

Multi-Stakeholder seminar on Preventing Violent Extremism in the Euro-Med Region

Theme: Assessing Progress made and the future Development of Action
Plans for preventing Violent Extremism in the Euro-Mediterranean region

Wednesday, June 27th 2018

Venue: Secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean

Palacio de Pedralbes
Pere Duran Farell, 11
08034 Barcelona, Spain

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Multi-Stakeholder seminar on Preventing Violent Extremism in the Euro-Med Region

Assessing Progress made and the future Development of Action Plans for preventing Violent Extremism in the Euro-Mediterranean region

1. Introduction

In January 2017, it was organized a Regional Meeting of Civil Society representatives during the Barcelona Conference: “Towards a new paradigm: Preventing Violent Extremism”. Bringing together 173 civil society organizations and multilateral institutions, national governments, academia and think tanks from across the Euro-Mediterranean Region, this conference contributed to approve a “Plan of Action of the Euro-Mediterranean Civil Society to prevent all forms of violent extremism”. This Plan of Action subsequently established a pioneer platform of CSO’s in charge of following the implementation of the Plan: The Observatory to Prevent Extremist Violence (OPEV). The OPEV has provided an active platform of CSO’s aiming to contribute to frame the discussion on PVE and make a positive contribution for the Development of National / Local Actions Plans (NAP’s) to Prevent Violent Extremism in the Euro-Med region.

One year on, the next 27th of June in Barcelona the OPEV will celebrate a multi-stakeholder seminar on Preventing Violent Extremism in the Euro-Med Region, that will be hosted by the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), and has been organized with the support of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the Catalan Agency of International Cooperation for Development (ACCD), the European Union Instrument Contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP) and the Municipality of Barcelona.

2. Context and regional trends

No country in the Euro-Mediterranean Region is immune from the negative impacts and threats posed by violent extremism. Data derived from studies on the impact of violent extremism during the last decade in the Euro-Mediterranean Region suggest a dramatic global increase in the number of attacks, fatalities and persons discriminated by all forms of violence, including terrorist attacks, hate speech, hate crimes and structural violence.

In Europe, according to the “European Islamophobia Report” violent extremism related to hate speech and hate crimes it is currently raising given the rise of racism especially Islamophobic, anti-Semitic and anti-Roma far-right parties and the adaptation of their discourse by mainstream parties in many European states. In terms of violence caused by terrorist attacks, during 2016 Europe has experienced the deadliest year for the region since 2002. The “Global Terrorism Index 2017” determines that in 2002, there were 14 deaths

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from 129 attacks in Europe. This increased to 826 deaths from 630 attacks by 2016 which equates to nearly 60 times more deaths and over 3.7 times more attacks.

The situation in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) remains as the second region in the world with a highest impact from violent extremism with four countries in the region amongst the ten most impacted of the world. According to the “Global Terrorism Index 2017” in 2002, MENA had 1,651 deaths and 300 incidents from terrorism. Yet in 2016, these statistics increased to 13,512 deaths from 4,732 attacks. In the region, Iraq and Syria continue to suffer the highest numbers of fatalities since 2002 with over 60,000 and 8,000 deaths respectively.

In all the Euro-Mediterranean region, violent extremism is undermining our humanity. As stated by the UN Secretary General in his Plan of Action, violence is destabilizing our tolerant societies by dividing local communities and provoking an overreaction

3. Current policy responses: the emergence of PVE strategies

In 2006, the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, adopted unanimously by the General Assembly by its resolution 60/288, foresees balanced implementation across four key pillars: (I) tackling conditions conducive to terrorism; (II) preventing and combating terrorism; (III) building countries’ capacity to combat terrorism and to strengthen the role of the United Nations system in that regard; and (IV) ensuring respect for human rights for all and the rule of law while countering terrorism. According to the UN Secretary General, during the implementation of this strategy “over the last decade, there has been a strong emphasis on the implementation of measures under pillar II and III, while pillars I and IV have often been overlooked”. The main focus of the responses to violent extremism during the last decade has been based on Counter Terrorism (CT) and Counter Violent Extremism (CVE) strategies, essentially security-based responses reinforcing Homeland Security and building countries capacity to combat terrorism.

