a different ‘generation of human rights’ and a major historical milestone in their development internationally.

Arguably, the UDHR is now used as the agreed reference point of our universal understanding and acceptance of human rights as indivisible, inalienable and as entitlements shared equally by everyone regardless of their status in society. Regional treaties that followed World War II such as the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) are inspired by the UDHR. Table 1 summarises the chronology of human rights and their generations as these are reflected in the UDHR.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UDHR Pillars</th>
<th>Human Rights generations</th>
<th>UDHR Articles</th>
<th>Types of rights</th>
<th>Historical era</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Human Dignity</td>
<td>First Generation</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>Civil liberties/ rights</td>
<td>Enlightenment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberty</td>
<td>First Generation</td>
<td>3-19</td>
<td>Civil liberties/ rights</td>
<td>Enlightenment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equality</td>
<td>Second Generation</td>
<td>20-26</td>
<td>Political, social and economic equity</td>
<td>Industrial revolution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brotherhood</td>
<td>Third Generation</td>
<td>27-28</td>
<td>Communal &amp; national solidarity</td>
<td>19th – 20th century &amp; post-colonial era</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: The historical development and generations of human rights

While all religions, secular traditions and schools of thought prior to the Enlightenment shared basic visions of a common good and championed certain individual standards within the human rights discourse, the collective understanding of the term ‘human rights’ was not captured. Most importantly, they did not perceive all individuals as of equal value. From the New Testament to the Qu ‘Aran, the Hammurabi’s Codes and Plato, one can easily identify a lack of common vision towards certain groups such as women and homosexuals, servants (or slaves), the disabled, or the elderly.

This is not to suggest that post the Enlightenment, the French Revolution and the UDHR, the implementation of human rights as a collective and universal vision of dignity, respect and liberty was materialised. For instance, in the European colonies and in America, slavery continued until the early 19th century. In Europe and its extended colonies, women did not enjoy equal rights and they were only able to vote equally in mid-20th century (e.g. in England 1928). Children’s rights continue to be usurped and the equal treatment of gays and lesbians is yet to be enjoyed. However, what did change was the narrative on human rights which were discussed at intellectual, academic and political levels as an aspirational charter of minimum standards for all. The development of a universal language of human rights that was informed by secular and international treaties started to take place.

1.3 Radicalisation – extremism – terrorism – religious fundamentalism: Definitional agreements

The terms:

- radicalisation & violent radicalisation
- extremism & violent extremism
- religious fundamentalism, &
- terrorism

are frequently used interchangeably. However, they are very different.
**Violent radicalisation** is the phenomenon of people embracing opinions, views and ideas which could lead to acts of violence including terrorism as defined in Article 1 of the Framework Decision on Combating Terrorism.\(^4\)

**Radicalisation** does not necessarily lead to violence and has been said to seek making changes to the existing political and social structure. Another approach defines radicalism as a quest for sweeping change, while limiting extremism to the pursuit of concrete and localised political ideologies. In other words, radicalisation can be a good force for change especially in oppressive political regimes.

**Extremism** has been referred to as the adoption of a particular ideology with the intention to use violence to remove the state or ruling structure and its elites.\(^5\) Again, extremism can be seen as a positive act for change.

**Violent extremism** involves the exercise of power through violent acts with the intention of changing the status quo and ruling structures illegitimately.

**Religious fundamentalism** is “a belief in an absolute religious truth, which is challenged by the forces of evil and which must be followed today in the same way as in the past”.\(^6\)

**Terrorism** is “any act of violence or threat thereof notwithstanding its motives or intentions perpetrated to carry out an individual or collective criminal plan with the aim of terrorising people or threatening to harm them or imperilling their lives, honour, freedoms, security or rights or exposing the environment or any facility or public or private property to hazards or occupying or seizing them, or endangering a national resource, or international facilities, or threatening the stability, territorial integrity, political unity or sovereignty of independent States”.\(^7\)

**Chapter 2: Human Rights & Preventing Violent Extremism in Europe**

**2.1 Push & pull factors of violent extremism in Europe**

**Introduction**

**Push factors** are defined as something which “pushes (one) away from mainstream society and causes them to be susceptible to radicalisation” and **pull factors** as something which acts as a trigger increasing the likelihood of the acceptance of violent extremism.\(^8\) Pull factors can be described as elements which involve participation in a movement, organisation or activity in order to gain a type of reward such as a universal one.\(^9\) Pull factors can also involve being within a favourable environment and having exposure to ideologies and recruiters.\(^10\)

When it comes to the radicalisation process in Europe, push and pull factors are based around three categories of motivational triggers:

- **background factors** which relate to personal circumstances and lack of social integration
- **trigger factors** which can either provoke antipathy or activism
- **opportunity factors** which relate to the individual’s environment in which they were brought up in.\(^11\)

Search for Common Ground\(^12\) states that violent radicalisation is caused by frustration with weak, corrupt or illegitimate governance, marginalisation, fractured relationships, lack of voice and opportunity, and struggles with diversity.\(^13\) They suggest that in order to deal with this issue within society and be able to eradicate it, people need to move away from adversarial approaches and
towards cooperative solutions. In order to deal with individuals and address the push and/or pull factors which may lead to a path of violent radicalisation, youth programmes may need to re-focus on areas such as real or perceived threats of well-being, security and wealth and the feeling of belonging to a group/community. This may help to address any issues that the individual may have at a young age and lead them away from the possibility of radicalising.

**Push factors**

According to the European literature, the push factors that help to nurture the rise or spread of the appeal of violent extremism include social marginalisation and fragmentation and perceived oppression and/or fascination with violence. A trigger event such as death or other reasons such as rejection by peer, faith or social group or family and/or pressure from peers associated with extremism could also increase one’s vulnerability and put them at risk of being radicalised. The reasons can be grouped into three main categories: the individual’s circumstances, life experiences, or their state of mind.

Social marginalisation and fragmentation can be defined as "the norms and processes that prevent certain groups from equal and effective participation in the social, economic, cultural and political life of societies". It can be argued that this is why people turn to radicalisation, as they may see it as a way of being heard and a form of getting their view across to many people.

Perceived oppression could result in one “becoming hyper-aware of critical issues ensuing in a radical irrationality and a subsequent willingness to violently act on this awareness”. This fascination with violence then becomes an escape route leading to socialising with the wrong crowd and "engaging in political violence without moral restraints". For example, the Staircase to Terrorism Model links the perceived oppression to radicalisation as it holds that there are five floors, with one viewing different kinds of opportunities “to be open to him or her on that floor”. It is believed that the higher a person gets, their choices are limited, and the only outcome is the destruction of others, oneself or both.

Pressure from peers associated with extremism can increase one’s vulnerability and put them at risk of being radicalised because of it being seen as a way of group bonding and it becomes a social process. This then leads to the view that violence is a way of dealing with the injustice people face, thus making radicalisation hard to overcome.

**Pull factors**

Neumann is of the view that one of the reasons individuals are at risk of being radicalised is introspection. The term introspection can be defined as “the examination or observation of one’s own mental and emotional processes”. There are various pull factors that draw individuals into a path of violent radicalisation, such as attaining reputation and acknowledgement, seeking a sense of belonging and the promise of adventure.

For example, in the UK, the ‘Prevent Strategy’ states that the ideologies that people may hear about are based on “historic texts and extensive contemporary literature, including what purports to be rigorous thinking about key texts from the recent and even distant past”. It also states that the ideologies used within violent radicalisation determine people’s engagement within terrorism-related activity. This could be down to the type of words used in order to attract and connect with people on different levels. The document states that in order to tackle radicalisation and challenge the ideologies put forward by different groups, society needs to be confident in their own human right values.

**Push & pull factors: Human rights & the rule of law in European societies**

There can be no doubt that violent radicalisation needs to be rooted out as it is a threat to Europe’s universal values based on its cultural and humanist inheritance. Cultural inheritance provides narratives of a collective identity and provides meaning and purpose to people, and this helps
individuals get through some rough parts of their life. Somers also states that “living together requires educational efforts to ensure that democracy, the rule of law and the principle of dignity of the human person are shared by members of communities in the EU”.

Human rights, however, are often seen as a hindrance to security. For example, extremists would argue that their right to free speech means that they should be able to “advocate, induce, encourage or glorify terrorism as well as lending material support to terrorism”. This is not an argument that is accepted within the human rights framework. Nevertheless, it is a narrative used by tabloids and politicians in order to undermine the power of human rights.

European governments have often made matters worse by having “an utter disregard for human’s rights”, therefore “an emphasis has been made on preventing and combatting terrorism and building countries capacity to combat it”. Sewall is of the view that when it comes to dealing with the human rights aspect of violent radicalisation and taking into consideration the push and pull factors, the what, who and where of a counterterrorism approach needs to be addressed. When looking at the ‘what’ aspect, the push factors are “the underlying grievances that violent extremism exploit” such as “no path for advancement and no escape from injustice which feeds instability and disorder” which plays off the pull factors as it allows for recruitment tactics to be used and individuals who are “trapped within impoverished communities” are targeted. They may be an easy target as they can be easily persuaded and made to feel like their rights are being valued and recognised so they are willing to participate in events which may not be morally correct.

The ‘who’ aspect requires a ‘whole of society approach’ between various stakeholders. Trust must be built and “fraught relationships between the government and actors in civil society or marginalised communities is repaired” in order to tackle this issue. The ‘where’ aspect involves considering the areas in which individuals may be targeted in order to “prevent the expansion of terrorist networks” and keep “vulnerable communities on a path of stability”. If law enforcement personnel are seen as being discriminatory, organisations may use this to justify violence. Law enforcement organisations thus need to ensure that human rights are upheld, and that individuals are not seen as being vulnerable and therefore become targets for recruitment by organisations with violent agendas.

Robinson and Kelly believe that in order to deal with violent radicalisation, upholding the rule of law “is the fundamental component of any effort seeking to address violent extremism in ways that are effective, sustainable and respectful of fundamental freedoms, civil liberties and human rights”. By ensuring that this is upheld, it is “promoting human rights, curtailing arbitrary state violence, building more inclusive societies as well as building a social contract between the state and citizens”, with the aim of “correcting injustice and reducing social and political alienation that can lead to violent extremism”.

To remove the possibility of radicalisation occurring within society, the terms deradicalisation and disengagement need to be understood and acted upon. Disengagement is about the individual experiencing a behavioural change whilst deradicalisation “implies a cognitive shift and a fundamental change in understanding” which is “triggered by a traumatic experience which challenges the coherence of the individual’s worldview and can engender post-traumatic growth”. As an individual is going through the deradicalisation stage, he or she is likely to be more receptive to new ideas and they can be persuaded to see the error of their previous ways.

2.2 European policies & measures: Counteracting & Preventing

To combat radicalisation at a local level, in 2015 the CoE adopted a strategy and the Guidelines for local and regional authorities on preventing radicalisation and manifestations of hate at the gross levels. These recommend local multi-agency consortia and the set-up of local safety partnerships, the consideration of education as an important vector, the involvement of civil society, the development
of exit programmes for those willing to leave extremism as well as the allocation of necessary funds in local budgets to allow sustainable funding of prevention programmes.51

When policies are being created, human rights and diversity should be at the forefront in order to ensure that all measures are being undertaken by the Member States and the EU to combat violent radicalisation. As a consequence, individuals are less likely to feel some form of wrongdoing has occurred to them, which can then lead to violent radicalisation for retribution.

‘The Influencing Push/Pull Model’52 has been put forward as a paradigm for countering violent radicalisation. Asserting and persuading people are push factors as they are a “direct use of your own energy”, whilst bridging and attracting people are pull factors as it “involves the energy of others”.53 “Moving away” is a term used when an individual is in a predicament where they are in a “neutral stance of disengagement which can be used to great effect in some circumstances”.54 These factors all relate to the mind-set of the individual as that determines how you would move forward when faced with this situation.

It has also been argued that the mind-set of the individual may be down to their family structures.55 The inability of the parents to communicate, bond or provide a safe environment and upbringing could lead to the child rebelling against their elders and joining extremist groups.56 This needs to be addressed to ensure individuals have the right mentality so they are not vulnerable and do not need to look elsewhere to have a sense of belonging or purpose within society.

Being persuasive is about ensuring people are informed of all the options available when dealing with a difficult situation, while being assertive is knowing how to build a rapport with people in terms of your body language, words, voice tone and expression in order to open their mind to a different perspective to the issue in question. Bridging is about having good listening skills and being able to question what is said in order to find alternative solutions to resolve an issue. Attracting people is about how you connect with people who share the same values and goals, and being able to move away from the situation and think about the effects of an issue for the long term and what stance you want to take in order to achieve a positive outcome.57

Organisations may also use social media platforms to spread their propaganda and radicalise and recruit people.58 Manstroup argues that social media “provides connectivity, virtual participation and an echo-chamber for likeminded extremist views” and gives extremists groups a platform that “reaches otherwise unreachable individuals which accelerates the process of radicalisation and increases opportunities for self-radicalisation”.59 Law enforcement agencies need to have a stronger grasp of how different platforms can be used to promote radicalisation, and they should try and ensure that young children as well as adults are aware of the programmes that are available to help them deal with the peer pressure to join organisations practise violent radicalisation.

2.3 Preventing violent extremism at the community level: A European Analysis

The role of European communities

The EU’s Counter-Terrorism Strategy has four pillars – Prevent, Protect, Pursue, Respond – carefully designed to fight terrorism globally and make Europe safer, while respecting human rights.60 The ‘Prevent’ pillar focuses on non-coercive measures that seek to prevent or mitigate VE.61 The remaining three pillars focus on coercive measures. This prevention strategy also recognises the four crime prevention approaches proposed by the UN.62 One of the approaches identifies the significant role of the ‘community’ in preventing radicalisation and violent extremism.63
The role of the community in crime prevention is to change local conditions that might be affecting criminal behaviour, victimisation and a sense of insecurity among vulnerable individuals or groups. Community crime prevention emphasises community mobilisation, using the notion of ‘community’ in the sense of either a social group or a living environment, and includes the aim of improving the quality of life of residents. There are four intervention levels: the individual, the relational environment, the community environment, and the social environment. More broadly, community environmental measures focus on strengthening the community’s ability to identify individuals vulnerable to radicalisation, and to mobilise resources to intervene should these individuals become radicalised. This may involve PVE initiatives designed to strengthen the community’s trust in institutional authorities or to create safe spaces for youth in trouble. Usually, these initiatives endeavour to foster community resilience, social cohesion and integration of their members.

Local communities also play an important role in helping to govern, as well as to implement, PVE initiatives. Firstly, communities are better placed to identify the main local drivers of violent extremism, such as poverty, income disparity, lack of education, ideology, failure of national policies etc. Secondly, local perceptions that resonate with the target audience and cultural sensitivities are critical in shaping locally acceptable programmes to counter VE. Local practitioners will often be better placed to identify key target audiences and provide current information about the evolving nature of VE. Accordingly, PVE programmes need to gain support and input from local communities where they are being implemented. Here civil society and community actors – such as local elders, local religious figures, those with political power, etc – play a critical role in the development of holistic, relevant and responsive PVE strategies that have resonance and sustainability with vulnerable groups.

Community in the European context

The concept of community and its relevance to counter-terrorism has been the subject of many policy discussions in Europe. For example, the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) argues that “a community is made up of individuals, groups and institutions based in the same area and/or having shared interests.” However, this interpretation does not capture the entire meaning of community within international law. Nevertheless, EU Member States have developed a variety of PVE initiatives involving a wide range of stakeholders within the local community.

There are two major approaches, namely ‘Community-targeted approach’ or ‘Community-driven approach’. In the latter case, PVE initiatives are pursued through locally driven, co-operative initiatives, tailored to local contexts, to increase effectiveness. The EU has acknowledged the significance of community-driven PVE initiatives by expanding its approach beyond ‘hard-power’ initiatives and law enforcement interventions and has recognised the need for multi-stakeholder collaboration in the form of community-driven initiatives.

The need for a comprehensive, integrated approach towards PVE has been recognised in the revised EU Strategy for Combating Radicalisation and Recruitment to Terrorism. The revised strategy encourages collaboration between governments, communities, civil society, NGOs and the private sector. It specifically calls for efforts from multi-stakeholders at local levels to support vulnerable individuals or groups in building community cohesion and community resilience. This is also highlighted in the Communication from the EC of June 2016. Furthermore, the OSCE has similarly reinforced the importance of involving communities in efforts to PVE. It has also highlighted the need to increase locally tailored and locally driven initiatives that draw on partnerships among a wide range of actors, beyond traditional security practitioners, in their efforts to PVE. Similarly, the Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN) policy recommendations define radicalisation as a local issue that requires local solutions and active communities. Most importantly, RAN asserts that this ‘local issue’ can be contained within those communities.
Examples of community-driven approaches in Europe

A preventative approach to VE requires an analysis of the root causes of ‘home-grown’ radicalisation. In recent years, there has been a wide range of locally-based or community-driven prevention initiatives aimed at changing local conditions that might be affecting criminal behaviour, victimisation and a sense of insecurity. The following is an overview of preventive measures and projects at both national and local levels in selected countries. The focus is on existing successful projects in cooperation with the local communities and civil society.

United Kingdom – case studies

The five terror attacks in London and Manchester during 2017 were a dramatic escalation of the threat from all forms of extremism in the UK. This demanded a new strategy to tackle the causes and the threats of radicalisation, both in local communities and online. The result was Counter-terrorism strategy (CONTEST) 2018: a comprehensive risk reduction framework, comprising four ‘P’ work strands, acknowledges that PVE through local interventions minimises the risk of radicalisation through early intervention and seeks to build strong community resilience of local communities to terrorism. Within its four-track approach, the programme of preventative activity now known as PREVENT is also favoured by the EU and individual member states.

Indeed, much of PREVENT’s PVE effort focuses on tracking: drivers of the threat – including ideology and radicalisation; enablers of the threat – including permissive environments and access to exploitable technology; and the counter-terrorism capabilities and actions of other countries; to determine future possible scenarios. The PREVENT strategy is particularly concerned with the risk of ‘home grown’ terrorism and views the building of partnerships and alliances with British Muslims as a key element within this framework. One objective is ‘a community-led programme to tackle violent extremism’, and this calls for a multi-strand approach that combines government sponsorship and funding with NGO and other agency activities.

The UK has a number of projects to prevent radicalisation and people being attracted to violent extremism:

CHANNEL – England and Wales

Channel is a voluntary, confidential programme which safeguards people identified as vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. It is a multi-agency process, involving partners from the local authority, the police, education, health providers and others. Under this programme, a referral can come from anyone who is concerned about a person they know who may be at risk of radicalisation, whether it is a family member, friend, school leader, or colleague. The type of support available is wide-ranging, and can include help with education or career advice, dealing with mental or emotional health issues, drug or alcohol abuse, and theological or ideological mentoring from a Channel intervention provider—a specialist mentor. One advantage of the programme is that it is not expensive as the cost is spread over existing departmental structures and there are clear criteria for judging the effectiveness of specific actions.

Channel addresses all forms of terrorism, including Islamist and far-right. However, many Muslim communities have alleged that this programme is, in effect, ideological intervention with young Muslims being reported for activities considered normal for other communities. This reporting bias reflects an inability to recognise the ‘symptoms’ of radicalisation.

SOLAS FOUNDATION – Scotland

The Solas Foundation tries to promote authentic Islamic education. Established in 2009 by two Muslim academics, the goal was to disseminate an informed and coherent image of Islam, present traditional
Islamic teachings on controversial issues and dispel any confusion created by radicalisation. The foundation developed various projects. For example, its iSyllabus is an educational and study programme for students with courses based on Islamic scriptural sources that describe the foundations of the religion and their relevance in a contemporary Western setting. One objective of these teachings is to equip students to identify radical interpretations of Islam and to use traditional sources to refute them. Ultimately, it aims to make Scotland and Britain safer by providing quality learning and education within the Muslim community and beyond.

**ARCHER – England & Wales and Scotland**

Archer is more of a management exercise within the Police and partners (includes local communities/ NGOs) designed to ‘demystify the CONTEST strategy. It brings together key strategic partners to help them improve their understanding and communication in the wake of a spontaneous counter terrorism arrest. It uses a backdrop of a number of issues such as hate crime, key national events and national demonstrations. Archer explores the wide ranging and long-term detrimental impact that counter terrorism operations can have on communities if not managed effectively. It places a great deal of emphasis on media messages and social media in the run up to high profile events.

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<td><strong>The Slotervaart Action Plan</strong></td>
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Following the murder of Dutch filmmaker Theo Van Gogh in 2004, the Dutch counter radicalisation strategy was designed primarily to eradicate Islamic radicals. It was also applicable to right wing and fascistic groups. The Dutch government linked the process of radicalisation and what they referred to as social polarisation. It also viewed radicalisation mainly as a youth phenomenon that occurs when isolated young people at local level are searching for an identity and their place in society, The Dutch Polarisation and Radicalisation Action Plan of 2007–2011 is thus viewed primarily as the responsibility of local governmental authorities. This plan has a three-track approach. The first track involves ‘prevention, signalling, and intervention’. These elements are implemented by youth workers, the police, truancy officials, and other municipal or local government security policy.

The first practical steps in developing community-approach programmes aimed at making at-risk individuals feel a part of the society materialised in Amsterdam. There are a number of focused projects in the country. Work with young people was the focus of interventions in the borough of Slotervaart. The Slotervaart Action Plan is mainly focused on counter-radicalisation. The project managed to bring together a wide range of community players and the community has been receptive to its methods. The Action plan consists of seven substantial measures: (1) Create awareness among young Muslims and their social environment of the risks of the radicalisation process. (2) Facilitate the development of competencies that can help to increase the resilience of young people and parents. (3) Support parents in the role as teachers. (4) Support mosques and imams in their work to deal with radicalised young people and counter radicalisation. (5) Ensure that systems designed to discover radicalisation are functioning effectively (Municipal Radicalisation Information Management System), (6) Facilitate cooperation between schools and youth centres. (7) Promote interaction between community groups and religious groups.

