Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force

First Report of the Working Group on Radicalisation and Extremism that Lead to Terrorism: Inventory of State Programmes[1]

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Introduction

1.   On 8 September, 2006, the General Assembly unanimously adopted the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. The Strategy, which united all 192 Member States for the first time behind a common vision, reflected the international community's

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[1] This is a report of the co-Chairs of the CTITF Working Group on Radicalisation and Extremism that Lead to Terrorism. The co-Chairs are the Executive Office of The Secretary-General (EOSG), the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI), and the 1267 Monitoring Team. Other Working Group Members include the Counter-terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED), the Department of Political Affairs (DPA), the Department of Public Information (DPI), the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

resolve to combat the scourge of terrorism. Even prior to the Strategy, the Secretary-General, in 2005, established the Counter-terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF) to ensure overall coordination and coherence in the counter-terrorism efforts of the United Nations system. In light of the Strategy, the Task Force created nine Working Groups to carry forward key initiatives highlighted in the strategy, in which the Task Force had specific expertise and could provide added value. The creation of the Working Group on "Addressing Radicalisation and Extremism that Lead to Terrorism," was a response to Member State demand for help in furthering their understanding of what makes a terrorist a terrorist and in identifying effective policies and practices to prevent this from happening.

2.   The Working Group is a vehicle for the Task Force to take up several of the Strategy's cross-cutting themes as well as a number of specific initiatives of the Strategy's Action Plan, in particular those addressing conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism. In doing so, the Working Group highlights the importance of preventive and long-term measures in fighting terrorism, separate from and additional to suppressive and coercive action that may involve the use of force. Its core focus is on non-coercive approaches to violent extremism that rely, in the words of the Malaysian government, on engagement with and "winning hearts and minds of the segments of society that are normally targeted by extremist and radical groups for recruitment, support and funding."[2] Until recently, such non-coercive approaches have received comparatively little attention from academics and state officials alike.[3]

3.   In line with the Strategy, the Working Group aims to help identify programmes and initiatives directed at furthering, inter alia, the dialogue, respect, tolerance and understanding among civilizations, cultures, peoples and religions; social inclusion of the marginalized; countering incitement to commit terrorist acts; and human rights and the rule of law.

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2 From the response of the Malaysian Government to the 18 February 2008 CTITF letter. Received on 9 October, 2008.

3 John Horgan and Tore Bjørgo, *Leaving Terrorism Behind: Individual and Collective Disengagement from Violent Extremism* (New York: Routledge, forthcoming).

4.   In its consultations with Member States since the adoption of the Strategy, the Task Force has detected a widespread desire among States to learn more about other countries' understanding of radicalisation and their experience with countering those processes that lead certain individuals to become terrorists or that make them vulnerable to recruitment by terrorist organisations. Against this background, and in an effort to facilitate information-sharing among Member States, the Working Group has embarked on a mapping exercise with the objective of creating an inventory of counter-radicalisation and de-radicalisation measures implemented by Member States. On 18 February 2008, the Working Group, in a formal letter to Permanent Missions to the United Nations in New York, invited all Member States to provide information on their policies and initiatives designed to address radicalisation and violent extremism that lead to terrorism.   Specifically, Member States were invited to provide answers to three questions:

- Has your country undertaken or is it planning to undertake any project and/or programme to understand and counter the appeal of terrorism?

- Has your country undertaken or is it planning to undertake any project and/or programme on de-radicalisation, rehabilitation, and integration of people who joined terrorist groups or participated in terrorist acts, including any programmes centered on prisons?

- Has your country any available analysis or evaluation of these programmes, particularly with regard to their effectiveness, success and shortcomings?

5.   Of the 192 Member States addressed, 34 responded to the Working Group's request and provided information on their respective policies and programmes.[4] While the Working Group hopes to receive input from even more Member States, the 34 reports at hand may constitute one of the largest inventories of counter-radicalisation

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4 Algeria, Australia, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Canada, Djibouti, Finland, France, Germany, Guyana, Iceland, Italy, Kuwait, Malaysia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Romania, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Seychelles, Singapore, Slovenia, Sweden, Sudan, St Vincent & the Grenadines, Switzerland, Thailand, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United States of America, and Yemen.

programmes available in the world today.[5] The information gathered so far allows the Working Group to provide, in this report, an overview of the types of counter-radicalisation initiatives currently in place in Member States. By no means does this report provide a total or comprehensive picture of all strategies adopted to deal with conditions conducive to terrorism, nor does the report venture into an independent evaluation of the programmes' effectiveness.

6.   A significant number of the Member State responses received by the Working Group manifest a particular concern with Al-Qaida-related terrorism. As this report is exclusively based on input from Member States, this emphasis on Al-Qaida-related terrorism is necessarily reflected in its inventory of State Programmes. Nonetheless, it is important to point out that in line with the Global Strategy, the Task Force and this Working Group are concerned with terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, committed by whomever, wherever and for whatever purposes.

