

**"Innovative ways to deal with violent extremism"**  
**La Maison du Futur and the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung**  
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**Third session: “Dealing with extremists: Applicable methods”**

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Extremism is a deviation from what is usual and trendy, and is not constrained to a religion ideology but could be inspired by a range of political, social and economic beliefs.

Terrorism is not associate to Islam owing to the actions of a few radical Muslim individuals who have taken it upon themselves to do the most heinous crimes in the name of Islam, defaming by their deeds Islam. While distinguishing between radicalization and religious piety and observance of the Islamic statutes, according to Islamic teachings, the extremist is a person who oversteps the boundaries of the Sharia in all aspect of life. The authoritarian trend of radical movements and their intolerance against anyone, individual or government, who refuses to apply their harsh and regressive interpretation of Islam, denies any possibility of political negotiation with them.

This ideological extremism has two pillars: An outright anti-western stance that considers the West as responsible of all ill-deeds in the world, and a self-inflating attitude stating that only Muslims can engage the process of human reformation.

Grievances that extremists capitalize on to promote their ideology, namely:

- The continued Israeli occupation of Arab lands and the failure to implement a just solution to the Palestinian issue
- Increased threats to the holy sites in Jerusalem
- The Western control over the Arabic countries’ natural resources
- Political despotism, unjust ruler, lack of democracy and the suppression of freedoms
- Cable television’s massive spread, which play a crucial role in diffusing extremist ideology and deepening sectarian rift
- Poverty caused by political and administrative corruption and the waste of the countries’ resources.

- Extremists' infiltration into the educational system, which made pupils vulnerable to recruitment
- The existence of internal and external parties that sponsor these extremist organizations and use them in proxy-wars

Amidst the current violent extremism rampage in many parts of the world and the subsequent acts of terrorism, we need to implement a joint and comprehensive global strategy to counter this phenomenon, starting with the adoption of a preventive policy through understanding the political, social, economic and cultural drivers of this trend in order to address them; investing in education and instigating an inclusive development of the education system; strengthening the role of Islamic religious authority in countering extremism through awareness raising regarding the real essence of Islam; engaging non-Islamic religious authority in raising awareness among believers about real Islam; emphasizing the role of media in the waged battle against violent extremism.

As for deterrence measures to counter extremism: The exchange of information between countries; the need to invest in enhancing the security services efficiency and readiness both at the military and ideological level; enact special legislation to deter terrorism. We should also underscore the role of the United Nations in countering terrorism by taking crucial action under Chapter VII against any State or institution or group classified as terrorist or providing support for acts of terrorism, and first and foremost, we need to reach a unified definition for terrorism that differentiates between the rightful resistance against occupation and terrorism.

Finally, with terrorism gaining an international dimension, it is urgent to amend the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols to suit the nature of modern asymmetric warfare between nations and terrorist groups and how to deal with individuals or groups classified as terrorists.