The Action plan calls for action by various parties, including parents, schools, mosques, immigrant support organisations, and civil society organisations, in the fight against radicalisation. The aim is to improve social cohesion and mutual trust among Slotervaart residents. The Slotervaart Action Plan is seen as a model of best practices in prevention of violent extremism.
Denmark – case studies

The Aarhus Model

Over the years, due to a sharp increase in home-grown radicalisation, EU member states came down hard on citizens engaged in terrorist activities at home and, increasingly, abroad. France shut down mosques it suspected of harbouring radicals. The U.K. declared citizens who had gone to help ISIS enemies of the state. Several other countries threatened to take away passports — a move formerly reserved for convicted traitors. Denmark, however, adopted the Aarhus Model’s programme of early prevention and exit that rests on the principle of inclusion. This model of community engagement does not use force to stop people from travelling to and from Syria but instead tackles the roots of radicalisation. In the words of the Mayor of Aarhus, Jacob Bundsgaard:

“Taking our starting point in the Danish democratic traditions about openness and dialogue, we wish to create a safe and good city for all by working long-term and intensively with crime prevention, while at the same time clamping down on offences and tendencies towards harassment, racism and discrimination. We wish to offer these people a chance of rehabilitation and return to an ordinary Danish everyday life characterised by security for themselves and the people who surround them”.

The Aarhus Model has three main characteristics: (1) close and flexible cooperation among several institutions and authorities working with exposed and vulnerable young people, (2) inclusion, and (3) scientific foundation i.e., it is based on the discipline of Life Psychology. Life Psychology provides the theoretical grounding for the model, underpinning the idea of empowering individuals with fundamental human life skills, with particular reference to inclusion and legal participation in democratic processes and citizenship. It also conforms with Denmark’s 2009 Action Plan to Prevent Extremist Views and Radicalisation Among Young People which defines extremism as “totalitarian and anti-democratic ideologies, intolerance to the views of others, hostile imagery and a division into ‘them’ and ‘us’.” This is made clear in one of the official quotes: “The goal ... is to help youths and adults move away from the radical environments, which may involve crime and violence or helping to radicalise others so that they are channelled onto a different life trajectory.”

Violent extremism in Denmark is largely viewed as primarily a failure of social integration. The Aarhus initiatives are not about ideology, right-wing/left-wing politics, or Islam as such, and certainly not about stigmatising groups of citizens. The main initiatives of the project are: (1) InfoHouse, which covers the handling of information, inquiry and investigation, (2) Mentoring; which includes debriefing, consultations with psychologists, medical care etc., (3) Workshops; to introduce young pupils and students to the threats of terrorism and violent radicalisation (4) Parents Network; individual guidance and advice to relatives of radicalised child and (5) Dialogues; to reach the general public. Interestingly, the programme has been called the ‘hug a terrorist’ model by the media.

Danish SSP system

The Danish SSP system is probably one of the oldest community collaborative systems used to identify risk factors and the reasons for at-risk behaviour, delinquency and crimes committed by youth. It is a collaboration between Schools, Social Services and Police (hence SSP), backed by legislation. The aim is crime prevention at the local level by sharing information about vulnerable youth at risk of committing crimes and/or in danger of being radicalised. The SSP system plays an important role in crime prevention among youth and demonstrates how local inter-agency collaboration can work. This cross-function cooperation helps to find valid solutions for the individual youngsters, groups of young people, the families, and the local area and so on. The SSP system has played a pivotal role as partner in special projects and other initiatives by the government to deal with radicalisation and extremism.
Belgium case study

The Vilvoorde approach

The Vilvoorde approach involves building a local network comprising groups of similar stakeholders in the municipality of Vilvoorde in Belgium. This local multi-agency network then deals with individual cases of radicalisation. The aim is to build trust among local authorities, local community organisations/NGOs and the general public by following a set of guiding principles, one of them is: ‘Giving respect, demanding respect’. The essence of this proactive approach is to offer support and warmth to vulnerable individuals, mainly frustrated young people who are susceptible to radicalisation. The network works with the key actors in the community to strengthen and restore social relations. In raising the awareness of the various local actors, this model helps to locate the drivers of VE among the youth affected by indoctrination and increasing isolation.

Another guiding policy is that of ‘prevention where possible, repression where necessary’. This programme has managed to stop the exodus to Syria and has succeeded in de-radicalising young people. It has become a source of inspiration for other authorities in Europe. Limited financial support for the effort comes from the federal government as well as Vilvoorde.

2.4 Violent Extremism & Gender in Europe

Introduction

The field of national and international security has traditionally been gender-blind. Conceived as the purview of men, women have been largely excluded from decision-making processes, and insufficient attention has been given to understanding the gendered nature of violence and extremism. VE is, however, a highly gendered phenomenon. The Global Countering Terrorism Forum (GCTE) manual for ‘Good Practices on Women and Countering VE’ recalls that:

“Women are subjected to a range of gendered experiences based on assumptions about masculine and feminine roles as they relate to economic, political, social and cultural realities. Gender-related assumptions shape available opportunities, rights, recruitment, and roles within organisations for both women and men.”

Understanding the complex gender dynamics sustaining VE, and including women in decision making processes and efforts to prevent it, is critical to contemporary security issues and to the preservation of women’s and human rights.

In Europe, advocacy for the advancement of a gender-sensitive perspective on violence has gained considerable space in the literature and regulations concerned with violent extremism and the prevention of it over the past decade. The introduction of a gender perspective to EU security-related policies has its roots in the introduction of the UN Women, Peace and Conflict (WPS) agenda. The WPS agenda, introduced by the landmark UNSCR 1325 resolution, recognised that the exclusion of women and girls from peace-making violates their rights, and that the inclusion of a gender perspective in decision-making processes at all levels can support the promotion of sustainable peace. According to the OSCE 2013 report on women and terrorist radicalisation, this landmark resolution set the tone for the subsequent debate on gender and security, greatly providing the impulse and inspiration for the gender-oriented nature of many CVE and countering terrorism (CT) debates, guidelines and regulations within the European context.

Current debates in Europe are mostly conducted under three headings: women’s role in preventing VE, women’s role in promoting VE, and the impact of VE and of CVE measures on women’s rights.
Women’s role in preventing violent extremism in Europe

Several EU security guidelines and regulations, and some national security agendas, now recognise women have an important role to play in security issues, particularly in preventing radicalisation that may lead to violence. Many of these guidelines recommend that measures should be taken to encourage empowerment of women and girls to become more vocal within their communities. Some national states, such as the UK, have taken the lead in introducing specific guidelines to encourage women’s involvement in preventing VE to their national security policy.

From a policy perspective, two questions are key to understanding women’s role in CVE: in what capacity(ies) can women effectively contribute to preventing VE; and what policies can be designed to promote or enhance their contribution?

When the notion that female empowerment adds value to CVE efforts is invoked, it normally rests on two assumptions. Firstly, it is often said that women, as mothers, are strategically positioned at the centre of their communities and families, thus playing a vital role in the formation, transmission and reproduction of social values. As central pillars of family units, they are also strategically situated to detect the early signs of radicalisation. Resonating with this view that women have an important role to play because they are at the centre of their family units, a recent Radicalization Awareness Network (RAN) study on the role of gender in VE opens with the following remark:

“Women can be unique agents of change within society, exercising considerable power over radicalised individuals in their roles as mothers and as wives”.

A second argument often used to support the value of engaging women in preventive efforts is that VE is a highly gendered phenomenon that tends to thrive on, and to perpetuate, conservative views of gender roles. Empowering women to build counter narratives to traditional gender roles and power dynamics that characterise adherence to VE is seen as essential to the promotion of women’s rights to equality, and as a means to effectively address some of the root causes of VE.

Although these two views are not necessarily seen as mutually exclusive, it has been pointed out that efforts to engage women that concentrate solely on their role in the private sphere, as mothers, can perpetuate gender power imbalances and reduce women’s contribution to CVE and to society. As De Leed et al. explain:

“Gender misconceptions and gender stereotypes often affect the space within which women contribute to these initiatives. Frequently, women are included in these programmes as mothers, sisters and wives, as they are considered ideally positioned to spot early warning signs of radicalisation. While this can be a valuable element of P/CVE programmes, it reinforces gender stereotypes and overlooks women’s capacity to contribute in many other areas.”

OSCE (Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe) and GCTF (Global Counter Terrorism Forum) recommend that women’s role should not be confined to the private sphere and that policies should be designed to build capacity for women’s participation in all spheres that relate to security issues, including taking on roles as policymakers, policy shapers, community leaders, educators and activists. On the other hand, there also exists a recognition that, although CVE can and should be designed to empower women and to address gender inequalities, sensitivity to cultural context and to the social barriers faced by women should be considered, particularly in the context of EU interventions abroad. The ‘Operational Guidelines on the preparation and implementation of EU financed actions specific to countering terrorism and violent extremism in third countries’ states that:

“At the same time, the cultural and social restraints that limit women’s participation in the social sphere and the potential opposition to the engagement of women in P/CVE programming need to be appreciated.”
When considering what policies can effectively promote the role of women, a problem faced by European policymakers trying to design and implement such policies to empower women with the specific goal of preventing VE is that there is a general lack of understanding of what may work best in each context. It has been pointed out by critics that even though the rhetoric of women’s empowerment to act as key players in CVE has become more prominent in European institutional agreements and national security agendas, there exists surprisingly little evidence-based knowledge about the effectiveness of these policies in directly addressing VE, and little consideration about the possible side-effects of these policies, posing the risk that they may be implemented based on ideological assumptions, having deleterious impacts on particular targeted groups.112

In view of that, recent EU guidelines emphasise the need to strengthen knowledge of the effectiveness of policies by undertaking evaluation work previous to, and concomitant with, the introduction of policies, and to build and support platforms for knowledge exchange.113 Advances have also been made recently in digital networks for dissemination of knowledge about European and global initiatives designed to foster women’s participation in VE. An example of this is the digital platform AWARE: Alliance for Women Against Radicalisation and Extremism.114

The UK was one of the first countries, and in fact one of the few countries in Europe, to specifically design policies to integrate women into the national security agenda to counter terrorism.115 The UK’s counter-terrorist policy CONTEST, first introduced in 2003 and last revised in 2018, comprises four strands: Prevent, Pursue, Protect and Prepare.116 Based on a ‘whole society approach’ to preventing VE, in 2008 the government issued a guidance identifying women as key constituencies to reach out to for security efforts: “Women can be a particularly effective voice as they are at the heart not only of their communities but also of their families”.117 Under Prevent, it encouraged local authorities to fund and support a series of new or ongoing community engagement projects targeting women, particularly from Muslim backgrounds.

Funded projects have a variety of purposes, but mostly focus on addressing issues relating to the role of women in preventing violence by providing skills building lessons to detect early signs of VE; leadership and confidence building for engagement in civic debates and professional skills building. Examples of these are: the Muslim Women’s Community Leadership Training Project delivered by Sizanani Africa, which focuses on building assertiveness and confidence and in providing coaching on how to identify and address signs of violent extremism; the Hounslow Leadership Training to empower Muslim women with the skills and confidence to tackle extremist ideologies by promoting shared values, citizenship and challenging the misconceptions around the position of women in Islam, and the Muslimah-Make a Difference project, which involves discussions on Muslim women’s contribution to communities and wider society, awareness of women’s role in preventing VE and detecting early signs of it, and the provision of guidance on how they can take up key roles in society, such as school governors, councillors, and journalists.118

Even if a few of these initiatives may have had positive impacts on women,119 from 2011 Prevent no longer had any explicit focus on women, as noted by Huckerby.120 An oversight of Prevent commissioned by the Government121 concluded that the downsides of overseeing and funding these projects under national security policy—rather than simply treating them as community development projects—outweighed the benefits. It thus recommended that a clearer line should be drawn between security policy and community engagement policies.

This move also responds to criticism levelled at Prevent’s approach to community and women’s engagement. Criticised on several grounds, Prevent’s former community engagement policies were seen by several critics122 as a top-down surveillance-based engagement which led to greater mistrust in the government and increased isolation of minority groups.

Perhaps the strongest criticism was about the excessive focus on the Muslim community, with all guidelines for women’s empowerment projects designed to target Muslim women. As a result, this policy orientation often exacerbated feelings of cultural exclusion and isolation amongst Muslim
communities. The 2009 Muslim Women Network submission for Inquiry into the Preventing VE Project lists a series of concerns about the impact of Prevent, including the stigmatisation of Muslim groups, the neglect of other forms of extremism, such as far-right extremism and the instrumentalisation of women’s role by the State as useful spies.123

The impact that such policies may have on women’s rights and on human rights, as well as a discussion of alternative avenues for including women in CVE practices which are compliant with human rights, will be discussed in more depth in the last section.

Women’s role in promoting & participating in violent extremism in Europe

According to the 2016 European Parliament briefing ‘Radicalisation and counter-radicalisation: A gender perspective’, the role of women in promoting VE has received less attention than the role of women in prevention.124 Thus, women’s involvement in VE remains under-estimated and poorly understood. This is often attributed to the persistence of gender stereotypes that position men as naturally more prone to violence and radicalisation than women.125 In 2013, OSCE recommended that more awareness be raised about women’s role in promoting VE, and that gender stereotypes built around the notions of women as naturally maternal and non-violent are dispelled.126

In Europe, there is a growing concern that women’s involvement with VE is on the rise. According to national official statistics mentioned in a recent study on women’s involvement with the Jihad, several European countries, such as Germany, the UK, Belgium and the Netherlands, saw a sharp rise in women leaving these countries to become foreign fighters, particularly after the proclamation of the Caliphate in 2014.127 A recent study conducted by the International Centre for Counter-Terrorism (ICCT), indicates that at least 17% of foreign fighters are female.128

It has been estimated that in some cases women account for up to 40% of the fighting force of some terrorist groups.129 It has also been noted that, while the involvement of women in ethnic and politically motivated violence had historically been proportionally higher than in religiously motivated VE, the latter has seen a sharp rise in recent years, attracting much more media and public attention.130

In Europe, as a result of growing concerns with the radicalisation of European citizens into religious extremism, the most recent debates on the involvement of women with VE tends to concentrate on religiously motivated VE. They mostly address the pathways to radicalisation, that is, the push and pull factors for women joining VE, and the roles of women in supporting VE, and the strategies used by VE groups to recruit women.

According to a RAN report on the role of gender in VE,131 the radicalisation process for both men and women is a complex, multi-layered phenomenon involving several contextual and individual push and pull factors. Additionally, the ICCT study on foreign fighters’ phenomenon in the EU based on analysis of member states data indicates that there is no standard profile of female Jihadists. They are women from a variety of ethnic, socio-economic and cultural backgrounds.132

It has also been argued that despite the impossibility of defining profiles for radicalised individuals or simple pathways to radicalisation, some gender patterns of push and pull factors can be identified,133 as men and women may be susceptible to different drivers and given that many VE groups use different recruitment strategies for men and women.134 The OSCE report suggests gender inequalities, violence against women, and lack of education and economic opportunities may act as gender drivers.135 Understanding these patterns is thus important for tailored preventive measures to be designed.

In view of that, the most recent version of the “Revised EU strategy for combating radicalisation and recruitment to terrorism” now recommends that gender be considered a factor in radicalisation that leads to violence.136
A growing number of studies also shed light on the multiple roles that women play in supporting VE. In the case of Jihad VE, women can: play the domestic role of raising children according to Jihadist ideology; act as recruiters, propagandists and fundraisers; serve as a propaganda asset, where women’s participation is used to shame men into Jihad. Finally, women can also have operational roles, by taking part in violent acts themselves.

Women can also be used as a cover or façade to disguise the violent nature of some groups, to open bank accounts in their names and to carry supplies. These strategies feed on the accepted gender stereotypes, which renders women less visible than men. Some of these roles, particularly that of acting as recruiters, fundraisers and propagandists, are said to have been greatly facilitated by more recent access to the Internet. Recent CVE efforts in Europe now include a strong focus on combating online radicalisation.

There is also a focus on understanding the recruitment strategies employed by VE from a gender perspective. This has been partially attributed to VE groups increasingly using sophisticated recruitment strategies to target new groups such as women and young people.

These groups are said to make extensive use of gender roles in their recruitment strategies, such as emphasising the domestic role of women, which is presented with glorified and rosy overtones. Additionally, many of these groups have been shown to capitalise on grievances resulting from the dominance or enforcement (perceived or otherwise) of Western gender norms and values over traditional understandings.

However, it has also been pointed out that although some women are indeed groomed into Jihad, pathways to radicalisation involve a complex combination of factors, requiring a multi-layered approach, and a consideration of their agency.

The impact of violent extremism & its countermeasures on women’s rights

The UNSCR 2242 (2015) Resolution noted that current violent extremism is posing a serious threat to advances in women’s rights made over the last decades. These threats include strategic attacks on women’s rights and freedoms, including restrictions on freedom of movement, access to education and employment, participation in public life and freedom of expression. The situation is particular acute in places where VE groups have made territorial advances.

In view of this association of VE with the violation of women’s rights, the UNSCR 2242 (2015) resolution called for States to make a stronger effort to integrate their agendas on women, peace and security, counter-terrorism and countering violent extremism. The 2016 UN Plan of Action to prevent violent extremism puts gender equality and women’s empowerment at the heart of CVE strategies, as one of its seven priority areas. The promotion and protection of women’s rights and the prevention of VE can go hand-in-hand by means of implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, which include achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls as a priority goal. The document states: “It is also no coincidence that societies for which gender equality indicators are higher are less vulnerable to violent extremism.”

Within the EU, the notion that member states should take more direct action to prevent VE at home and abroad, and that CVE agendas must include measures to prevent direct and indirect impact of violent extremism on women and girls, is now expressed in several EU guidelines and regulations. Member states are, however, responsible for their national security agendas. Therefore, there are significant country disparities in introducing gender-sensitive and rights-based approaches to VE.

However, as noted by the Special Rapporteur on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms while Countering Terrorism, any initiatives to counter violent extremism have the potential to infringe on basic human rights and freedoms, thus it is of critical importance that States evaluate and monitor these practices to guarantee their compliance with human rights.
The experience with the implementation of CVE measures to protect and promote women’s rights in Europe and abroad has shown that such measures can have a negative impact on women’s safety and rights and on human rights in general. Some of these are listed below:

1. **CVE measures may lead to the instrumentalisation of women’s role.** Where the promotion of women’s rights becomes priority only in so far as it serves CVE efforts. Some state-led measures to strengthen the relationship between women, communities and government, such as some initiatives funded by the UK under Prevent, were criticised as top-down surveillance-based initiatives that can encourage the perception that women’s engagement is CVE is promoted for security concerns, such as gathering intelligence. The concern that this approach may lead to side-lining of women’s and human rights as state security takes priority over the protection of those rights has been highlighted by several experts, institutional representatives and human rights activists.

2. **CVE strategies may lead to the stigmatisation of certain groups.** CVE policies implemented in Europe have often targeted particular groups which are perceived as being at higher risk of radicalisation or more affected by it. Muslim communities in particular have been the most affected by CVE policies, with less attention given to far-right extremism, for instance. In some cases, like in the UK, this has exacerbated feelings of cultural and social marginality. EU recommendations are often made that VE and CVE agendas avoid associating VE with religion, ethnicity, race or national identity.

3. **CVE policies may lead to backlashes & grievances that can be exploited by extremist groups.** When cultural differences are not considered in the formulation of strategies to promote women’s rights and empowerment, CVE strategies may risk being ineffective and provide a fertile ground for VE groups to exploit. As mentioned in the previous section, some VE groups have been shown to exploit grievances resulting from the dominance of Western values. Within the European context, a huge challenge has been the design of policies and initiatives that promote women’s empowerment and rights, whilst maintaining sensitivity to cultural differences regarding gender roles, and a commitment to promoting gender equality within an overarching European framework of shared values, perspectives on gender roles and women’s rights.

4. **Interventions designed to empower women can make them more vulnerable & more visible targets for VE groups,** as their involvement with CVE efforts, particularly in areas of conflict, can be seen as a threat to their ideologies.

European rights-based case studies for women’s’ empowerment

In Europe, initiatives that proved more successful in advancing rights-based strategies for women’s empowerment with positive impact on CVE efforts and on the protection of women against gender-based violence often came from civil society initiatives, promoted largely by NGOs or by various institutions supporting community-led initiatives.

Some examples of successful projects to empower women—in various capacities—to have a real stake in preventing violence, to embrace and actively protect their rights and to promote appreciation and respect for women’s contribution to society are:

- **‘The Mothers School’,** a Women Without Borders project based in Austria, which offers international and local family-oriented CVE strategies that focus on supporting mothers and families to spot signs of radicalisation. This innovative project offers tailored community-based mothers’ workshops, where women cover diverse themes from psycho-social development, confidence-building, family communication and applied parenting skills designed to teach mothers how to support their children in becoming more resilient to the fears and frustrations that may lead to radicalisation, and to become ambassadors for de-radicalisation within their communities.
• ‘The Mothers for Life’, is a unique global network run by the German Institute on Radicalisation and De-radicalisation Studies for mothers who have experienced radicalisation in their families. It aims to bring these mothers together and to provide a safe space where they can discuss, share their experiences and heal their wounds. The project also aims to create counter-narratives to VE from the perspective of women who have experienced it first-hand.\textsuperscript{157}

• The Gender and Justice Project, a Comic Relief-funded initiative run by the IARS International Institute, which offers support to refugees and asylum-seeking women with the aim to empower them to actively fight for their rights and influence policy change. Refugee and asylum-seeking women experience multiple disadvantages, being more likely to experience gender-based violence, and less likely to understand their rights as victims of abuse and to have access to justice. This innovative user-led project offers legal training and mentoring which aim to empower refugee and asylum-seeking women to understand their rights, embrace them and lobby for the establishment in the UK of safeguards for the protection and support of victims who do not have legal resident status.\textsuperscript{158}

• The Muslim Women Network (MWNUK), a UK-based national Muslim women's organisation that works to improve social justice and equality for Muslim women and girls through community engagement workshops, advocacy and individual support. MWN projects are grounded on a perspective of Islamic feminism that challenges interpretations of the Quran that discriminate against women and girls.

These grassroots initiatives cater for a variety of context-specific issues, incorporating multiple goals and flexible approaches. These may have several advantages over top-down state-led initiatives, including a better capacity to gain trust and to foster truly participatory, multivocal, multicultural and inclusive initiatives that allow for co-building of knowledge. Additionally, grassroots civil society-led movements tend to have a stronger focus on promoting women's rights and empowerment in its own right, instead of treating it as a matter of national security strategy. They also often reach out to hard-to-reach individuals for whom the State sometimes offers no, or little, protective legal support.