7.   The Working Group hopes that this report be the start rather than the end of a process of enhanced information-sharing among Member States on their respective counter- and de- radicalisation efforts. In that sense, the inventory and this report are intended to be living documents that will be updated as Member States continue to provide information and deepen their engagement with the Task Force. While the Working Group has limited its work so far to mapping programmes and initiatives undertaken by national governments, it recognises that significant initiatives are also in hand at the municipal level and within civil society. Subject to resource constraints and

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5 Other studies and reports providing inventories or comparative analysis of different countries' counter- and re-radicalisation measures include the U.S. Department of State Country Reports on Terrorism (2008), providing an overview of counter-terrorism, including counter-radicalisation, efforts in more than 135 countries; a 2007 study sponsored by the Netherlands Ministries of Justice and Internal Affairs, (National Coordinator for Counterterrorism [NCTb], Radicalisation in Broader Perspective), analysing the counter-radicalisation experiences of three countries, namely, the Netherlands, Germany and the interaction between the Netherlands and Morocco; a 2006 study by Rudie Neve, Lisette Vervoorn, Frans Leeuw, and Stefan Bogaerts (First Inventory of Policy on Counterterrorism, at: http://transcrime.cs.unitn.it/tc/fso/Altre%20pubblicazioni/first%20inventory%20of%20policy%20on% 20counterterrorism%20-%20italian%20contribution%20to%20ncbt.pdf), focusing on the experiences of six countries, namely, Germany, France, Italy, Spain, the United Kingdom and the United States; and a 2008 European Commission funded study ("The EU Counter-radicalisation Strategy: Evaluating Polices Concerning Causes of Radicalisation"), analyzing the experiences of two programmes in the UK and the Netherlands.

the agreement of Member States, it sees potential value in also collecting information on these initiatives for the general lessons they may provide.

8.   The terms "'counter-radicalisation' and 'de-radicalisation' are poorly defined and mean different things to different people."[6] In this report the term counter-radicalisation refers to policies and programmes aimed at addressing some of the conditions that may propel some individuals down the path of terrorism. It is used broadly to refer to a package of social, political, legal, educational and economic programmes specifically designed to deter disaffected (and possibly already radicalized) individuals from crossing the line and becoming terrorists. The term de-radicalisation, on the other hand, is used to refer to programmes that are generally directed against individuals who have become radical with the aim of re-integrating them into society or at least dissuading them from violence.[7]

9.   In the 34 responses from Member States, the Working Group identified eleven key strategic issues (or types of programmes), around which the report is organised. These are: 1) engaging and working with civil society; 2) prison programmes; 3) education; 4) promoting alliance of civilizations and inter-cultural dialogue; 5) tackling economic and social inequalities; 6) global programmes to counter radicalisation; 6) the internet; 7) legislation reforms; 8) rehabilitation programmes; 9) developing and disseminating information; 9) and training and qualifying agencies involved in implementing counter-radicalisation policies.

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6 International Crisis Group, "De-radicalisation and Indonesian Prisons," *Asia Report* No. 142, 19 November, 2007, P. i.

7 See John Horgan, "From Profiles to Pathways and Roots to Routes: Perspectives from Psychology on Radicalisation into Terrorism," Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science (forthcoming); John Horgan, "De-radicalisation or Disengagement? Perspectives on Terrorism," Volume II, Issue 4; and John Horgan, "Individual Disengagement: A Psychological Perspective," in Tore Bjørgo and John Horgan (eds.), *Leaving Terrorism Behind*, NY (New York/London: Routledge, forthcoming).

Inventory of State Programmes and Initiatives

Engaging and Working with Civil Society

10.   The State alone does not have all the resources necessary to counter radicalisation and deal with violent extremism. Therefore, central governments need partners to carry out this task. Involving civil society and local communities can bring to bear a range of tools and resources not available to governments. Working with communities and civil society enhances trust and transparency and strengthens social cohesion. Civil society organizations can reach segments of society that governments may have difficulty to engage. They can help counter extremist ideologies and promote peaceful dialogue. Investing in contacts with local communities not only facilitates and accelerates the process of information gathering, but can also act as an early observation or recognition system of any violent extremist tendencies, hence permitting an early and effective counter-strategy.[8]

11.   It is not surprising therefore that several Member States have developed programmes and frameworks to engage local communities in efforts to counter radicalisation processes, enhance cooperation between the state and society, and give local communities a leading role in countering ideological support for violent extremism. Norway's Exit Project (established in 1997) was aimed specifically at supporting young people who wanted to disengage from radical racist or other violent extremist groups (e.g. neo-Nazi groups). Exit was managed by local government agencies with members of civil society playing a crucial role in its successful implementation. Community leaders, local youth workers, welfare officers, teachers, local police and personnel from various agencies and professions – i.e. those with experience of working directly with

