

## BRITISH AMBASSADOR TO SAUDI ARABIA VISITS IMCTC CENTER

The IMCTC Secretary-General, Maj. Gen. Mohammed Saeed Al-Moghedi, received on Monday September 14, 2020 H.E. the UK Ambassador to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Neil Crompton, and the accompanying delegation. His Excellency was well provided with a detailed background on the IMCTC efforts in counterterrorism across the four main domains of action and the vital role which the IMCTC plays to better coordinate and intensify the efforts of the IMCTC member countries.

His Excellency paid tribute to the efforts made by IMCTC in establishing strategic partnerships between the IMCTC member countries, supporting countries and international organizations, and while also enhancing continued cooperation with all countries all over the world to better raise counterterrorism capabilities, share best practices, information and experiences, and support international efforts aimed at maintaining international peace and security.

On his part, Maj. Gen. Al-Moghedi highlighted that the British Ambassador's visit comes within the framework of enhancing joint cooperation between IMCTC and supporting countries. The United Kingdom is one of the supporting countries of IMCTC. It is worth noting that the United Kingdom has signed a memorandum of cooperation with IMCTC to coordinate the partnership between the two sides in sharing information, supporting capabilities and initiatives, conducting research and providing training courses and workshops. ■



## THE NINTH IMCTC SYMPOSIUM DISCUSSES COUNTERING EXTREMIST IDEOLOGY



IMCTC held its ninth symposium Wednesday, 30 September, featuring presentations by the delegates of the Republic of The Gambia and Sierra Leone. The participants discussed extremist ideology, its historical dimensions, its impact on terrorism and approaches to counter it.

The IMCTC Secretary-General mourned Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Emir of the State of Kuwait, offering condolences to the Kuwaiti delegate to IMCTC, while praying for late Emir to rest in peace.

With the symposium moderated by Colonel Simon Sharif, Lieutenant Colonel, Mukhtar Tijani reviewed the definition and emergence of extremist ideology, noting that extremist ideology is a breeding ground for terrorist groups, using it to drum up for recruitment, mobilization and deliberate distortion of Islam. ...Page 2

## IMCTC COMMEMORATES THE 90TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NATIONAL DAY OF THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA



IMCTC held an official celebration ceremony, marking the 90th Anniversary of the National Day of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the IMCTC Headquarters country. The attendance was spearheaded by the IMCTC Secretary-General, Major General Mohammad Saeed Al-Moghedi, along with the delegates to the IMCTC and the IMCTC personnel.

Delegate of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to IMCTC, Brigadier General Yahya Mohammed Asiri, delivered a speech, paying tribute to the great efforts made by the Kingdom for the Muslim world and counterterrorism domains.

Major General Al-Moghedi highlighted the vital role played by the Kingdom to support IMCTC to further reject extremist and violent ideology. ■

# IMCTC Secretary-General Mourns Death of Emir of Kuwait

## THE NINTH IMCTC SYMPOSIUM DISCUSSES COUNTER-EXTREMIST IDEOLOGY



IMCTC held its ninth symposium in its headquarters in Riyadh on Wednesday, 30 September. The symposium included presentations by the delegates of the Republic of The Gambia and the Republic of Sierra Leone to IMCTC. The participants discussed extremist ideology, as Ideology is one of the domains of action of IMCTC. The symposium provided a definition of extremist ideology and discussed its historical dimensions, its impact on terrorism and approaches to counter it.

At the outset, the IMCTC Secretary-General mourned Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Emir of the State of Kuwait, offering his condolences to the delegate of the state of Kuwait to IMCTC, Brigadier Nawwaf bin Nasser Al-Jatili, while praying for late Emir to rest in peace and for the Kuwaiti people to exercise patience and solace; may Allah safeguard and protect the Kuwaiti government and people.

The said symposium was moderated by retired Colonel Dr. Simon Sharif, Head of the Sierra Leone Delegation to the IMCTC, former Deputy Minister of Defense. Lieutenant Colonel, Mukhtar Tijani, delegate of the media domain of the said delegation, reviewed the definition of extremist ideology, highlighting that thought per se is a powerful and influential tool in communicating messages that address human consciousness to catalyze people to do something, which is an ever-changing and evolving concept. Equally important, extremist ideology channels events into ideological interpretations, fueling vio-

lence, triggered by political motives, while also contributing to setting up an organizational structure, establishing leadership, membership and recruitment.

Terrorist groups such as Al-Qaeda, ISIS, and Boko Haram have developed their extremist ideologies by perverting religious scriptures and political issues, using such made-up ideologies to lure and recruit their members, supporters and sympathizers. Taken together, extremist ideology paves the way for extremist groups to decoy their followers from all walks of life. Combined together, ideology for IMCTC is one of the four key domains to counter terrorism alongside with the bedrock principles of Islam, showcased by moderation, tolerance, compassion and counter-rhetoric of extremism.

### HISTORY OF EXTREMIST IDEOLOGY

Colonel Mukhtar Tijani traced the emergence of extremism back to the beginnings of the French Revolution, when the terminology of leftist and rightist ideologies came to prominence in 1789. Against such dichotomy and ambivalence, the members of the National Assembly had divided themselves into two factions: the supporters of the then king would sit on the right side; while, the supporters of the revolution would sit on the left side. As a result, the press later nicknamed each of these two groups rightist and leftist respectively. Following the abolition of the National Assembly, being then replaced by

the Legislative Assembly, the said tradition so continued.

