



INCUBATORS OF EXTREMISM AND TERRORISM DIAGNOSIS AND PREVENTION

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Extrémism does not arise as a result of a string of pure coincidences; rather, it is the outcome of the combination of a set of religious, ideological, social, political, psychological and other contributory factors. Unless otherwise extremist ideologies are dogmatically embraced by incubators conducive to radicalization, such extremist ideologies cannot be translated into acts. The entire world today is very much concerned with better understanding such incubators, keeping a pair of scrutinizing eyes on how they operate as to nip such incubators in the bud, while closely maintaining security and stability for the world.

Concept of Incubators

The concept 'incubator of extremism and terrorism' refers to the environment conducive to the growth of extremist and terrorist ideologies; it is the outcome of many interactions. The entire world is propelled into action by a set of new global interactions best spelled out in the following milestones:

1. **Borderless statehoods and end of national sovereignty:** due to state-of-the-art technologies, communications and ubiquitous globalization.
2. **Overlapping home and foreign policies:** There are no longer clearly demarcated boundaries across policies, as was the case previously. Home policies impact foreign policies and vice versa.
3. **The concept of ever-changing power:** new patterns of material and non-material power have emerged, and transnational movements have benefited from contemporary technical progress that allows individuals and groups to confront regular armies, in asymmetric

warfare.

4. **Global economic exclusion:** many countries suffer from being exploited, marginalized in the world trade with their wealth and resources glaringly depleted amidst bias and prejudice being the prevailing logic to rule. Against a backdrop of such imbalance, countries sustain failure, bringing their economies to paralysis and inability, trapped into a fierce and sometimes dishonest competition. It further deepens the chasm between the economies of rich and poor countries, leading up to the emergence of troubled, helpless and bankrupt countries, impacting their social security, which snowballs into protests, upheavals and sectarian and political domestic conflicts.
5. **Global violence:** the loss of balance of the world order along with the geopolitical and geo-economics and geo-cultural conflicts between different groups in international relations comes to an end of turbulence rife with global violence; it is such large-scale violence against poor people, against nature, against individuals, it is domestic and foreign violence. Global violence *per se* is the backdoor through which mercenaries, organized crime organizations, extremist and terrorist movements and so-called or quasi-statehoods sneak into reality.
6. **New global tribalism:** the loss of security at home and abroad forces individuals and groups to be involved in ideological, political and religious organizations seemingly assuming a protection role against global violence, and to honor promises to establish ideal communities that provide and maintain human dignity in exchange for loyalty and obedience in return. The new global tribalism – both regional and local – is not based on race in the first place, or known old ties; rather, it depends on ideologies, visions and representations of the self, the other and the entire world. As such, it can be an incubator for extremism and terrorism.
7. **The lack of moral determinants in global interactions:** global interactions dominantly draw on utilitarianism and materialism without regard to moral values and principles; foreign public policies are still built on realism, and some transnational organizations and individual behaviors follow suit, as well. Remarkably, over-consumerism, increasingly growing individualism and nihilism have contributed to shaping the general behavior of individuals, and social interactions that have lost their common moral values lead to patterns of aggressive behavior toward the other; such patterns that feed on fear, loss of trust and hope for the future.

Types of Incubators

The incubators of extremism and terrorism are multiple and overlapping, as they are associated with the ever-changing social reality, characterized by transformation, complexity, and vulnerability to global and regional interactions. Here are the most important incubators:

1. **Family:** It is the first social institution based on nurturing, instilling and transferring values, and building social awareness of the child. Therefore, if the family is impacted by extremist and terrorist ideas, which will undoubtedly direct the children to family-driven terrorism, according to which family members contribute to implementing terrorist operations, and there is a myriad of instances. Telling instances of family-driven terrorism include Dzhokhar Anzorovich Tsarnaev, a Kyrgyz-American terrorist of Chechen descent, who was convicted of planting pressure cooker bombs at the Boston Marathon on April 15, 2013; the two brothers, Saïd and Chérif Kouachi, forced their way into the offices of the French satirical weekly newspaper Charlie Hebdo in Paris, killing 12 people while injuring 11 others on 7 January 2015; and an entire family carried out suicide bombings in the Indonesian city of Surabaya on May 13, 2018, and sadly enough the family includes children between 13 and 15 years old. The grave danger arising from this type of terrorism lies in the labyrinthine channels of recruitment, simply because the family-based ties are uniquely strong and it is onerous for one party to communicate to the security services of their terrorist plan. Equally important, they are charged with strong emotive drivers, especially if the terrorist motive is revenge for a family member who has been killed or imprisoned.
2. **School and the education system:** Most of those concerned with issues of extremism and terrorism agree that schools or education systems in general are potential incubators of extremism, simply because school curricula, teaching methods and lesson content can be the springboard or the seeds of extremist ideology. Religious intolerance or bigotry in some countries causes education institutions to spread speeches that do not call for harmony and respect for differences; rather, such speeches arouse and spread hate, ostracism, disintegration, heterodoxy and heresy given the fact that religion opens up windows for people to coexist, live in harmony and call for Islam with goodness. Therefore, school curriculum designers are required to observe

respect for revealed religions, to teach young people the constructive methods of lively and reasoned debate and to reject the ill and contentious debate that leads to sectarianism and the exploitation of religion for political and ethnic purposes. Thus, the speeches of religious, ethnic and political extremism that are inculcated into schools can contribute to the emergence of

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extremist pathways that call for symbolic violence, as well as physical violence; that is, terrorist behavior.