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8 From the response of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to the February 18, 2008 CTITF letter. Received on 23 September, 2007. Also see Marije Meines, "Radicalisation and its Prevention from the Dutch Perspective," in Radicalisation in Broad Perspectives, The National Coordinator for Counterterrorism (NCTB), Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken en Koninkrijksrelaties, 2007, the Netherlands pp. 37-8.

young people – possessed the know-how and influence needed for the project to succeed.[9]

12.   The Russian Federation's Ministry of Regional Development, the Office of the Prosecutor General and other interested federal and regional government bodies have worked with non-governmental and religious organizations in developing proposals for joint programmes to counter ethnic and religious extremism and prevent ethnic conflicts. The Russian government has also set up consultative bodies to enhance cooperation with civil society organizations in the field of interethnic relations, prevention of extremism, xenophobia and ethnic conflicts at the regional and local level. In Singapore the authorities have sought to expand engagement with the religious minorities to debunk and explain the falsities of extremist ideologies. The U.S. approach has also sought to expand engagement with and to enhance collaboration between states and local communities to counter violent extremism. This includes empowering, mobilizing and amplifying the voices of "community influencers and opinion leaders in different parts of the country" in order to discredit and counter (through words or actions) the ideology or narrative of violent extremism to de-legitimize its discourse.[10] With that in mind, one of the key roles of Italy's Youth Advisory Board, jointly set up in 2006 by the Interior Ministry and the Ministry of Youth and Sport, is to engage young people of different cultural backgrounds - and through them, their communities - in dialogue and mutual understanding. Seventeen of the 34 countries that provided information on their counter-radicalisation policies have designed systems of cooperation between the state and communities and have introduced frameworks to empower and amplify moderate local voices to rebut and discredit violent extremist ideology.[11]

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9 Exit in Finland and Sweden was established in 1998 and Exit Deutschland in autumn 2000. There has also some been some interest in Switzerland to adopt elements from the Exit approach as part of governmental action plans against neo-Nazism.

10. From U.S. Response to the 18 February CTITF letter. Received on 19 May, 2008.

11 These are: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Nigeria, Romania, Russia, Singapore, Thailand, United Kingdom, United States, and Norway. It is also important to note that Norway's efforts here refer to an "Exit Project" established in 1997 that targeted young people involved in violent and racist groups than ideologically oriented groups. In fact, the process of countering-"radicalisation and disengagement from terrorism has long been neglected" in Norway. From the response of Norwegian Government to the 18 February CTITF letter. Received on 27 March, 2008.

Prison Programmes

13.   An important issue that prison reformers all over the world have begun to face is how to prevent prisons from becoming breeding grounds for violent extremism and terrorist recruitment centres. Increasingly, sophisticated extremists have managed to devise ways to turn prisons into training camps under their control.[12] The question here is whether to separate violent extremists from other inmates or to integrate them and let them mix freely. Allowing violent extremists to mix freely has carried serious costs in allowing them to seek out and successfully recruit fellow prisoners; but evidence also shows that segregating extremists in separate blocks has allowed them to maintain an organizational hierarchy and hone their operational skills.[13]

14.   Whether to separate or integrate is currently a hotly debated issue, and one that may lead in some States to the creation of a special prison environment and major expenditure directed against detecting, deterring, and disrupting the efforts of violent extremist to recruit other inmates. It seems that at present more States see a balance of advantage in separating their extremist prisoners from others, with Saudi Arabia going so far as to establish new and special incarceration facilities that not only separate security detainees from other regular criminals, but also separate security and violent extremist detainees from one another in individual cells. Along with Saudi Arabia, twelve other States reported having developed or developing special prison programmes aimed at preventing their incarceration facilities from becoming breeding grounds for terrorism and a pool for recruitment.[14]

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12 Cuthbertson, 2004.

13 Ibid and Cuthbertson, 2004.

14 These countries are: Algeria, Austria, Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Malaysia, the Netherlands, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, United Kingdom, United States, and Slovenia whose prison programme is currently under development.

Education

15.   Given the pre-eminent role of schools and other educational establishments in the development of a resilient community that upholds values of non-violence, peaceful co-existence and tolerance, education also features strongly in the counter-radicalisation programmes developed by States.[15] In the United Kingdom, for example, authorities work closely with providers of education at all levels to make schools and universities, better equipped to resist the influence and ideology of violent extremism. This has resulted in the teaching in schools of subjects that promote inter-cultural understanding and citizenship. It has also been reflected in other actions, such as the recently introduced "Children's Plan", through which state officials engage directly with head-teachers in order to ensure their access to all forms of support needed, as well as ensuring support for young, vulnerable people who may be exposed to violent extremist influences.