As modern politics dictates, there are different ideologies that have developed over the course of time, which are derivatives from socialism, liberalism and conservatism. This encompasses far-right and far-left ideologies, such as Marxism and Fascism. Newer ideologies came into existence, such as neoliberalism, neoconservatism and others. Thus, it can be said that society was divided for centuries, and that these ideological divisions have grown more deepened in our time.

Colonel Tijani discussed the impact of extremist ideology on terrorism, highlighting that it is a breeding ground for terrorism to mushroom. It is for this telling reason why terrorist groups such as Al-Qaeda, ISIS and their affiliates in recent years launched their operations abroad by spreading their extremist ideologies to attract more followers, mobilize power and deliberately distort the image of Islam. Colonel Tijani also remarked that terrorist groups unintentionally use one of the principles of war: mobilization. Simply put, they use overwhelmingly decisive combat power in a given place and time, generating a glaringly clear impact on the enemy's strength in a short period of time.

Terrorist groups use mobilization to launch violent and brutal attacks in many cases against unarmed civilians, and sometimes on military targets in unconventional fashions to inflict the greatest possible damage on their victims.

### COUNTERING TERRORIST IDEOLOGY

In a similar vein, Lieutenant Colonel Simba Baldeh, delegate of the Republic of The Gambia in the military domain to IMCTC, reviewed the United Nations efforts to counter extremist ideology, highlighting that the counterterrorism strategy of the United Nations is concerned with four main foci:

1. Addressing conditions conducive to spreading terrorism.
2. Preventive action and counterterrorism.
3. Strengthening the capabilities of governments to prevent and counter terrorism, while also supporting the efforts of the United Nations to this end.
4. Ensuring that human rights are well maintained, honored, observed and respected, alongside with the rule of law.

The second focus calls on member states to take measures to prevent and counter terrorism, especially preventing terrorists from accessing the resources and means that help them carry out their attacks, and creating protection for easy targets in particular. The action plan subsumed under the strategy includes measures to prevent extremism. It called on member states to develop and implement national media strategies, in serious and close cooperation with social media companies and the private sector institutions, making it critically necessary for these strategies to take into account local specificities, societal sensitivities and universal human rights, while also addressing the rhetoric of extremist ideology associated with violent extremism.

Countries have positively responded to the terrorist groups and the spread of violent extremism; they fought tooth and nail the rhetoric of such groups that abhor moderation and tolerance in religion, ideology,

culture and politics, using social media to spread and drum up for encrypted messages urging their followers and supporters to carry out horrendous crimes. Observing the counterterrorism recommendations of the United Nations calling for the cooperation of member states at the regional and continental levels, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia blazed a trail in establishing IMCTC of forty-one Muslim member countries to better achieve concerted counterterrorism efforts to combat terrorism, and to further repel the factors that aid extremism and radicalization among the youth of the Muslim world.

Given the tendentious propaganda by extremist groups that distort the image of Islam to pander to their extremist ideology, IMCTC has developed an informed strategy across four domains, including the ideological domain of counterterrorism. The domain draws on combating, refuting and exposing extremist rhetoric of terrorist groups. Each of the IMCTC member countries is expected to draw up national action plans to develop efficient means to better combat extremist terrorist ideology and to dry up the sources of recruitment across all the IMCTC member countries.

Lieutenant Colonel Mamadou Abd Al-Rahman Galoo, Head of the Republic of The Gambia to the IMCTC, concluded the said symposium, underscoring the fact that terrorist ideology is a breeding ground on which terrorism feeds. Lieutenant Colonel Galoo also remarked that terrorist groups in the past years launched operations abroad fueled by the extremist ideology notoriously rife in their followers. Taken together, the IMCTC member countries should bear and shoulder responsibility to develop an informed, cogent and compelling rhetoric that well refutes the narratives of terrorist groups across the Muslim

world, preserving Islam as pure as is.

The open discussions highlighted key issues pertinent to fighting extremist ideology, bringing countering violent extremism and spreading the highly acclaimed values that well address and reform extremist ideology at the forefront of top priorities. Other essential issues were also brought under constructive discussion:

- Similar principles of the history of extremist ideology, and the relationship between violent extremism and local and global problems.
- Extremism must be critically addressed as it is the most dangerous source of terrorism, otherwise, terrorism will snowball into being ubiquitously rife even if terrorist groups are at a very low ebb.
- Extremism is a product of the environment; a person is not born extremist. Rather, one becomes so influenced by their milieu, which requires addressing the causes of extremism, not just the relevant consequences.
- The counterterrorism strategies of the international community have glaringly demonstrated the insufficiency of security and military approaches to eradicate terrorism, which confirms the paramount importance of the multiplicity and integration of counterterrorism methods, on top of which are ideological approaches.
- The colonial occupation heritage in Asia and Africa and its relationship to bringing about conditions favorable for extremism and terrorism.
- The causes of the spread of violent extremism are multiple and differ across countries; even if the causes are closely similar, their relative weights vary geographically. ■



## Radicalization Awareness Network: European Umbrella for Prevention from Extremism



**National** and international action plans for the prevention of extremism draw on the involvement of civil society organizations. Extremism has become a major political and security challenge for governments and societies across Europe, and it is not clear at present whether these governments can successfully meet these challenges. This quagmire has pushed governments to pay attention to specific preventive, societal programs that aim to address the factors leading to extremism, including cultural sympathy with both violent and non-violent extremism.