Ten years after the adoption of the UN Global Strategy, in 2016 the UN Assembly pointed out the need to take a more comprehensive approach of the ongoing CT and CVE strategies. In the same line, several civil society organizations, including Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, has also called attention on the fact that the anxiety to respond to violent extremism has fueled overreactions in terms of Homeland Security, where fundamental freedoms and civil and political rights have been restricted, subjected to mass surveillance and the democratic and plural values have been limited by a general state of emergency. Many consider that counter-terrorism measures have limited the perimeter of fundamental rights and freedoms.

In face of the growing concern for identifying more effective measures to end extremism while respecting human rights and rule of law, the United Nations SG launched a Plan of Action demanding to encompass not only security-based counter-terrorism measures, but

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also systematic preventive measures which directly address the drivers of violent extremism that have given rise to the emergence of these new and more virulent groups.

In view of the lessons learned over the past decade and the challenges that lie ahead, the PVE strategy presented by the Secretary General is based on

- (I) Preventive measures for addressing violent extremism with the aim to create open, equitable, inclusive and pluralist societies, based on the full respect of human rights and with economic opportunities for all giving tangible and meaningful alternative to violent extremism and rendering it unattractive.
- (II) Ensuring respect for human rights for all and the rule of law while countering terrorism.

4. Current developments of PVE Strategies

Following the UN Plan of Action recommendations, the last two years has seen an unprecedented effort in the Euro-Med Region to further develop it and implement it. The UN is assisting the member states in developing National Action Plans (NAP's) to Prevent Violent Extremism. Trying to assess the progress made, the second UNDP global meeting on PVE (Oslo, May 2018) provided an opportunity to convene a broad community of relevant stakeholders, and take stock of new evidence and experience to assess what has worked well, identify challenges, and generate new insights as well as specific recommendations aimed at enhancing future efforts and global drive towards PVE research, policy-development and programmatic interventions.

In January 2017, another relevant multilateral institution, the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), adopted an action-oriented roadmap centered on Mediterranean women's and youth's potential for promoting stability and development. Ministers committed to supporting intercultural and interfaith dialogue and bridging any potential cultural divides in order to fight violent extremism. Through its activities, UfM joins regional and international efforts to address the socio-economic root causes of violent extremism, and aims to develop further high-impact projects and initiatives with a special focus on youth employability and women's empowerment. On the other hand, in the 4th Ministerial Declaration on strengthening the role of women in society adopted in Cairo on the 27th of November 2017, Ministers agreed to advance women's participation in decision making in the field of peace and security, as well as prevention and resolution of social conflicts, violence and extremism.

Civil society organizations, academia and think tanks have also proved to have the potential to greatly contribute to face challenges to prevent radicalization and to address the conditions conducive to the spread of violent extremism. Significant actions and good practices raising alternative narratives, mainstreaming gender equality and strengthening community resilience to the message and drivers of violent extremism have been

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implemented. Since its creation during the its foundational Conference in Barcelona in January 2017, the Observatory to Prevent Extremist Violent (OPEV) is offering a pioneer platform to those organizations in order to share experiences learned, implement pilot projects and promote structured dialogue in order to contribute to the adoption of local, national and regional Plans of Action.

5. Objectives of the seminar

Aiming to connect all the current efforts, this seminar aims to open a structured dialogue between civil society organisations, practitioners, academia, think tanks and regional and multi-lateral institutions regarding the future Development of Action Plans for preventing Violent Extremism in the Euro-Mediterranean region. The opportunity to strengthen the cooperation between UfM, UNDP, OPEV, Think Tanks, Academia and Civil Society Organizations that this event brings is an enormous opportunity

The main goals that will be pursued are:

- ✓ Share the main lessons learned and progress made in the adoption of National Action Plans (NAP's) for preventing Violent Extremism in the Euro-Mediterranean region
- ✓ Learning from the practice, distil lessons on policy-development, research and programming on PVE.
- ✓ Suggest good practices and recommendations for PVE policy-development National Actions Plans with a whole of society approach.

6. Expected outputs

- ✓ Reinforce the regional cooperation and structured dialogue between multilateral institutions, CSO's platforms and governments to contribute to the adoption of National Action Plans (NAP's)
- ✓ Provide an analysis on the progress, challenges and goals for the implementation of local, national and regional Plans of Action to prevent violent extremism.
- ✓ Propose recommendations and key remarks that could inform the UfM regional dialogue on strengthening the role of women and youth in preventing extremism.
- ✓ Propose recommendations and key remarks useful for informing the CSO's and OPEV efforts to contribute to the adoption of Local, National and Regional Action Plans.