16.   In Austria, compulsory school curricula and religious education classes teach anti-bias and tolerance as part of civic education. In the Netherlands, education is viewed as a prerequisite not only to counter violent extremism, but also to facilitate the integration of minorities. Since 2006, therefore, primary and secondary schools have been legally obliged to build citizenship education and social integration into their curricula. The Belgian authorities have designed specific educational programmes to engage and inform pupils and parents about the dangers pertaining to violent extremism and terrorism, and have also developed special educational programmes to combat violent extremist beliefs and foster tolerance and coexistence. The crucial role of education in creating a resilient society led the Yemeni authorities to unify the general educational system under the supervision of the Ministry of Education, ensuring that the national curriculum respects all religions, as well as setting in motion awareness activities that promote religious discourse and the ethics of tolerance and moderation. Finally, efforts to use education as a means to counter violent extremist ideology in the United States have included programmes designed specifically to reach out to youth, as well as to marginalized groups and racial and religious minorities. In total, sixteen of the 34 Member States that

15. Australian Government, "Counter-Terrorism and Australian Aid (AusAid)," 2003, at
        http://www.ausaid.gov.au/publications/pdf/counterterrorism.pdf.

provided responses attach special importance to the role of education in building peace, fostering tolerance, and promoting coexistence.[16]

Promoting an Alliance of Civilizations and Inter-Cultural Dialogue[17]

17.   Promoting an alliance of civilizations and encouraging inter-cultural dialogue are regarded as important tools in promoting understanding, respect and tolerance among religious and cultural communities and combating stereotypes and dismantling prejudices on all sides. Promoting an alliance of civilizations and an inter-cultural dialogue can thus significantly contribute to countering the forces that fuel extremism and violence.[18]

18.   Initiatives that promote an alliance of civilizations and foster inter-cultural understanding to counter radicalisation have been launched by fourteen of the 34 States that provided input for this report. For instance, this approach featured prominently in New Zealand's efforts to counter violent extremism, including through co-sponsorship of the "Asia-Pacific Interfaith Dialogue," which brings together fifteen representatives of the major faith and community groups in the Southeast Asian and South Pacific regions. In May 2007, New Zealand also hosted the third Asia-Pacific Regional Interfaith Dialogue meeting; its recommendations focussed on bridge-building, security, media, and educational themes.

19.   In 2005, the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs made "religio-political conflicts" a special priority and launched the "Montreux Initiative" in cooperation with Islamic charities and the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies in Geneva to improve trust and understanding between the Swiss federal authorities and

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16 These are: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Finland, France, Germany, Kuwait, Malaysia, the
   Netherlands, Russia, Switzerland, Thailand, United Kingdom, United States, and Yemen.

17 While not the subject of the present report, it should be recalled that many of the measures taken by
   States to counter radicalisation in the context of the Global Strategy are relevant also to their
   implementation of Security Council resolution 1624 (2005), which addresses incitement to commit
   terrorist acts and the related issue of enhancing dialogue and broadening understanding among
   civilizations. The Counter-Terrorism Committee has described measures taken by States to implement
   that resolution in two reports to the Security Council (S/2006/737 of 15 September 2006 and
   S/2008/29 of 21 January 2008).

18 High-level Group of the Alliance of Civilisations, "Alliance of Civilisations: Report of the High-level
   Group", United Nations, 13 November 2006, http://www.unaoc.org/repository/HLG_Report.pdf.

charitable organizations.[19] Australian authorities have allocated US$35 million over four years beginning in 2006 to develop a broad range of measures focused on Southeast Asia to help counter extreme ideologies. These included co-sponsoring a series of major regional interfaith dialogues in 2004, 2006, 2007, and 2008 as a way to undermine the claim of moral legitimacy by violent extremists.[20] In Thailand, moderate Muslim organizations from overseas have been invited to exchange views and ideas with local religious leaders in order to enrich an understanding of Islam and promote true religious teaching. Thailand also played a significant role in supporting Dialogue on Interfaith Cooperation (Indonesia, 2004), the Asia-Middle East Dialogue (AMED), the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) Interfaith Dialogue, and it co-sponsored the Informal Meeting of Leaders on Interfaith Dialogue and Cooperation for Peace during the 60th Session of the UNGA. And as mentioned above, Italy's Ministry for Youth and Sport, jointly with the Ministry of Interior, set up a Youth Advisory Board in 2006 for religious and cultural dialogue. The purpose of the Board is to encourage young people to play a leading part in building up models of dialogue and tolerance between the country's different religious and cultural groups, as well as helping the government by offering opinions and proposals on issues related to the peaceful coexistence of different cultures and faiths.