Against this backdrop, the European Commission established the Extremism Awareness Network (RAN) in 2011 to prevent and raise awareness of extremism, violent extremism and terrorism in European communities, strengthen European community security and empower local communities (family, schools, places of worship ... etc.) to perform important efforts.

RAN seeks to achieve five main goals: empowering communities and immunizing them from extremism, combating recruitment, cutting off terrorists' access to finance and equipment, tracking their transactions and protecting means of transportation.

Driven by development, the network turned into a center of excellence for a network of extremism awareness as of October 1, 2015. RAN is defined by the

European Commission as "a network of experts and frontline practitioners or at the grassroots level across Europe who interact daily with people who have taken the path of extremism, or people at risk of extremism.

The scope of work of these includes: police departments, prisons and those who are not traditionally involved in counter-terrorism activities, such as teachers, workers, representatives of civil society, local authorities and health-care professionals."

The RAN Network aims at facilitating the exchange of experiences among practitioners and other interested parties and providing support to both the European Union and Member States and other countries by drafting policy papers and organizing events such as high-level conferences, providing consultation, training and specialized services, and disseminating lessons learned for the target audience.

The RAN approach is an effective response to violent extremism. RAN operates across four main domains: engaging and training front-line practitioners, or those in close contact with individuals who are truly extremist. It is important to invest in interventions aimed at eliminating the breeding ground of extremism to prevent or stop these operations as soon as possible and to address the push and pull factors, and the motives that lead to these extremist activities, and cooperation among the

various relevant agencies. This approach brings together law enforcement, local authorities, professional care organizations, non-governmental organizations and community representatives. Finally, intervention plans are drawn up taking into account the specificities and needs of each country.

Here the importance of the assumption that "no one-size-fits-all" becomes evident; operations differ synchronically and diachronically. Hence, it becomes critically important to better understand the reality of individuals along with their motives and fears and frustration.

This helps to develop well-tailored interventions. In addition to internal factors, consideration should be given to external factors, such as the individual social environment and other local conditions to create active support.

RAN has an organizational structure that includes nine subject-matter teams, led by a steering committee chaired by the European Commission. The steering committee includes the Leaders of the Working Groups and the Center of Excellence, and each of these teams is concerned with a specific domain.

RAN also publishes reports and guides on extremism and prevention approaches, highlighting the lessons learned and counterterrorism practices ever since its inception. ■

## Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership: American-African Partnership Supporting Sahel G5 Initiative



As the threat of terrorism materializes globally, Africa has become a main springboard for many terrorist organizations and groups that are constantly looking for a breeding ground to carry out their activities. The conducive circumstances surrounding the continent have favorably become a major motivation catering to such organizations. The insecurity and poor political leadership there reduce it down to hotbeds of terrorists, seeking to extend their influence. They notched up remarkable successes, using their various fortunes and riches. Drug and human trafficking operations were among the most important financing resources; most of the armed terrorist groups depend financially and logistically on the flows of the illicit economy funneled covertly, making Africa a large market for illegal trade of cocaine, heroin and synthetic drugs. Hence, it was necessary to launch two initiatives to confront the threat of terrorist groups. The first initiative was the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership (TSCTP), which was established in 2005. It included Algeria, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Mali, and Mauritania, Morocco, Nigeria, Niger, Senegal and Tunisia. The second initiative was the Partnership for Regional East Africa Counterterrorism (PRACT), which was launched in 2009 and financed by the United States. It included Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Burundi, Comoros, Rwanda, Seychelles, South Sudan and Sudan.

The purpose of establishing the TSCTP was to complement the Sahel Initiative, which is a wide-ranging initiative; it well supported countering violent extremism and terrorism, following the spread of armed groups that took advantage of the strategic geographic location of the African coast.

This partnership has been one of the important strategic initiatives in countering violent extremism and terrorism. The main objectives of this counter-terrorism partnership included maintaining free communities, clamping down on terrorism and violent extremism, creating a global environment unfavorable to terrorists and reducing the ideological support for terrorism.

It is noteworthy that the most notorious violent extremist organizations operating across African countries are Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), the Movement for Unification and Jihad in West Africa, Ansar Al-Din, Boko Haram, Ansar Al-Muslimeen in Sudan, Ansar Al-Sharia, and several others. AQIM is the most dangerous threat to regional and US interests. Although the activity of these violent extremist organizations outside the Sahel and the Islamic Maghreb is limited and has no significant threat to the global interests of the United States of America, most of the Muslim population across the region in general reject the violent extremist ideology adopted by these organizations and groups.

The United States seeks to defeat terrorist organizations by strengthening regional counterterrorism capabilities, strengthening the institutional nature of cooperation with security forces across the region, promoting fair democratic governance, distorting terrorist ideologies, strengthening bilateral military relations with the United States and strengthening the local capabilities of governments across the Sahel to face the real challenge of such terrorist organizations and groups across the region. Equally important, the said program is keen on cooperation among the countries of the Sahel and the partners of the Arab Maghreb (Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia) in counterterrorism.

With the terrorist activity ballooning into a higher degree of diversity and spread at the physical, ideological and organizational levels, the United States of America along with its partners have launched a set of programs, projects and activities aimed at combating the activity of such terrorist organizations and groups, by adopting the following measures: capacity-building of the military and foreign law enforcement agencies in these areas, carrying out counter-terrorism operations, enhancing cooperation between military entities and foreign law enforcement agencies of the United States and other partner countries in counterterrorism efforts, enhancing the border security capacity of partner countries in these regions, especially the ability to monitor, track, detect and intercept terrorists, strengthening the rule of law in these countries.