In conclusion, as the debate over the integration of gender considerations into CVE and CT policies continues, it is important that governments and institutions frame their policies under an overarching framework based on respect for and, foremost, commitment to the preservation of human and women’s rights. As the GCTF puts it:

"Practical integration of women and girls into all aspects of CVE programming can only occur in the context of broader guarantees of the human rights of women and girls in particular; these include addressing the causes of gender inequality such as the subordination of women and discrimination on the basis of sex, gender, age, and other factors. The promotion and protection of women’s rights and gender equality needs to underlie CVE programmes and strategies."\textsuperscript{159}

2.5 Youth, Education & Prevention of Violent Extremism in Europe

Introduction

In Europe, the latest terrorist attacks created a narrative that is presented within “.two frames: ‘Youth as Problems’ or ‘Youth as the Future of the Nation’, both of which are instruments for political control rather than reflections of the life experiences and interests of youth themselves.”\textsuperscript{160} Young people are seen as being the most at risk to violent radicalisation but, as the UN has pointed out, this approach increases the risk of losing a generation of youth to despair and disengagement.\textsuperscript{161}

Governments and EU institutions are realising that allocating funds to reinforce security measures is insufficient and that violent extremism must be considered within a holistic prevention framework.\textsuperscript{162} Preventative strategies are effective responses to push factors, also known as an ‘upstream’
However, preventing radicalisation is a challenge, and doing it at an early stage is even more so because of issues such as detecting who is at risk of violent radicalisation, being able to get into contact with them and give them and their families the right support.

The position of the EC

In Europe, poverty and social exclusion have increased during the economic crisis and young people were impacted the most by this. The EU Youth Strategy acknowledges the links between young peoples’ financial hardship and the risks of being radicalised for violence. The strategy has two main objectives: to provide more and equal opportunities for young people in education and the job market, and to encourage young people to actively participate in society. The strategy is to ensure that young people can transit from education to employment. Here, the Erasmus+ programme must be highlighted since it “supports projects designed for youth organisations or groups of young people, with a focus on non-formal learning”, such as youth exchanges or volunteering, and it also engages people in a structure dialogue with policy makers. All these actions have a role in preventing youth radicalisation since they promote social inclusion and promote education as well as involve young people in the decisions that affect them directly.

The new EU Youth Strategy (2019-2027) proposes some important features such as: (1) a clearer link between EU youth policy implementation and related activities in Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps; (2) a tracking of EU spending for youth in main funding programmes, and also (3) an agenda for youth work to further improve its quality and to allow other sectors to capitalise on the potential of non-formal learning. The Commission proposes a new framework for cooperation on youth so young people and EU can get closer and address the issues that concern them the most, focusing on three areas of action: engage, connect and empower. While this strategy is forging a stronger link between the EU and young people through inclusive ways of dialogue, bringing effective results through focused priorities and actions, and providing a more effective structure to capture and transmit young people’s ideas, it will also help EU by taking huge steps in the prevention of young people’s violent extremism and radicalisation.

In their 2015 Paris Declaration, the EC committed to strengthening their actions to promote social inclusion and to ensure that children and young people acquire social, civic and intercultural competences and enhance their critical thinking. All these commitments have huge potential to deal with the radicalisation of young people since they can be used to manage young people who may be at risk. For instance, if young people have the tools to develop their critical thinking, when they are face-to-face with extremist messages on the Internet they will be better able to shape their own counter-narrative and to see/understand what’s behind the messages.

In addition, RAN connects frontline practitioners from around Europe who work with people that have already been radicalised or who are vulnerable to radicalisation. RAN has also a platform for young people (18-25) where they can exchange ideas and experiences, as well as give valuable input to the RAN Working Group and address recommendations to policy makers.

By having youth engage directly with the democratic decision process, the young people have the possibility to influence what matters most to them and to feel more included in society. There are many such programmes. One is YouthMetre, a ‘Forward Looking’ youth project funded by the EC and based in Belgium. This initiative targets young people (aged 18-30) living in the EU. The aim is to “identity, test, develop and assess an innovative approach” which connects young people to EU policy. The project seeks to provide information and empower young people living in the EU with the tools that will allow them to interact with policy actors and to help bring about changes in public policy.

An Erasmus+ Project that seeks to prevent violent and political radicalisation by promoting participatory learning approaches, intercultural understanding and active citizenship in and outside schools is the European Learning Environment Formats for Citizenship and Democracy. Three formats are being implemented in Germany, Denmark, Hungary, Poland and Spain: (1) Street Education: reaches out to
young people from disadvantaged areas and backgrounds and invites them into political dialogue; (2) Democracy Coaches: teachers and pupils work together to develop a module for participatory learning approaches and; (3) Innovative, experimental and multi-media supported learning activities which will be organised by young people.

The EU Work Plan for Youth 2016-2018 outlines the priorities of youth policy at the European level. The aim is to increase social inclusion of all young people, especially those who are at risk of marginalisation (young people who are ‘Not in Education, Employment or Training’ – NEET) and those who are migrants (immigrants and young refugees). Another resource that can be used to understand and prevent violent radicalisation is the Seventh Framework Programme (FP7), now Horizon 2020.

Horizon 2020 is the financial instrument implementing Innovation Union, a Europe 2020 flagship initiative aimed at securing Europe’s global competitiveness. Since Europe’s leaders and the Members of the European Parliament agreed “that research is an investment in our future”, many projects and programmes in the field of youth and radicalisation have been funded by Horizon.

One example is the Dialogue about Radicalisation and Equality project (DARE), that includes 13 countries. It aims to investigate young people’s encounters with messages and agents of radicalisation, how they receive and respond to such calls, and how they make choices about the paths they take. It looks at young people “neither as victims nor perpetrators of radicalisation, but as engaged, reflexive, often passionate social actors who seek information they can trust, as they navigate a world in which calls to radicalisation are numerous”. SAFIRE (Scientific Approach to Finding Indicators of & Responses to Radicalisation) is another example involving groups and individuals on the extreme and violent radicalisation spectrum. This project notes that “in order to understand them and their motives, we also need to step back and understand what happened before they turned to a more violent version of their philosophy”.

Education as soft power

Many European governments as well as the EC see education as the soft power that can play a key role in the prevention of violent extremism and radicalisation. Education plays an essential role in the promotion of the core values of the CoE and it has been a defence against the rise of violence, racism, extremism, and more. This growing awareness is reflected in the adoption of the CoE Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education by the 47 members states in the framework of Recommendation CM/Rec(2010)7.

In other words, young people need relevant learning opportunities to develop skills and attitudes that can strengthen their resilience against extremist groups propaganda. In the context of violent extremism, resilience has been defined as the capability of people, groups and communities to reject proponents of violent extremism when these manifest themselves. Resilience can help young people to build positive actions, rather than resort to violent behaviour. In other words, building young people’s resilience is a good start to prevent violent extremism because it gives young people the ability to utilise the opportunities that exist and also to create new ones. They are thus less likely to conclude that violence is an option and when confronted with problems they can manage them positively. There is evidence that this resilience can be built through formal and informal education as it can act as the vehicle for engagement even with the most vulnerable young people. The primary purpose of education is not only to develop knowledge, skills, competencies and to embed fundamental values, but also to help young people – in cooperation with parents and families – to become active, responsible and open-minded members of society.

For example, in December 2015, the UN Secretary-General’s Plan of Action to Prevent VE was launched and it came with the recognition of the importance of quality education to address the drivers of the VE problem. Also, in 2015 (October) UNESCO’s Executive Board adopted a decision that enhances the importance of education as a tool to help prevent violent extremism, as well as war crimes and crimes against humanity.
Even though the right to education has been recognised as a human right in international conventions and is one of the key targets of the Sustainable Development Goals adopted by UN member countries in 2015, many children and youth face barriers in accessing and receiving quality education. Despite considerable gains in education enrolment in the past decade, only 63% of youth accessed upper secondary school education in 2014, according to the Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals Report by the UN Secretary-General.

Education can take place through formal and informal routes. Formal education is understood as “the structured training systems that run from pre-primary and primary through secondary school and on to university”\(^\text{191}\). Non-formal education is understood as “any planned programme of education designed to improve a range of skills and competences, outside the formal educational setting”.\(^\text{192}\)

One format of non-formal education is youth work. Youth work can enable youth with safer spaces for discussion, to express themselves, for pluralistic debate and engagement.\(^\text{192}\) It can also promote counter-narratives and alternative role models based on tolerance and democracy.\(^\text{193}\) However, it “takes an exceptional level of honesty, integrity and moral judgement to help young people explore their own beliefs without imposing our own.”\(^\text{194}\) Considering that social exclusion is a risk factor for youth’s radicalisation and that it is “a process of progressive multidimensional rupturing of the social bond at the individual and collective level”,\(^\text{195}\) youth work can provide young people with positive behaviour and instigate positive relations with peers. In conclusion, teachers and youth workers need to be equipped with appropriate skills and tools to deal with young people’s problems.\(^\text{196}\) Resilience is about how students are taught as well as what they are taught.\(^\text{197}\)

**European examples of education for prevention**

Teachers play a central role in the prevention of VE (not as punishers, but as educators). They can be role models but also the first to identify signs of radicalisation. They can also serve as a bridge between school, families and the broader community.\(^\text{198}\) Therefore, UNESCO designed the first Teacher’s Guide on the Prevention of VE through education. This Guide was designed for teachers in upper primary, lower secondary and upper secondary education, and was developed with the hope that it can support teachers working in both formal and non-formal educational settings. This tool seeks to provide practical advice on when and how to discuss the issue of violent extremism with learners, and to help teachers create a classroom climate that is inclusive and conducive to respectful dialogue and critical thinking.\(^\text{199}\)

One of the principles of the CoE Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education\(^\text{200}\) is “all means of education and training, whether formal, non-formal or informal, have a part to play in the learning process and are valuable in promoting its principles and achieving its objectives”. Thus over the last years the number of non-formal educational projects aiming at the prevention of youth radicalisation has increased. The University of Turku, in Finland, with funding from the Ministry of Education and Culture, developed The KivaKoulu (Nice School) programme focusing on violence among young people. The results show a reduction of anxiety and depression and a positive impact on students’ perception of their peers. Also, the data from all the schools where it was implemented showed that after the first year of implementation, both victimisation and bullying were reduced significantly, making for a better and more inclusive school environment.\(^\text{201}\)

Erasmus+, recognising the urgent need to tackle youth radicalisation, funded the Youth Empowerment and Innovation Project (YEIP),\(^\text{202}\) a 3-year youth-led initiative that aims to construct and test innovative EU-wide intervention strategies founded on the principles of positive psychology, restorative justice and the Good Lives Model. YEIP aims to design a positive policy prevention framework for tackling and preventing marginalisation and violent radicalisation among young people in Europe, and it will be implemented through the construction and field validation of tools in different environments (schools, universities, prisons, online). The success of this project will “demonstrate to European citizens the leadership and determination of EC Institutions in rooting out the reasons that lead to young peoples’ marginalisation and radicalisation, firming up in this way trust and confidence.”\(^\text{203}\)
In addition, the Philosophical Dialogues Programme that has been tested in UK and French schools aims to reduce the risk of young people adopting radical, discriminatory, non-liberal ideologies and the potential to act on these. This programme, “by focusing on the formation of positive identities, analytic and reflective habits of thinking, and the acquisition of skills for growth and flourishing, can expand young people’s resilience to narratives or pressures that promote extremist systems of value.”

Mind Your Own Business is an entrepreneurship-focused development programme that seeks to strengthen participants’ professional skills and vocational relationships through vocational and personal skills development. The participants are boys from deprived neighbourhoods around Denmark (aged 13-17), because they often experience rejection and negative attention because of their ethnicity or negative stereotypes. And so young people are given the responsibility to establish and operate their own micro-enterprise. With this programme, the participants improve their communication and social skills, such as co-operating with others and listening to others’ views. Also, the exposure to a variety of new experiences can increase their confidence.

The truth is that education by itself cannot prevent an individual from committing a violent act, but the provision of relevant education of good quality can make it difficult for violent extremist ideologies to proliferate, and that is why education policies must ensure that learning doesn’t become a breeding ground for violent extremism.

Ensuring inclusive education for both children and young people helps counter racism and discrimination, promotes citizenship and teaches understanding and acceptance for different opinions, beliefs or lifestyles. In dealing with the VE problem, Europe cannot afford wasted talent, social exclusion or disengagement among its youth. That is why young people should not only be architects of their own life, but also contribute to positive change in society.

European families & their role in prevention

Family is one of the domains where greatest changes have taken place over the past years in Europe. The traditional nuclear European family consisted of a married father and mother with several children. However, today this is only one of the many European family models. The role of men and women has changed with women in most European countries enjoying the same educational and employment opportunities as men. Regardless of the consequences of all these changes, violent extremism and radicalisation prevention still benefit from familial support, whether it is a ‘typical family’, or a single parent family, or a family composed by two homosexual parents.

The role of the family in violent radicalisation has become the centre point in the European debates around prevention, and so family members should be seen “as partners in signalling, preventing and protecting individuals at risk of radicalisation, contributing to the safety and security of society.” However, research shows that they need support to succeed. Parents and close family members are one of the most important socialisation agents for children and can play an important role in the prevention of violent extremism. For better execution of this role, parents need to develop understanding of radicalisation processes that lead to violence. They also need to be equipped with the skills to play a proactive role in shaping positive attitudes toward non-violence.

Capacity building is crucial to safeguard families, and so it is suggested that national and local authorities should commit funding to ensure sufficient human resources are out in the field, to develop clear understanding of processes of change, disengagement or deradicalisation, and to invest in support structures for family support professionals.

One example where family helped in the prevention of violent extremism was in Norway in 1997. The Norwegian Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Children and Family, and the Directorate of Immigration formally established Project Exit. The project aimed to establish local networks to support parents of children embedded in racist or violent groups, to enable young people to disengage from these groups, and, at the same time, to disseminate methodological knowledge to professionals working with the
target group. This project emphasised the need for parents to be involved in dialogue between youths and professionals, highlighting their integral role in the process of disengagement, and it enabled parental network groups that shared information and advice.213

A more recent approach in the UK was the Channel Programme214 that focused on providing support at an early stage to people identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into extremism. It was found that for the programme to succeed, it is important that both the individuals and their families are fully engaged.215 Knowing that violent extremism groups, for their survival, require the support of a huge number of sympathizers, and if they are deprived of this support, their capacity to cause harm will be greatly reduced,216 the need to capacitate the community members, such as parents or other family members, with a safe and inclusive environment is easily seen.

Internet and young people

The Internet has a huge impact on society, and especially on young people who have grown up surrounded by technology and social media. Violent extremism groups use social media to foster fear and to polarise societies, and also to recruit people and incite them to engage in violence.217 Young people must thus be protected from inappropriate content so they can enjoy the positive aspects of the Internet. For this to happen, they must be as protected online as they are offline.218

According to the Net Aware Report 2017,219 the biggest risks for young people when online are:
(a) interaction with strangers, and this includes unwanted friend requests and sexual or offensive messages; (b) inappropriate content that is particularly prevalent on sites and apps with livestreaming functionality, and where young people deal directly with violence, radicalisation and hatred, sexual content and bullying.

Raising awareness about the risks of the internet for VE is paramount.220 Strengthening children’s and young people’s ability to think critically, particularly in the context of the Internet and social media, is a must if they are to distinguish facts from opinions and be able to recognise propaganda and hate speech.221 One example is a project by UK children’s charity NSPCC and telecommunications provider O2. Their ‘Let’s keep kids safe online’ project provides tools and advice for parents and teachers on how to ensure that children make positive and safe use of the Internet. For teachers, there is an online course and other teaching resources. For parents, there is the TEAM framework – Talk (about safety online), Explore (the online world with their children), Agree (make rules together as a family about what is OK and what is not) and Manage (the settings available to control technology). Actions like these are very important because young people are especially vulnerable and the Internet and social media can, together with other social and psychological factors, facilitate the radicalisation process.222

A holistic approach

If cultural diversity is as necessary for humankind as biodiversity is for nature,223 it is imperative that we build a more inclusive society able to deal with cultural differences. Respect for diversity can also help people understand antagonistic points of view, and this will help develop empathy and compassion.224 Two of the most mentioned topics that young people want the EU to focus on are education and skills (53%) and the management of migration and integration of refugees (40%). It would be logical for the European government to allocate funds to meet these concerns.225

In the ‘State of democracy, human rights and the rule of law’ report, the CoE’s Secretary General226 identifies inclusive societies as one of the five fundamental building blocks of democratic security. A democratically secure Europe is only possible if it is guaranteed that all members of society have equal access to fundamental rights. Respect for diversity is essential if a society is to be inclusive and able to deal with differences. Such a society will see a reduced risk of radicalisation. Today, with growing global challenges and local tensions and conflicts, learning to live together peacefully is a top priority. 227
The EC and SALTO work together to ensure that cultural diversity is understood, respected and promoted within Youth in Action and beyond. SALTO Cultural Diversity is a resource centre that provides resources, information and training courses. One of the tools it has developed is We Are All Europeans, a guide for young people, youth workers and youth organisations that want to carry out projects with migrant or multicultural groups. It can be used to inspire ideas, for example, and to learn about funding opportunities.

The International Young Naturefriends (IYNF) is a Prague-based NGO promoting solidarity between people of different backgrounds through international activities. After the refugee crisis of 2015, IYNF decided to dedicate the year of 2017 to the topic ‘Border-free solidarity’. This means the absence of fences between young people and indicates that any perceived barriers, whether religious, cultural, linguistic, geographical, educational, or moral, should not stop people from cooperating, helping each other and learning from each other.

Co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the EU, the ‘Working with migrants and refugees: Guideline, Tools and Methods’ Guide was built, aiming to provide useful tools and methods for working with young refugees and/or migrants in different contexts. The secondary aim of this guide is to “increase the understanding of the challenges and opportunities that migration brings to the youth work sector and international cooperation and to provide recommendations for good practices when working with young refugees and migrants.”

Integration policies have positive ancillary effects on preventing violent radicalisation. A holistic approach that manages social, cultural, religious, linguistic and national differences is needed. Young people all have something to offer, and Europe needs their ideas and hopes. To empower young people requires the discovery of individual skills, and the transformation of emotions into energy and ideas into projects. In other words, a key aspect of violent extremism prevention is to include and empower young people.

In this regard, young people should be encouraged to channel their energy to create and develop positive ideas and solutions to the challenges we face today. By participating in organisations and informal groups, young people can develop self-confidence, identity, belonging, friendship, and feelings of comradeship, and give purpose to their lives. Society needs to deal with the fact that extremism is going to be around for a very long time and that the “most effective long-term solution is looking upstream and changing the ethos of people to make sure they are more tolerant, more inclusive and more diverse as a preventive measure.”

Chapter 3: Human Rights & Preventing Violent Extremism in Asia

3.1 Background

While socio-economic, political, and cultural differences exist between and among Asian countries, many are negatively affected by violence and conflict. In a study of cross-national patterns of terrorism, a trajectory analysis revealed a rapidly rising new terrorist threat concentrated especially among countries in South and South East Asia, the Middle East and Africa. Extremism is a common factor creating instability in the region. South Asia, for instance, has one of the highest numbers of deaths from violent extremism. According to the Global Terrorism Index, South Asia is the second-most affected region with three countries ranking among those with the highest impact of terrorism: Afghanistan, Pakistan and India. In fact, the Index listed Pakistan as one of the four countries in the world most affected by terrorism, along with Nigeria, Syria and Iraq. In Afghanistan, terrorism incidents continue to increase, with the Taliban responsible for most attacks targeting civilians, schools, and the police.

In South East Asia, of significant concern is the growing influence of ISIL (Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant) or Daesh. It is reported that more than 60 terrorist groups in Southeast Asia have pledged their support to ISIL who declared in a June 2014 video that foreign fighters who could not get to Syria
should go instead to Mindanao in southern Philippines. It is estimated that more than 100 of these so-called ‘foreign terrorist fighters’ (FTF) have returned from Syria and Iraq to Indonesia resulting in fears that they will bring back the war to the home front.\textsuperscript{239} The consequence of this is the urgent need for de-radicalisation and rehabilitation programmes. The establishment in Indonesia and “growing influence” of the Malay Archipelago Unit of the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (Katibah Nusantara) signals a more strategic role for ISIL in Malaysia and Indonesia.\textsuperscript{240}

The five-month siege in Marawi, in southern Philippines, also provides a stark example of the transnational nature of violent extremism. The aim of the attack on Marawi by the home-grown groups led by the Maute brothers of Lanao and Isnilon Hapilon of Basilan was to establish an East Asian Wilaya or province as part of the global caliphate being created by ISIL. Fighters from India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Yemen, Saudi Arabia, and Chechnya were killed in the battle of Marawi.\textsuperscript{241} Funding from ISIL was facilitated by a Malaysian member. “\textit{We see the southern Philippines emerging as an important venue for foreign terrorist fighters,}” reports the head of Singapore’s International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research.\textsuperscript{242} According to the Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict (IPAC), “\textit{One possible impact of Marawi is an increased risk of violence in other countries in the region as local groups are inspired or shamed into action by the Philippine fighters. In Indonesia, some of the attacks against the police in May 2018 were linked to the Philippines.}”\textsuperscript{243}

Asia is also seeing cross-region religious violence between Myanmar and Bangladesh. Mass attacks led by the Buddhist-majority state army of Myanmar and supported by militias have led to massive displacement of Rohingya who have fled to Bangladesh, creating yet again a mass of people with the potential to be recruited into extremism.\textsuperscript{244}

\textbf{3.2 Push & Pull Factors}

As indicated in the introduction to ‘push and pull factors’ in this paper, there is no single driver but a combination of drivers of violent extremism.