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19 From the response of the Swiss Government to the 18 February CTITF letter. Received on 25 March, 2008.

20 From the response of the Australian Government to the 18 February, 2008 letter. Received on 18 March, 2008.

Tackling Economic and Social Inequalities

20. The degree to which inequality and deprivation can explain violent extremism and terrorism continues to be debated in academia and among Member States.[21] None of the Member States providing input for this report suggested any direct causal relationship between socio-economic factors and terrorism, and academic research suggests that the relationship is indirect at best. As Coolsaet and Swielande wrote: "Not all individuals who share the same fate of deprivation... turn to terrorism...Terrorism is always the action of a few within the larger group or community...". However, there seems to be an implicit recognition among many Member States that economic and social inequalities (real or perceived) fuel discontent and encourage grievances that create conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism. This is suggested by the fact that several Member States have designed measures to improve the social conditions and economic empowerment of minority groups in their societies as part of their overall counter-radicalisation effort.

21. For example, the Netherlands authorities have undertaken several policies to address discrimination, including in the labour market, as well as to equip youth with the skills they require to find work. They have also provided financial resources for language training and to encourage young people to complete their schooling, and have increased support for parents to help them equip their children to participate in Dutch society. The United States authorities have introduced a programme specifically designed to address the economic needs of the target population before violent extremists do, and shape and influence their views. The United States programme has been tailored according to the unique social, economic, and psychological needs of each target group. Algeria has provided direct financial and welfare support to the victims of violent extremism, including the siblings and progeny of incarcerated or killed violent extremists in order to

21 See, for example, Scott Atran, "The Moral Logic and Growth of Suicide Terrorism," *The Washington Quarterly*, 29:2, pp. 127-147; Robert Pape, *Dying to Win: the Strategic Logic of Suicide terrorism* (New York: Random House, 2006); Alan B. Krueger and Jitka Maleckova, "Seeking the Roots of Terrorism," *The Chronicle Review*, June 6, 2003, (Available on website: http://chronicle.com/free/v49/i39/39b01001.htm); Mia Bloom, *Dying to Kill: the Allure of Suicide Terror* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005); Marc Sageman, *Leaderless Jihad: Terror Networks in the Twenty-First Century* (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008); and Rik Coolsaet (Ed.), *Jihad Terrorism and the Radicalisation Challenge in Europe* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2008).

prevent the emergence of a new generation of extremists from related social networks. Saudi Arabia and Malaysia have undertaken similar measures, with the former providing tuition fees as well as medical treatment and financial support for food and clothing, while the latter looks after the welfare of the families of detainees. "Commitment towards the welfare of the families of detainees seeks to ease the financial burden of the immediate family members" and therefore to "avoid radicalizing them."[22] A recent regulation in Thailand went so far as to call for a "special development zone" in areas of instability as part of the country's overall counter-insurgency strategy. The zone addresses aspects of the economic, social, cultural, health, educational and other needs of the targeted population. In total, eight respondent States have introduced policies to address economic and social inequalities in target groups.[23]

Global Programmes to Counter Radicalisation and Build Capacity in Third Countries

22.   Terrorism is a global challenge. In an age in which individuals, money and ideas can move internationally with increasing ease, environments in which conditions may be conducive to the emergence or spread of radicalisation and violent extremism are of potential concern to other States, regardless of distance. In fact, some Member States cited in this report see the threat of violent extremism coming primarily from "global" violent extremists moving between countries and regions, rather than from home-grown terrorists.[24]   This means that to be truly effective, efforts to counter radicalisation and violent extremism that lead to terrorism must also have global application.

23.   This realisation has prompted several countries to work with other States, regional bodies and civil society organizations to promote and help fund programmes in third countries aimed at countering conditions conducive to terrorism; these may include promoting political participation, civil rights, the rule of law, and sustainable and

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22 Malaysian Response to an earlier request for information from the Task Force. October 9, 2007.

23 These are: Australia, Canada, Kuwait, the Netherlands, Sweden, Thailand, United Kingdom and United States.

24 See for instance the Australian response to the 18 February CTITF letter. Received on 18 March, 2008.

equitable economic and social development. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, for example, now budgets 2,000,000 Euros annually for specific activities aimed at addressing international violent extremism, such as promoting international legal frameworks for combating violent ideologies, supporting police and the judicial system in third countries, and organizing studies and/or seminars aimed at understanding factors conducive to terrorism. The United Kingdom's global programme to counter radicalisation includes assisting foreign governments to improve education, civil rights, the rule of law, working with civil society more widely, promoting equality and tackling racism and bullying. Sweden and Belgium are currently exploring how development, civil rights and good governance and democracy assistance programmes may contribute to preventing violent extremism and recruitment. In addition to Sweden and Belgium, whose global programmes are still under development, six other Member States cited in this report have a global programme to prevent violent extremism in a third country.[25]

Internet Policies[26]

24.   Recent years have shown an increasing use of the Internet by violent extremists as a means of spreading propaganda, raising funds, recruiting new members, and communicating with their activists.[27] Violent extremists have also used the Internet as a virtual training camp by establishing various forms of online, private, person-to-person or group communication to exchange experience and knowledge.[28] Violent extremists have successfully turned the great virtues of the Internet – low cost, ease of access, lack of

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25 These are: Australia, Austria, Canada, the Netherlands, United Kingdom, United States, and, of course, Sweden and Belgium.