Such actions include achieving justice, the ability of law enforcement entities to detect, disrupt, investigate, prosecute and respond to terrorist activities, keeping track of the financing of terrorism and taking counter-measures, supporting the populations exposed to the risk of violent extremism and terrorism in these areas, and reduce the recruitment or incitement to terrorist activities ignited by terrorist organizations by strengthening public diplomacy efforts, such as supporting youth employment, promoting meaningful participation and robust engagement of women, strengthening local governance, supporting civil society capacities, improving access to economic opportunities, providing education, and supporting independent media of local languages, especially in rural areas to face the media propaganda operations of extremists and terrorist organizations and expose their baseless allegations. ■

# FAMILY IS PROTECTIVE BULWARK AGAINST TERRORISM



## ■ Editorial Team

**Extremism** and terrorism have become a global epidemic of the time, acting as demolition vehicles demoniacally juggled with the forces of evil to fragment and undermine communities, sow sedition across countries, and spread terror around the world. Against a backdrop of merciless reality, it has become imperative to doggedly confront and prevent both extremism and terrorism, through close cooperation between all countries, institutions and bodies to better immunize individuals and communities from any associated evils. Admittedly, preventive approaches against extremism are as onerous and arduous as terrorism. It stands to reason that when confronting extremism, a number of parties and levels should be brought together, with their specific and interrelated roles in such a manner so that the burden falls equally on everyone. Axiomatically, the family is at the forefront when it comes to combating extremism; it is the nucleus of society, as defined by the Arab Charter on Human Rights, which shows the close and sound relationship between family and society.

### DEFINING THE CONCEPT

Like other problematic concepts that have not yet gained unanimously agreed definitions, extremism per se in the running context means exaggeration and intolerance; which simply means lacking moderation. Again, moderation, like other relative con-

cepts, differs over time and from place to place. Extremism can also be defined as the adoption of the militant vision of a certain ideology or thought. Extremism may be associated with any belief, but it is usually related to religion. In the current discussion, extremism shall be addressed within this limit only, as it is the most notorious source of terrorism and violence in the world.

Epistemologically, a key difference arises between extremism and terrorism with regard to the concept, the limits of violence and the criminalization of each term. Simply put, while terrorism is considered a crime punishable by law, many countries do not criminalize extremist ideology, as long as it is not associated with an act, simply because criminalizing extremism would greatly expand the circle of condemnation to further include ideas and beliefs. In this article, we shall bring to focus the roles and responsibilities of the family, and meticulously review the stages of when a family member becomes bloated with extremism, as follows:

### 1. FAMILY AND PREVENTION OF EXTREMISM

In sociology, the family is the first building block in the formation of an individual's identity and awareness of the self and the other. Undoubtedly, other educational, cultural and religious institutions have im-

portant impact on forming the realization of individuals and creating their perceptions of the entire world, society, state and the other; however, under no circumstances does this render the family dispensable.

A large body of literature on those involved in extremist and terrorist organizations and groups does reveal that the lack of family cohesion had direct or indirect impact on individuals adopting extremist ideologies and committing violence and terrorism individually or collectively. A family-driven contribution to the prevention of extremism and terrorism goes in line with the roles of various official and civil society bodies, such as the role of education in fostering awareness and reflecting the identity of society along with the role of religious institutions in sensitizing individuals for the values of mercy, cooperation, justice and peace, while staying off conflict, violence and terrorism.

Equally important, culture, art and relevant institutions play a vital role in improving and refining one's own inside, while catering for a creative power and passion to learn about the cultures of other nations and to accept the diversity of civilizations, beliefs and ethnicities. This is also true of legal and statutory institutions that protect the freedoms and rights of individuals, and deter the infringement of the rights of others.

With this in mind, the roles assigned to communities are varied and multiple; they are as complex as extremism. National institutions should, therefore, build a national strategy that organizes the roles assigned to each group in such a way that achieves harmony.

## 2. FAMILY AND TERRORIST ORGANIZATIONS

In May 2018, the world awoke to a terrorist operation in Indonesia, carried out by a family with all its members; the head of the family drove a vehicle loaded with explosives and stormed into a church, while his wife and two daughters attacked a second church, and his two children broke into a third church, using a motorcycle. Just one day into the incident, another extremist family attacked a police station in the same city. People realized that they were facing a new manifestation of terrorism; "one-family terrorism", and that terrorist organizations such as ISIS have the ability to exploit an entire family to implement their terrorist plans.

Family-based terrorism should not be understood as a new pattern; several terrorist operations have been carried out by members of one family, such as the Boston Marathon bombing in the United States (carried out by two brothers in 2013), and the terrorist attack on the French satirical weekly newspaper *Charlie Hebdo* (carried out by Saïd and Chérif Kouachi in 2015). However, what is new in the two Indonesia operations is that the family with all its members carried out several operations simultaneously. Shockingly enough, the big leap is in the recruitment of the entire family, which augurs ill for the great interest by terrorist groups in attracting and urging families to carry out their extremist plans.

The exploitation of families in carrying out such direct terrorist operations has included also recruitment and financing; one third of the foreign fighters in ISIS, who come from about 25 countries, have close ties to one of the terrorists in ISIS, according to an American study conducted on about 474 foreign fighters who have joined ISIS.

