Countering Extremism: Now What?

Event Report

10 – 11 September 2018

Centre of Excellence

for National Security

RSiS S. RAJARATNAM SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES
Nanyang Technological University, Singapore

NSCS NATIONAL SECURITY COORDINATION SECRETARIAT

Report on the Workshop organised by:

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CENS Radicalisation Studies Programme

The Workshop adheres to a variation of the Chatham House Rule. Accordingly, beyond the speakers and the presenters cited, no other attributions have been included in this report.

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Introduction

The Centre of Excellence for National Security (CENS) led by its Radicalisation Studies Programme held a Workshop on “Countering Extremism: Now What?” from 10-11 September 2018. The CENS Workshop was intended to: a) enhance our understanding of radicalisation from a multi-disciplinary perspective; (b) learn how countries and organisations around the world are confronting extremism; and (c) explore new methods to counter extremism.

The Workshop consisted of six panels. The first panel looked at the current state of violent extremism. It was followed by a panel looking at Indonesia's current countering violent extremism (CVE) challenges. The third panel looked at Denmark's Aarhus model, which employs mentorship to dissuade vulnerable individuals from extremism. The fourth panel talked about current CVE initiatives in Indonesia. The fifth panel examined the aftermath of the Battle for Marawi, specifically how to prevent the resurgence of groups linked to Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) in the Philippines. The last panel discussed the distinct nature of managing extremists in detention.

Twenty (20) speakers from institutions in Australia, Denmark, France, Indonesia, the Philippines, Singapore, the United Kingdom, and the United

States shared their experiences on dealing with the challenges of CVE. Workshop participants included members of the Singapore civil service, the private sector, and academia involved in examining radicalisation, countering violent extremism, terrorism, and national security topics.

This report summarises key points from the panel speakers' presentations. Key takeaways made by participants during the syndicate discussions and by CENS staff are included at the end of each panel section.

Welcome Remarks

Summary of remarks by Shashi Jayakumar, Head, Centre of Excellence for National Security (CENS), RSIS, NTU [Singapore]

The CENS workshop on "Countering Extremism: Now What?" aims to provoke discussion on wider perspectives on the future of violent extremism through bridging practitioner and academic expertise. Violent extremism is a constantly evolving phenomenon and academic institutions need to adopt diverse perspectives that take into account possible future threats. Analysts need to examine violent extremism from different, seemingly unrelated angles to understand how it will evolve in the Southeast Asian region. Issues such as intolerance and less common forms of radicalisation may contribute to shaping what may be conducive to violent extremism, and should therefore be on the agenda for future academic research. The workshop aims to bridge the gulf in perceptions between practitioners and academics, who work on similar issues in violent extremism but approach the issues differently. As an applied policy think tank, CENS runs workshops that bring together participants from diverse backgrounds in order to discuss and provoke deeper thinking on the issues presented.

Panel 1: The State of Violent Extremism

Speakers

Terrorism and CVE: A Singapore Perspective by *Shashi Jayakumar, Head, Centre of Excellence for National Security (CENS), RSIS, NTU [Singapore]*

Understanding "Reciprocal Radicalisation" as a Component of Wider Conflict Dynamics by *Joel Busher, Research Fellow, Coventry University [United Kingdom]*

Ascent and Decline of the "Islamic State" (IS) Has Eclipsed but Not Eclipsed al-Qa'ida (AQ) by *Nelly Lahoud, Senior Fellow, International Security Program, New America [USA]*

Shashi Jayakumar started his presentation by sketching out how the terrorism landscape has evolved in Southeast Asia. Al Qaeda's regional affiliate, Jema'ah Islamiyah (JI), was linked to several terrorist plots and arrests in Singapore since 2001. With the establishment of ISIS in Raqqa, Syria in 2014, the terrorism landscape in Singapore has shifted. Radicalisation of Singaporean citizens and foreigners workers has become a more salient issue.