26 A separate Working Group of the Task Force will report in more detail on the Use of the Internet for Terrorist Purposes

27 See, for example, National Coordinator For Counterterrorism (NCTb), "Jihadis and the Internet," Ministries of Justice and interiors, the Netherlands, 2007; Gabriel Weimann, "How Modern Terrorism Uses the Internet," United States Institute of Peace Special Report 116 (March 2004); Alan Knight and Kasun Ubayasiri, "eTerror: Journalism, Terrorism and the Internet," available on website: http://www.ejournalism.au.com/ejournalist/alkas.pdf; and Johnny Ryan, "Europe, Terrorism and the Internet," published on OpenDemocracy, 6 - 11 – 2007, available on website: http://www.opendemocracy.net/node/35026/pdf; and Maura Conway, "Terrorism and Internet Governance: core issues," *Disarmament Forum*, 2007 (3). pp. 23-34, at http://doras.dcu.ie/520/.

28 Johnny Ryan, 2007.

regulation in many parts of the world, vast potential audience, and fast communication and flow of information – into a means to achieve their goals and attract recruits.[29]

25.   The question of how to limit terrorist abuse of the Internet has been contentiously discussed in different parts of the world for some time. Much of the debate has centered around the question of whether governments should intervene through censorship, monitoring and counter-propaganda programmes, or allow the free-flow of traffic on the Internet lest democratic values such as freedom of expression be undermined.[30]

26.   The recent trend points in the direction of increased government intervention and many States have begun to place a high priority on curbing terrorist propaganda and recruitment through the Internet. Mechanisms have been put in place, in collaboration with Internet service providers, to monitor websites that facilitate and encourage violent extremism and recruitment. In many Member States, Internet sites that incite hatred and violent extremism are either shut down or systematically monitored and investigated in order to deepen knowledge about the activities of groups that encourage violent extremism. The United Kingdom Government has been using the Internet as an instrument to support mainstream voices to articulate a moderate understanding of various religions in the country. One example is the UK authorities' active support and encouragement for the "Radical Middle Way" project, which is a British-Islam-Online website where young Muslims can access a wide range of views and opinions from all the major Muslim schools of thought.[31] Nigeria has organized several seminars on combating terrorism through the Internet, including the organization of capacity building and training/workshops on law enforcement and digital technologies for all agencies involved in countering radicalisation, as well as the initiation of online projects aimed at undermining the capacity of violent extremists to propagate violent ideologies through the Internet.

27.   In the Netherlands, webmasters of sites that attract large numbers of Muslim youths have installed systems whereby radical expressions are countered by a message

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29 Gabriel Weimann, 2004.

30 Rt. Hon. Jacqui Smith, 2007. The advantages and disadvantages of these two approaches are fully discussed in Gabriel Weimann, 2004, Alan Knight and Kasun Ubayasiri, 2008, Johnny Ryan, 2007.

31 www.radicalmiddleway.org

stating alternative views. The Belgian authorities have put in place mechanisms that systematically investigate all Internet sites that encourage and facilitate violent extremism and recruitment. This is reflected in the "Internet Open Source Platform," which is administered by the Federal Police with representation from the Intelligence Services and the Counter-terrorist Joint Unit. This includes measures to encourage individuals to report sites that host illegal material through a point of contact within the Federal Police. In Singapore, authorities have encouraged a group of volunteer religious scholars and teachers to launch a website which carries arguments that rebut violent extremist teachings and beliefs.[32] The European Commission-backed "Check the Web" project, launched during the German Presidency of the European Union in May 2007, proposes a common European approach to Internet-monitoring based on strengthened cooperation and coordinated monitoring and evaluation of open Internet sources. Finally, the United Arab Emirates has subjected all media forms to monitoring, and is using them, including TV channels, to teach the "right Islam" and rebut distorted violent ideology. Overall, twelve Member States of the 34 that responded to the Working Group have developed some programme to combat the use of the Internet for violent extremism and/or to counter violent ideology.[33]

