



CalsMUN 2019
Future Technology

Research Report

Forum: GA1

Issue: Combatting and preventing the radicalization of youth

Chairs: Marije van de Wall and Annelieve Ruyters



Personal Introduction

Marije van de Wall

Dear Delegates,

As you can see above my name is Marije van de Wall and I will be your chair, and also the PGA, at CalsMUN 2019. I am 17 years old and go to Cals College myself, which makes this conference extra special for me. When it comes to my MUN experience, I have participated in 8 MUN's and was a chair at CalsMUN last year as well. When I have free time, which, as I am in my final year, is not very often sadly, I like to do rock climbing. Additionally, I also spend a lot of time watching movies and series or hanging out with friends. I am really excited for the conference and I am sure that it will be a lot of fun.

Sincerely,
Marije

Annelieve Ruyters

Dear Delegates,

My name is Annelieve Ruyters, 16 years old, and I will be your co-chair at this amazing conference. I have always enjoyed being a delegate (which I have done 7 times before), and now I will finally be able to lead this debate as a chair. I enjoyed being a delegate in GA1 in specific, as it is truly the best committee there is. And with me as your chair, and you as delegates, it will be lit. However, there is more to me than my MUN experience (which I am forced to include in this letter). I love music; I play violin and bass guitar. I am also a metalhead: I like anything from melodic death metal to power metal. Also, I have a strange passion for drawing comics.

I hope we will all get along and I hope we will make this CalsMUN the best one yet.

Sincerely yours,

Your Co-Chair Annelieve



Introduction

One of the great challenges our world faces is the radicalisation of youth. Rooted in political discontent a culture of isolation and humiliation and a collective or individual longing for revenge against acts of hate and repression can lead to terrorist activity. The radicalisation of youth does not only occur in conflict areas, but extends far beyond those zones. Former Norwegian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Jonas Gahr Storer, wrote about the importance of counter-radicalization measures in the New York Times. He stated that “political extremism does not grow in a vacuum. Ideas are the oxygen that allows it to flourish and spread. Extremist perspectives win sympathy and recruits because they offer narratives that claim to identify deep injustices and enemies. Without this fuel, the blaze of extremism is quickly extinguished.”

Definition of Key Terms

Radicalization

The action or process of causing someone to adopt radical positions on political or social issues

“The process by which people come to support terrorism and violent extremism and, in some cases, then join terrorist groups” (UK Home Office, MI5’s parent agency)

“The process by which individuals—usually young people—are introduced to an overtly ideological message and belief system that encourages movement from moderate, mainstream beliefs towards extreme views. While radical thinking is by no means problematic in itself, it becomes a threat to national security when [Canadian] citizens or residents espouse or engage in violence or direct action as a means of promoting political, ideological or religious extremism.” (Royal Canadian Mounted Police)

“The (active) pursuit of and/or support to far-reaching changes in society which may constitute a danger to (the continued existence of) the democratic legal order (aim), which may involve the use of undemocratic methods (means) that may harm the functioning of the democratic legal order (effect)” (The Netherlands General Intelligence and Security Service (AIVD))



Counter radicalization

A package of social, political, legal, educational, and economic programs specifically designed to deter disaffected (and possibly already radicalized) individuals from crossing the line and becoming terrorists.

Terrorism

the unlawful use of violence and intimidation, especially against civilians, in the pursuit of political aims.

General Overview

Youth radicalization should not be disconnected from its social and political context and must be investigated within the broader scope of sociology of conflict and violence studies. The causes for radicalization can range from identity crisis, personal trauma, discrimination, segregation, and alienation to misinformation about Islam and Western foreign policy.

Causes of radicalization

There are many different reasons young people might radicalize, the most important and most occurring ones are explained below.

- **Experiences with discrimination, isolation or perceived injustice**
In many western countries Muslims, immigrants and minority groups experience discrimination, marginalization, isolation and are sometimes treated as inferiors in society. In everyday life, the workplace, at school and even when finding housing. As anger and resentment build up these people seek for revenge and justice and thus become prone to being victims of radicalization. Those at highest risk of suffering radicalization are individuals in difficult financial situation, are unemployed or have been isolated from their family or community.
- **The promise of a way out of an insecure and undignified life**
Young Muslims in for example Iraq and Syria are prone to radicalization due to the situation they find themselves in. These young people often feel a sense of shame and frustration because of the fact that the Muslim world has been



moving backwards in terms of political and economic development and they are unhappy about the incompetent, corrupt government. Though they are not necessarily captivated by the ideology of the terrorist group, this group, such as ISIS, does promise a way out of the insecure and undignified life these young people find themselves in. It promises a path towards regaining their pride, it is about culture, tribe and territory as well. Furthermore, a terrorist group such as ISIS is, as contradicting as it sounds, a good job opportunity. ISIS pays far more than any job opportunity any of these youth could possibly receive and it even provides social services in the territories it rules. In combination with the lack of viable alternatives this is an attractive option.