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AGENDA

Wednesday, June 27th 2018

Venue: Secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean

Language of the meeting: English and French (with direct translation)

08: 45	<i>Registration of the participants</i>	
09 :00	<p>Welcome and introduction: framing the debate</p> <p>The keynote speakers will provide their reflections on contemporary issues related to preventing violent extremism (PVE).</p> <p>These conferences will help to present the current global agenda on PVE, disseminate and discuss cutting edge research findings, generate lessons learned on programmatic interventions and policy support on PVE.</p>	<p>Laurence Païs, UfM - Assistant Secretary General of Civil and Social Affairs of the Union for the Mediterranean</p> <p>Luca Gervasoni, OPEV Codirector of NOVACT and member of the Observatory to Prevent Extremist Violence</p> <p>Manel Vila, ACCD General Director of International Cooperation of the Generalitat de Catalunya.</p> <p>Kawtar Zerouali, UNDP Gender, Leadership and Participation Specialist of UNDP Regional Office for Arab States</p>
09 :30	<p>Panel 1: How the public institutions are implementing their PVE Policy frameworks today?</p> <p>Relevant multi-lateral, regional and international institutions will analyse the progress made, and identify current gaps as well as future efforts on the development and implementation of PVE plans of action.</p>	<p><i>Moderator: Lurdes Vidal, IEMed</i> Director of the Arab and Mediterranean Department</p> <p>Slim Ben Jrad, Tunisian Government Permanent Secretariat of the Tunisian National Commission to Prevent and Counter Violent Extremism</p> <p>Ana Sánchez, AECID Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo/AECID</p> <p>Oriol Amoros, Generalitat of Catalonia Secretary of the Department of Equality, Migrations and Citizenship of the Catalan Government.</p> <p>Arnau Gutiérrez, Madrid Municipality Deputy Director General for International Affairs, Networks and International Organisations.</p>
11 :00	<i>Coffee – Break</i>	
11:30	<p>Panel 2: A vision of Think Tanks and Civil Society Actors: How to develop a policy framework with a multi-stakeholder approach? The session will provide insights drawing from non-governmental actors in relation to support to countries, communities and civil society on the existing and potential contribution to the prevention of violent extremism.</p>	<p><i>Moderator: Khadija Ryadi, CMODH</i> President of the Coordination of Human Rights Organizations of the Maghreb.</p> <p>Albert Caramés, Spain OPEV Hub</p> <p>Ines Tlili, Tunisian OPEV Hub</p> <p>Mahmoud Hishmeh, Jordan Hub Representative</p> <p>Moussa Bourekba, CIDOB Researcher</p>
13: 20	<i>Lunch</i>	
14: 30 16:00	<p>Concluding remarks on key findings and recommendations from the seminar and key outcomes of the session.</p>	Open Debate

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Organizers and supporters:



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The following CSO's from the EuroMed region are core promoters of the Seminar:

MAGHREB REGION:

- Ligue Tunisienne des Droits de l'Homme (Tunisia)
- Association tunisienne des femmes démocrates (Tunisia)
- Free Sight Association (Tunisia)
- Union générale tunisienne du travail (Tunisia)
- Coordination Maghrébine des Organisations des Droits Humains (Regional)

EUROPE:

- SOS Racisme (Spain)
- Institut de Drets Humans de Catalunya (Spain)
- Stop als Fenòmens Islamòfobs a Catalunya (Spain)
- Centre Euro Àrab de Catalunya (Spain)
- FundiPau (Spain)
- Fundación Al Fanar (Spain)
- Gruppo di Volontariato Civile GVC (Italy)
- Un ponte Per... (Italy)

MASHREK REGION

- Arab Renaissance for Democracy and Development (Jordan)
- Durrat Almanal (Jordan)
- Leaders of tomorrow (Jordan)
- Penal Reform International (Jordan)
- The Jordanian National Commission for Women (Jordan)
- East and West Center for Sustainable Development (Jordan)
- LAONF (Iraq)
- Iraqi Civil Society Solidarity Initiative (Iraq)

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