The term "alternative family" has gained prominence in the existing literature on extremism, following the success of ISIS in recruiting many young men and women, using the said method.

Simply put, it means providing an alternative family instead of the real one for the new member, creating one identity and one common cause for all its members, while making promises to young people to live out their dreams of getting married

and starting a family. Such a propaganda-based chimera has come true according to international reports.

## 3. FAMILY AND PREVENTION OF EXTREMISM

The family has various roles to assume in preventing extremism. Prior to extremism, the family should strengthen its bonds based on justice, freedom and consent among all its members, by building bridges of trust, opening direct and continuous communication channels to discuss all issues openly, without suppressing or marginalizing opinion.

It is equally important to keep a pair of scrutinizing eyes on the virtual worlds in which family members engage to better prevent the propaganda of extremist and terrorist organizations; the stronger the family ties, the more difficult it becomes to penetrate such families with terrorist propaganda.

The telling signs of religious extremism in one or more family members, for instance, include intolerance, contempt, defaming others, propensity to be isolated from other family members, spending long times viewing websites, making new friends, or abandoning old friends and propensity to violence. At this stage, the family should take the initiative to address such practices while still in initial development and open an explicit objective dialogue and discussion about extremism, the statements published by extremists, and the threat of terrorism on the Arab and Muslim communities. In this regard, families can seek the assistance of subject-matter specialists in tandem with institutions of rehabilitation and reintegration.

With this in mind, the family should well realize its key role in preventing extremism and violence. Once a family member slips into an extremist ideology, the family should understand that some imbalance has crept into the family and should act accordingly.

## 4. FAMILY GUIDELINES TO CONFRONT EXTREMISM

An increasingly growing need for an easy-to-read guidebook to better address extremism and violence arises amidst an unexpectedly changing world. We are in dire need to build community-based awareness, whereby the family is, beyond compare, the nucleus. With this in mind, a local reference guide along with a well-detailed map should be developed for the family to be provided with all the types of extremism and terrorism, methods of recruitment, methods to detect signs of



extremism in one of its members, and feasible approaches to address such cases of extremism faultlessly.

This also includes providing a list of subject-matters, relevant institutions and respective contacts for closer communication.

The said reference guidebook should also address different types of families, with regard to the problems of families of prisoners and fighters in terrorist organizations, marginalized families, and social support centers and incubators close to hotbeds of extremism and violence. The Family Guidebook to Confront Extremism should be presented to all members of society, through a set of training and rehabilitation programs aimed at building public awareness of extremism, existing and potential threat, statements and propaganda. The ultimate goal is to help prepare parents to be readily efficient to address extremism through knowledge, information and skills necessary to this end. ■

# DRUG TRAFFICKING

## EXAMINING THE EXISTING NEXUS BETWEEN VIOLENT EXTREMISM AND ORGANIZED CRIME GROUPS



### ■ Editorial Team

Since the late 1970s, terrorism has snowballed into a regional and international phenomenon with regard to ideology, geography and activity of violent extremist and terrorist groups. With this in mind, financing terrorism becomes glaringly vital to such groups to keep the ball rolling for major organizations that control specific geographical swathes of territory or affiliated or independent cells and battalions.

### FINANCING URGE

The larger organizations are, the more financing they need to establish an infrastructure that provides a basis to carry out their various activities, in proportion to the space in which they operate, the number of existing members and the types of operations. Therefore, such groups, regardless of their size, scope and activity, need to be financed to plan and run their institutions and affiliates, recruit and train existing and potential fighters, funnel ammunition and create the necessary and favorable conditions for the success of terrorist operations, in addition to the requirements of the media and information apparatus.

Terrorist organizations have outright capitalized on the technological advancements and the potentials brought about by globalization and the information revolution, catered for by the associated liberalization of trade exchange and the ease of transfer of funds to engage in illegal economic activities. The money

laundering operations resulting from drug crimes is one of the most notorious manifestations of such transformations, and one of the patterns of alliance formed by violent extremist groups with local and non-local organized crime groups.

### FLIMSY JUSTIFICATIONS

Using what they term Holy Jihad as a decoy and pretext to paper over and shore up their illicit activities, some would-be polymaths of such terrorist groups readily rush into thinking up lame justifications and invoking reasons for producing and trafficking drugs for various purposes. Therefore, drugs across the whole gamut of activities of production, shipment, distribution and export have become one of the most important engagements of terrorist groups to finance their short-term and long-term operations. Drug trafficking is carried out through close follow-up and secrecy to secure drug smuggling and human trafficking networks over a wide geographical area, spanning a large number of countries across the continents of the world, especially in countries suffering from political unrest and a security vacuum, such as Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Libya and the Sahel Region.

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime states that drug trafficking has created financing sources for terrorist activity around the world. Recent European security reports reveal that there are many overlapping points between

the perpetrators of terrorist operations in some European cities and capitals (Madrid, Paris, Nice, Brussels, London) and drug and arms dealers and traffickers.

