



Global Policies on Countering Extremism: Lessons Learned from Syria and Iraq

3 September 2019

Radisson Blu Martinez Hotel – Beirut

CONCEPT NOTE

For almost two decades, the persistent threat of terror attacks in America, Europe and other countries by ideologically driven movements has triggered major responses from the international community to fight extremism and terrorism. Although numerous international initiatives are being implemented and a wide variety of research projects are conducted on the issue, the threat remains continuously present. Despite some successes, efforts and policies to fight terrorist groups and prevent radicalization of domestic groups or individuals that could turn to violence, the global community is far from having eradicated radical terrorist organizations.

In light of this, Maison du Futur, in cooperation with the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS) Syria/Iraq Office and the Wilfried Martens Centre for European Studies, will host a one-day conference on “Global Policies on Countering Extremism” focusing on Syria and Iraq. Together with decision-makers and other relevant stakeholders from the West and the Middle East, this conference aims to draw lessons learned from the fight against terrorism and radicalization, using the turmoil of Syria and Iraq as case studies. The event will assess the counter-terrorism policies of major international actors (EU, US and Russia), highlighting their interests and strategies in the Middle East. It will also tackle Western capabilities to address the issue of their own citizens at risk of radicalization and their de-radicalization strategies. A broad analysis of policies and tools that have proven to be successful in countering extremism and preventing radicalization, with the cases of Syria and Iraq at hand, will seek to summarize the assessment of different stakeholders.

The conference will start off by shedding light on the various interests, methods and tools of selected state actors (EU, US and Russia) that shape their counter-terrorism policies towards the Middle East. Subsequently, the second panel will give an insight on how different countries determine the internal threat radicalized elements pose within their state borders and which legal and technical instruments they have at disposal to fight radicalization. Last but not least, the nexus between radicalization and terrorism will be analyzed, giving an overview of intertwined stakeholders working on de-radicalization and counter-terrorism, and an assessment of various measures’ effectiveness and relative success. This will strengthen the understanding of efficient strategies on countering extremism, both in countries of the Middle East and in the West.



PROGRAM

08:30 – 09:00

REGISTRATION

09:00 – 09:30

WELCOMING REMARKS

H.E. Amine Gemayel | Former President of Lebanon and President of Maison du Futur

Panagiotis Tasiopoulos | Head of External Cooperation and Events, Wilfried Martens Centre for European Studies

Gregor Jaecke | Head of Office, Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung Syria/Iraq Office

09:30 – 11:15

PANEL 1: Countering Terrorism in the MENA Region – Interests and Policies

Moderator: Vanessa Hungeling | Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung Syria/Iraq Office

– **Adapting Tools and Policies of Counterterrorism**

Matthew Bamber | The Graduate Institute Geneva

– **Foreign Interests and Geographical Focus of Counterterrorism**

Stephen Tankel | American University, Washington D.C.

– **EU, US and Russian Counterterrorism Policies – Focus on Syria and Iraq**

Hanna Notte | The Shaikh Group

Jasmine M. El-Gamal | Rafik Hariri Middle East Center, The Atlantic Council

– **Questions and Answers**

11:15 – 11:45

COFFEE BREAK



11:45 – 13:15

PANEL 2: Preventing Radicalization outside the MENA Region – Targets and Tools

Moderator: Chrysosgelos Angelos | Weatherhead Center for International Affairs, Harvard University

- **Some Characteristics of Radicalization – Who and How?**
Margarita Bizina | TSAS Canadian Network for Research on Terrorism, Security and Society
- **Legal Framework and Available Tools to Prevent Radicalization**
Bibi Van Ginkel | The GloCal Connection – Platform for Shared Security
- **De-radicalization and Returning Fighters from Syria and Iraq**
Friedrich Lindsey | Violence Prevention Network
- **Questions and Answers**

13:15 – 14:30

LUNCH

14:30 – 16:00

PANEL 3: Assessing the Nexus between Preventing Radicalization and Counterterrorism: Lessons Learned and Recommendations

Moderator: Jana Jabbour | Sciences Po Paris

- **Linking Radicalization and Terrorism – EU, US and Russian Strategies**
Yan St Pierre | MOSECON
- **The Effectiveness and Failures of the Nexus Radicalization/Terrorism – The Recent Case of Syria and Iraq**
Hisham Al-Hashimi | Iraq Advisory Council
- **Review of Strategies: Lessons Learned and Recommendations for the MENA Region**
Peter Romaniuk | John Jay College of Criminal Justice
- **Questions and Answers**

The event receives financial support from the European Parliament. Sole Liability rests with the organizers, the European Parliament is not responsible for the activity.