Legislation and Regulations

28.   The United Nations Global Strategy reaffirmed that States must ensure that any measures taken to combat terrorism comply with their obligations under international law, in particular human rights law, refugee law and international humanitarian law. Rights that may be especially affected by counter-radicalisation measures include the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, the right to freedom of opinion and expression, the right to liberty and personal security, and the right to freedom from discrimination. While it is generally true that security and human rights are two sides of the same coin, as one is not possible without the other, it would be difficult to deny that

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32 www.rrg.sg

33 Belgium, Canada, France, Kuwait, Italy, the Netherlands, Nigeria, Russia, Singapore, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, and the United States.

governments sometimes face difficult trade-offs between the need to defend freedom of speech and the need to counter the spread of violent extremism.[34] Indeed, legislation prohibiting the dissemination of extremist content can be an effective instrument in confronting those who spread hate speech, and incite racism, xenophobia, and violence, as the response from the Belgian government advises.

29.   In this context, Canada was one of the earliest countries to enact in 1985 a law criminalizing incitement to violent extremism and addressing hate crime and even the use of the Internet to encourage and facilitate violence. In France, laws exist that allow legal action against groups that promote discrimination, hatred, and violence towards a person or a group of people based on their origin or their belonging to a particular ethnic group, nation, race or religion. Legal recognition of all religions and religious groups in Austria empowered moderate voices that challenge terrorist ideology. Iceland has established new legislation criminalizing acts of terrorism, including hate speech and incitement to violence. Iceland has also used its legislation to deny admission of aliens who pose a threat to national security or public order, and to expel aliens who have become a threat to national security or public order after they have been admitted to the territory. Similarly, anti-discrimination laws have been used in the Netherlands not just to support victims of discrimination, but to allow monitoring and to provide information to citizens and local authorities to enable them to combat those who would exacerbate divisions in society by inciting racism and xenophobia, specifically Islamophobia. New legislation in Yemen facilitates monitoring non-governmental organizations and their activities and criminalizes acts of incitement, recruitment, and training for terrorism.[35] Algeria has used its legislation to create a national consensus and reconciliation programme by enabling the President to pardon and/or reduce the sentences of individuals who have been involved in violent extremist acts so long as they have not committed mass murder, rape or were involved in causing explosions in public places. Finally, new legislation in Thailand stresses that "people's participation is essential in fostering peace in the area

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34 Tsoukala Anastassia, "Democracy Against Security: the debates about Counter-Terrorism in the European Parliament," September 2001-June 2003, in Liberty and Security, Monday 14 February 2005, at http://www.libertysecurity.org/article137.html.

35 The new regulations are still in the process of being implemented.

where instability prevails."[36] Of the 34 responses from Member States, sixteen mention laws to counter radicalisation and violent extremism.[37]

Rehabilitation

30.   Several Member States have designed and come to rely on rehabilitation programmes aimed at preparing violent extremist detainees for reintegration into society upon their release from incarceration. In addition, Sweden has developed methods to support people who want to leave an environment of extremist violence. The United States Bureau of Prisons has designed a special rehabilitation programme that focuses on traditional methods to assist offenders in developing skills necessary for a successful reintegration into society. In Singapore, rehabilitation includes religious counselling and education and continues to operate indefinitely even after the detainee is released: "It would be naïve to believe that many years of... indoctrination can be permanently neutralized through a short period of religious counselling."[38] Saudi Arabia designed and introduced a special rehabilitation programme in 2006, the *al Ria'ya* (Care) programme. The programme transfers detainees who qualify to a new, specially designed facility. Implemented during the period that immediately precedes the release of a detainee, the *al Ria'ya* programme provides psychological counselling, religious education and promotes debate and dialogue between them and the organizers of the programme.[39] Eight Member States of the 34 respondents have designed and implemented some form of a rehabilitation programme.[40]

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36 From the Response of the Government of Thailand to the 18 February CTITF letter.

37 Algeria, Austria, Belgium, Canada, France, Iceland, Italy, the Netherlands, Russia, Sudan, Sweden, Thailand, United Kingdom, United States, while Yemen and Slovenia still have their legislations in the process of implantation.

38 From the Singaporean response to the 18 February CTITF letter. Received on 27 March, 2008.

39 'The al Munasaha program' and 'The al Ria'ya program,' documents published by the Ministry of Interior (Saudi Arabia) and sent to the CTITF in May, 2008 as a response to the 18 February letter.