Existing CVE measures in Singapore must be continually reassessed and reworked in order to

keep abreast of future developments. Besides rehabilitation initiatives such as the Religious Rehabilitation Group (RRG) and the Inter Agency After Care Group, excellent work by organic grassroots movements such as the Interfaith Youth Circle, which gathers youths for interfaith scriptural discussion and reasoning, should also be encouraged to tackle future challenges in violent extremism.

Joel Busher stressed that 'reciprocal radicalisation' between adversarial groups is a growing phenomenon. Reciprocal radicalisation refers to a phenomenon where different forms of radicalisation feed off one another, magnifying the impact of other forms of extremism.

The dynamics between extremist groups and other actors such as the state are complex. Extremist groups validate one another's narratives in order to accentuate polarisation in society. Violence committed by extremist groups can also create mobilisation opportunities for other groups. The outcomes of reciprocal radicalisation are not obvious and could therefore pose a challenge to policymakers. Political violence, promotion of radical ideologies, and wider polarisation within the society could take place. At times, however, reciprocal radicalisation may not lead to violence. The concept of reciprocal radicalisation, however, does present

opportunities for policymakers in terms of avoiding strategic surprise.

Nelly Lahoud outlined the growth and eventual decline of ISIS and compared it with current state of competing jihadi groups such as AQ. The growth of ISIS was made possible largely through its compelling ideology outlining the legitimacy of the caliphate, which was accepted by its *wilayah*s (provinces) as well as foreign fighters from all over the world.

ISIS continues to compete with other jihadi organisations such as AQ for leadership monopoly over the global jihadi landscape. In this respect, the violence ISIS committed was intended both against enemies as well as to prove their credentials to their competitors. Although ISIS has managed to surpass AQ in terms of violence it has committed, its ideological dominion has proven challenging to establish. ISIS appears to be on the decline while AQ seems to be stagnant in terms of activities. Public statements from ISIS leader al-Baghdadi betrayed signs of weakness. On the other hand, AQ's Hamzah bin Laden has failed to make an impression on the jihadi landscape.

Observations

Division between and within jihadi groups poses a greater threat than unity. Competitive rivalry between the groups means they often escalate

violence in order to defeat and outdo the influence of competing groups. In this regard, groups such as the ISIS and AQ are unlikely to unite in the future.

The ISIS perspective of establishing Asian *wilayahs* has not been coherent. In July 2016, it released a video outlining their *wilayah*s and some areas did not appear in that video. Two reasons behind the lack of ISIS acknowledgement on some Asian region include: (1) ISIS desire for Asian militants to earn and be worthy of the title of *wilayah* by conducting more violence; and that (2) ISIS did not wish to create schisms among jihadi groups in Southeast Asia.

Reciprocal radicalisation could be exploited by foreign actors for their agenda. In Europe and North America, where Russian interference online is a source of concern for intelligence agencies, far-right groups spend a lot of time fighting with their adversaries online. Foreign actors with interest in escalating inter-group, intra-country disputes could use these dynamics.

While there are various “extremisms” that can pose a threat to national security and communal relations, the key principle to address violent extremism rests on acquiring nuanced information and exploiting fault lines amongst adversary groups. Policy measures should also be targeted to suit threats posed by the extremist group in question.

Panel 2: Violent Extremism in Indonesia

Speakers

The Dynamics of Indonesian Entities Affiliated with Islamic State by *M. Adhe Bakti, Programme Director, Centre for Radicalism and Deradicalization Studies [Indonesia]*

Combating Online Extremism and Hate Speech in Indonesia by *Navhat Nuraniyah, Analyst, Institute for Policy Analysis and Conflict [Indonesia]*

Indonesian Online Extremism: Latest Trends and Techniques by *Mark Wilson, Consulting Principal, Jane's by IHS Markit [Indonesia]*

The rise of ISIS has reignited the jihadi movement in Indonesia, heralding extreme ideology, inspiring deadly attacks, and increasing the active role of women in violence. M. Adhe Bakti noted that ISIS supporters could now be found in at least 20 Indonesian provinces, though the movement is fragmented by support for different leaders.