Many of the drivers of violent extremism in Asia are local in nature, as witnessed for instance, by the continuing presence and influence of the Taliban in Afghanistan and the rise of Hindu and Buddhist nationalism in India and Myanmar. In some cases, religious extremists have capitalised on a culture of political violence by questioning the legitimacy of secular governments and proposing a violent transformation of the state. Moreover, extremist groups often seek to reduce the space for pluralist discourse and engagement, threatening minority rights and civil liberties, as demonstrated by deadly attacks on liberal and secular voices in Bangladesh and the Maldives.\textsuperscript{245}

However, with the rising transnational nature of the threat in Asia, groups are exploiting these local grievances for their recruitment and mobilisation efforts. According to IPAC, “\textit{Where they often used to be triggered by local factors – such as the sectarian conflict between Indonesia’s Christians and Muslims that triggered a deadly bombing in 2002 in Bali – now, fighters are inspired by what’s going on thousands of miles away in Syria and Iraq.}”\textsuperscript{246}

\textbf{Push factors}

Like other parts of the world, violent extremism of all kinds in Asia thrives in an environment of socio-political inequality, ethnic and religious marginalisation, intolerance, discrimination, un-/underemployment, weak rule of law and governance, violations of human rights and poor justice systems, political exclusion, and a lack of adequate resources and service delivery. Other drivers include Islamophobia, hate speech, lack of education and critical thinking, military operations by Western government in Afghanistan and Iraq, feelings of victimhood and secondary trauma related to suffering of Muslims outside the region (Palestinians, refugees from Syria). In other instances, heavy handed security and counterterrorism measures also contribute to distrust between citizens and the state and to deepening grievances about the securitisation of the state-society relationship and fostering an enabling environment for terrorism and violent extremism.\textsuperscript{247}
Pull factors

Common pull factors in Asia include political identity, cultural and religious identity, influence of media, monetary incentives, idealisation of former fighters from Afghanistan and other conflicts, idea of achieving a ‘pure Islam’, sense of adventure, feelings of power, opportunity of transformation and change for their community.248

To understand better the influence of these factors, it is important to know what are the common types of narratives being used by violent extremists for recruitment and radicalisation. According to the Hedayah Center, the five narratives are:

• **Inter-Faith & Inter-Ethnic Narratives** – These counter and alternative narratives encourage general support for peace and non-violence as well as tolerance between ethnicities and religions. Because South East Asia is particularly diverse in terms of religious and ethnic identity, these sorts of narratives are especially applicable to the region.

• **Religious or Ideological Narrative** – These types of narratives utilise religious or ideological concepts or elements to justify the terrorist organisation’s end goal as well as the use of violence to achieve that goal. Religious components of the narrative ascribe divine legitimacy to the story, which in turn reinforces the narrative for those receiving it. Included in this categorisation of narrative, for example, is a moral narrative by which the West is corrupt, and the only right path is through the way of Islam.

• **Political Narrative** – The political narrative contains elements of political objectives such as government change, a new state structure, or the institution of a new legal system. In some instances, political narratives can also be coupled with religious narratives, to give legitimacy to the political objectives through religious authority. One of the main narratives of violent extremists in South East Asia relates the political construction of a ‘state’ with religious authority in an attempt to give it legitimacy. This is also sometimes coupled with the aspiration of territorial control.

• **Social or Heroic Narrative** – The next category of narratives used by violent extremists is social/heroic narratives or socio-psychological narratives. This type of narrative focuses on the glorification of violent acts, including terrorism, as well as their perpetrators. It also links them directly to the grievances. An example of a social/heroic narrative is the idea that Muslims are suffering in other parts of the world, and an individual has a personal responsibility to protect fellow Muslims from harm. This type of narrative also includes elements of social pressure or the desire to be part of a greater good or larger cause.

• **Economic Narrative** – In this case, violent extremists directly or indirectly suggest that by joining that organisation, economic freedom will ensue. For example, original ASG (Abu Sayyaf Group) members were mostly comprised of young Filipino Muslims who joined the terrorist group because of economic marginalisation and silent discrimination. Cash and easy access to weapons – the allure of money and power that comes from the barrel of a gun – were other motivating factors for ASG members. In the 2000s, the ASG kidnapping-for-ransom policy helped to reinforce the idea that by joining ASG, economic concerns would no longer be an issue for group members.

Information & communication technologies (ICTs)

Terrorist groups and individuals are increasingly and strategically using ICTs to recruit, finance, propagate, train, and incite acts of terrorism, as well as gather and disseminate information for terrorist purposes. Former UN Secretary-General BAN Ki-Moon referred to the Internet as a “prime example of how terrorists can behave in a truly transnational way; in response, States need to think and function in an equally transnational manner.”249
For instance, ISIL has exploited social media with slick video productions that have made their propaganda more effective and recruited record numbers of foreigners to Syria and Iraq. Technology has also contributed greatly to mobilisation. But because of tighter monitoring of pro-ISIL social media accounts and suspension of some of them, ISIL has been using end-to-end encryption, a more sophisticated and secure platform for communicating with their operatives. They have used these encrypted communication platforms not only for recruitment online but also to spur recruits to action, enabling them to play “an intimate role in the conceptualisation, target selection, timing, and execution of attacks.” Bomb-making techniques are also taught online. “Virtual planners have even helped operatives who got cold feet, literally coaching them until the moment they blew themselves up.”

### 3.3 Preventing Violent Extremism in Asia

In January 2016, while terrorism wrought havoc in many parts of the world, a conceptual shift occurred in the halls of the United Nations. The ‘war on terror’ became ‘PVE’ or Preventing Violent Extremism. This shift was announced by the UN Secretary-General Ban Ki Moon as he unveiled the Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism. He said:

> “I am convinced that the creation of open, equitable, inclusive and pluralist societies, based on the full respect of human rights and with economic opportunities for all, represents the most tangible and meaningful alternative to violent extremism and the most promising strategy for rendering it unattractive.”

The ‘war on terror’, many claimed, had blurred the distinctions between armed conflict and terrorism, between criminal law enforcement and war-related military action, and ultimately between the legal regime of international humanitarian law and human rights law. Because it was a ‘war’, it seemed to imply that ordinary legal safeguards and rights protections did not have to be observed. ‘War’ was an extraordinary phenomenon and needed extraordinary powers from those who would execute the plans for winning the war.

This new way of framing the problem as PVE not only enlarged the scope of the actions but also deepened them. The new Plan of Action would strengthen two pillars of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy originally adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2006, namely, Pillar I – addressing the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism; and Pillar IV – ensuring human rights and the rule of law. The Plan presented seven priority areas: dialogue and conflict prevention; strengthening good governance; human rights and the rule of law; engaging communities; empowering youth; gender equality and empowering women; education, skills development and employment facilitation; and strategic communications, including through the Internet and social media.

### National & regional action plans for the prevention of violent extremism

Following the adoption of the UN Plan of Action on PVE, Asian states are now starting to formulate National PVE Plans of Action that would address local drivers of violent extremism. The national PVE plans would complement any existing national counter-terrorist strategies. These should be developed in a multidisciplinary manner with input from governmental and non-governmental actors to:

- Fortify the social compact against violent extremism; address the Foreign Terrorist Fighter threat; prevent the financing of violent extremism and terrorist groups; align national development politics with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); and include effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.

In order to proceed with the development of the national strategies and action plans, Asian countries attended a landmark cross-regional workshop in November 2017 with the aim of exchanging knowledge and experiences on how to develop and implement National Action Plans to Prevent Violent Extremism (PVE). These action plans are comprehensive policy documents that governments can adopt to promote a holistic approach to PVE. In line with the UN Secretary General's call for an 'all-of-UN' approach to PVE assistance, the workshop was convened by a team of five UN agencies including...
the recently established United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT), the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), UN Women and UN Volunteers.255

Throughout the meeting, participants among whom were government officials, civil society delegates and members of the academia from Bangladesh, Indonesia, Malaysia, Pakistan, Philippines and Thailand, shared views and experiences in dealing with different forms of violent extremism, identifying some of the major challenges and key recommendations to promote ‘whole-of-society’ responses to violent extremism. Experts from Hedayah and the Global Center on Cooperative Security provided technical knowledge on the main elements and methodologies for the development of comprehensive and measurable National Action Plans on PVE.

Some Asian governments have started to develop national action plans on preventing violent extremism. According to UNDP, the governments of Indonesia, Philippines, and Bangladesh are in the process of developing their plans.

The UN Plan of Action also calls for the creation of Regional PVE Plans of Action to strengthen regional and sub-regional cooperation in preventing violent extremism. Three regional bodies in Asia have drawn up interventions to prevent and counter violent extremism. These are, ASEAN or the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, SAARC or the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation, and SCO, the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation.

The 10-member ASEAN has had a series of conferences and meetings that have resulted in the Manila Declaration to Counter the Rise of Radicalisation and Violent Extremism agreed upon on 20 September 2017, the formation of the Ad-Hoc Experts Working Group to formulate an ASEAN Plan of Action to Prevent and Counter the Rise of Radicalisation and Violent Extremism; and the Regional-UN Dialogue on ‘Women, Peace and Security – The Role of Women in the Prevention of Violent Extremism’ held on 6-7 December, 2017 in Kuala Lumpur.256

On the other hand, SAARC, because the relationship of its two largest members – India and Pakistan – is at a new low, is not taking any action toward formulating a regional plan of action. However, countries in the region have been engaged in efforts to promote regional cooperation on countering terrorism and violent extremism through a process implemented by the UN Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (UNCTED) and the Global Center on Cooperative Security. Since 2009, over 300 judges, prosecutors, and police from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka have shared experiences, lessons learned, and best practices on how to counter terrorism in their region and beyond. A parallel process in support of the practitioners’ dialogue was launched in 2011 by the Global Center, in partnership with the Institute of South Asian Studies at the National University of Singapore, bringing together key experts, academics, and practitioners to explore national and civil society responses to terrorism.257

SCO describes itself as the largest regional organisation in the world in terms of geographical coverage and population, covering three-fifths of the Eurasian continent and nearly half of the human population. Apart from cooperation among the Member States in various fields like economy, culture and finance, the SCO members have agreed to organise themselves to prevent and counter violent extremism. A High-Level International Conference on Countering Terrorism and Preventing Violent Extremism was hosted by the government of Tajikistan in partnership with the UN, OSCE and EU. ASEAN is a major partner of the SCO.258

Prevention of violent extremism & human rights in Asia

To date there is no agreed definition of terrorism and violent extremism. The Plan of Action merely states that “definitions of terrorism and violent extremism are the prerogative of Member States and must be consistent with their obligations under international law, in particular, international human rights law.”259 The Plan leaves the matter to each State although it tries to make a distinction between
the two terms by stating that “Violent extremism encompasses a wider category of manifestations.” However, the Secretary-General cautioned that “Sweeping definitions of terrorism or violent extremism are often used to criminalise the legitimate actions of opposition groups, civil society organisations and human rights defenders”. He concluded that “This has led to drastically narrowed space for freedoms of expression, association and assembly.”

In Asia, the implications of not having an agreed definition means that all kinds of violence found in the region can come under the cover of violent extremism. Specifically, in South Asia, development actors “remain cautious about engaging on counterterrorism or CVE issues due to the negative association with the ‘global war on terror’, which has fuelled resentment among local populations and has been exploited by terrorist organisations in promoting their violent narratives as a challenge to what they perceive as the social, cultural, and political domination of the West.”

Clearly, one major challenge in the implementation of an effective prevention strategy is to agree on a definition of both violent extremism and terrorism. No such agreement has been forthcoming. Human rights violations could come from overly broad responses to violent extremism. The lack of a definition could permit counterterrorism programming to unduly expand and encroach on civil liberties. There is a need at least for greater delineation between terrorism and violent extremism.

The UN High Commissioner on Human rights has also stated that “In some jurisdictions, counterterrorism legislation has reportedly been used to unduly restrict human rights, such as freedom of expression, peaceful assembly and religion or the right to privacy.” The Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief has repeatedly expressed concern that overly broad or vague definitions of extremism may be applied arbitrarily and misused to control religious communities or even criminalise legitimate manifestation of religion or belief. The Special Rapporteur on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms while Countering Terrorism has expressed concern that Governments have used vague and broad definitions of ‘terrorism’ to punish those who do not conform to traditional gender roles and to suppress social movements that seek gender equality in the protection of human rights.”

In the interest of finding a common definition, three criteria have been advanced for what constitutes a violent extremist actor: (1) transnational reach; (2) decentralised operations; and (3) ideological opposition to the very values and structures of international society. Some have warned that “with no ownership of the term and no criteria for determining attendant projects, PVE can easily be subverted, misused or manipulated. The lack of definition and conceptual framing in the Plan of Action leave the term virtually defenceless against misuse.”

Centralising human rights in PVE can also enable women’s rights – hitherto in the margins of the issue – to be significantly integrated into PVE initiatives. According to Fionnuala Ni Aolain, now Special Rapporteur on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms while Countering Terrorism, and Jayne Huckerby:

> “Women’s rights advocates and gender experts working on the counter-terrorism and P/CVE spaces have a particularly important obligation to remain locked into and unrepentant on the necessity of protecting women’s social, economic, cultural, political, civil and reproductive rights in the context of countering terrorism and P/CVE.”

Ben Emmerson, in his 2016 report as Special Rapporteur on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms While Countering Terrorism, described the impact of measures to counter/prevent violent extremism on human rights. Emmerson broke these down into three sections, the first being ‘Limitations on Freedom of Expression and Censorship Online’, which enforces that: Measures taken to prevent or remove messages communicated through the Internet or other forms of technology constitute an interference with the right to freedom of expression; Bans on the operation of certain sites should not be generic but content-specific; No site or information dissemination system should be prohibited from publishing material solely on the basis that it may be critical of the government or the social system.
The core issues therefore are: How to make the implementation of the complex, multi-layered approach to violent extremism effective? How do we ensure that human rights and the rule of law are not mere rhetoric and are no longer trampled upon at the first sign of crisis? 

Experts from the humanitarian, development, peace and rights communities are calling for taking stock of lessons learned from these fields and how these could make PVE more effective. There are “highly relevant lessons from political economy analyses of aid, years of learning about what works in peacemaking, conflict analysis and strategy development techniques, the limits of stabilisation and security assistance, how to approach perplexing capability traps in the governance sphere, ways to support social empowerment, and so on.”269

In PVE, experts agree that context is everything because of the dynamic and constantly evolving nature of the threat. Therefore, another big challenge is how to collect data that must be “context and time specific and delivered in real time.” It is especially important for technical knowledge and skills to be built up and strengthened regarding the push and pull factors and their rule-of-law and human rights implications.270

Technical & political issues faced by Asian countries

Former UN Secretary-General Ban Ki Moon articulated in his Action Plan on Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE) that:

...rebuild[ing] the social compact between the governing and governed [and] creation of open, equitable, inclusive and pluralist societies, based on the full respect of human rights and with economic opportunities for all, represents the most tangible and meaningful alternative to violent extremism.271

Collaboration and cooperation among the many actors – from global, regional, national, sub-national; across peace, development, human rights fields – will entail asking this crucial question: Who decides what for whom? This is a core issue. Where does the right to participation of citizens begin and end? What are the institutional mechanisms for making participation in decision-making possible and viable? As the UN’s so-called ‘whole of nation’ approach is rolled out, this becomes a key issue especially given the critical importance of the local context in any prevention programme.

Many in the development, peace and rights communities are finding this issue of participation in PVE programmes problematic for two reasons: (1) that only 0.5% of terror attacks occurred outside countries suffering conflict or political terror, so focusing on PVE may be co-opting the energies of those who were trying to work for the interests of conflict-affected societies; and (2) The Plan of Action seemed to ask humanitarian actors to become political agents or to assist on the basis of threat rather than need, particularly in authoritarian or conflict settings. The key question in the State-society relationship therefore is whether PVE is a form of instrumentalisation or empowerment.272

For example, Attree proposes that rather than trying to co-opt women’s and youth organisations to serve top-down, state-driven counter-terror strategies, it would be more valuable to support them to set their own agenda for its own sake, with full freedom to challenge all problem behaviours, and have a say in shaping wider stabilisation strategies and peace processes. Political will, based on a clear commitment to people’s right to participate in matters that affect their lives, means that instead of
routinely focusing efforts on religion and ideology, PVE interventions make “changing people’s lived reality the fundamental focus of strategy in the way that rights, peace and development programmes typically do.”

On the matter of people’s participation in the design of interventions, for example on de-radicalisation and countering radicalisation, Sidney Jones, director of the Jakarta-based Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict, says the problem is that prevention programmes seem to be thought up in capitals like Jakarta without much reference to concrete cases, thus diminishing their chances of success. She also gives the example of the lack of people’s participation in the rehabilitation of Marawi not just as a challenge for the Philippines but also for Southeast Asia as it could provide fertile ground for recruitment if resentment builds up at people having no voice in the rebuilding of their city.

Lastly, as part of keeping the political space vibrant and relevant to people’s concerns – women and men both – it is proposed that we “embrace vigorous debate on foreign policy.” Attree explains:

“It is important that actions to stop incitement to violence don’t creep into becoming broad clampdowns on dissent. Instead, we need more diverse and vigorous debate – in which decision makers adopt a listening rather than a hubristic stance... It is vital – through deeds more than words – to counteract IS and Al Qaeda’s claim to be the primary international actors standing against the suffering of Muslims in conflict-affected and repressive countries.”

Preventing violent extremism at the community level in Asia

The shift to a ‘soft’ approach has offered many opportunities for a broad, comprehensive, and coordinated multidisciplinary response to be implemented by a multitude of actors, including those working on women’s rights and women, peace and security issues. The technical capacity to work strategically with this approach is critical to effectiveness. The Special Rapporteur on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms while Countering Terrorism said that the human rights dimension as both a cross-cutting theme and one of the central pillars of the counterterrorism strategy needed “meaningful support in implementation and practice.”

The term ‘glocalisation’ has been coined to describe the phenomenon whereby ISIL or Daesh is able to bring its global agenda to a very local level. That is why communities are an important arena for preventing violent extremism. Community initiatives enable civil society to have a critical role in PVE because of their legitimacy, reach and understanding of local demands, aspirations, and culture. Here are some examples of CSOs involvement in PVE:

**Regional case studies**

**Networking**

The **Asian Muslim Action Network** (AMAN – meaning peace in Arabic) is an international organisation promoting a socially engaged, peace-oriented civil society that upholds universal humane and spiritual values. AMAN works to build understanding and solidarity among Muslims and other faith communities in Asia. With members from Jordan to East Timor, AMAN brings together individuals, groups and associations of Muslims in Asia under a progressive approach to Islam. By empowering Muslim people through institutional capacity building, human resource development and interfaith dialogues, AMAN works to create a culture of peace on the local, national and international levels.
AMAN also collaborates with other faith-based and secular groups in its many areas of work. AMAN’s main activities include: School of Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation; Interfaith dialogue, peace forums and promoting peace processes; Research fellowship on Islam in Southeast Asia for young scholars; Women’s Commission; Amana Media Initiative: promoting peace thoughts and actions through responsible journalism; AMAN Watch: Human rights watchdog and engaging Muslim lawyers for legal aid services; Friendship and Assistance to Asylum Seekers, Refugees and Migrants; and Prevention of HIV/AIDS and reducing stigma and discrimination.278

Founded in 2016, the **Southeast Asia Network of Civil Society Organisations on Countering Violent Extremism (SEA-CSO)** supports the capacity building of Southeast Asian CSOs working to prevent violent extremism.279

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**Singapore – case study**280

Singapore has combined a hard and soft approach to P/CVE. Because of Singapore’s multi-ethnic and multi-religious population, its leaders consistently stress the importance of social harmony. Singapore made early investments in building social resilience, an effort that would yield high dividends in the long run. One month after the Singapore Jemaah Islamiyyah (JI) network was exposed in December 2001, then Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong proposed the concept of ‘Inter-Racial Confidence Circles’ (IRCC) for each of the country’s 84 constituencies, and ‘Harmony Circles’ for schools, workplaces and other local organisations. A National Steering Committee was also established to provide broad guidance for IRCCs to deepen inter-racial and inter-religious rapport within communities. (Hearn Yuit, 2009).

The total IRCC membership reached 1,021 by June 2006, composed of Chinese, Malays, Indians and other ethnicities. The IRCC was renamed ‘Inter-Racial and Religious Confidence Circles’ in September 2007, to reflect the new role of IRCCs in bridging different religious groups at the local level. According to an official overseeing the process, the aim was “to make sure that in times of peace, we build relationships, trust and confidence. This will create a safety net for Singapore. If ever anything unfortunate were to happen, at that point in time, this safety net would be tested.”

After the London 7/7 bomb attacks in 2005, the government launched the Community Engagement Programme (CEP) in February 2006 to provide more integrated and comprehensive efforts in preparing the populace to be psychologically and socially resilient to terrorism. Example initiatives over the past few years include introducing Safety and Security Watch Groups at industrial and commercial premises; outreach to foreign worker populations through the foreign worker dormitories; and expanding the scope of Emergency Preparedness Exercises to cover the readiness to detect and prevent the fallout from potential communal tensions in a crisis.

Aside from the IRCC and CEP, the government also formed (formally in October 2005) the Religious Rehabilitation Group (RRG), which is an unpaid, all-volunteer grouping of Islamic scholars and teachers who possess formal Islamic educational credentials from both local madrassas and foreign universities. The RRG’s objective is to counsel detained JI members and to counter their ideological beliefs. Since 2003, the RRG has performed more than 800 counselling sessions, and has progressively released some of the detainees on restriction orders.
Indonesia – case study

Working with Victims

Terrorism victims and their families, strategically deployed, can be a powerful tool in raising awareness of the costs of terrorism. Two organisations of bombing survivors have emerged in Indonesia, the Survivors Foundation (Yayasan Penyintas) and the Association for Victims of Terrorism Bombings in Indonesia (ASKOBI). They are working with the Alliance for a Peaceful Indonesia (Aliansi Indonesia Damai, AIDA), an organisation focused on encouraging victims to share their stories more broadly. Both have members who have taken part in school and university programmes in a way that has proved to have an emotional impact on the audience.