- **Need for belonging**

Young people especially seek for approval, recognition and validation, things a terrorist group often provides. In a radical extremist group prospective terrorists not only find a sense of meaning, but also of belonging, affinity and affiliation. They are attracted to the promise of heroism, an illusion of military glory that will not easily cease to exist. ISIS especially presents a Utopian view of what the world could be and the youth is then urged to join in the cause.

- **Indoctrination**

According to Eric Hoffer the goal of a terrorist group is to embed the feeling that, by the possession of a potent doctrine and an infallible leader, they have access to a source of irresistible power, in new recruits. Eric Hoffer noted that a successfully indoctrinated member of any mass movement must have an extravagant conception of the prospect and the potentialities of the future and must be woefully ignorant of the difficulties involved. In this case experience is a handicap instead of a virtue.

A core part of the indoctrination of new recruits is the steady diminution of oneself. In terrorist groups everything that is unique about an individual is often criticized, forbidden or diminished. Additionally, terrorist groups also focus on demonstrating to its members and recruits how their radical world is a total support structure. An example is ISIS. They pay good wages, the social atmosphere for those who apply is generally egalitarian and affectionate and ISIS militants even compose their own ideological songs.



- **The internet and social media**

Radical propaganda is easily spread through social networks, which are a powerful tool for recruiting the youth. To take ISIS as an example once more, they have created many English videos used for recruitment. These pitches are warm and welcoming, with stirring imagery and professionally produced videos, mostly reasonable in tone and content. They are targeted at addressing real or imagined ambitions and grievance, appeal to the youth's sense of adventure and offer a chance to join a movement with clearly defined purpose and hope.

Major Parties Involved

Organisations

European Union

The European Union has measures to counter terrorism and radicalization on three separate levels: Judicial Powers, executive powers and preventive policies. They support two networks of expert: The Policy Planner's Network on Polarisation and Radicalisation (PPN) and the Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN) in order to share practises and diffuse knowledge on radicalisation in Europe

ICCT (International Centre for Counter Terrorism)

This independent knowledge centre focuses information creation, collation and dissemination pertaining to the preventative and international legal aspects of counter-terrorism. ICCT focusses on themes such as but not limited to de- and counter-radicalisation, human rights, impunity, the rule of law and communication in relation to counterterrorism.

UNESCO (United Nations Scientific and Cultural Organization)

UNESCO has a four-point plan in order to prevent violent extremism, which includes working on the following points: (1) education, skills development and employment facilitation, (2) empowerment of youth, (3) strategic communications, social media and the internet, (4) gender equality and empowering women.



ISIS/ISIL

The Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), also known as the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham, the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) and officially known as the Islamic State (IS) is a jihadist militant group and proto-state following an extremist interpretation of Islam. The United Nations and many individual countries have deemed the organisation a terrorist group. They are known for violent videos of beheadings and other types of executions and destruction of cultural heritage. ISIL is currently being accused of war crimes, human rights abuses and ethnic cleansing by the UN.

Al-Qaeda

Al-Qaeda was founded by Osama Bin Laden in 1988. They have been designated as a terrorist group by the United Nations Security Council, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the European Union and various individual countries. They are widely known for the September 11 attacks on the World Trade Centre. In recent years, while the world's attention has been focused on ISIS, they have had the chance to rebuild.

Boko Haram

Boko Haram is a jihadist military organisation based in northeast Nigeria. They were founded in 2002 and have been aligned with ISIL from march 2015 to august 2016. The organisation has killed tens of thousands and displaced 2.3 million people and they were ranked world's deadliest terror group by the Global Terrorism Index in 2015. Additionally, UNICEF says that Boko Haram has kidnapped more than 1,000 children in northeast Nigeria since 2013. Minors make up nearly a quarter of Boko Haram soldiers.

Al Shabaab

Al Shabaab or "The Youth" is a militant organisation based in Somalia who have been deemed a terrorist organisation by the US, Norway and Sweden. They emerged as the radical youth wing of the now-defunct Somalian Union od Islamic



Courts. The group imposes a very strict interpretation of Sharia law in areas under its control, including amputating the hands of thieves and stoning women accused of adultery to death.