In the beginning, the call from ISIS central in Raqqa was to join the fight and establish a caliphate straddling Syria and Iraq, but as travel became more difficult and military pressure more forceful, the message shifted to conducting attacks at home.

Assailants heeded this call and Indonesia has witnessed an upsurge in jihadi violence. Successful Indonesian law enforcement operations over the past 15 years have made police a favourite target, while state institutions and places of worship have also been attacked.

Social media platforms are now widely exploited by extremist networks in Indonesia. Navhat Nuraniyah stressed this 24/7 access to material and likeminded people has accelerated the pace at which people become radicalised. Online activities have also provided more opportunities for women to play a role in the jihadi movement as they can take part from home while managing their domestic affairs.

Actors in the Indonesian online extremism space can be classified into four categories, according to Mark Wilson: Threat makers, who create or rehash ISIS content; inciters, who shame others into violent action; disseminators, who translate content, spread jihadi memes, tools and tips; and ‘data-storers’, who use file hosting websites to archive material and protect its legacy.

The Indonesian government response to online extremism has been largely slow and ineffective. For example, in 2013, the government began banning extremist websites, whereas messaging was mainly taking place on social media. No deliberate online strategy pervades the jihadi community in Indonesia;

efforts are more organic in nature. However, Wilson believes the ingredients are all there for an organised group to manufacture a potent social media strategy.

Observations

Indonesia has a long history of Islamist militancy which developed an international dimension in the 1980s, when Southeast Asians travelled to the Afghan-Pakistan border to train with mujahidin who would go on to form al Qaeda. ISIS on to the world stage at a time when the jihadi movement in Indonesia was floundering after years of police pressure and internal splintering.

While the establishment of a caliphate in Syria and Iraq and the associated propaganda campaigns energised Indonesian jihadis, the movement still maintains an indigenous substance built over generations through family ties and national political grievances. As such, developments in the Middle East will remain important to dynamics within Indonesia but the long established Indonesian jihadi movement will also be resilient enough to maintain itself regardless of what happens elsewhere.

A possible upside to this gloomy outlook is that Indonesian jihadis continue to be fractured, and the only likely candidate capable of uniting the various factions (Aman Abdurrahman) received a death sentence in 2018 for inciting terrorist violence. A number of independently operating cells throughout the country – both known and unknown – may pose significant threats, but Indonesian police, now

backed by stronger laws, will continue to suppress and dismantle the movement.

The online space will cause further headaches for authorities. Technology companies have started to crack down on the misuse of their platforms and show more willingness to cooperate with security agencies. For example, Telegram has recently updated its privacy policies, and has publicly mentioned it would release the IP addresses of its users to law enforcement, in compliance with court orders.

However, those intent on spreading harmful rhetoric and mobilising others online will continue to find a way to skirt the surveillance. Furthermore, much of the harm may lie in a grey area between inciting violence and expressing political opinion. Rising societal intolerance fuelled by toxic discourse on social media may prove a more serious issue than occasional outbreaks of jihadi violence.

Panel 3: Denmark's Aarhus Model

Speakers

Aarhus Model: Danish Anti- and De-Radicalization Strategy by *Erhan Kilic*, *Mentor, Aarhus Municipality [Denmark]*

Meeting the Aarhus Model by *Mohammed Abdikarim*, *Mentee, Aarhus Municipality [Denmark]*

Preventing Radicalization and Violent Extremism through the Aarhus Model by *Thorleif Link*, *Detective Inspector, Aarhus Municipality [Denmark]*

Presentation of the Life Psychological Approach to Radicalization and Anti-Radicalization by *Preben Bertelsen*, *Professor, Aarhus University [Denmark]*

Thorleif Link listed some of the key factors that account for radicalisation in Denmark. These causes, which are not different from what has been observed in other Western countries, include social exclusion, feelings of discrimination and poor integration of ethno-religious minorities. When such factors resonate with a radical or extremist ideology, processes of radicalisation are likely to occur in a short timeframe.