Bringing convicted terrorists face to face with victims and their families can also be effective, particularly if the victims are Muslim. One of the biggest issues between Jemaah Islamiyah and its more militant critics after JI decided that violence on Indonesian soil was counterproductive was over the deaths of innocent Muslims. JI argued that such collateral damage might be acceptable if Indonesia were under occupation or attack. But in the absence of such dire circumstances, it made no sense. The impact of bringing victim and perpetrator together was in evidence in 2013, when Umar Patek, one of the original Bali bombers, captured in Pakistan in 2011 and returned to Indonesia, was brought together with some of his Indonesian victims. He was reportedly shocked at what they had suffered and said he knew he could never enter heaven without their forgiveness. The emotional punch of that meeting may have contributed to Patek’s moderation, to the point that he never became the champion of Indonesian extremists that some of his former colleagues hoped or that Indonesian officials feared. Inside the prison, he preaches that jihadi actions are only acceptable when Muslims are under direct attack.
Think Twice Pakistan

Think Twice Pakistan is a collection of videos produced by Black Box Sounds, a communication company in Pakistan, working on countering the terrorist narratives. Among others, some of its videos powerfully capture images that showcase the misery and pain of the victims and the survivors of terrorism.\(^{282}\)

The role of religious journals in violent extremism

In Pakistan, certain religious journals and other media have for a long time been a key factor in driving violent extremist views of individuals, groups, and organisations by encouraging and even inciting violence through the distortion of facts and misrepresentation of religious scripture. Although many madrassas and religious groups have no direct link to militant or radical groups, they often promote similarly prejudiced and intolerant views in their religious magazines and journals. Limiting and altogether eliminating the publication and circulation of such literature is challenging for law enforcement agencies and are key objectives of Pakistan’s national action plan to counter terrorism, which was established in January 2015.

A study conducted by The Peace and Education Foundation (PEF) explored the dynamics of radicalisation and the extent to which religious media, particularly religious journals and magazines, are a key element in the process of radicalisation to violent extremism. In analysing 17 prominent magazines (72 editions in total) related to seminaries or different sects, PEF identified seven major categories of biases that were common in all journals: Overt sectarian prejudices; glorification of jihadists; anti-Western sentiments; biases against liberalism, secularism, and democracy; biases against modern education; widespread support for blasphemy laws; and biases against women’s empowerment.

The most common trend found was criticism of the practices and beliefs of other sects implicitly and explicitly. Adding to sectarian biases is the promotion of propaganda that glorifies one’s own ideology, leading to an endless race for sectarian supremacy. Another common trend is the glorification of jihad, including advocating jihadi activities within Pakistan and in places such as Afghanistan, Kashmir, and Palestine. Many publications also blame Western countries for promoting immoral social values and anti-Islamic rhetoric. They often claim that liberalism, secularism, and democracy are Western values that seek to undermine Islam and are the cause of many contemporary problems faced by Muslim societies around the world. Likewise, non-religious educational topics such as the social sciences are blamed for spreading infidelity and pushing people away from religion. The publications often call on the government to take policy measures to establish an Islamic educational system, which they claim is part of the government’s moral, religious, and constitutional responsibility. Many of the religious magazines included articles in support of Pakistan’s controversial blasphemy law.
**Australia – case study**

**Community Policing**

The Australian Multicultural Foundation (AMF) has worked with Australian police services for the past 17 years. The AMF was co-partner with the Chief Commissioners’ Conference of Australasia in the establishment of the Australian Police Multicultural Advisory Bureau. The AMF also assisted in the establishment of the Multicultural Faith Advisory Council for Victoria Police and has developed a range of community policing and research projects with Police agencies throughout Australia under their *Mosaic Fund* program.

AMF funded a project in Victoria entitled Community Policing Partnership Project: Helping to Build Social Cohesion and Harmony with Australian Muslim Communities. It was developed after a report revealed that many incidents of discrimination were not reported to police or government authorities due to fear of victimisation; a general lack of trust in enforcement agencies and lack of knowledge about the law and complaints processes. The report advised that mechanisms for building trust between Muslim communities and law enforcement agencies were necessary to reduce the risk of further marginalisation of these communities, particularly young people and women. In partnership with the Australian Multicultural Foundation, this project enabled partnerships between police and Muslim communities across Australia.

Joint community and police projects received funding of up to USD10,000 to establish local networks aiming to build trust, facilitate a stronger sense of social participation, respect and inclusion within communities. The project aimed to: (1) demonstrate good practice examples of partnerships which improve relationships between police and Australian Muslim communities, and which can be used as a set of pilots to be replicated with other communities and in other locations; (2) strengthen awareness of the diversity of Muslim communities, an understanding of Islam and issues relevant to Muslim communities across the general ranks of police through education, consultation and other activities; (3) provide a two-way flow of experience, information and direction for police and Muslim communities to identify emerging issues and address common questions and challenges to break down stereotyping on both sides; and (4) develop training and resources for law enforcement agencies to assist in responding to complaints of discrimination and abuse. These resources may be used at a local level but may also be applied in various community policing settings.

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**3.4 Violent Extremism & Gender in Asia**

As policymakers and practitioners in South East Asia increasingly recognise the importance of investing in preventive measures that complement counterterrorism operations, it is critical to integrate a gender analysis when developing related national action plans, strategies, and programmes to address the threat, whether by groups, families, returning or relocating foreign fighters, or lone actors. Understanding gender dynamics and integrating a gender perspective means that policymakers, practitioners, and programme implementers account for the different experiences, impacts, and needs of women, girls, men, and boys with regard to their development and security. It also considers their varying access to and control of resources, legal rights, and sociocultural beliefs and practices, and examines how all of these dynamics may change over time.

Violent extremism and CVE should be considered within the broader context of gender equality and restrictions on women’s freedoms and rights, as well as instances of gender-based violence and general criminality. This is an important framing because key indicators of the spread of violent extremist ideologies include increased discrimination against women and girls, including their rights to education, public life, and decisions over their bodies.
Systematic and institutional discrimination against women reinforces gender inequalities and limits women’s upward mobility and ability to participate freely in society and the economy. Some analysts therefore argue that “countering violent extremism means countering gender inequality, and countering the growing misogyny, sexism, and moral policing of women and their bodies.” In Indonesia, for example, the National Commission on Violence Against Women (Komnas Perempuan) found that 154 laws across 140 regions are discriminatory against women, including laws that dictate women’s clothing, curfews, restrictions on mobility, and prohibitions on rights of religious minorities. Furthermore, in Pakistan, a legislation in the Punjab Assembly titled ‘Protection of Women Against Violence’, which included the creation of women’s shelters and district-level panels to investigate reports of abuse, was later declared null and void due to pressure from certain religious groups. The bill was criticised by for violating Islamic practices and protecting and legalising sin.

Worsening intolerance across the region, including hate speech, against religious and sexual minorities and those who support gender equality is also a cause for concern. Rising nationalism, religious fundamentalism and exclusivity, and intolerance have negative effects on gender equality and women’s socioeconomic and political mobility. In Myanmar, for example, fears over polygamy and forced conversion are driving opposition to a bill that protects women from violence.

Additionally, sexual and gender-based violence is increasingly used as a terrorist tactic and can also be an early indicator of violent extremism. In recent years in the Philippines, for example, International Alert found a spike in gender-based violence in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), a region long affected by protracted conflict, instability, and insecurity. Even when countries like the Philippines try to address this problem with comprehensive domestic violence legislation that covers physical, sexual, psychological, and economic violence, courts are usually backlogged and corrupt, deterring women from reporting their abuse or taking legal action. The lack of women in the justice and security sector also creates ‘macho’ environments where women may not feel comfortable reporting instances of gender-based violence.

Women’s role in preventing violent extremism in Asia

According to Bhulai and Nemr, women have long played essential roles in peace and security efforts in conflict-affected regions;

“In helping to safeguard their communities against violent extremism, they are recognising early signs of radicalisation, intervening to dissuade individuals from supporting or joining terrorist groups, and rehabilitating and reintegrating violent extremist offenders back into society.”

The authors point to the fact that because of the importance of family within the region, there is an increasing focus on women’s roles within their families and communities and how these roles can be better harnessed to address violent extremism. They cite some programmes that work to empower mothers to take an active role in safeguarding their families against violent extremism by training them in personal communication and parenting skills and to spot early warning signs of radicalisation. Bhulai and Nemr state that, in conflict-affected regions, some programmes also involve grandmothers, especially in cases where both parents may have migrated for employment. They caution policymakers and practitioners about making assumptions about or over-emphasising these traditional roles of women by saying, “Women are not always best-positioned to spot or respond to early warning signs, especially where children may be hiding predilections or behaviours. They are also not likely to alert relevant authorities of their child’s behaviour, typically due to mistrust or fear of law enforcement and community backlash.”

Other P/CVE programmes by civil society organisations, governments, and international agencies focus on promoting the social and economic empowerment of women as a means of building social cohesion and resilience against violent extremism.
Women’s role in promoting & participating in violent extremism in Asia

Contextual analysis should include the role of women, not just as coming from a vulnerable group, but as increasingly important actors in mobilisation, financing and recruitment for terrorist groups. Bhulai and Nemr note that so far “less attention has been paid to female radicalisation and mobilisation to violent extremism, resulting in a weak evidence base for programming and neglecting an audience that has garnered specific outreach and attention by ISIL and al-Qaeda, for example”. South East Asia has also seen a dramatic rise in the number of women who went to Iraq and Syria. They cite that of women worldwide who travelled to those two countries, South East Asia had the highest rate of female returns at 42%. Formerly seen only as a vulnerable group to be protected, women are opting to join ISIL for various reasons, not dissimilar to men and - ironically enough – because of ‘empowerment’ offered by the ISIL through their recruitment methods. In Indonesia, for instance, some analysts observe a ‘new activism’ of women in violent extremist movements, in which they have moved beyond ‘reproductive and nurturing roles’ to recruitment (both online and offline), providing or facilitating material support to families of imprisoned and ‘martyred’ fighters, or planning or perpetrating suicide attacks.

Asian rights-based case studies for women’s empowerment

Civil society organisations and other stakeholders in South and South East Asia have made good strides in pushing for a more gender-sensitive approach to policies and programmes directly or indirectly related to P/CVE. Some of these include:

**Women’s School for Peace in Poso.** Central Sulawesi, Indonesia, puts women front and centre in developing a community warning system to prevent the escalation of inter-religious incidents into violence. Moreover, women *ulamaks* or religious leaders in the country are playing a crucial role in challenging extremist ideologies and individuals, as well as in drawing on Islamic teachings and texts that promote tolerance.

**Yayasan Prasasti Pedamaian** (Institute for International Peacebuilding, Indonesia) works with women imprisoned on terrorism charges and the female family members of men imprisoned for terrorism to support them psychologically and provide financial support if needed.

**Burka Avengers** – This is a locally-made, animated superhero TV series which has claimed numerous international awards, including a Peabody. Its creator, Aaron Haroon, highlighted the importance of having a female superhero who fights for ‘Peace, Justice, and Education for All’ and who reaches children and adults alike across Pakistan, India, Afghanistan, and Indonesia.

**Looking for that Other Face,** by Frank van Lierde, tells the stories of six Indonesian Muslim women inspired by their faith to develop women’s leadership and work against sexual and domestic violence while countering the rise of extremist beliefs in their communities. The report makes a significant contribution in documenting and vividly portraying indigenous feminism in a Muslim country.

**Mothers for Peace** in the Philippines has organised an Imams’ League and Youth Affairs Council to prevent radicalisation through Islamic Values Seminars and youth engagement in cultural and sports activities. They also raise awareness about our early warning signs of extremist violence in everyday behaviour that affects women including changes in social attitudes to women's and girls' dress and veiling, restrictions on women's mobility, use of derogatory language, and the exclusiveness of mosques.

**Women’s Peace Tables** in Mindanao encourages women’s participation in decision-making about peace and security though a campaign to set up Women’s Peace Tables. The Tables are set in local communities by women who bring their issues to the table. Their slogan is ‘AT the Table, ON the Table, and TURNING the Tables’ which means that women are sitting at the table, their issues and perspectives are being taken into consideration, and structures are being transformed so that gender equality is achieved.
In spite of the many interventions by and for women, a recent conference among women leaders in South East Asia noted that a number of challenges and gaps remain that will need to be addressed at all levels by a multiplicity of actors for any robust inclusion of a gender dimension. To address these challenges, the Global Center on Cooperative Security-sponsored conference stated that it was important to leverage the vast knowledge, experiences, and lessons from civil society actors and others who have been working on gender-related issues in the areas of conflict and violence prevention, development, human rights, and other fields critical for PVE. Governments, both national and local, as well as donors and other interested stakeholders, should capitalise on the opportunity to build meaningful partnerships across all sectors to advance a more inclusive and rights-based approach to P/CVE. These partnerships, including with civil society, media, the private sector, and academia, can help raise awareness of gender-sensitive approaches that are being undertaken in communities to prevent and counter violent extremism, and to ensure women and women’s organisations have a seat at the table when planning, developing and implementing P/CVE strategies and programmes.

As countries in Asia look to adopt and implement their PVE action plans, strategies, and programmes, The Global Center on Cooperative Security encourages them to consider the following recommendations to ensure gender inclusivity, especially relating to women’s participation:

• **Ensure better strategic coherence & coordination among national & local efforts.** Governments should create operational frameworks and formal engagement mechanisms that facilitate meaningful engagement and inclusive dialogue and debate between national and local officials and diverse groups of civil society organisations, including those working on gender issues in related fields like women, peace, and security, violence prevention, development, human rights, peace-building, security sector reform, and good governance.

• **Invest, politically & financially, in national & local efforts to advance gender inclusion & women’s participation in P/CVE.** Donors should allow flexibility in terminology and funding for P/CVE projects to test new concepts, facilitate better dialogue and submissions for funding, and report on activities. Stakeholders could also consider providing support for proposal-writing and organisational capacity-building for civil society organisations, particularly those tasked with contributing to the implementation of national P/CVE action plans.

• **Facilitate trainings & programmes that improve female economic & social standing and encourage greater representation in society.** These could include literacy trainings or programmes to strengthen political leadership and civic action among youth – including girls – to help increase their representation in local government at an early stage and establish a future desire for political activism. Other programmes could also focus on educating religious leaders on topics of gender equality and female empowerment to help them become better advocates and partners in building more resilient communities against violent extremism. Trainings could also focus on general paralegal services and access to justice measures to increase understanding of terrorism legislation and to increase the number of legal aides in communities that are overly targeted and prosecuted.

• **Partner with private sector companies to explore funding opportunities for new ideas & platforms.** Private sector engagement can tap into potential corporate social responsibility models that may allow for the private sector to play a greater role in the empowerment of women and girls and change structural, organisational, and cultural barriers to equality.

• **Engage with communications & media professionals to raise awareness of women-led P/CVE efforts.** Gender-sensitive media and communication campaigns can help raise awareness of the work of women-led organisations and can socialise communities and local governments to the role of women in P/CVE policy and programming. Such campaigns could take the form of writing op-eds and hosting radio programmes.
• **Fund & share evidence-based, gender-sensitive, & context-specific research.** Further research is needed on the links between gender-based violence and violent extremism and gendered pathways to engagement in terrorist groups. Stakeholders should invest in collecting, storing, and sharing gender-disaggregated data to explore such links and trends. Government agencies should apply relevant research and policy analysis from academic institutions, think tanks, and others to feed into P/CVE policy and practice, and share their own data with civil society organisations and other relevant actors, where feasible.

• **Prioritise the safety & security of women in P/CVE programming.** Donors, governments, civil society organisations, international partners, and others should develop and implement standard operating procedures to assess the appetite, feasibility, and security risks of undertaking activities designed to amplify the role of women in P/CVE within the local context. This includes maintaining open avenues of communication with local authorities and coordinating as much as possible with such authorities to ensure safety and security.

### 3.5 Youth, Education & Prevention of Violent Extremism in Asia

As of 2014, Asia’s youth population stood at 1.1 billion aged 10 to 24, representing 26% of the total population. India and China alone accounted for 660 million youth, with 360 and 300 million, respectively. In other words, Asia has the largest generation of youth in history. The challenges are enormous: 220 million youth are not engaged in education, employment or training. Only 37% of primary school students are expected to leave with a basic level of numeracy and literacy; 36 million youth are unemployed, with another 300 million underemployed; 180 million youth are living in extreme poverty (below USD 1.25/day).301

Against this background, how to engage the youth of Asia so they are not vulnerable to violent extremism?

UNESCO responds: This must start on the benches of schools and by empowering young women and men with the right values, skills and behaviours to make the most of diversity, to engage fully in their societies, to find decent employment, to live as global citizens, defending human rights and fundamental freedoms in every instance. All of this calls for new forms of education, a new focus on advancing cultural literacy, to defend humanity’s shared cultural heritage, new approaches to bolstering media and digital literacy, to strengthen the resilience of societies against the false siren calls of violent extremism, to strengthen the unity of all women and men as members of a single family, sharing aspirations and rights, a past and a future.302

A research project conducted by SEARCCT (Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter Terrorism) among undergraduate students in Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand yielded the following significant insights:303

1. Both radically violent and ‘not-yet-violent’ ideas were a clear and present danger because they have the potential for radical violent behaviour.

2. The students were aware of the subject of terrorism and believed that it had the capacity to affect their lives.

3. Videos and images of victims of terrorism and former terrorists were powerful tools.

4. There is a need to develop alternatives to terrorism such as non-violent approaches to civil disobedience and to highlight and disseminate such alternatives to the students.

5. The tremendous potential of television and the Internet to counter terrorism, considering their popularity among the undergraduates.
6. A small but significant minority of the undergraduates were actively seeking out and engaging with terrorists via the Internet.

7. Universities had a responsibility to the students in the prevention of violent extremism.

The research concluded that, first, there is cause for concern based on the patterns of undergraduate radicalisation in institutions of higher learning in these five South East Asian countries; and second, universities and their undergraduate students can contribute to preventing radicalisation and violent extremism.

Clearly, young women and men can be partners in any intervention to address the push and pull factors that are directed at them. The research shows that they have the “potential, energy and creativity to play a significant role” in countering terrorism, particularly in the area of countering the terrorist narratives. It is important for these partnerships between the undergraduates and the university to be institutionalised from the very beginning when programmes are crafted and developed. Thus far, “efforts in harnessing this potential from among the undergraduates, in particular, and the youth in general has been ambiguous at best and neglected at worst,” the report concludes.

The research further lists what this programme would consider addressing: (1) the need to exploit the media; (2) the need to target non-violent radicalisation to prevent violent radicalisation; (3) the need to tell the stories of victims and former terrorists; (4) the need to popularise the alternatives to terrorism; (5) the need for digital story-tellers; (6) the need for real-life heroes and heroines; (7) the need to re-channel curiosity; and (8) the need to move from ‘selective CVE-inoculation’ to ‘comprehensive CVE-inoculation’, that is, directed at all youth instead of selecting only those who have shown tendencies toward radicalisation.

UNESCO indicates the following priority action areas: Education to build resilience, media skills, counter-narratives and online coalitions, youth participation and empowerment, safeguarding cultural heritage, celebrating cultural diversity, promoting intercultural dialogue, and building inclusive sciences and sharing natural resources.

Some projects focused on youth and PVE include:

**#Extreme Lives** – This is a series of live video broadcasts on Facebook from countries across South East Asia, including Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Singapore, covering on-the-ground stories of violent extremism. The Asia-Pacific region is estimated to have 1.7 billion active users on Facebook, and men between the ages of 18 and 34 constitute the largest single demographic of users across large swathes of the region. Produced by UNDP, the project counteracts the use of digital technologies and platforms used by radical groups to recruit and radicalise by engaging the region’s youth on issues such as violent extremism.

**6+1 Rehabilitation Model** in Sri Lanka. The 6+1 model includes six programmes: education, vocational training, spiritual growth, recreational activities, psycho-social counselling, and exposure to society, culture and family. The ‘+1’ component includes preparing the wider community to accept and assist in aftercare, to prevent re-radicalisation and marginalisation. While the number of youth de-radicalised through the programme is currently unavailable, official government statistics indicate that over 11,000 participants of the programmes were reintegrated into society.

**Mythos Labs** works with comedians and social media influences to counter the narratives of terrorist and violent extremist groups through humorous viral videos. In South Asia, they partnered with East India Comedy to create the video ‘I want to quit ISIS’. In less than one month, the video amassed more than 900,000 views on Facebook and YouTube. Their latest productions – ‘Brainwash’ and ‘Hi Sis’ – used satire to counter the messages used by terrorist organisations to recruit women to their cause. Targeted at audiences in South and South East Asia, the comedic videos highlight the false promises of violent extremism groups that seek to recruit women and promote the message that withholding support from these groups and promoting messages of peace is the empowered choice.
Chapter 4: Concluding & Critical Reflections

4.1 The “Push and Pull Factors” of Violent Extremism: Who is to be Blamed?

European and Asian literature on the so called ‘pull and push factors’ of violent extremism is rich. And yet, we are far from being able to ‘profile’ those at risk. In fact, there is more evidence to claim that by attempting to profile and predict, we may in fact be breeding the very reasons that lead those at risk to violent radicalisation. The factors that have been quoted in the aforementioned literature are shared between the two continents and can be summarised as: individual backgrounds and motivations; collective grievances and victimisation stemming from domination, oppression, subjugation or foreign intervention; distortion and misuse of beliefs, political ideologies and ethnic and cultural differences; and leadership and social networks.

As the Plan of Action on PVE affirms, there is no one driver for radicalisation. The broad PVE agenda, covering economic, social, cultural and political structures and systems, thus calls on a ‘whole of nation’ approach for these drivers to be addressed. As noted earlier, the participation of development, peace, and humanitarian agencies, as well as community groups, would be critical in addressing the complex push and pull factors of violent extremism. Many have also argued that the true terrorist is to be found within by raising the mirror of responsibility and looking inside to find only ourselves.

James Madison once said, “Perhaps it is a universal truth that the loss of liberty at home is to be charged to provisions against danger, real or pretended from abroad” (Letter of James Madison to Thomas Jefferson, May 13, 1798). How true these words sound when considering the anti-terrorism legislation that we have been drafting to minimise the risks created by ‘pull and push factors’. Take as an example the UK’s Terrorism Act of 2000 and the Anti-terrorism, Crime and Security Act of 2001. Both have exposed the British government to a number of criticisms, mainly from international NGOs such as Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and other national human rights groups such as Justice and Liberty.

