

## DEBATING SECURITY PLUS ROUNDTABLE REPORT

26 November 2018

Hedayah, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates (UAE)

On November 26, 2018, Hedayah, the International Center of Excellence for Countering Violent Extremism (CVE), Friends of Europe and TRENDS Research & Advisory organized a round-table discussion in Abu Dhabi to discuss Recommendation 7 “Use criminal rehabilitation programs as model for re-integrating violent extremists back into society” and Recommendation 9 “Include both Nuclear and Non-Nuclear States to guide the process of tangible denuclearization”. Such recommendations were part of the Debating Security Plus 2018 Report.

Participants were from a variety of sectors such as academia, foreign government, think-tanks and government officials and universities from the UAE. The aim of the round-table was:

- To discuss and contextualize the recommendation with locally-based audience.
- To include their feedback and perspectives of the recommendation.
- To identify additional topics for Debating Security Plus 2019.

### RECOMMENDATION 7

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*“Use criminal rehabilitation programs as a model for re-integrating violent extremists back into society”.*

#### BACKGROUND

Hedayah focused on recommendation 7: “Use criminal rehabilitation programs as a model for re-integrating violent extremists back into society”. The recommendation looks at successful solutions for reintegrating criminal gangs that can be utilized for countering violent extremism. In particular the recommendation highlights the importance of psychological support as a means to ensure full dis-engagement and rehabilitation.

The roadmap for implementation recommends in the short term that governments should work with think tanks or specialized centers of excellence to produce a study on criminal rehabilitation programs successfully used to reform gang members and see how these can be adapted to violent extremists.

Participant’s thoughts on Recommendation 7 included:

1. Building trust networks with family and friends is key.
2. Ensuring flexibility as each case is different,
3. Providing social welfare either by religious leaders, by the use of family and friends, and follow-up programs after prison.
4. Understanding the functioning of prison systems.

5. Having specialized groups to train prison staff, and connecting relevant institutions with prison staff.
6. Ensuring that information sharing sensitivity is mitigated, as there are not enough data to conduct a statistically significant study on what works and what does not work.
7. Ensuring there is more focus on disengagement and de-radicalization.
8. Ensuring transparency and fostering a culture where national security is a shared responsibility.
9. Using technology for trainings to allow families to become part of the rehabilitation process.

Participants also provided some feedback on the applicability of Recommendation 7 in the MENA context:

1. There are limited resources for dealing with violent extremism in the MENA region. In particular, there are poor resources in terms of research programs. Comprehensive integration of rehabilitation policies is also expensive, given that significant amounts are already spent within and on the prison sector.
2. ‘Criminal rehabilitation program’ was not considered as appropriate language since several rehabilitation practices are set outside the criminal space (e.g. for instance, in the case of rehabilitation of children exposed to violent extremist ideologies). It was therefore recommended to rephrase the recommendation and not to use the word ‘criminal’.
3. Participant’s provided some suggested input to ensure successful applicability of the recommendation:
4. Programs should be properly tested and validated before sharing their content. Programs should also better differentiate between ex-prisoners and ex-violent extremists as rehabilitation responses might be different.
5. In the long-run, it is important to create a safe platform for discussion, where people are encouraged to share their problems and grievances (e.g. the “Majlis” concept in the MENA regions could provide an example).

## RECOMMENDATION 9

*“Include both nuclear and non-nuclear states to guide the process of tangible denuclearization”.*

### BACKGROUND

TRENDS Research & Advisory focused on recommendation 9: “Include both nuclear and non-nuclear states to guide the process of tangible denuclearization”. The recommendation addresses the need to limit the proliferation of nuclear weapons and work towards denuclearization globally. This recommendation seeks to expand the actors involved in discussions about nuclear weapons. In the MENA context, more countries have a stake with

respect to nuclear energy; this gives them a prominent role in the global debate concerning weapons proliferation.

The short-term roadmap states the importance of freezing and testing the production of nuclear weapons at first with the aim to ensure production of enriched uranium is terminated and the country's nuclear complexes subsequently dismantled.

Participant's thoughts Recommendation 9 included:

1. It is important to empower communities that suffer from nuclear power effects.
2. It is crucial to re-initiate a global dialogue and culture about 'common good' not 'national interest'.
3. Promoting a non-nuclear free zone is paramount.
4. Equally, it is paramount to address security concerns within the context of *realpolitik*.

Participants also provided some feedback on the applicability of Recommendation 9, in general:

1. It is difficult to see how nuclear-states and non-nuclear states cooperation would work in practice, and how the latter could have any influence in the debate'
2. There needs to be a practical acknowledgement that political distrust among certain countries exists; this aspect should be seriously addressed, to ensure nuclear weapons are dismantled.
3. There is not a clear political goal in the current debate on nuclear weapons.

Participant's provided some suggested input to ensure successful applicability of the recommendation:

1. Addressing practical security concerns in alternative manners is paramount to ensure progress on the debates about dismantling nuclear weapons.
2. Reinforcing long-term relationships and using soft power skills is key to ensure applicability of international agreement that otherwise would not be enforceable.
3. Reinforcing the collaboration with the International atomic energy agency and encouraging them to share their safety practices.
4. Empowering credible voices of communities that could be affected by the use of nuclear weapons.
5. Measuring the implementation of treaties.
6. Achieve the universal ratification of the Safety and Transparency Agreements of the IAEA in order to guarantee peaceful development of nuclear energy research;
7. Work towards establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East in order to avoid transfer of the nuclear facilities and raw material (such as uranium and plutonium) to the non-state (extremist) actors;
8. Harmonize export control tools with the integrated border management in order to provide extra measures for illegal trafficking;
9. Draw attention of the international community to defining the infringement of the non-proliferation regime as a threat to international peace and security (as per Chapter VII, Article 49 of the UN Charter);

10. Avoid double-standards in the nuclear non-proliferation regime by universalizing its enforcement and implementation;
11. Follow the UAE's example in nuclear research and non-proliferation.

### SUGGESTED RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE UPCOMING DEBATE, 2019

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Towards the end of the event participants had the chance to brainstorm on new topics that could be possibly be integrated in Debating Security Plus 2019.

Suggested topics were:

- The unbalanced targeting of ethnic and religious communities through CVE policies.
- Marginalization, disempowerment, and trauma as push factors towards violent extremism.
- Quantifying the effectiveness of CVE policy.
- Cyber-attack on energy facilities (electricity or nuclear)
- Evaluation of the effectiveness of existing Counter-Terrorism measures (researches indicated the absence of such evaluation)
- Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE) in schools (is it done, how, is it effective?)
- Artificial Intelligence implications on CVE and CT (research both positive and negative implications, talk about efforts in profiling terrorists, cost-benefits comparison, technology benchmark)
- Social Media role in identifying and countering extremist ideologies
- Women's role in CVE
- Holistic Approach in CVE- easier said than done? (How can it be done, was it done?)