In a joint presentation, Erhan Kilic and Mohammed Abdikarim described their interactions under the mentor-mentee programme known colloquially as the ‘Aarhus mode’. For a mentor, the primary objective is to listen to young people and help them to find their place into society. One of the toughest challenges for a mentor is to convince a mentee that he/she is not part of the security or intelligence services.

Voluntary participation is key to successful mentorship. The first step of the mentor-mentee relationship is to persuade the young person that talking to a mentor that can be trusted could be in one’s own interest. For a mentee, an individual’s experiences can dictate how one feels misunderstood and rejected by his social environment in Denmark. In his particular case, Mohammed’s extremist leanings were not triggered by a single event. It was instead a succession of crises, such as his mother’s death and his exclusion from high school, which led him to abandon the idea that he could fit into Danish society

Preben Bertelsen laid out the theory of ‘life psychology’ that underpins the Aarhus model of counter-radicalisation. Life psychology integrates various sub-disciplines such as personality and social psychologies. It is not a purely conceptual approach that would be devoid of practical implications. On the contrary, the ultimate goal of the life psychology approach is to empower individuals

with life skills in order to facilitate their societal inclusion.

Observations

Religious knowledge is not an essential requirement for a mentor. Religion is helpful in creating connections with some mentees and it may even be crucial when mentors deal with individuals who are ideologically committed. However, religious knowledge will be useless in other cases such as members of far-right groups. In addition, most discussions with mentees pertain to non-religious subjects such as how to define one's identity as a Danish citizen of foreign descent or how to cope with intolerance and racism.

The success of mentorship is evident when the mentee's sense of marginalisation disappears and when he feels included into society. It is even possible for the mentee to show that he cares for his community or country by involving himself in citizenship activities. In fact, being considered as a valued element of society triggers the desire to protect one's environment.

While many observers praise the Aarhus model as a success story of counter-radicalisation, it also raises criticism within Denmark. Some members of the Danish government consider the Aarhus model as too soft. They would rather favour a repressive approach rather than a rehabilitation model that

shows results over the long-term. Such disagreements show that consensus on the most effective ways to protect society is particularly difficult to achieve when it comes about radicalisation and terrorism.

The distinction between life skills and life tasks is a crucial component of the life psychological approach. The former provides people with the necessary tools to handle the latter. Life skills can be related to work, leisure or relationships with friends and relatives. Living an ethical, empathic and moral life is a primary life task. Life skills and life tasks are thus common to all individuals, regardless of the differences between their personal backgrounds.

Panel 4: Countering Extremism in Indonesia

Speakers

The Evolution of CVE Initiatives Combining Online and Offline Types of Interventions by *Noor Huda Ismail*, *Founder, Institute for International Peace Building [Indonesia]*

Freeing Indonesia from Violent Extremism by *Mira Kusumarini*, *Executive Director, Civil Society Against Violent Extremism [Indonesia]*

Indonesian CVE Efforts: What Does Work and What Doesn't Work by *Taufik Andrie*, *Director, Yayasan Prasasti Perdamaian [Indonesia]*

Noor Huda Ismail explained that a common pathway to disengagement from extremism in Indonesia is disillusionment towards the movement and a change in one's life priorities. This is followed by the development of new relationships and social networks. Illustrating such transitions and spreading success stories can offer encouragement to those still caught up in the movement and may represent effective alternative narratives.

Civil society organisations (CSOs) have an essential role in efforts to counter violent extremism in Indonesia, from policy advocacy and capacity building to community engagement and individual counselling. Mira Kusumarini's C-SAVE was

involved in the drafting of the June 2018 updates to anti-terrorism legislation, advocating for attention to human rights concerns and stipulations on prevention in the new legislation.