3. Tribes and clans: tribesmen are closely connected, as they

share cultural representations that highlight their narrow vision of the self, the other, and the world, especially if these tribes do not observe the values of the orthodox religion, or they have their own beliefs that uphold the value of their race. It is no secret that even in modern communities where tribalism has been rendered disintegrated, there are still social ties between individuals belonging to specific entities. However, in traditional communities where tribalism still prevails, it is easy for certain tribesmen to show solidarity in specific cases and to adopt extremist or racist rhetoric against other tribes, or against the institutions of modern states whose elite is made up of a rival tribe. Extremism rampant in countries such as Mali, Niger and Nigeria is due to the alliance between tribes and terrorist organizations that have become an alternative to shore up the fragile and faltering states. For instance, the Massena Liberation Front builds its religious and political project on gathering the Diaspora of the Fulani race and reviving the Massena Empire, and thus some of the Fulani tribes are incubators of this extremist movement.

4. Prisons: it stands to reason that prisons are among the most dangerous incubators for extremism and terrorism, as revealed by a set of regional and international reports. Harvey Kushner, Professor of Criminology, considers prisons in Western countries as flashpoints conducive for recruiting extremists and loyalists to Al-Qaeda. Such recruitment is not limited to religious drivers; rather, it is also driven by political and ethnic drivers in non-Muslim countries. Mark Hamm, a former prison warden and now professor

of criminology, points out that some of the causes of extremism in prisons include overcrowding, lack of necessary services, abuse and mismanagement.

5. **Camps:** displaced and refugee camps are also potential incubators of extremism, as they include individuals and groups suffering from cruel and inhuman conditions, making them eligible and susceptible to recruitment into extremist and terrorist organizations. For instance, the Al-Hol refugee camp for Iraqi and Syrian refugees attracts more than four thousand women and eight thousand children from Daesh families; such hard circumstances make them willingly ready to take revenge on their families and loved ones.
6. **Cultural and political organizations and clubs:** with some individuals and groups compliant with the laws applicable in establishing organizations, associations and clubs, we sometimes find that such entities are incubators for their members to be imbued with extremist ideologies, including the collective fabric of the rising far-right in Europe, America and the rest of the West.
7. **Virtual World:** the internet is the backdoor of the creation of extremist communities as the internet notoriously provides ease of communication, inclusiveness and universality. Extremist organizations are increasingly paying close attention to their ubiquity across the digital world, and are developing methods to attract as many members as possible to become influential in promoting extremism and terrorism.

Prerequisites of Resistance

Incubators of extremism and terrorism can snowball from being covert into being overt, hence can change the rhythm and scope of their formation. Telling examples include communities that were once moderate, tolerant and stable but ballooned and turned into being volatile flashpoints, such as Iraq, Syria, Yemen, Libya, Somalia and Afghanistan, as well as West African countries such as Nigeria, Niger, Mali and Burkina Faso, which is a region that snowballs into a bigger one every day.

This metamorphosis from the stage of moderation into extremism and terrorism is simply because such incubators of extremism and terrorism take up the reins and mushroom naturally, while turning a blind eye to address the issues that contribute to feeding such incubators. Therefore, there are a set of prerequisites to limit the spread of incubators of extremism:

- 1- **Political prerequisite:** communities should have political awareness and a real willpower to eliminate corruption, imbalance and injustice accept the peaceful transfer of power, and avoid the basis of loyalties and adopt the logic of competencies. At the level of expansion abroad, it is critically important to promote the model of real cooperation rather than geopolitical expansion and chaos.
- 2- **Economic prerequisite:** it is equally important to adopt real economic development, attracting businessmen to a solidarity-based economy, and limiting unethical willingness and readiness to earn profits without contributing to the support of fragile social segments.
- 3- **Knowledge prerequisite:** it is seminal to encourage peer-reviewed scientific research to understand all phenomena of extremism and terrorism, making it easily accessible to come up with intellectual creativity and innovation without limitations, while also establishing cooperation between research centers and policy makers to develop policies based on scientific research.
- 4- **Educational prerequisite:** it is vitally important to adopt education systems that raise the logic of coexistence and constructive dialogue, appreciation for others, respect for the national institutions, and a sense of the value of societal security and national unity.
- 5- **Media prerequisite:** it is critically necessary for the media channels to contribute to turning the spotlight on the existing and potential dangers of extremism, terrorism and sectarianism, rather than fueling prejudices, and harnessing the media in favor of one group and not another. It also important to seek true information and avoid disseminating disinformation in such a manner as to raise the level of professionalism and attract the attention of more groups of youth who complain about "official media", while also encouraging youth media initiatives to conduct social mediation and practice of peer-based education.
- 6- **Security prerequisite:** it is very important to adopt a new security culture based on cooperation between those who watch over security and citizens to gain their trust, while also respecting human rights, and integrating security oversight techniques and tools.
- 7- **Religious prerequisite:** it is of great importance to carry out

proper religious awareness campaigns, taking into account the types of target audience and their cultures, creating new pathways to diversify moderate religious discourse and renew its presentation methods, paying much attention to issues that attract youth, adopting religious debates with extremists to expose their sympathetic discourse, grooming imams and preachers to gain better debate skills and to communicate openly to the existing cultures of the times.

In sum, the issue of the incubators of extremism and terrorism cannot be underestimated, as these incubators provide them with the viability for continuity and ubiquity. Therefore, communities are concerned with adopting integrated approaches to address this important aspect.