The road that we have taken in preventing the ‘pull and push factors’ of violent extremism is encouraging international society to become more polarised than ever, while the ‘them’ (criminals – terrorists) and ‘us’ (victims) rhetoric dominates political speeches and media presentations. And we have to ask: What will it take for society to finally raise the mirror of responsibility and look well into its reflection? We are the real architects of the social fabric that generates extremist ideologies, which then gradually corrupt universal values such as tolerance and the respect of life, dignity and brotherhood. The extremist ideology that leads those young men and women to inhumane actions is not an alien virus of unknown origin, but a product of our way of living.

Sharing responsibility and the ability to look inside of ourselves also forces us to ask whether a public debate and a restorative dialogue for responsibility-taking might indeed be more fruitful than yet another ‘war on terror’ that could take more freedoms away from those who are most vulnerable such as those in hospitals, care homes, foster care and prisons.

4.2 From the “War on Terror” to Community Prevention

Following the September 11 attacks, the narrative of Western and Asian governments has focussed on the ‘war on terror’. However, as this paper has outlined, communities have risen and gradually responded to this and numerous other narratives (economic, gender, political, and so on). Shifting the focus from ‘war on terror’ to ‘PVE’ has opened up space for the critical participation and leadership of communities and civil society in the prevention of violent extremism.

In a ‘whole-of-society’ approach to PVE from national to sub-national levels, the local communities in Europe and Asia can provide the experience and expertise for any national plan of action. This
is because underlying drivers of radicalisation and violent extremism are intimately manifested at the local level. Community-led interventions supported by local government authorities; the private sector; leaders of communities; professionals; women’s and youth organisations; families; faith-based groups; and social service providers, among others, are crucial to interventions at all stages from pre-radicalisation, radicalisation, engagement in violent extremism, rehabilitation, and reintegration. The challenge in this approach is how to ensure its effectiveness; how to ensure that security sector strategies run alongside civil society, community-led efforts without each cancelling out the other’s gains.

4.3 Women & Prevention of Violent Extremism

It is apparent from the analysis presented in this report that, in both Europe and Asia, the role of women in violent radicalisation can be multifaceted. Women can be the catalyst for change, instigating violent radicalisation or performing violent radical acts, themselves. We have also provided evidence to show that the field of national and international security has so far been gender-blind. Conceived as the purview of men, women have been largely excluded from decision-making processes, and insufficient attention has been given to understanding the gendered nature of violence and extremism. VE is, however, a highly gendered phenomenon. The Global Counter Terrorism Forum (GCTF) manual for ‘Good Practices on Women and Countering VE’ recalls that:

“Women are subjected to a range of gendered experiences based on assumptions about masculine and feminine roles as they relate to economic, political, social and cultural realities. Gender-related assumptions shape available opportunities, rights, recruitment, and roles within organisations for both women and men.”

Understanding the complex gender dynamics sustaining VE and including women in decision-making processes and efforts to prevent it is critical for contemporary security issues and the preservation of women’s and human rights.

The UN, through the UNSCR 2242 (2015) resolution, noted that current violent extremism is posing a serious threat to advances in women’s rights made over the last decades. These threats include strategic attacks on women’s rights and freedoms, including restrictions on freedom of movement, access to education and employment, participation in public life and freedom of expression. The situation is particularly acute in places where VE groups have made territorial advances.

In light of this association of VE with the violation of women’s rights, the UNSCR 2242 (2015) resolution called for States to make a stronger effort to integrate their agendas on women, peace and security, counter-terrorism and countering violent extremism. The 2016 UN Plan of Action to prevent violent extremism puts gender equality and women’s empowerment at the centre of CVE strategies, as one of its seven priority areas. The promotion and protection of women’s rights and the prevention of VE can go hand-in-hand by means of implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, which include achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls as one of its priorities. The document recalls that, “it is also no coincidence that societies for which gender equality indicators are higher are less vulnerable to violent extremism”.

4.4 Youth, Education & Prevention of Violent Extremism

When it comes to violent extremism, young people, whether in Asia or Europe, have been the focus of politicians and the media, but not for the right reasons. This has created an even bigger inter-generation gap and further isolation. We have argued that young people need relevant learning opportunities to develop skills and attitudes that can instigate their resilience against extremist group propaganda. In the context of violent extremism, resilience has been defined as the capability of people, groups and communities to reject proponents of violent extremism when these manifest themselves. Resilience can help young people to build positive actions, rather than engage in violent behaviours.
There is evidence that this resilience can be built through formal and informal education as it can act as the vehicle for engagement even with the most vulnerable of youth. The primary purpose of education is not only to develop knowledge, skills, competencies and to embed fundamental values, but also to help young people – in cooperation with parents and families – to become active, responsible and open-minded members of society.

The UN Secretary-General’s Plan of Action to Prevent VE recognises the importance of quality education to address the drivers of this problem. UNESCO’s Executive Board also adopted a decision that enhances the importance of education as a tool to help prevent violent extremism, as well as war crimes and crimes against humanity.

Even though the right to education has been recognised as a human right in international conventions and as one of the key targets of the Sustainable Development Goals adopted by UN member countries in 2015, many children and youth face barriers in accessing and receiving quality education. Despite considerable gains in education enrolment in the past decade, only 63% of youth accessed upper-secondary school education in 2014, according to the Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals Report by the UN Secretary-General.

Education can take place through both formal and informal routes. It can promote counter-narratives and alternative role-models based on tolerance and democracy. However, it “takes an exceptional level of honesty, integrity and moral judgment to help young people explore their own beliefs without imposing our own.” Considering that social exclusion, as a risk factor for youth radicalisation, is “a process of progressive multidimensional rupturing of the social bond at the individual and collective level,” this type of work can create opportunities for young people to develop healthy behaviour patterns and help them to create positive relations with peers.
Endnotes:

4 Council Framework Decision 2002/475/JHA of 13 June 2002 on Combating Terrorism. Article 1 provides that each Member State shall take the necessary measures to ensure that the intentional acts referred to nine expressly specified offences, as defined under national law, which given their nature and context, may seriously damage a country or an international organisation where committed with the aim of seriously intimidating a population, unduly compelling a Government or international organisation to perform or abstain from performing an act, or seriously destabilising or destroying the fundamental political, constitutional, economic or social structures of a country or an international organisation, shall be deemed terrorist offences.
5 https://epthinktank.eu/2016/07/12/radicalisation-extremism-and-terrorism-words-matter/
7 Convention on Combating International Terrorism adopted by the OIC in 1999
9 A Jacobsen Pushes and Pulls of Radicalisation into VE and Prevention Measures targeting these (May 2017)
13 Search for Common Ground, Transforming VE A Peacebuilder’s Guide pg. 4
14 Ibid
20 Ibid
23 Ibid
25 Ibid
27 Ibid
28 P R Neumann, Countering VE and Radicalisation that Lead to Extremism: Ideas, Recommendations and Good Practices from the OSCE Region, 28 September 2017, https://www.osce.org/chairmanship/346841?download=true
32 Ibid
33 Ibid
34 B Somers, Opinion of the European Committee of the Regions – Combatting radicalisation and violent extremism: prevention mechanisms at local and regional level, 17th July 2017
35 Quora, What is the importance of cultural inheritance
36 B Somers, Opinion of the European Committee of the Regions – Combatting radicalisation and violent extremism: prevention mechanisms at local and regional level, 17th July 2017
40 Ibid
41 Ibid
42 Ibid
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50 S Fataliyeva, Preventing the radicalisation of children by fighting the root causes, 22 June 2015, page 12
51 Ibid
52 Leadership Foundation for Higher Education, The Influencing Push/Pull Model, https://www.lfhe.ac.uk/download.cfm/docid/B7C773E5-E1DD-48D4-B59F2DC1A8D85300
53 Ibid
54 Ibid
56 Ibid
57 Leadership Foundation for Higher Education, The Influencing Push/Pull Model, https://www.lfhe.ac.uk/download.cfm/docid/B7C773E5-E1DD-48D4-B59F2DC1A8D85300
61 The Prevent pillar is designed to combat radicalisation and recruitment into terrorism, which also includes PVE measures. This strategy was revised in June 2014 in light of evolving trends, such as ‘home-grown’ terrorism, foreign fighters, and the use of social media by terrorists. Under this strategy the EU has been developing policy frameworks and implementation measures both inside the EU and worldwide.
63 Ibid


Khalid Koser, “5 ways communities can counter violent extremism” (2015). Available at: [https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2015/05/5-ways-communities-can-counter-violent-extremism/](https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2015/05/5-ways-communities-can-counter-violent-extremism/)

OSCE (2014) n (11)

These are ‘hard-power’ initiatives that target communities for intelligence-gathering and enforcement activities driven by the security priorities of the member state. They involve little or no consultation or partnership with members and groups from the general public.


EC Communication on Supporting the Prevention of Radicalisation Leading to VE, COM (2016) 379 final of 14 June 2016. It emphasised that “the absolute priority must be to prevent more people from being radicalised and ensure that those who already are enter de-radicalisation programmes and are prevented from spreading terrorist propaganda and hate speech”.


Similarly, 2016 UN Plan of Action for the PVE, goes beyond security-centric measures by introducing systemic, multi-tiered and synchronised steps to pre-emptively address conditions precipitating radicalisation and violent extremism.


Arun Kundnani and Ben Hayes, The globalisation of Countering VE policies: Undermining human rights, instrumentalising civil society. Amsterdam, (February 2018)


There is no single socio-demographic profile of a terrorist in the UK Inspired by violent and non-violent, Islamist and right-wing groups.

The stated aim of CONTEST is ‘to reduce the risk to the UK and its interests overseas from terrorism, so that people can go about their lives freely and with confidence.’

CONTEST’s Risk Reduction Model.


HMG 2009:13


Van Gogh was a controversial director and social commentator whose works included a film criticising the treatment of women in Muslim societies.


[www.nuansa.nl/.../Slotervaart-plan-English.doc](http://www.nuansa.nl/.../Slotervaart-plan-English.doc)
95 Preben Bertelsen, Danish Preventive Measures and De-radicalization Strategies: The Aarhus Model 2015
100 RAN (2017a) n (13)
114 https://euaware.eu/#/purpose


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http://girds.org/mothersforlife/mothers-for-life-network

https://www.iars.org.uk/node/1924


Professor Emma Murphy, Durham University.


The current EU Youth Strategy strives to “(a) enable young people to be architects of their own lives, build their resilience and equip them with life skills to cope in a changing world; (b) encourage young people to become active citizens, agents of solidarity and positive change for communities across Europe, inspired by EU values and a European identity; (c) help prevent youth social exclusion and; (d) improve the impact of policy decisions on young people through dialogue and addressing their needs across sectors”.

85
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YouthMetre Project, Belgium. Available at: http://youthmetre.eu/.


According to Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals report by the UN Secretary-General, despite considerable gains in education enrollment in the past decade, access to education, as well as educational inequality in terms of outcomes and unequal distribution of educational resources such as trained teachers, technologies, still constitute a major challenge in education (E/2017/66).


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Aly Jetha, CEO and Founder, Big Bad Boo Studios.


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PRESERVATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS
AN INTRINSIC PART OF PREVENTING VIOLENT EXTREMISM

Rafael de BUSTAMANTE TELLO, Head of Political, Press and Information Section, EU Delegation of the European Union to Indonesia and Brunei Darussalam

(Closing remarks at the 18th Informal ASEM Seminar on Human Rights)

The EU has a strong history of engagement with ASEM in advancing the promotion of human rights. We have enjoyed dialogue and cooperation in this area since 1998 though informal seminars like this one, on topics ranging from freedom of expression and the protection of migrants to the rights of persons with disabilities and human rights and children.

This 18th informal ASEM seminar has made it clear that protecting human rights for the prevention of violent extremism remains a major issue, in Europe and Asia alike. We have had some insightful discussion on this topic over the past few days, and some interesting sharing of best practices.

It is clear that the landscape is changing. New push and pull factors of violent extremism are emerging, and women and children are becoming increasingly involved. Just a few months ago in May in Surabaya, for example, Indonesian families blew themselves up in deadly suicide bomb attacks.

Because of this changing landscape, there has been an increasing focus on the local level as well as on youth and education in the prevention of violent extremism.

Violations of human rights, discrimination and repression by government agencies, sometimes in the name of fighting terrorism, can fuel the very conditions conducive to the spread of violent extremism. The preservation of human rights is therefore an intrinsic part of preventing violent extremism.

This was underscored at the recent ASEM Summit in Brussels last month, where leaders emphasised that measures taken to counter terrorism must comply with all states' obligations under international law, in particular international human rights law, international refugee law and international humanitarian law.

The EU firmly believes that states have a duty to protect the general interest of public security and the rule of law without jeopardising the core of human rights, which are enshrined in particular in the European Convention on Human Rights.

The EU Counter Terrorism Strategy outlines precisely this. All EU counter-terrorism and preventing violent extremism interventions must respect the twin principles of Do No Harm and Do Maximum Good, by ensuring that project interventions do not cause human rights violations, exacerbate divisions between institutions and communities, or worsen existing grievances.

Similarly, the revised EU Strategy for Combating Radicalisation and Recruitment to Terrorism focuses on human rights and the role of the community. It advocates supporting vulnerable groups and individuals so as to build community cohesion and resilience.

The EU also has guidelines for a human rights-based approach to EU actions addressing terrorism. This recognises that preventing radicalisation, recruitment to terrorism and violent extremism requires a complex palette of state and community responses, which in turn leads to the necessity of carefully balancing responses with certain key rights concerns, in particular freedom of expression and information and assembly and association, and respect for linguistic, cultural and religious diversity.
So we try to engage with all aspects of society to ensure human rights and key concerns are addressed. This means focusing on issues such as women’s rights, youth empowerment and education.

For example, the EU’s "Radicalisation Prevention in Prisons" project trains prison officers, psychologists and social workers to enable them to identify and help prevent radicalisation. It focuses on respect for HUMAN RIGHTS in particular by training staff how to detect and appropriately work with potential vulnerable individuals at risk of radicalisation. There is also an e-learning training course.

For the EU, it is clear that the focus should always be on developing dialogue so as to promote mutual awareness and understanding. Our discussions over the past few days – on topics ranging from the role of youth and education to women’s rights – have reiterated this. It’s clear that full respect for human rights and our fundamental freedoms must be one of the foundations for work to prevent violent extremism. All actions must be taken with full respect for fundamental rights and freedoms.

Overall, it is clear that the protection of human rights and the provision of security are not conflicting goals but complementary and mutually reinforcing objectives. Respect for human rights and preventing violent extremism can and must always go hand in hand.

Thank you.
CROSS-BORDER COLLABORATION & COOPERATION ESSENTIAL TO PREVENTION OF VIOLENT EXTREMISM

Associate Professor Dinna WISNU, PhD, Indonesian Representative to the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights

(Closing remarks at the 18th Informal ASEM Seminar on Human Rights)

Excellencies, Distinguished Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen

It is my honour to participate in the 18th Informal ASEM Seminar on Human Rights and Prevention of Violent Extremism.

I am here to represent the human rights body of ASEAN, AICHR, the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights. We are a charter-body of ASEAN with the overarching mandate to promote and protect human rights in ASEAN.

In AICHR, violent extremism has yet to become a priority programme but I am glad to find out, listening to the series of talks and participating in the working groups, that AICHR can contribute to ASEM.

AICHR has engaged youth, women, persons with disabilities, government officials, and law enforcement officials on human rights and ways to empower and elevate their capacity in decision making or as members of society. Not only in normal situations but also under difficult circumstances such as after natural disasters, in the absence of rule of law, in areas prone to trafficking in persons, in areas where political rights and freedom of expression are limited, in areas where weapons roam free, where torture is still practiced, and where civil service organisations cannot yet make meaningful contributions to the development of a human rights-based approach on various topics important to the ASEAN Community.

On behalf of AICHR, I thank you for the opportunity to be engaged in this important endeavour. Now, please allow me to share my observation of our activity in the past few days.

Overall it was a rich process of assessing the players, the followers, the positive contributions and models of Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE) in various countries. It was an open dialogue, a frank, passionate exchange of ideas. My note of caution is that we have yet to reach any conclusive agreement on what we must do that will lead to better PVE at the cross-border level.

PVE is as much a cross-border issue as it is a local and national issue. A lot was shared on local and national approaches and issues but discussion was scanty on the potential for and realisation of cross-border collaborations.

We learned that not all poor, uneducated people, or people of certain religions, when exposed to radical material, would respond with a desire to hurt others, to rise against the system, or to commit suicide in order to terrorise others. There are indeed certain parts of our society that are more vulnerable than others to committing violent extremism. Some systems, especially those that are non-democratic, corrupt, and unfriendly to human rights, are more fertile for PVE.

We need to follow up on how cross-border collaboration and cooperation can help reduce the vulnerability of countries to PVE. We should look at the participation of the public in policy making, in combating corruption, and in capacity building. We must respond to circumstances that lead to
strong dissatisfaction with the government, including situations where genocide and war crimes have crippled people and thus may make a society prone to PVE.

We should ask the question of how to scale-up the hope? How to scale-up the knowledge and skills to respond to the frustrations of people and to bring about constructive change? How to engage the stakeholders?

We need to follow up on this informal meeting and step up our engagement with the 51 member-countries. The coalition of caring stakeholders who are gathered here is precious. I propose that there be a follow-up informal meeting with politicians and opinion-makers as they are important in engaging cross-groups. We need to get them on our side in order to make a difference.

Thank you once again for the opportunity to be here.

Congratulations to the organisers and to all of us.
WHY DIALOGUE BETWEEN ASIA & EUROPE ON HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES IS SO IMPORTANT

Amelita C. AQUINO, Assistant Secretary of the Office of European Affairs of the Department of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Philippines, ASEM Senior Official

(Closing remarks on behalf of the organisers at the 18th Informal ASEM Seminar on Human Rights)

Excellencies, Esteemed Speakers, Moderators, Rapporteurs and Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen.

On behalf of the Department of Foreign Affairs of the Philippines and co-organisers of the ASEM Informal Seminar on Human Rights – the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs of Switzerland, Ministry of Foreign Affairs for Europe of France, the Raoul Wallenberg Institute of Human Rights and Humanitarian Law together with the Asia-Europe Foundation, I would like to thank our host, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, for the excellent arrangements and warm hospitality extended to all the participants and organisers of this seminar.

Our appreciation also goes to all of the speakers, moderators, rapporteurs and participants for your active participation and thoughtful interventions throughout the seminar.

Aside from our fellow co-organisers, we also recognise the contributions made by our other fellow Steering Committee members, which include Indonesia, China, and the European Union. The joint efforts of all those involved in the seminar have made this event a success.

The Informal ASEM Seminar on Human Rights was conceptualised 21 years ago during the 1st ASEM Foreign Ministers Meeting in 1997 in Singapore. The Philippines became a co-organiser in 2011 and to this day we continue to support the seminar series as it provides a platform for dialogue between Asia and Europe on human rights issues. We believe that continuing dialogue between Asian and European officials and civil society representatives will contribute to mutual understanding and appreciation of each other’s priorities, perspectives and positions.

The seminar’s format of having closed door working groups where participants engage in respectful and non-confrontational discussions has allowed for an open, candid and constructive exchange of views and experiences between representatives of civil society and officials from ASEM countries.

Eighteen seminars have been organised thus far covering a wide range of topics, including access to justice, freedom of expression, migration and protection of migrants, gender equality, information and communications technology, the environment, and the rights of children.

The theme of our seminar this year could not be more relevant, especially to the Philippines. The threat of terrorism remains a major challenge to our country and to the other countries in Asia and Europe. It is a challenge that does not recognise nor respect borders. So now more than ever, bilateral, regional and multilateral initiatives and cooperation are important and necessary to respond to violent extremism.

At the same time, we also recognise the need to uphold the rule of law and human rights in preventing violent extremism and in addressing the conditions that lead individuals to embrace it.

At the international, regional, sub-regional and national levels, there are indeed various initiatives, measures and policy approaches addressing the issue of human rights and violent extremism.
This seminar that we are concluding this afternoon has, we believe, notably contributed to the global conversation on a human rights-based approach to preventing violent extremism. The seminar has looked into the drivers of violent extremism, the local approaches as well as the role of gender and the youth. The rich discourse among the participants has generated ideas on how our two regions can address this challenge.

The results of the seminar, the recommendations and ideas that have emerged from the discussions will be shared with ASEM Senior Officials and relevant ASEM institutions.

Going back to your respective countries, we hope that the face-to-face interactions and relationship built among the participants during these three days would facilitate further engagement and translate into concrete collaboration among ASEM Partners in the future.

Once again my sincere appreciation to all of our participants, our host and co-organisers and a safe journey to you all as you go back to your respective countries.