40 Canada, Malaysia, Nigeria, Saudi Arabia, Sweden, Singapore, United Kingdom, and United States.

Developing & Sharing Information

31.   Generating and sharing information among all officials involved in counter-radicalisation and between them and the public without assisting violent extremists is probably the most effective yet difficult aspect of counter radicalisation. Responses from Member States suggest that they differ widely in how they gather and disseminate information. Some have established specialized units purely for this purpose. The responses of the twelve Member States that emphasize the need to the gather and share information in countering radicalisation suggest that there is no unified and well articulated view on how best to approach this task.[41] For example, Guyana has begun a Citizen Security Programme. One of its initiatives includes the implementation of an integrated information system to facilitate outreach to civil society, as well as to gather and exchange information and monitor crime and violence. In Belgium, a system is in place that facilitates gathering, disseminating, and exchanging information at both national and regional (European) levels. Information on those involved in hate speech and incitement to terrorism inside and outside the European Union is shared and exchanged between and among intelligence and police services at national and regional levels. Norway's former "Exit Programme," developed in the 1970s to counter violent right-wing groups and rehabilitate their members, focused on developing knowledge and disseminating information to professionals working and associated with violent groups. The Italian Central Directorate of Prevention Police has recently launched the *"Tabligh Eddawa"* project with the European Group of Six[42] relating to the sharing and analysis of information on the movement of so-called "itinerant preachers".[43]

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41 Belgium, Canada, Guyana, Italy, the Netherlands, Nigeria, Romania, Russia, United Kingdom, the United States, and Yemen and Slovenia whose information gathering/sharing policies are still under construction.

42 The G6 (Group of Six) in the European Union is an unofficial group of the interior ministers of the six European Union member states with the largest populations

43 From the Italian response to the 18 February CTITF letter. Received on August 12, 2008.

Training and Qualifications

32.   Seven countries of the 34 Member States who responded to the Working Group's request for information reported that they have developed or are developing some form of training and qualification programme for their officials and community workers involved in countering radicalisation.[44] Such training is considered necessary to improve the cultural competence of counter-radicalisation agencies, qualify them to do their jobs better and equip them with essential knowledge. The United States training programme, for example, involves training police forces in areas related to special dimensions of the religious and cultural traits of the country's main communities. This includes training posters and programmes on common types of community groups, as well as developing DVD training on related aspects. In Belgium, training programmes involve the installation of special modules for new police candidates in police schools, as well as training for existing officers. They also involve sensitizing neighbourhood police to violent extremism by explaining the phenomenon and explaining recruitment activities and ways to disrupt them with the help of appropriate agencies. Canada provides cultural and religious awareness training for its National Security investigators in partnership with community members.

33.   Drawing on the knowledge, experience and methods of Norway's above-mentioned Exit Project, in which more than 700 personnel from various agencies and professions were trained in prevention and intervention in relation to racist and violent youth groups, the Norwegian Police Security Service (PST) in 2003 set out to train regular police to recognize radicalization processes and take preventive measures with radical youths who have became involved with violent right-wing or other violent organizations. For instance, regular police are trained to carry out "preventive conversations" with radical youths along with their parents with the goal of motivating young people to break with extremist groups.

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44 Belgium, Canada, the Netherlands, Saudi Arabia, United Kingdom, United States, while Belarus'
    training programme continues to develop.

Conclusion

34.   This report attempts to contribute to the current work on violent extremism by providing an overview of non-coercive counter-radicalisation policies and programmes implemented or being launched by the 34 Member States that responded to the Working Group's request for information.

35.   The 34 reports received by the Working Group suggest that Member States have significantly increased their efforts in recent years to develop policies and programmes aimed at countering radicalisation that leads to terrorism and addressing the challenge of violent extremism. Indeed, most programmes referred to in this report have been launched since 2000. The increased attention given to a non-coercive approach to violent extremism that aims to prevent disaffected individuals from resorting to violence in the first place, reverses a previous reliance on "hard approaches" and highlights a growing recognition among States that military and other suppressive approaches alone are insufficient, and in some cases may even be counter-productive.[45]

36.   Contributions by Member States to this report demonstrate that radicalisation processes are complex and multifaceted and may follow different dynamics in different places. These complexities, the need for multilayered approaches and the fact that many governments are entering relatively unknown territory in developing counter- and de-radicalisation policies and programmes, mean that many States have sought ideas from others and have wished to learn from their experience. While no one theory can explain all forms of terrorism and no one approach can address all the conditions that may lead to it, some common understanding and policies have begun to emerge. These are likely to increase as Member States find what works and what does not and pass on their knowledge to others.

37.   It is here that this Working Group may be able to play a helpful role by promoting an exchange of information and knowledge among Member States on their programmes and policies addressing radicalisation and extremism that lead to terrorism. This report aims to make a first step in this direction.

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45 See, for example, Horgan and Bjørgo, 2008.

38. The Working Group has the resources to establish a database containing the information on counter- and de-radicalisation programmes submitted by Member States. This database would be accessible to Member States. The Working Group hopes to add further contributions and updates from Member States on their respective counter-radicalisation programmes and policies.

39. The Working Group looks forward to continue to engage with all Member States on meeting the critical challenge of countering radicalisation that leads to terrorism and it welcomes any suggestions for future work.