One notable CSO initiative is the creation of an early warning system at the village level across Indonesia. Ideally, community leaders will intervene when a young person is flirting with extremist ideology and divert their attention toward more positive pursuits, well before the police or security services become involved.

The Indonesian government is increasingly open to working with non-state actors and this represents a constructive development for the nation's counterterrorism and CVE efforts. However, Taufik Andrie pointed out that coordinating the multitude of state and non-state stakeholders remains highly challenging, and has often resulted in overlaps between programmes and repetition of practice.

Prisons are a particular area of concern. Roughly, 290 inmates are currently serving sentences for violent extremist crimes and they are dispersed among 117 facilities throughout the country. Over 300 people are on remand following recent arrests for suspected terrorist activity. Given the broad dispersal strategy, prison-based de-radicalisation programmes have been infrequent and poorly targeted. Moreover, the vast majority of those arrested in the past year are ISIS supporters who

mostly refuse any participation in government initiatives.

Observations

In recent years, there has been growing awareness that there is no 'one-size-fits-all' approach to preventing and countering violent extremism. The United Nations has urged national governments to establish their own CVE 'action plans' based on a combination of emerging global best practice and their own particular dynamics.

Yet a more recent development is the realisation that a uniform strategy for an entire country may also be too broad, and that governments must analyse particular circumstances and conditions in different sub-national regions. For example, in Indonesia, the root causes of violent extremism may be quite different in central Sulawesi, with its history of sectarian conflict, to central Java, where Islamist militancy is rather entrenched in certain communities.

This is why CSOs and local government authorities must play a role as well. Central government agencies may be well resourced, but they are often not sufficiently agile to keep abreast of the dynamics at the neighbourhood level. Indonesian non-

governmental organisations have been working on locally relevant initiatives for years, and have built capacity among community leaders and established programmes that promote peace and youth development. International donors have supported many of these efforts, but the various sources of funding have not contributed to a cohesive strategy. Ideally, the national counterterrorism agency (BNPT) would coordinate the myriad stakeholders more effectively so assistance is dispersed more evenly.

Indonesian authorities have become highly adept at infiltrating extremist networks, arresting suspects, and often piecing together successful prosecutions. However, the prison system continues to be a significantly weak link in the criminal justice system. Not helped by the tens of thousands of inmates entering prison on drugs charges in recent years, penitentiaries are now critically overcrowded. Managing extremist prisoners is notoriously difficult, but the current system of dispersal while allowing ideologues unsupervised visitations has not been an effective approach. No programme aimed at de-radicalisation will be effective before more basic issues of management are addressed.

Panel 5: After Marawi

Speakers

Breaking Extremist Narratives: The Joint Task Force Marawi Story by *Jo-Ar Herrera, Director, Operations Research Center, Philippine Army [Philippines]*

Aftermath of the Marawi Siege by *Moctar Matuan, Professor, Mindanao State University [Philippines]*

Violent Extremism in Southern Philippines by *Benedicto Bacani, Executive Director, Institute for Autonomy and Governance [Philippines]*

Civil-military initiatives, focused on traditional and social media campaigns and community engagements have played an indispensable role in handling the Marawi city crisis. Jo-Ar Herrera shared how the programmes of the Joint Task Force (JTF) in Marawi focuses on the prevention of terrorism in central Mindanao. More than 50 percent of the Maute Group fighters were composed of young people who had been radicalised. Youths in remote areas of Mindanao are amongst the most susceptible and vulnerable to Maute propaganda.

To identify best practices, the JTF took an in-depth look into the civil-military operations during the Marawi crisis. This included strong engagement with stakeholders in affected communities to isolate

the enemy physically and psychologically. There was also sustained effort to execute information operations, which included social media to facilitate positive messaging at a wide range of audiences. The JTF's approach also involved implementing community support programmes to suppress and reduce the vulnerability of Muslim youth. Peace education programmes are now part of a soft-power strategy for CVE in the Philippines.