### PRODUCTION-TO-EXPORTATION ACTIVITY

Some violent extremist organizations, including ISIS, produce fenethylamine (Captagon) pills. In the same vein, a report published on the University of Utah Law website in 2017, featuring "The Nexus of Terrorism to Drugs" reveals that it has become an infamously common practice that terrorist organizations are involved in drug trafficking, with taxes levied on drug traffickers and poppy plantations on the swathes of territory they control; the governing relationship between drug, human and weapon traffickers and terrorist organizations is a symbiotic one. Simply put, terrorists gain financial profits, while enfeebling their enemies by flooding their communities with addictive drugs. It is for the interest of drug traffickers that terrorists take control of the key smuggling routes, as the former can avoid getting involved in a potential clash with the latter.

In close cooperation with the US Federal Drug Control Administration, the Italian police seized a shipment of about 24 million pills of tramadol (addictive pills), claimed by ISIS destined for Libya, with a value of about €50 million in a port in southern Italy in early 2017. Later in July 2020, the Italian authorities also seized a shipment of addictive pills claimed by



ISIS, with a total weight of 14 tons, making up 84 million addictive pills produced by ISIS in Syria. As officially reported, the said shipment was supposed to reach Libya, as well. Extremist excommunication groups use drugs and fenethylamine (Captagon) pills (addictive pills that make addicts extremely aggressive and fearless) to motivate terrorists to kill and commit suicide.

The same absolute certainty is further highlighted by a research study conducted by the International Center for the Study of Extremism and Political Violence, as it reveals that a direct interaction of terrorists was glaringly evinced with drugs across Europe between 2012-2017, before they adopted extremist ideologies and after they became radicalized, and some days or hours prior to the perpetration of any terrorist attacks. The involvement of terrorist activities in drug trafficking is also revealed. Of the approximately 75 perpetrators of terrorist attacks in Europe, five (7%) had taken drugs some days or hours earlier to their terrorist attack.

#### DRUGS AND TERRORISM

The link between terrorism and drugs is close and vital for terrorist and organized crime groups. The breeding ground where Al-Qaeda wreaked havoc produced an alliance between jihadists, arms dealers and drug traffickers. The Taliban was among the first violent extremist groups to have used drugs for financing purposes. According to the Secretary-General of Interpol, about 40,000 Taliban members received salaries, estimated at between \$75 and \$95 million, from tax revenues on drugs, land and agricultural products in 2017. International officials suspect that Taliban runs private factories in the southern Helmand province to convert the poppy plant, which accounts for half of Afghanistan's total agricultural output, into morphine and heroin for export.

ISIS manufactures and trades drugs (amphetamine) and Captagon in the swathes of territory it controls in Syria to finance an important part of its activities. ISIS made about \$10 million a month, according to estimates in 2017. Following the loss of its most important strongholds in Syria and Iraq, however, ISIS relied on Libya to be an advanced center for cooperation between ISIS and the international drug trafficking mafia.

The Lebanese terrorist Hezbollah was charged with several accusations of running a drug trafficking network that extends to Africa, Europe and Central and South America, which prompted the US Department of Justice in January 2018 to

establish a task force to investigate the activities of Hezbollah; however, the latter denies its connection with international drug trafficking networks.

Chaotically slipping into a vacuum of official control, the Sahel Region thus ballooned into a breeding ground for violent extremist terrorist groups, wielding control of organized crime methods. With such extremist terrorist groups assuming the roles of police officers, ridiculously enough, the security protection is tailored and custom-made for drug dealers, human traffickers, food smugglers, and money launderers. Boko Haram and Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb are two telling examples among several others.

#### ORGANIZED CRIME GROUPS

Violent extremist groups sneak into criminal networks for logistic support throughout Europe. Greece is one of the most vital drug transit regions between Turkey, the Balkans and Africa. Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb gets involved in the heroin trade and distribution across West Africa and Europe. Terrorist cells in North Africa and Pakistan are frequently involved in criminal activity to finance terrorist operations abroad and in Europe in particular.

#### LAWS AND POLICIES

The United Nations issued the Convention on Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances in 1988 (Vienna Convention). The said convention called on member states to criminalize the practice of money laundering as a criminal offense. In a similar vein, the "International Financial Action Task Force" (FATF) was established in 1989 to better implement the necessary legal measures developed to further combat money laundering and terrorist financing.

Against a backdrop of terrorism geographically snowballing into wider swathes of territory and a spate of operations brutally carried out by such groups, the General Assembly of the United Nations developed the "International Convention to Combat the Financing of Terrorism", in accordance with Resolution 54/109 of December 9, 1999. The member states of the United Nations affirmed the close ties between terrorism and organized crime, especially drug trafficking and money laundering at the international level, and called on countries that have not yet joined the relevant international conventions, to join and act accordingly to better work in concert. To this end, the Security Council adopted Resolution No. (1373) in 2001, and the Counter-Terrorism Committee was established to monitor

the implementation of the said resolution, which urges countries to prevent the financing of terrorist acts.

The United Nations General Assembly adopted a strategy to combat terrorism in September 2006, under which several methods were subsumed to dry up the sources of terrorist financing. Quite recently, March 28, 2019, the United Nations Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution No. (2462), which aims to tighten measures to combat the financing of terrorism, calling on member states to put into action national laws that provide for fitting sanctions and penalties for criminal offenses committed by anyone who uses money, directly or indirectly, or so intends to use it to carry out violent attacks. Equally important, this also includes identifying the economic sectors available to finance terrorism and developing intelligence units to better uncover the financial clandestine circles that terrorist organizations capitalize on. The foregoing resolution provides that the secrecy of transfers shall be revealed by developing means of monitoring on-the-phone payments, and using cash and cryptocurrencies. It also stressed the necessity of intelligence information exchange and sharing across the countries concerned.