Thank you.
## ANNEX 1: GLOSSARY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AIDA</td>
<td>Alliance for a Peaceful Indonesia</td>
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<tr>
<td>AMAN</td>
<td>Asian Muslim Action Network</td>
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<tr>
<td>AMF</td>
<td>The Australian Multicultural Foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARMM</td>
<td>Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASEAN</td>
<td>Association of South East Asian Nations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASEF</td>
<td>Asia-Europe Foundation</td>
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<tr>
<td>ASEM</td>
<td>Asia-Europe Meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>ASG</td>
<td>Abu Sayyaf Group</td>
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<tr>
<td>ASKOBI</td>
<td>Association for Victims of Terrorism Bombings in Indonesia</td>
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<tr>
<td>AWARE</td>
<td>Alliance for Women Against Radicalisation and Extremism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CoE</td>
<td>Council of Europe</td>
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<tr>
<td>CEP</td>
<td>Community Engagement Programme</td>
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<tr>
<td>CSO</td>
<td>Civil Society Organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>CVE</td>
<td>Countering Violent Extremism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CT</td>
<td>Countering Terrorism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DARE</td>
<td>Dialogue about Radicalisation and Equality</td>
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<tr>
<td>EC</td>
<td>European Commission</td>
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<tr>
<td>ECHR</td>
<td>European Convention on Human Rights</td>
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<tr>
<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
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<tr>
<td>GCTF</td>
<td>Global Counter Terrorism Forum</td>
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<tr>
<td>HR</td>
<td>Human Rights</td>
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<tr>
<td>HRE</td>
<td>Human Rights Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>HIV/AIDS</td>
<td>Human Immuno-deficiency Viruses</td>
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<tr>
<td>ICCT</td>
<td>International Centre for Counter-Terrorism</td>
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<tr>
<td>IPAC</td>
<td>Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict</td>
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<tr>
<td>IRCC</td>
<td>Inter-Racial Confidence Circles</td>
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<tr>
<td>ISEAS</td>
<td>Institute for Southeast Asian Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>ISIS</td>
<td>Islamic State of Iraq and Syria</td>
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<tr>
<td>ISIL</td>
<td>Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant</td>
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<tr>
<td>IYNF</td>
<td>The International Young Naturefriends</td>
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<tr>
<td>JI</td>
<td>Jemaah Islamiyah</td>
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<tr>
<td>LGBT</td>
<td>Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender</td>
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<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-Governmental Organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>NSPCC</td>
<td>National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children</td>
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<tr>
<td>OSCE</td>
<td>Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEF</td>
<td>The Peace and Education Foundation</td>
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<tr>
<td>PVE</td>
<td>Preventing Violent Extremism</td>
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<tr>
<td>P/CVE</td>
<td>Preventing/Countering Violent Extremism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RAN</td>
<td>Radicalisation Awareness Network</td>
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<tr>
<td>SAARC</td>
<td>South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation</td>
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<tr>
<td>SALTO</td>
<td>Support, Advanced Learning and Training Opportunities for Youth</td>
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<tr>
<td>SCO</td>
<td>Shanghai Cooperation Organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Full Form</td>
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<tr>
<td>SDG</td>
<td>Sustainable Development Goals</td>
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<tr>
<td>SEAN-CSO</td>
<td>Southeast Asia Network of Civil Society Organisations on Countering Violent Extremism</td>
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<tr>
<td>SEARCCT</td>
<td>Southeast Asian Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism</td>
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<tr>
<td>UDHR</td>
<td>Universal Declaration of Human Rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNCCT</td>
<td>United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNCTED</td>
<td>United Nations Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>United Nations Education, Science and Culture Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Programme</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNOCT</td>
<td>United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNODC</td>
<td>United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime</td>
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<tr>
<td>VE</td>
<td>Violent Extremism</td>
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<tr>
<td>YEIP</td>
<td>Youth Empowerment and Innovation Project</td>
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</table>
## ANNEX 2: SEMINAR PROGRAMME

### 18th Informal ASEM Seminar on Human Rights: Human Rights and Prevention of Violent Extremism

5-8 November 2018  
Hyatt Regency Hotel, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

**Sunday, 4 November 2018**  
Participants to arrive

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day 1 – Monday, 5 November 2018</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14:00 - 16:00</td>
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<tr>
<td>16:00 - 16:55</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Venue:** Ballroom  
**Chair:** Mr *Achsanul HABIB*, Director, Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia

**Welcome Remarks**

- **Mr SUN Xiangyang**, Deputy Executive Director, Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF)

**Welcome on behalf of the co-organisers:**

- **H.E. Mr Stephan HUSY**, Ambassador-at-Large for Counter-Terrorism, Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, Switzerland (10 min)

**Welcome on behalf of the host:**

- **Mr Abdurrahman Mohammad FACHIR**, Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia (10 min)

**Keynote Addresses**

- **Ms Kate GILMORE**, Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, OHCHR (10 min)

- **Mr Steven SIQUEIRA**, Deputy Director, Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force Office and Counter-Terrorism Centre, Department of Political Affairs, United Nations (10 min)

- **Mr Michael O’FLAHERTY**, Director, European Union Fundamental Rights Agency (video message) (10 min)

<p>| 16:55 - 17:05                     | <strong>Formal Group Photo</strong> |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17:05 - 18:25</td>
<td><strong>Joint Presentation of Background Paper by Main Rapporteurs</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(40 min)</td>
<td>Moderator: <strong>Mr Rolf RING</strong>, Raoul Wallenberg Institute of Human Rights and Humanitarian Law</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- <strong>Ms Irene SANTIAGO</strong>, Lead Convener, #WomenSeriously - Global Campaign on Women, Peace and Security</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- <strong>Dr Theo GAVRIELIDES</strong>, Founder and Director of the IARS International Institute and the Restorative Justice for All Institute</td>
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<tr>
<td>17:45 - 18:25</td>
<td>Plenary Discussion</td>
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<tr>
<td>18:25 - 18:35</td>
<td><strong>Address</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18:25 - 18:35</td>
<td><strong>Ms Barbara LOCHBIHLER</strong>, Member of the European Parliament, Vice-Chair of the Parliament’s Subcommittee on Human Rights, Member of Delegation for relations with the countries of Southeast Asia and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) (10 min)</td>
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<tr>
<td>18:35</td>
<td>End of Plenary</td>
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<tr>
<td>19:00 - 20:30</td>
<td>Welcome Dinner at the invitation of the Host (Venue: Kemangi Bistro, poolside)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Remarks by Ambassador Soemadi D.M. BROTODININGRAT, ASEF Governor of Indonesia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Event</td>
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<tr>
<td>08:00 - 09:00</td>
<td>Registration of Participants (continued)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09:00 - 11:00</td>
<td>Simultaneous Working Groups</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Working Group 1:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Theme:</strong> Push &amp; Pull Factors of Violent Extremism</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Rapporteur:</strong> Dr Theo GAVRIELIDES (IARS International Institute and the Restorative Justice for All Institute, UK)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Moderator Chair:</strong> Dr Irfan AHMAD (Max Planck Institute for the Study of Religious and Ethnic Diversity, Germany)</td>
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<td><strong>Working Group 2:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Theme:</strong> Targeting Violent Extremism at the Local Level</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Rapporteur:</strong> Ms Faiza PATEL (Brennan Center for Justice, US)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Moderator Chair:</strong> Prof Noorhaidi HASAN (Sunan Kalijaga State Islamic University, Yogyakarta)</td>
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<td><strong>Working Group 3:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Theme:</strong> Violent Extremism: Women’s Involvement, Rights &amp; Security</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Rapporteur:</strong> Ms Irene SANTIAGO (#WomenSeriously - Global Campaign on Women, Peace and Security)</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Moderator Chair:</strong> Dr Melissa JOHNSTON (Monash University, Australia)</td>
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<td><strong>Working Group 4:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Theme:</strong> Youth, Education &amp; Prevention of Violent Extremism</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Rapporteur:</strong> Prof Lynn DAVIES (University of Birmingham, UK)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Moderator Chair:</strong> Dr Mohammad Najib AZCA (University of Gadjah Mada, Yogyakarta)</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:00 - 11:15</td>
<td>Coffee Break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:15 - 13:00</td>
<td>Working Groups Continued</td>
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<tr>
<td>13:00 - 14:30</td>
<td>Lunch at Kemangi Bistro</td>
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<tr>
<td>14:30 - 15:30</td>
<td>Working Groups Continued</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15:30 - 16:00</td>
<td>Coffee Break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16:00 - 18:00</td>
<td>Working Groups Continued and Wrap-Up</td>
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<tr>
<td>19:30 - 21:00</td>
<td>Seminar Dinner (Venue: Bogey’s Teras)</td>
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</table>
## Day 3 – Wednesday, 7 November 2018

**Venue:** Ballroom

### 09:30 - 12:30

**Closing Plenary**

*Chair: Mr Henri PLAGNOL, Conseil d’État, France*

### 9:30 - 10:30

**Rapporteurs’ Summary on Each Workshop**

- **Working Group 1 Presentation:** Dr Theo GAVRIELIDES  
  *Push & Pull Factors of Violent Extremism (10 min)*

- **Working Group 2 Presentation:** Ms Faiza PATEL  
  *Targeting Violent Extremism at the Local Level (10 min)*

- **Working Group 3 Presentation:** Ms Irene SANTIAGO  
  *Violent Extremism: Women’s Involvement, Rights & Security (10 min)*

- **Working Group 4 Presentation:** Prof Lynn DAVIES  
  *Youth, Education & Prevention of Violent Extremism (10 min)*

### 10:30 - 11:00

**Coffee break**

### 11:00 - 12:30

**Q&A Session**

### 12:30 - 14:00

**Lunch** (Venue: Kemangi Bistro)

### 4:00 - 16:00

**Panel: Best Practices on Protecting Human Rights for the Prevention of Violent Extremism**

*Moderator: Mr Rolf RING, Raoul Wallenberg Institute of Human Rights and Humanitarian Law*

Panellists:

- **Ambassador Pekka METSO**  
  Ambassador-at-Large for Intercultural and Interreligious Dialogue Processes in the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs (Finland)

- **Dr Mohammad Najib AZCA**  
  Center for Security and Peace Studies, University of Gadjah Mada (Indonesia)

- **Dr Melissa JOHNSTON**  
  Monash University’s Centre for Gender, Peace and Security (Australia)

- **Ms Mossarat QADEEM**  
  Paiman Alumni Trust (Pakistan)

**Q&A Session**

### 16:00 - 16:30

**Coffee Break**
16:30 - 17:15  Official Closing

Chair: Mr Achsanul HABIB, Director, Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia

Closing Remarks by EU Representative

- Mr Rafael De BUSTAMANTE TELLO, First Counsellor, European Union Delegation to Indonesia and Brunei Darussalam

Closing Remarks by AICHR Representative

- Dr Dinna WISNU, Indonesian Representative to the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights, AICHR

Remarks on Behalf of the Host

- Mr Febrian A. RUDDYARD, Director General of Multilateral Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia

Closing on Behalf of the Organisers

- Ms Ma. Amelita C. AQUINO, Assistant Secretary of the Office of European Affairs of the Department of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Philippines, ASEM Senior Official

17:15  End of Programme

19:30 - 21:00  Seminar Dinner (Venue: Merapi Garden)

Day 4 – Thursday, 8 November 2018

08:00 - 13:00  Cultural Visit organised by the local host (Optional)

Departure of Participants

Day 5 – Friday, 9 November 2018

Departure of Participants (continued)
ANNEX 3: CONCEPT NOTE

Introduction

Violent extremism affects the well-being, dignity and security of individuals and communities, and it also poses grave challenges to the protection and enjoyment of human rights. Globally, the occurrence of attacks from violent extremists is increasing and violent extremism has taken the lives of many innocent people of different nationalities, races, gender, age and creed.

Violent extremism is a diverse phenomenon, without clear definition. It is neither new nor exclusive to any region, nationality or belief. While extremists’ violent attacks can never be justified, we must also acknowledge that the ideology fuelling their actions does not arise in a vacuum, as the UN Secretary-General’s Plan of Action states: “Narratives of grievance, actual or perceived injustice, promised empowerment and sweeping change become attractive where human rights are being violated, good governance is being ignored and aspirations are being crushed.”

The root causes of violent extremism are complex, multifaceted and often intertwined. Thus, there is a need for a comprehensive, multi-stakeholder approach which encompasses not only security-based counter-terrorism measures, but also preventive measures which directly address the drivers of the phenomenon. Any measure to prevent violent extremism will need to be anchored in a human rights approach and will need to be carried out in such a manner that specific groups are not targeted, and the enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms are not violated.

The Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) is an intergovernmental forum for dialogue and cooperation established in 1996 to deepen relations between Asia and Europe. The organisation addresses political, economic and socio-cultural issues of common concern. The 18th Informal ASEM Seminar on Human Rights aims to contribute toward a better mutual understanding of violent extremism and its underlying causes, to discuss the human rights impact of measures adopted to prevent violent extremism, as well as to identify good preventive initiatives that are aligned with human rights standards.

Background

Having an internationally recognised definition of violent extremism is crucial for the development of policies and programmes concerned with its prevention. However, despite the numerous prevention-of-violent-extremism initiatives and policy measures addressing violent extremism, a generally agreed-upon understanding of the characteristics specific to violent extremism is yet to emerge and thus the phenomenon remains an ‘elusive concept’.

Furthermore, the terms violent extremism, radicalisation, and terrorism are frequently used interchangeably. While they are closely connected concepts, they should not be understood as simple linear processes. While radicalism, connected to radicalisation, has been said to seek making changes to the existing political and social structure, it does not necessarily lead to violence. Radicalisation has also been described as a context-bound phenomenon with several common ‘push’ and ‘pull’ factors but no single determining feature.

‘Extremism’, on the other hand, has been referred to as the adoption of a particular ideology with the intention to use violence to remove the state or ruling structure and its elites. It may also refer to a belief in or support for ideas that are diametrically opposed to a society’s core values and a willingness to further them through violent means. The terminology of violent extremism has been used to construe a broader and more expansive concept than terrorism, because it accommodates any kind of violence (even non-violent acts) so long as its motivation is deemed extremist.

The elasticity of the term ‘violent extremism’ and the lack of clarity on what leads individuals to embrace violent extremism, however, means that the concept can easily be misused, exploited or
manipulated. In the absence of a clear definition, the term is likely to be utilised to restrict a wide range of lawful activities and expression. Another risk of a poorly defined concept which alludes to a political and social threat is that some governments may apply it as a tool to suppress political opposition or ideological dissent. As noted by the Special Rapporteur on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms while Countering Terrorism, legislation relating to extremism has been used against the activities of non-violent groups, religious texts of non-violent groups, and against journalists and political activists critical of state policy. Furthermore, measures are used increasingly to justify profiling, surveillance and other activities that treat certain communities as de facto suspects, promoting a climate of intolerance and alienating members of these communities.

While the preventing of violent extremism is often presented as a softer approach to countering terrorism and packaged as positive measures, many initiatives have a significant potential to threaten the human rights of equality and freedom from discrimination, the freedoms of expression, association, and religion or belief and the right to privacy. As such, preventive measures may run the risk of being counterproductive and isolating the very communities whose cooperation is most needed to fight violent extremism.

Relevant Human Rights Standards

Preventing violent extremism is a commitment and obligation under the principles and values enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, the ASEAN Human Rights Declaration, and other international human rights instruments.

Human rights are also placed as a red thread throughout the UN Secretary-General’s Plan of Action on Preventing Violent Extremism, in which the following links between human rights and violent extremism are made:

I. Violent extremism poses a direct threat to the enjoyment of human rights;

II. Grievances at the community level may contribute to the rise of violent extremism, and, for example, repressive policies and practices that violate fundamental rights and the rule of law can heighten the lure of violent extremism;

III. Individual experiences of human rights violations, such as torture or violations of due process, can play a role in an individual’s path to radicalisation;

IV. States that embrace international human rights norms and standards, and uphold the rule of law, create an enabling environment for civil society and reduce the appeal to violent extremism.

The Secretary-General’s Plan of Action contains more than 70 comprehensive recommendations for national, regional and international action. Furthermore, the document calls for countries to focus on the “underlying conditions that provide violent extremist groups the opportunity to take root” by providing opportunities for education, employment and inclusion. It also stresses that “over the longer-term, the biggest threat to terrorists is not the power of missiles – it is the politics of inclusion”.

Asia

Due to socio-economic, political, and cultural differences between countries in Asia, there is no regionally coordinated strategy to address violent extremism. Countries have sought to deal with it through various approaches, or combinations thereof, ranging from military measures, socio-economic incentives, and educational policies; as well as the enactment and enforcement of laws to counter terrorism/radicalisation and violent extremism. Furthermore, there is no Asia-wide human rights declaration (unlike in Europe, Africa and the Americas), but there is a sub-regional ASEAN Human
Rights Declaration which was adopted by all the 10 member states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)\textsuperscript{20} in 2012.\textsuperscript{21}

ASEAN has also adopted several documents in relation to the prevention of violent extremism and human rights, including the Manila Declaration to Counter the Rise of Radicalisation and Violent Extremism by the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime in September 2017,\textsuperscript{22} as well as the Joint Statement on Promoting Women, Peace and Security in ASEAN in November 2017.\textsuperscript{23} Although the instruments adopted by ASEAN are not legally binding and are largely characterised as 'soft law', they can influence, act as standard-setters, and provide a helpful framework through which the varied policies addressing prevention of violent extremism and human rights of the ASEAN countries can be coordinated.

The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), which was established in 2001 as a multilateral association to ensure security and maintain stability across the Eurasian region, also pays special attention to the fight against violent extremism, and in 2017 adopted the SCO Convention on Countering Extremism in this regard. Besides aiming at advancing security, increasing effective cooperation between authorities and improving the legal framework in this sphere,\textsuperscript{24} the Convention stresses the need to ensure that preventive efforts respect the rule of law, human rights and freedoms.\textsuperscript{25} The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation has currently eight members,\textsuperscript{26} including the ASEM countries of China, India, Kazakhstan, Pakistan and Russia.

Europe

“There is a compelling duty for states to protect the general interest of public security and the rule of law without jeopardising the core of human rights, which are enshrined notably in the European Convention on Human Rights.” (Commissioner for Human Rights, Council of Europe)\textsuperscript{27}

Preventing violent extremism is a high-priority policy area for which the European Union (EU) has a range of external action tools at its disposal that connect the internal and external dimensions of EU policy in Europe.\textsuperscript{28} While violent extremism is primarily addressed within the context of security-based counter-terrorism measures, all EU interventions to prevent violent extremism are bound to adhere to a ‘do no harm and do maximum good’ principle, meaning that no intervention should cause human rights violations, exacerbate divisions between institutions and communities, or worsen existing grievances.\textsuperscript{29} Furthermore, all preventive measures undertaken by member states of the EU must be in compliance with the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, and respect the right to private life, the right to security, the right to data protection, the presumption of innocence, the right to a fair trial and due process, freedom of expression and freedom of religion; while preserving the right to liberty and security of European citizens.\textsuperscript{30}

The EU has issued several policies and communications relating to violent extremism.\textsuperscript{31} In 2016, the European Commission issued a Communication on Supporting the Prevention of Radicalisation Leading to Violent Extremism in which it calls for a comprehensive approach in “preventing radicalisation to violent extremism”. The document stresses that violent extremism is a complex phenomenon that calls for an in-depth knowledge and a multi-faceted response across several policy areas and various actors, including authorities and civil society at a local, regional and European level.\textsuperscript{32} The communication identifies seven key areas related to the prevention of violent extremism, including the promotion of inclusive education and EU common values, and an open and resilient society, which reaches out to its younger generations.\textsuperscript{33}

Push and Pull Factors

The push and pull factors related to violent extremism are multiple and interrelated and vary significantly between different contexts, groups and individuals. According to Muhsin Hassan (2012),
push factors are “the negative social, cultural, and political features of one’s societal environment that aid in ‘pushing’ vulnerable individuals onto the path of violent extremism”. These variables are also commonly known as “underlying/root causes” and spring from dissatisfaction relating to personal or political circumstances. These can include perceptions of injustice and marginalisation and other individual experiences of human rights violations.

Pull factors, in contrast, refer to the characteristics of an extremist group that are perceived as positive by new recruits and may persuade vulnerable individuals to become drawn in. For example, a violent extremist group may be a source of services and employment for some of its recruits. Simultaneously, vulnerable young persons may view the very same organisation as a promised sense of belonging, acceptance and a pathway to establishing identity. Other individuals may be pulled towards extremist groups due to their ideology, or by social ties, recruitment narratives and media.

Although experts have identified some common ‘push’ and ‘pull’ factors that help explain why some individuals become involved in violent extremism, it must be kept in mind that there is no single cause or pathway into violent extremism and no archetype of a violent extremist.

Also, while there is research available on the social, psychological, and contextual factors that may render some individuals susceptible to religious-based extremism, there remains very little evidence of what drives other forms of violent extremism, such as ethno-nationalist extremist violence, despite the increase in its occurrence. Although violent extremist groups have been found to use the internet and social media to their advantage, it is unclear whether this kind of internet usage, or the resulting exposure of extremist narratives to the public, stands in direct correlation to an increase of extremist attacks or the attempted recruitment through extremist organisations.

Impact on Human Rights of Measures to Prevent Violent Extremism

Measures taken by governments to prevent violent extremism are diverse and include a wide array of initiatives which are intended to target different groups of individuals or local communities and involve diverse series of activities. Some measures target ‘extremist’ speech and restrict free expression, while some focus on building community resilience or addressing the underlying conditions that may drive individuals to join violent extremist groups. Some countries also provide programmes involving individual interventions, such as counselling or mentoring.

However, some of the measures have the potential to violate specific fundamental human rights and freedoms. From a human rights perspective, measures that target individuals or groups based on misconceptions about their susceptibility to violent extremism are particularly concerning as such an approach can be discriminatory and stigmatise various groups and communities (minority, ethnic, religious or indigenous groups). This approach is also in conflict with Article 26 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) which guarantees equal and effective protection against discrimination on any ground, as well as equality before the law and equal protection of the law.

Furthermore, initiatives to prevent violent extremism also carry some risk of negatively affecting the right to privacy, as well as the freedoms of expression, association, and religion or belief, which are also guaranteed by the ICCPR.

Measures taken on the basis of suspicion may violate fair trial guarantees or other human rights standards such the presumption of innocence or due process, while measures that involve educational institutions can have a potential to infringe on the right to education. Some countries have also considered amending aspects of their national legislation to prevent the internal movement or entry of individuals considered to be ‘extremist’, which can have a serious impact on freedom of movement of the individual and on the right of refugees from protection under the 1951 Convention.
Community-driven Initiatives

As the drivers of violent extremism vary within as well as between countries, it is the local communities that are arguably the most conveniently placed to understand what these drivers are, why they change, and how best to address them. Also, community-led initiatives are considered to be more effective than national or regional approaches due to their flexibility in preventing violent extremism on a case-by-case level.

Community actors have an important role to play in education, advocacy, oversight, and as service providers, and they can also help to align prevention of violent extremism measures with respect for human rights and the rule of law. Furthermore, community-based approaches can be effective in building resilience against violent extremism and promoting social cohesion and tolerance.

According to a global survey by the Center for Strategic and International Studies on Global Perceptions of Violent Extremism, a significant majority of the respondents supported community-led efforts and targeted, prolonged information campaigns to undermine extremists’ narratives and ideologies, while half of the respondents indicated that their governments’ response to containing and preventing violent extremism was inadequate and that military efforts to date had not worked. Despite this, civil society actors remain an underutilised resource, and local communities often find themselves excluded from policy dialogue on the prevention of violent extremism. In contrast to the latter survey findings, the important role of civil society organisations and local communities in developing and implementing responses to violent extremism is increasingly recognised by national, regional, and multilateral actors, and a number of UN resolutions, statements and communications issued by the EU and ASEAN call for a comprehensive approach to prevention of violent extremism that engages civil society and communities.