The rehabilitation and reconstruction of Marawi is a daunting task fraught with difficulties that will require far greater consultation, collaboration and synergy between the public and private sector. Moctar Matuan painted a sobering picture of how nearly 400,000 people from Marawi and nearby municipalities were displaced by the crisis. Moctar noted that the damage inflicted by the Marawi crisis could have been reduced if non-military options had been attempted prior to air strikes.

Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte's accusation that the Maranao had been complicit in enabling the Maute attack and that they had coddled the terrorist group resulted in some refugees subjected to prejudice; turned away from shelters and households. This has complicated efforts to engage communities in the reconstruction process. Delayed rehabilitation and reconstruction of the so-called 'most affected area' of Marawi lead to further lack of trust. The plan for reconstructing and rehabilitating Marawi lacks consultation and has been insensitive

to the feelings, culture and religion of the Maranao thus far.

Beyond the city of Marawi, the state of violent extremism in the southern Philippines remains complex according to Benedicto Bacani. Young Muslims are particularly susceptible to radicalisation due to limited awareness of what constitutes violent extremism and Islam. There is a history of disillusionment and grievances coupled with an ongoing legacy of rebellion and revolutionary groups that have shaped the region. When this is contextualised within the history of weak and sometimes failed governance in Mindanao, it provides a milieu for the entrenchment of violent extremist ideology. No single organisation or community can claim to exercise strong leadership due to the presence of deep ethnic divisions.

Push factors towards youth radicalisation are strong. Frustrations over social, economic, cultural and political marginalisation resonate very strongly in the southern island provinces. Pull factors vary across the southern Philippines. Effective persuasive recruiters, access to martial training, generous cash incentives and a close-knit sense of unity play a compelling role in attracting Muslim youths towards violent extremist groups.

Observations

There were repeated queries over the aftermath of the Battle for Marawi specifically the possibility of a

similar siege occurring elsewhere in the Philippines. What emerged is a sceptical assessment of the Maute Group and other ISIS-affiliated groups. Remnants of groups who attacked Marawi now have limited capabilities and may stage small-scale ambushes against the military. However, once martial law is lifted in Mindanao there is the possibility that other armed clans affected by the destruction of Marawi may retaliate against families of the Maute Group.

Greater collaboration is needed between JTF Ranao and local government and community leaders to address the situation in Marawi. A better understanding of the religious and cultural underpinnings of what constitutes identity in Southern Philippines within Muslim communities will enhance the ability of the government and military to tackle the crisis. This approach will have to be informed by a distinct sense of empathy. Another important point is the legal recognition of the Bangsamoro identity. A strong bulwark against the radicalisation of Muslim youth in the southern Philippines will be the traditional leadership of family, elders, religious leaders and Madrasahs, which should not be undermined or dismantled by the state.

There is increasing regional-level political autonomy in Mindanao, with more functions and resources devolved by the national government. For example, the autonomous region has power to budget the

funds given by the central government. These policy interventions are necessary to correct the long history of disillusionment, grievances and distrust. While prospects for a political resolution of the conflict in Mindanao have improved, local power dynamics will make it difficult for authorities to establish long-lasting peace.

The battle of Marawi was fought in both offline and online spaces. Optimising media presence enables the Philippine army to put forward the army's own narrative, and allows control of influence operations in the battle. Counter-narrative messaging should bear in mind the context and target audience, as well as terminology used for the target audience, for it to be rendered effective.