Regionally, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) Treaty to Combat International Terrorism, which was adopted by the Conference of Foreign Ministers of the OIC countries, Ouagadougou June 2-July 1 of 1999, has come into play. The said agreement was an attempt to confront terrorist concentration in Africa. Likewise, there were several various initiatives aimed at confronting the alliance of terrorist groups in the Sahel and Sahara, including the partnership initiative launched by the United States of America in 2007 on counterterrorism in the Sahara Desert.

In 2014, the G5 strengthened its security efforts through a partnership with Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and Niger to form special forces in the Sahel to counter terrorism, drug and human trafficking.

The political chaos and security vacuum sustained by many countries helped increase the activity of violent extremist terrorist groups, as well as drug and human trafficking in alliance with organized crime groups, given the lack of the state-of-the-art technologies that help to uncover the methods used. This calls for strengthening international coordination and cooperation to combat crimes of terrorism, drug trafficking and money laundering, and encouraging states to apply comprehensive international standards. ■

# Documents – Data – Analyses: South Asia

## South Asia Terrorism Portal (SATP) Regional Knowledge Source



**Founded** in March 2000, the South Asia Terrorism Portal (SATP) is considered the largest website on terrorism and low-intensity warfare in South Asia. According to the latest statistics, its database includes 82,041 pages. In addition to its large database, this portal provides in-depth analyses of events, analytical studies of all extremist movements in the region, and outstanding specialized research.

The purpose of establishing this portal is to confront the increasing shortcomings in the study of terrorism, particularly the international community's neglect of a wide range of terrorist movements in the South Asian region, especially in India. What characterizes this portal is that its database is comprehensive and updateable and additions can be constantly made to it. It is, furthermore, easy to use the portal and benefit from all the information on terrorism, low-intensity conflicts, and ethnic

and sectarian conflict in South Asia that it contains.

This project is based on the firm conviction that terrorism is not a threat to only a specific region, but to all humanity. This is due to the fact that terrorism is a method that respects no limits of the law, and does not recognize moral constraints or human sympathy, or even the minimum rules of war. Undoubtedly, terrorism transcends international borders. It destroys the societies that support it, as well as those who tolerate it or capitulate to it.

This portal clearly helps researchers, specialists, and those interested in terrorism because of the diversity and richness of its content, which includes the following:

- Daily news updates on terrorism and all related issues in South Asia.
- Constantly updated assessments and timelines for all major conflicts in the region.

- Large-scale statistics that are constantly updated on important standards related to major conflicts.

- Extensive records of research and analysis that are related to conflicts and terrorism.
- General studies on the main terrorist groups active in the region.

- Important documents, laws, treaties, agreements and data that are related to these conflicts.

- Links to the most important sites concerned with terrorism and combating it.

- Conflict maps, in addition to selected articles.

Furthermore, the portal provides an in-depth study of the South Asia region, and introduces regular data, assessments and news briefs on terrorism, insurgencies, terrorist responses and counterterrorism policies as well as related economic and political information and social issues. ■

### Periodicals

## Homeland Security Affairs: Knowledge-Based Production for Naval Postgraduate School Center



Link:



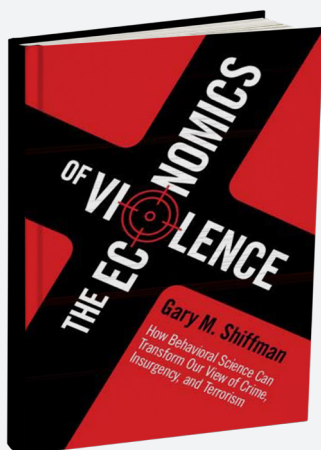
**Homeland Security Affairs**, established in 2005, is an annual, peer-reviewed Journal. It is the online journal of the **Naval Postgraduate School Center for Homeland Defense and Security (CHDS)**.

The journal provides a forum for suggesting and discussing strategies, policies, plans and organizational arrangements to better enhance homeland security in the United States. The contributors include trainers, subject-matter specialists, postgraduates, participants and partners of the Center.

The Journal publishes peer-reviewed articles submitted by scholars and practitioners throughout America. It also places a special focus on writings that contribute to understanding and developing

homeland security, while encouraging debate among practitioners and specialists. The topics include authentic research articles, short articles and media reviews. These articles show best practices and latest developments in homeland security as an emerging academic and professional discipline.

In August Issue of 2020, the Journal features and addresses several important topics, including a review of an importantly seminal book on women in internal security, the Status of Women, Counterterrorism in The United States since 9/11 and an article examining the need for adaptive standard operating procedures for first respondents and a research article evaluating two recent projects relating to countering violent extremism. ■



**Author:** Gary M. Shiffman

**Publisher:** Cambridge University Press

**Date:** January 30, 2020

**ISBN:** 9781107092464

Link



## THE ECONOMICS OF VIOLENCE HOW BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE CAN TRANSFORM OUR VIEW OF CRIME, INSURGENCY & TERRORISM

**The Economics of Violence** addresses how human behavior can well apply to understanding methods of combating violence more effectively. Based on the idea that we can easily predict human behavior, *The Economics of Violence* presents an overview of modeling the ability to predict human behavior in general as it applies to violent leaders of organizations, as it does to normal people.

Drawing on the divisive dynamics of 'us' versus 'them', access to increasingly larger markets further creates more transnational opportunities for deception, coercion, and violence as it has become more facilitated through digital communications and social media.