The UN Secretary General’s Plan of Action on Preventing Violent Extremism stresses the need for member states to “develop joint and participatory strategies, including with civil society and local communities, to prevent the emergence of violent extremism”. The ASEAN Ministers have acknowledged “the role of civil society organisations, private sector and non-government organisations in collaboration with ASEAN Member States, preventing the process of radicalisation leading to violent extremism” and the need for development of an “integrated, evidence-based approach to addressing the threats of the rise of radicalisation and violent extremism by engaging communities and empowering women and youth”.

Similarly, the EU has expanded its approach beyond ‘hard-power’ initiatives and law enforcement interventions and has recognised the need for inclusion and participation of multiple civil society players. In the Global Strategy for the European Union’s Foreign and Security Policy, the EU agrees to “deepen dialogue with the UN, while building broad partnerships with states, regional organisations, civil society and the private sector on issues such as countering violent extremism”. The world’s largest security organisation, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), has similarly reinforced the importance of involving civil society in efforts to prevent violent extremism, and also highlighted the need to increase civil society organisations’ awareness about ways in which they can contribute to the prevention of violent extremism.

Violent Extremism & Women

The roles of women in relation to violent extremism have remained less explored by policy makers and practitioners, despite the participation of women in violent extremism and their critical roles in its prevention.

Women are often viewed as being highly influential in families, communities, and governments, and owing to this, they can play critical roles in detecting and preventing violent extremism. Since women are strategically positioned at the centre of the family, it has been suggested, for example, that they can help build resilience within their communities starting from their own families and respond to
children’s early signs of violent extremism. Critics have, however, observed that efforts to include women have tended to focus more on women’s engagement at the informal level (e.g. as mothers and wives) and less on women’s roles as policy shapers, activists and educators.

Besides their involvement in prevention, women are also active agents engaging in violent extremist movement, and it has been estimated that women account for approximately 20 to 30% of membership of terrorist groups. The number of women providing active support or encouragement for violent extremists in their own families and communities has increased substantially in recent years, while many are also joining the fight on the battlefield or playing an operational role in a terrorist attack. It is estimated that around 17% of all individuals travelling to the battlefields of Syria and Iraq are women.

Although the role of women as actors of violent extremism remains relatively unexplored, the research seems to suggest that women are driven to violent extremism by many of the same factors that motivate their male counterparts. Women’s motivations are said to include: adherence to a particular political ideology or religious belief; grievance and concern with injustice; a desire for revenge, redemption, or honour; an aspiration to spur societal change; or a drive for power or adventure. Furthermore, women and girls often experience distinct ‘push’ factors that increase their vulnerability to recruitment as well as specific ‘pull’ factors that violent extremist organisations use to target and recruit females.

Besides women’s varied roles in aiding, abetting and preventing violent extremism, women and girls are often targeted by violent extremists for gender-based violence, including abductions, forced marriages, sexual violence, attacks on women human rights defenders and leaders, restrictions on girls’ access to education, and on their freedom of movement. Thus, prevention of these attacks, providing protection for women and girls who are most at risk, rejecting societal acceptance, prosecuting perpetrators, and providing assistance for female survivors are essential actions which should be undertaken as part of the efforts to prevent violent extremism.

The gender dimension of violent extremism has started to draw more interest in recent years, and the roles of women in addressing violence and extremism have been highlighted, for example, in a number of Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF) meetings and workshops, where it has been noted that women are critical stakeholders and can actively help prevent violent extremism. The European Union has also started to recognise the relevance of including a gender perspective in all its efforts and now considers women as potential partners in its efforts in the prevention of violent extremism. Additionally, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has made a number of commitments to address gender equality and the roles of women in conflict and violent extremism in its recently adopted Joint Statement on Promoting Women, Peace and Security in ASEAN.

The roles of women in peace and conflict resolution have been emphasised in several UN instruments, most notably in UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and subsequent resolutions on women, peace, and security. In his Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism (2015), the UN Secretary-General also places a significant emphasis on gender and noted in particular that ‘societies for which gender indicators are higher are less vulnerable to violent extremism’. The Secretary-General further recommended that gender perspectives be mainstreamed across all efforts to prevent violent extremism and that efforts to counter extremism must include efforts to empower women.

Youth, Education & Prevention of Violent Extremism

“Disarming the process of radicalisation must begin with human rights and the rule of law, with dialogue across all boundary lines, by empowering all young women and men, and by starting as early as possible on the benches of schools.” (UNESCO)

As youth are often marginalised from local and national development gains, they are particularly vulnerable to economic shocks, social instability, and conflicts. Furthermore, young people are often left out of decision-making processes, which limits their potential to determine their own future.
Young people who feel disengaged and isolated by their community may, in turn, be more vulnerable to being influenced by ‘pull’ factors and therefore more susceptible to violent extremism. Besides being at higher risk of being drawn into violent extremism, young people are also likely targets of recruitment strategies of violent extremists. As the most active media consumers, young people are particularly vulnerable to extremist narratives which are propagated across various online platforms.

Education is one of the most important tools to reach young people and can be used to address some of the push and pull factors that may drive young people towards violent extremism. Education can act as a preventive measure by making young people more resilient citizens and by strengthening their emotional, intellectual and psychological development, but it can also play a role in promoting respect for diversity, inclusion and human rights. Furthermore, good education enables people to obtain jobs, qualify for higher income levels and generate productivity gains which fuel economic development. Education can also help youth to counter violent extremism narratives by helping them to become critical thinkers and equipping them with, for example, media and information literacy.

At the same time, however, education can be leveraged to radicalise young people, and used to exacerbate existing tensions and divisions, foster exclusion and inequality, and promote harmful ideologies and behaviour. Thus, while it is important that education is inclusive, non-discriminatory and encouraging of participation and multiple viewpoints, education initiatives should also look beyond the classroom and into the broader mechanisms of governance and representation to address the root causes that underlie different forms of violence and violent extremism.

However, while the right to education has been recognised as a human right in various international conventions and as one of the key targets of the Sustainable Development Goals adopted by UN member countries in 2015, many children and youth face barriers in accessing and receiving quality education. Despite considerable gains in education enrolment in the past decade, only 63% of youth accessed upper secondary school education in 2014, according to the Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals Report by the UN Secretary-General. Additionally, in nearly 80% of the countries included in the report, more than one in 10 youths were neither in the educational system nor working. Youth were also almost three times as likely as adults to be unemployed.

The importance of addressing violent extremism in relation to its impact on youth and through education has recently gained global attention. The issue has been acknowledged, for example, through the passing of the UN Security Council Resolution 2250 on Youth, Peace, and Security. Furthermore, the UN Secretary-General’s Plan of Action on Preventing Violent Extremism (2015) highlights the importance of quality education in reducing poverty and social marginalisation, as well as in fostering respect for human rights and diversity, developing critical thinking, promoting media and digital literacy, and contributing to peaceful coexistence and tolerance. The relationship between education and violent extremism has also been underscored in the recently adopted Manila Declaration to Counter the Rise of Radicalisation and Violent Extremism as well as in the EU’s Shared Vision, Common Action: A Stronger Europe. A Global Strategy for the European Union’s Foreign and Security Policy.

18th Informal ASEM Seminar on Human Rights

The Informal ASEM Seminar on Human Rights series was launched in 1997 to deepen relations between civil society actors and governments in Asia and Europe on human rights issues. The Seminar series is co-organised by the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF), the Raoul Wallenberg Institute (nominated by the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs), the French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, the Philippine Department of Foreign Affairs, and the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs. The 18th Informal ASEM Seminar on Human Rights is hosted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia.
Participation in the 18th Informal ASEM Seminar on Human Rights will take place in four simultaneous working group discussions (on Day 2) on the four following topics:

1. **Push & Pull Factors of Violent Extremism**

2. **Targeting Violent Extremism at the Local Level**

3. **Violent Extremism: Women’s Involvement, Rights & Security**

4. **Youth, Education & Prevention of Violent Extremism**

In addition to the guiding questions specific to each working group, there are cross-cutting questions which are valid across all the four working groups. The cross-cutting questions and the working group questions are the following:

**Cross-cutting Questions**

1. Which attributes would have to be captured in the definition of ‘prevention of violent extremism’ in order for it to reflect both Asian and European agency, while demonstrating awareness of historical and cultural contexts?

2. To what extent does the lack of data and lack of consensus on conceptual definitions affect the efforts regarding preventing violent extremism? How can the situation be improved?

3. The Former UN Secretary-General, BAN Ki-moon, stated in 2016 that “short-sighted policies, failed leadership, heavy-handed approaches, a single-minded focus only on security measures and an utter disregard for human rights have often made things worse”\(^97\) From your country’s perspective, do you agree with this?

4. The World Organisation for Resource Development and Education has proposed a cluster model of five potential risk factors which could lead to radicalisation: Sociological Motivators, Economic Factors, Political Grievances, Psychological Factors, as well as Ideology, Beliefs & Values. How can ASEM and its partners contribute to the mitigation of these risk factors and, thus, the prevention of violent extremism?

5. Why does tolerance/social and cultural integration not suffice as a quick fix in the prevention of violent extremism?

6. As ‘hate speech’ increasingly fills online news forums and appears on social media feeds, freedom of expression has become one of the most controversially debated intersections between human rights concerns and the prevention of violent extremism. Should national governments have the last word on their citizens’ online interactions?

7. Media outreach is a powerful tool in awareness-raising and activism. How can online initiatives manifest themselves in ‘real-life’ prevention of violent extremism?

8. The priority of human rights stakeholders in pursuit of preventing violent extremism should be...
   a) Changes in policy or changes in law?
   b) Agency on a local or on a regional level?
   c) Implementations from the top down or bottom-up?
**Push & Pull Factors of Violent Extremism**

1. The United Nations Secretary-General described violent extremism as neither new nor exclusive to any region, nationality or system of belief, but rather as a phenomenon that can be triggered when human rights are violated. Which of these violations could constitute drivers of violent extremism? (United Nations, 2015)

2. Many ASEM countries have committed to adopting measures aimed at addressing the conditions conducive to violent extremism, including the lack of the rule of law and violations of human rights. More concretely, how can the promotion and protection of human rights contribute to the prevention of violent extremism?

3. It has been suggested that the measures addressing prevention of violent extremism have focused mainly on religious ideology as the driver of extremism, while other forms of extremist behaviour have been overlooked. What are the implications of this?

4. According to Dr Magnus RANSTORP, violent extremism can be best conceptualised as a kaleidoscope of factors creating infinite individual combinations.98 In light of this, can profiling be justified as a tool in the identification of persons who are vulnerable to the outreach of violent extremist organisations?

5. How can education address some of the push and pull factors that are linked to violent extremism?

6. Which factors make young adults increasingly vulnerable to the outreach of violent extremists?

**Targeting Violent Extremism at the Local Level**

1. The right to directly and indirectly participate in political and public life is important in empowering individuals and groups and is one of the core elements of human rights-based approaches aimed at eliminating marginalisation and discrimination (OHCHR). How can community participation in the decision-making processes with respect to preventing violent extremism be enhanced and made more inclusive? Can you think of any good examples related to inclusive participation?

2. An article by the Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict on guest workers’ draw towards different violent extremist groups states that “while the workers were systematically underpaid and exploited, this abuse was not a direct factor in radicalisation [...] the search for a sense of community in an unfamiliar environment may have been more important”. How could this have been avoided? (IPAC, 2017)

3. How can local companies in the private sector contribute – in a manner that does not negatively impact on any human rights – to the prevention of violent extremism?

4. What mechanisms need to be put into place so a regional agency regarding prevention of violent extremism can be manifested in communities?

5. Can community-led initiatives on the prevention of violent extremism be scaled up to a national or regional level since the drivers of violent extremism vary across contexts?

6. Thus far, little attention has been paid to the economic and socio-political environment in which individuals become drawn to extreme measures to express hatred or dissatisfaction. What role can local community leaders play in negating such clashes?
7. While prevention-of-violent-extremism programmes may bring needed resources to communities (e.g. in the form of humanitarian aid or development assistance), they may also run the risk of isolating communities whose support is critical to the effectiveness of the programmes. How can this be avoided?

8. From shaping attitudes toward non-violence to serving as a ‘front line’ actor in identifying early signs of violent extremism and intervening in the process, families can represent invaluable allies in prevention-of-violent-extremism efforts. How can (and should) families’ involvement in prevention of violent extremism be encouraged and enhanced?

**Violent Extremism: Women’s Involvement, Rights & Security**

1. What makes the involvement of women indispensable to the prevention of violent extremism?

2. While women play an important part in the prevention of violent extremism, they are often denied the chance to play this role in many environments at the community level. How can women’s involvement in prevention efforts be encouraged and enhanced?

3. Peace is inextricably linked to equality between men and women, and violence, including extremist violence, is underpinned by gender inequality (UN Security Council resolution 1325). How can a gendered approach improve responses to violent extremism?

4. Why have women and girls mainly been alluded to as victims or bystanders of violent extremism, as opposed to potential actors in the prevention thereof?

5. How can communities protect girls and women from being used as catalysts of violent extremist agendas? Consider the roles of mothers, in particular.

6. In many cases, women and girls are stripped of their basic human rights due to geopolitical proximities to violent extremism. Can a discourse exist between the suppressed and their role in the prevention of future oppression?

**Youth, Education & Prevention of Violent Extremism**

1. Should a part of school teachers’ responsibility lie in monitoring their students’ attitudes and flagging irregular behaviour? What are the possible implications of this?

2. To what extent can media and information literacy counter precursors of violent extremism?

3. Albert BANDURA’s social cognitive theory of moral disengagement suggests that violent extremism appears where a person disengages from their moral standards. Usually, moral conduct is attained through socialisation processes; it has been argued that reinforcements of a person’s moral awareness may prevent them from being influenced by violent extremism. How can this theory be applied in practice?

4. ‘Peace education’ is a term which has often been used to refer to an early fostering of peaceful coexistence and tolerance amongst youth. Which educational components are essential tools in this endeavour?

5. According to basic human rights, children and teenagers should be spending most of their time in a classroom environment. Inevitably, students may find themselves in situations at school or at home which demand judgement beyond their scope of experience. Which pathways can the education sector provide for these students to raise their concerns or observations safely and in confidence?

6. How can youth groups/peer-led programmes become involved in the prevention of violent extremism?
Endnotes:

1 A/70/674, para 2. (available at: http://www.undp.org/content/dam/norway/undp-ogc/documents/SG%20PVE%20plan%20of%20action.pdf)
2 A/70/674, para 3.
3 Ibid.
6 A/HRC/31/65, para 19.
8 ‘Violence’ as defined by the World Health Organization (WHO): “the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment, or deprivation.”
11 According to e.g. H. Mirahmadi (2016), violent extremist worldviews are often framed within binary “us versus them”, “good versus evil”, or “right versus wrong” rhetoric, all of which represent value monism, p.135.
14 Many states have sought to adopt new legislation to criminalise “extremist” speech, by creating offences such as encouragement, glorification of terrorism or lending material support to terrorism. See A/HRC/31.65, para 39.
17 A/HRC/31/65, para 54.
20 Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Laos, Myanmar, Cambodia, Vietnam & Brunei
China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, India and Pakistan..


For example, the European Commission’s Communication on “Preventing Radicalisation to Terrorism and Violent Extremism: Strengthening the EU’s response of January 2014” the European Agenda on Security of April 2015, as well as the Council conclusions on the Renewed Internal Security Strategy of June 2015, which address issued of disengagement, rehabilitation and de/anti-radicalisation as priority issues for action.


Ibid.


i.e. poverty, unemployment, illiteracy, discrimination, and political / economic marginalization.

Hassan, Muhsin (2012).


A/HRC/31/65, para 36.

See e.g. ‘the Aarhus model ’in Denmark, or ‘the Mechelen model’ in Belgium.

According to a study conducted by Durham University in 2011, both Muslim and no-Muslim members of the community in the UK felt that counter-terrorism law and policy generally was contributing towards hostility to Muslims by treating Muslims as a ‘suspect group’, and creating a climate of fear and suspicion towards them. See Choudhury, Tufyal & Fenwick, Helen (2011). The impact of counter-terrorism measures on Muslim communities. International Review of Law, Computers & Technology, 25:3, 151-181.


According to the UN Special Rapporteur on the right to privacy, there is no one piece of national surveillance legislation which perfectly complies with and respects the right to privacy (March 2018).

The UN Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression has noted that the prevention of violent extremism measures adopted by countries are rarely drawn narrowly enough to satisfy the necessity or proportionality criteria, see United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner (2016). Special Rapporteur on the Promotion and Protection of the Right to Freedom of Opinion and Expression. Annual Report. A/71/373, para 23.


Covered in articles 14 and 15 in ICCPR.

A/HRC/31/65, para 41


The survey included respondents from 8000 participants in eight countries: China, Egypt, France, India, Indonesia, Turkey, the United Kingdom, and the United States.


Khalid Koser (2015). *5 ways communities can counter violent extremism*. Available at: https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2015/05/5-ways-communities-can-counter-violent-extremism/.


Manila Declaration to Counter the Rise of Radicalisation and Violent Extremism, adopted in September 2017


A/HRC/31/65, para 53.

https://www.osce.org/secretariat/99919?download=true


See e.g. Europol’s annual EU Terrorism Situation and Trend Report 2017.


75 Ibid.

76 Global International Forum (GCTF) is an international forum of 29 countries and the European Union.


78 From Theory to Action (2017).


80 Ibid.


91 According to Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals report by the UN Secretary-General, despite considerable gains in education enrolment in the past decade, access to education, as well as educational inequality in terms of outcomes and unequal distribution of educational resources such as trained teachers, technologies, still constitute a major challenge in education (E/2017/66, para 8).

92 E/2017/66, paras 8 and 12.


ANNEX 4: ABOUT THE CO-ORGANISERS

The Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) promotes understanding, strengthens relationships and facilitates cooperation among the people, institutions and organisations of Asia and Europe. ASEF enhances dialogue, enables exchanges and encourages collaboration across thematic areas of culture, education, governance, economy, sustainable development, public health and media.

ASEF is an intergovernmental not-for-profit organisation located in Singapore. Founded in 1997, it is the only institution of the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM).

ASEF runs more than 25 projects a year, consisting of around 100 activities, mainly conferences, seminars, workshops, lectures, publications and online platforms, together with about 150 partner organisations. Each year over 3,000 Asians and Europeans participate in ASEF’s activities, and much wider audiences are reached through its various events, networks and web-portals.

For more information, please visit www.ASEF.org

The Raoul Wallenberg Institute of Human Rights and Humanitarian Law is an independent academic institution dedicated to the promotion of human rights through research, training and education. Established in 1984 at the Faculty of Law at Lund University, Sweden, the institute is currently involved in organising in Lund two Masters Programs and an interdisciplinary human rights programme at the undergraduate level. Host of one of the largest human rights libraries in the Nordic countries and engaged in various research and publication activities, the Raoul Wallenberg Institute provides researchers and students with a conducive study environment. The Institute maintains extensive relationships with academic human rights institutions worldwide.

For more information, please visit www.rwi.lu.se

The Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs of France, as a founding member of ASEM, is pleased to have supported the ASEM human rights dialogue since its inception in 1997. For more information, please visit www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/

The Department of Foreign Affairs of the Philippines is the prime agency of the Philippine government responsible for the pursuit of the State’s foreign policy. It is also responsible for the coordination and execution of the foreign policies of the country and the conduct of its foreign relations.

For more information, please visit www.dfa.gov.ph

The Federal Department of Foreign Affairs of Switzerland (FDFA) forms and coordinates Swiss foreign policy on behalf of the Federal Council, pursues foreign policy objectives, safeguards the interests of Switzerland and promotes Swiss values.

For more information, please visit www.eda.admin.ch
ANNEX 5: ABOUT THE HOST

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia was the proud host of ASEMHR518.

For more information, please visit https://kemlu.go.id/portal/id
The Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) is an intergovernmental process established in 1996 to foster dialogue and cooperation between Asia and Europe.

The 53 ASEM Partners are Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, Belgium, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Cambodia, China, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Korea, The Lao PDR, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Malta, Mongolia, Myanmar, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan, the Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, the Russian Federation, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, the United Kingdom, Viet Nam, the European Union and the ASEAN Secretariat.

For more information, please visit www.ASEMinfoboard.org
ANNEX 7: BACKGROUND ON THE INFORMAL ASEM SEMINAR ON HUMAN RIGHTS SERIES

The aim of the Informal ASEM Seminar on Human Rights is to promote mutual understanding and co-operation between Europe and Asia in the area of political dialogue, particularly on human rights issues.

Previous seminar topics include:

- Access to Justice; Regional & National Particularities in the Administration of Justice; Monitoring the Administration of Justice (1997, Lund, Sweden)
- Differences in Asian & European Values; Rights to Education; Rights of Minorities (1999, Beijing, China)
- Economic Relations; Rights of Multinational Companies & Foreign Direct Investments (2003, Lund, Sweden)
- International Migrations; Protection of Migrants, Migration Control & Management (2004, Suzhou, China)
- Human Rights & Gender Equality (2010, Manila, Philippines)
- National & Regional Human Rights Mechanisms (2011, Prague, Czech Republic)
- Human Rights and Information and Communication Technologies (2012, Seoul, Korea)
- Human Rights & the Environment (2013, Copenhagen, Denmark)
- Human Rights & Businesses (2014, Hanoi, Viet Nam)
- Human Rights & Trafficking in Persons (2015, Montreux, Switzerland)
- Persons & Disabilities and Human Rights (2016, Beijing, China)

The Seminar series is co-organised by the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF), the Raoul Wallenberg Institute (nominated by the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs), the French Ministry for Europe & Foreign Affairs, the Philippine Department of Foreign Affairs and the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs of Switzerland. ASEF has acted as the Secretariat of the Seminar since 2000.

Supervision of the seminar is entrusted to a Steering Committee, composed of the Seminar’s five co-organisers as well as representatives of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of China and Indonesia & the European Union.

The 18th Informal ASEM Seminar on Human Rights (ASEMHRS18) is co-organised by:

ASEMHRS18 was hosted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia

Co-funded by the European Union

With the support of the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
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