Panel 6: Extremists in Detention

Speakers

Effective Management of Violent Extremist Offenders in the Philippines by *Clarke Jones, Research Fellow, Research School of Psychology, Australian National University [Australia]*

Terror in Courts: The Radicalization of French Counter-Terrorism Law and Practise by *Sharon Weill, Assistant Professor, The American University of Paris/Sciences Po Paris [France]*

The Interplay Between Radicalization, Commitment and Citizenship in French Prisons by *Bartolomeo Conti, Sociologist-Researcher, Centre d'Analyse et d'Intervention Sociologiques [France]*

The Contestation of Knowledge in Prison by *Pascal Vankenhove, Specialised School Teacher, Centre Pénitentiaire de Varennes-Le-Grand [France]*

Clarke Jones's presentation delved into living conditions of prisoners in the Philippines, with special attention paid to violent extremist offenders (VEOs). He mentioned that there is no 'one-size-fits-all' solution to the problems that the prison

administration is confronted with in the Philippines. Manila's prisons confront issues such as varied as corruption, gang violence and overpopulation.

Sharon Weill tackled the issue of counter-terrorism laws in France. Legislation has long been one of the French State's favourite tool in fighting terrorism, but the effectiveness of legal provisions and laws that have been adopted since 2015 is questionable. Conflict is emerging between French judges and prosecutors, as the former tend to analyse the personalities and motivations of suspects in great detail. By contrast, prosecutors focus exclusively on harsh punishment.

Bartolomeo Conti shared his experience of young male inmates in French prisons. Prison infantilises people, which lead detainees to consider themselves as victims of society. As Conti pointed out, negative feelings such as bitterness and mistrust are common among prisoners. Working on such perceptions is a necessary first step to re-socialise inmates.

Pascal Vankenhove described the ways he interacts with detainees, the challenges involved in familiarising his students with school subjects and the progress achieved. One of the major obstacles he confronts is the habit of prisoners to challenge his authority. Vankenhove explained that professors should not try to convince inmates of what is right

and what is wrong. On the contrary, teachers need to start a discussion and play the role of mediators between inmates. They must ask questions related to the ways knowledge is acquired and create the conditions of a productive dialogue.

Observations

Two points stand out from the prison life of detainees in the Philippines. First, the institutionalisation of corruption. It is in the interest of some prison wardens to oversee as many prisoners as possible, as it increases their sources of informal revenue. Second, prisoners' skilfulness in creating micro-societies within the prison. Many inmates are involved in commercial and tradecraft jobs. While such freedom may look surprising, it is in fact a useful way to limit physical violence by keeping inmates preoccupied.

Between 2015 and 2017, the adoption of the state of emergency by French authorities was a watershed moment that changed the landscape of counter-terrorism in France. Some measures involved, such as house arrest and bans on public demonstrations, reflected the determination of the French government to confront terror cells head-on. The prosecution of hundreds of returning foreign fighters marks another significant evolution. Elements used to incriminate returnees may be as limited as text

messages sent by suspects from their cell phones to friends or relatives.

Inmates in France have to face multiple problems. French prisons are plagued by structural issues such as overpopulation and understaffing. In addition, many detainees lose self-esteem. Prisoners think about themselves as the victims of an unjust legal system, which makes dialogue on responsibility and accountability difficult. Reconnecting inmates to society is possible, but it requires a patient approach. In particular, it is important not to provide detainees with counter-narratives but to make them gradually realize that they need to assume their mistakes.

How can teachers in prison convince their students that the courses they give are true reflections of reality? Non-confrontational dialogue is key. During the first phase of the course, teachers must show humility by asking questions. During the second phase, they need to play the role of mediators between inmates who challenge each other by word. Facilitating mutual interactions within the classroom is thus a key factor in strengthening teachers' legitimacy.

Moderated Discussion (Workshop Closing Panel)

Chaired by Shashi Jayakumar, Head, Centre of Excellence for National Security (CENS), RSIS, NTU [Singapore]

The two-day Workshop underscored the necessity of a continued and collaborative process of examining models to counter violent extremism. Initiatives that may be effective in a specific jurisdiction may not be transferable nor future-proof. This is further complicated by the potential emergence of new "extremisms" which may not be at all related to religious ideologies. Stakeholders must also be prepared for the possibility of all sorts of people becoming radicalised.