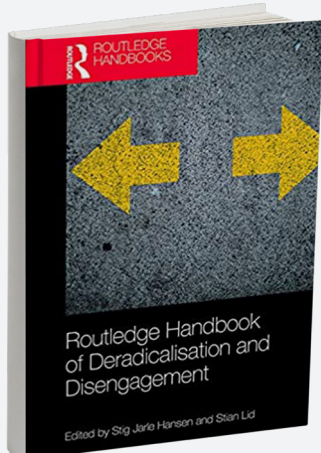
It also promotes thinking about several issues: If an economist's perspective helps to explain violence, how does it further facilitate insights into promoting peace and security? Gary Shiffman believes that if we can approach violence as behavioral scientists, then we can also better structure and organize our institutions to create policies that make the world a more secure and happier place for us and for future generations.

People usually view state violence as an irrational expression of religious, tribal, or ethnic identity; however, the author believes that understanding organized violence requires an analysis of individual decision-making and the incentives and options available.

The subject-matter is presented according to deep economic analysis and case studies of the most notoriously dangerous criminals and terrorists, such as "Pablo Escobar" and "Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi", spelling out how each terrorist behaved as an entrepreneur, using force and types of coercion to conquer the markets.

The book provides an easy method to understand the behaviors leading to violence for those interested in national security and better enables leaders to reform institutions and establish peace and security.

The author's extensive experience makes this book a fascinating material. He was a Senate employee, executive director of homeland security, businessman, and researcher in security and behavioral studies. ■



**Author:** Stig Jarle Hansen and Stian Lid

**Publisher:** Routledge 1st Edition

**Date:** February 18, 2020

**ISBN:** 9781138229969

Link



## ROUTLEDGE HANDBOOK OF DERADICALIZATION AND DISENGAGEMENT

**The Routledge Handbook of Deradicalization and Disengagement** provides an overview of historical conditions, theoretical discussions, national approaches and action plans for de-radicalization and disengagement. It makes clear that violent extremism and militancy are among the major global challenges facing communities, especially with the new emergence of extremist and violent groups and breeding grounds for corruption and sabotage. It presents the unremitting efforts to develop feasible solutions to curb these two phenomena by ensuring individuals' physical safety and changing their mentalities in approaching this phenomenon.

Historically, this issue was of concern to the security and military institutions, which adopt methods of deterrence, unlike what is stated in this Handbook. The contributors present "lightweight" methods that serve the community. This work features discussions of political right-wing and left-wing de-radical-

ization efforts, while the religious side takes a large part of these discussions, being an inescapable fact.

The Handbook falls into three main parts. The first part discusses the theoretical side of the social phenomenon, including the various definitions, historical backgrounds, theories and hypotheses to be proven or disproved. The second part discusses the positive and negative actors in this phenomenon. The third part presents a comprehensive regional case study that covers all the previous aspects, and comes up with practical solutions to curb the phenomenon of extremism.

Academically, the Handbook receives great interest and attention from students, researchers, scholars, and specialists in de-radicalization, counterterrorism and political violence. It helps establish constructive studies. Undoubtedly, it contributes to enriching security studies and international relations. ■

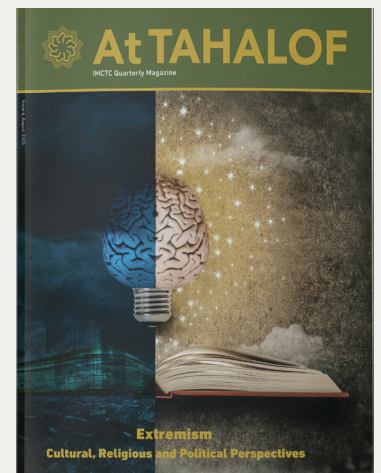
## IMCTC RECEIVES A NEW DELEGATE FOR SUDAN



The IMCTC Center in Riyadh received Brigadier General Musa Omar Ahmed Saeed, Monday 21/09/2020. He joined the existing delegates of the Republic of the Sudan at the IMCTC Center, to assume the roles of a delegate in combating terrorist financing, succeeding Brigadier General Abu Bakr Saeed Mohammed Abdul Rahim, honored at a special farewell ceremony, set up by the IMCTC Center, Sunday, 13/09/2020.

## NEW ISSUE OF AT-TAHALOF QUARTERLY MAGAZINE IS RELEASED

IMCTC issued the fourth issue of At-Tahalof, featuring a new key theme about the ideological, cultural and religious contexts of extremism. A wealth of elite writers and scholars have well contributed to the analyses of the historical contexts and temporary transformations of extremism to better create an objective structure for preventing and countering violent extremism. The fourth issue of At-Tahalof features key interesting themes, including the Mauritanian counterterrorism experience, the results of the index of organized crime in Africa and the associated relationship to terrorism and analyses of the threats of the rise of the far-right in Europe, especially Alternative for Germany. Serious counterterrorism attempts following COVID-19 epidemic are also well presented in the said issue. ■



### Training Courses

#### CHARACTERISTICS OF VIOLENT EXTREMISM


**November 2-4, 2020**  
 Geneva Center for Security Policy  



#### POLITICAL ECONOMY OF TERRORISM COUNTERMEASURES


**January 11-15, 2021**  
 Vrije University, Amsterdam  



#### THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE ON COMBATING


**November 5-6, 2020**  
 Trier, Germany  