Countries

United States of America

The USA has developed a counter-terror policy called “Countering Violent Extremism (CVE)”. The USA is the key actor in the Global War against Terrorism and have intervened in many countries (rightfully and not, successfully and not)



Timeline of Key Events

Date	Description of Event
<i>September 11, 2001</i>	Series of attacks in the United States by Al-Qaeda
<i>September 14, 2001</i>	The Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Terrorists is passed as a resolution by the United States Congress
<i>October 7, 2001</i>	Operation Enduring Freedom, also known as the war on terror, is launched
<i>March 11, 2004</i>	Bombings on a train in Madrid by Al-Qaeda killed nearly 200 people
<i>December 2006</i>	Al Shabaab emerges
<i>August 14, 2007</i>	Al-Qaeda is responsible for four corresponding suicide bombs which exploded in the towns of Yazidi and Jazeera, estimated 796 casualties and 1,562 injured.
<i>February 9, 2012</i>	Al Shabaab officially becomes part of Al-Qaeda
<i>May 30, 2013</i>	The UN Security Council recognizes ISIL as terrorist organization separate from al-Qaeda.
<i>November 13, 2013</i>	The US state department adds Boko Haram and Ansaru to its list of terrorist organisations
<i>April 14, 2014</i>	Boko Haram kidnaps approximately 276 teenage girls from a boarding school in Chibok, Borno.
<i>May 22, 2014</i>	The UN security council adds Boko Haram to its sanctions list
<i>June 29, 2014</i>	ISIL declares a caliphate
<i>January 7, 2015</i>	Al-Qaeda claims responsibility for the Charlie Hebdo Shootings in Paris
<i>March 7, 2015</i>	Boko Haram pledges alliance to ISIL
<i>March 22, 2016</i>	Three coordinated ISIS suicide bombers attack an airport an metro station in Belgium
<i>July 14, 2016</i>	ISIL claims responsibility for a truck driving into crowds in Nice, France
<i>August 20, 2016</i>	A child suicide bomber kills 57 people at a wedding, no group has claimed responsibility though ISIL was blamed by some
<i>February 19, 2018</i>	Boko Haram Raids the Governmnet Girls Science and Technical College in Nigeria and kidnaps 110 students
<i>March 21, 2018</i>	It is announced that 104 of the 110 students abducted by Boko Haram have been released
<i>July 25, 2018</i>	ISIL launches a string attack of suicide bombings and gun attacks in Syria, killing at least 246 people and injuring more than 200 others



Previous Attempts to Resolve the Issue

Many European countries have developed policies aimed at preventing non-radicals from being radicalised and stop them from possibly joining violent groups in Europe and abroad. They are intended to detect radicalised youth in neighbourhoods, communities and prisons.

The UN aims to promote a culture of justice and human development, peace, ethnic national and religious tolerance, and respect for all religions, religious values, beliefs or cultures by establishing and encouraging, as appropriate, education and public awareness programs involving all sectors of society. A key role is played by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization plays a key role by facilitating inter-faith and intra-faith dialogue and dialogue among civilizations.

In the United Kingdom the government launched a counter-radicalization Prevent Programme in 2003 which' goal is to “stop people becoming or supporting terrorists or violent extremists”. It has been highly criticized by numerous NGOs since reports and studies have shown it to be an infringement on people’s rights. Additionally, these reports showed the programme to be counterproductive as they may add to Muslim people’s feelings of marginalization and targeting. In the UK there has also been the CONTEST strategy to counter-terrorism, whose work is founded around four P's': *Prevent*, *Pursue*, *Protect*, and *Prepare*. It started in 2006 but was later revised in 2009

Saudi Arabia has a de-radicalization program which began in 2004 under the government’s PRAC Strategy (Prevention, Rehabilitation, and Aftercare) and has reen countered high levels of public support. The program employs a prison-based individual level approach to disengage and de-radicalize participants, but often goes a step further by reaching out and supporting the families of detainees as well as by providing aftercare programs for participants once they have been released.



Possible Solutions

A key obstacle in the way of de-radicalization is the lack of clarity and consensus with regard to many key concepts, such as terrorism, radicalization, extremism, etcetera. Common definitions must therefore be reached in order to properly and collaboratively tackle the issue.

In the case of extremists aiming to exploit grievances, either real or perceived, a core objective of counter-radicalisation is to address these grievances and the perception thereof.

Furthermore, communication is key. Communication between all levels of government and community prevents alienation of certain groups within a community or society and is thus vital for de-radicalisation.

If violent extremists seek to promote extremist narratives and make their ideology resonate, the purpose of counter-radicalisation is to expose and counter such ideas, educate communities and thereby strengthen their defenses against the extremists' narrative; empowering community leaders to speak out against violent extremists and their ideas as well as amplifying the voice of moderate Islamic organizations and engaging them in debate are both counter measures as well.

Additionally, there should be adequate post-immigration support provided to ensure the integration of foreigners into the society which they are entering, to minimize the risks for resentment and isolation.

Police and social workers need awareness training to be able to gauge early signs of radicalization in communities. Social integration of youth is extremely important along with counter ideology through means of education.

Furthermore, it is very important to adequately address the experience of returnees, people who return to their native country, for example after war service. By giving the returnees a voice, one could contribute to the dislocation of their hostility. Various formats of debriefing sessions should be explored, based on an evidence-based



understanding of the various situations and actors involved. Here, experience gained in the armed forces around post-traumatic stress disorder could be evaluated.

As a whole, communication between nations is of great importance. Supporting counter-radicalization programmes by sharing practises, facilitating intelligence and information sharing should all be considered as part of this.

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