In the midst of these potential sources of extremism, building a community of practice is more relevant than ever. Specialists in non-security fields such as branding, advertising, and marketing may hold the key towards countering emerging extremisms. For terrorism researchers, it is important to keep pace with the increasing utility of inter-disciplinary approaches that incorporates sociology, anthropology, and ethnography.

There was recognition that what is often tagged as CVE is no different from initiatives to promote digital literacy or improve public education. Beyond developing critical thinking skills, governments may have to consider regulating social media use.

Preventing risky social media behaviour among the youth can be patterned from existing programmes such as sex education and drug abuse prevention efforts. Countering narratives must also be considered as just one aspect of CVE. Stakeholders must instead also look into countering the experience of extremism. Without a wellspring of violent experiences, individuals would have limited incentive to construct radical narratives.

Workshops should go beyond simply sharing ideas and principles. The emerging CVE community of practice must push for actual joint projects. This can be in the form of basic research to determine the actual extent of violent extremism or joint CVE programmes. In Southeast Asia, the challenge of violent extremism necessitates at the least, bilateral efforts such as between Jakarta and Manila. To provide more early warning of violent extremist attacks, the nascent “community of spies” such as the various ASEAN intelligence exchange mechanisms, must be allowed to forge stronger ties.

Aside from looking at the drivers of violent extremism, researchers and policymakers should also look into the links and pathways that lead individuals to act. This recognises that given the same exposure to violent extremism, one person’s pathway to violence would often differ with another. By considering violent extremisms because of linked actions, stakeholders may be able to find similar pathways towards de-radicalisation.

Finally, the power of imagination was highlighted as a principle for any future attempts to create or conduct a CVE initiative. Creativity can offset the scarcity of resources and allows for the faster learning of mistakes. Decades after 9/11, it is clear that a paradigm shift has yet to occur. There remain opportunities for maverick and out-of-the-box CVE approaches.

About the Centre of Excellence for National Security

The **Centre of Excellence for National Security (CENS)** is a research unit of the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS) at the Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. Established on 1 April 2006, CENS raison d'être is to raise the intellectual capital invested in strategising national security. To do so, CENS is devoted to rigorous policy-relevant analysis across a range of national security issues. CENS is multinational in composition, comprising both Singaporeans and foreign analysts who are specialists in various aspects of national and homeland security affairs. Besides fulltime analysts, CENS further boosts its research capacity and keeps abreast of cutting edge global trends in national security research by maintaining and encouraging a steady stream of Visiting Fellows. For more information about CENS, please visit www.rsis.edu.sg/research/cens/.

About the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies

The **S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS)** is a professional graduate school of international affairs at the Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. RSIS' mission is to develop a community of scholars and policy analysts at the forefront of security studies and international affairs. Its core functions are research, graduate education and networking. It produces cutting-edge research on Asia Pacific Security, Multilateralism and Regionalism, Conflict Studies, Non-Traditional Security, International Political Economy, and Country and Region Studies. RSIS' activities are aimed at assisting policymakers to develop comprehensive approaches to strategic thinking on issues related to security and stability in the Asia Pacific. For more information about RSIS, please visit www.rsis.edu.sg.

About the National Security Coordination Secretariat

The **National Security Coordination Secretariat (NSCS)** was formed under the Prime Minister's Office in July 2004 to coordinate security policy, manage national security projects, provide strategic analysis of terrorism and national security related issues, as well as perform Whole-Of-Government research and sense-making in resilience. NSCS comprises three centres: the National Security Coordination Centre (NSCC), the National Security Research Centre (NSRC) and the Resilience Policy and Research Centre (RPRC). Please visit www.nscs.gov.sg for more information.