College and University Peacebuilding Approaches to Violent Extremism and Youth Recruitment

October 6th – 8th, 2016, Cleveland, Ohio, USA

AGENDA
(Last updated September 3, 2016)

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**Day 1: Overview of Root Causes and the Current Issues in the Field**

How terrorism in this context is defined as well as the root causes, such as poverty, unemployment, lack of educational opportunities, social ostracism/lack of community connections, will be reviewed. In addition, the role that local and global policies play in exacerbating or reducing these challenges will be considered.

**Some of the themes that will be considered include:**
- How do groups radicalize members?
- What similarities are there between radicalization and gangs?
- Which youth are particularly vulnerable to violent extremism?
- What is the gendered component to radicalization?
- What similarities are there between hate groups?
- What are the international responses to these issues?
- What are the domestic responses to these issues?

**Thursday, October 6 (8:45 a.m. – 3:55 p.m)**

8:00 – 8:30 a.m.  Registration
8:45 – 9:00 a.m. **Welcome**, Ms. Brette Steele, Deputy Director of the CVE Task Force, Department of Homeland Security

9:00 – 10:00 a.m. **What is Violent Extremism? A Global and U.S. Perspective**, Heidi Beirich, Ph.D., Director, Intelligence Project, The Southern Poverty Law Center and Saeed A. Khan, Professor, Near East & Asian Studies, Wayne State University
The Southern Poverty Law Center will share how they view violent extremism and discuss how the radical right in the US is so deeply entwined with similar movements in other countries, particularly Europe. Wayne State University will share other forms of hatred and international trends different from the radical right.

10 - 10:15 a.m. **Break**

10:15 – 11:15 a.m. **Session 1: 1 hour workshops (Select one)**

**Troublemakers versus Peacebuilders, The Evolving Role of Youth in Preventing Violent Extremism**, Saji Prelis, Director of Children and Youth Programs, Search for Common Ground
This discussion will include topics including, why young people join armed groups and common misconceptions, followed by how international policy has evolved in viewing and engaging youth. He will then discuss five pillars of engagement and investment: 1) Prevention, 2) Disengagement, 3) Improving State Responses, 4) Amplifying New Narratives, and 5) Partnerships. Lastly, he will consider what role U.S. youth can play in addressing these challenges.

**Media Coverage of Violent Extremism**, Julie Shedd, Ph.D., Associate Dean, School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution George Mason University
Violent Extremism is a strategy that takes full advantage of modern media practices and techniques creating a public sense that the threat is overwhelming and immediate. As we seek to understand how to prevent the spread of extremism this session begins by identifying ways in which violent extremists count on media to assist in achieving goals and the impacts this has on recruitment efforts. A sample of research findings will be presented as well as a bibliography of other resources.

11:35 – 12:35 a.m. **Session 2: 1 hour workshops (Select one)**

**CVE Strategies in the US, UK and the EU: An Overview of Comparisons, Contrasts & Contexts**, Saeed A. Khan, Ph.D. Professor, Near East & Asian Studies, Wayne State University
CVE strategies vary from country to country. Yet, there is an understandable and, at times, reflexive, tendency to apply seemingly successful policies in a new context without fully studying and appreciating variations in socio-economic, cultural, ideological, political and demographic realities that may render such application imprecise and/or ineffective somewhere else. This presentation will highlight the similarities and differences in strategies deployed to counter violent extremism by the US, the UK and the EU governments, respectively. As the quest for effective CVE strategies continues, efforts are made to explore best practices and successful policy implementations across a broad span of countries. At the same time, however, it is critical for the success of these programs to assess the sociological variations that exist in these three contexts to optimize and deploy CVE efforts.

**Upholding Religion or Promoting Terrorism?**, Josephine Stommel, Student, Elizabethtown College
Extremist groups often use religion to justify violence, leading to intractable conflicts that greatly impact education. The violence such groups initiate violates the inherently peaceful principles religions uphold. In Northern Ireland, the conflict between Protestants and Catholics during the Troubles disrupted citizens’ education and quality of life. Since the Good Friday Agreement, violence has flared, and is evident in the social divide among generations. Discussing how groups in Northern Ireland have deviated from the religious traditions they claim to uphold, she will share how educators and parents are combating the legacy of violence
with peace education. Building on the early work of Professor Tony Gallagher and other researchers, she will explore the principle of inclusion and how peace education may be further developed in the university setting.

12:35 – 1:35 p.m.  Lunch (provided)

1:35 – 2:35 p.m.  Plenary - *Can Peacebuilding Approaches Address Violent Extremism?*, Qamar-ul Huda, Ph.D., Senior Policy Advisor, U.S. Secretary John Kerry’s Office of Religion and Global Affairs, U.S. Department of State

The field of Peacebuilding and conflict resolution developed sophisticated approaches and applications in supporting civil society activities and government efforts in preventing violence. But can the peacebuilding community utilize the same concepts, methods, and practices in a culture of violent extremism?

2:45 – 4:15 p.m.  Plenary - *Lessons Learned from Mental Health and Education, Identifying Best Practices for Addressing Violent Extremism*, Stevan Weine M.D., Professor of Psychiatry, University of Illinois at Chicago College of Medicine

CVE grew out of the recognition that counterterrorism approaches were not adequate for preventing radicalization to violence and that community-based approaches were needed. Many community members are resistant to CVE due to past targeting, stigmatization, and stereotyping of Muslim American communities. Our experience in participatory research, a technique used in public health, suggests that part of the difficulty has been that community-based prevention and intervention of violent extremism does not adequately fit under a criminal justice framework, and CVE programming has been too narrowly tailored to violent extremism, when other issues are of equal or greater concern to communities. Furthermore, CVE initiatives have not yet adequately engaged mental health professionals and educators. This project involved a review of education and mental health literature by a multidisciplinary team inclusive of education and mental health professionals. Overall we demonstrated that the fields of mental health and education, including both community-based practitioners and lessons learned from those fields, are uniquely poised to contribute to effective prevention and intervention activities in relation to violent extremism. We will share key findings and describe how mental health and education professionals could become involved.

5:00 p.m. – 5:45 p.m. - Opening Reception

5:45 p.m. – 6:45 p.m. - *Is Deradicalization Even Possible? From Anger and Hatred to Compassion and Forgiveness*, Tony McAleer, President, Executive Director, Life After Hate

How does a young person become a neo-nazi? Is there a way back to humanity from such extreme hatred? Sharing his personal story, experience, and research, Tony will share how he was drawn into the dark world of violence and extremism, how he was able to disengage and deradicalize, and lessons we can learn as a society and as individuals.

6:45 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. - Q and A

**Day 2: What Works? Prevention Strategies**

During this day participants will consider what “works” in preventing and addressing hate crimes and terrorism in the U.S., from social media campaigns to community engagement efforts to local and global policies and programs.

**Some of the themes that will be considered include:**

- What are the processes involved in prevention?
- What is the role of the College and Community in preventing extremism and the rise of hate groups?
- The role of social media
- What colleges and universities can do to help students be more resistant to the violent ideologies
Frid
ay, October 7 (8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.)

8:00 – 8:30 a.m.   Registration

8:30 – 9:45 a.m.  Morning Keynote - *Radicalization and the Radical Right: Lessons from the Southern Poverty Law Center’s Research*, Heidi Beirich, Ph.D., Director, Intelligence Project, The Southern Poverty Law Center

What causes someone to join the radical right and perhaps countenance or engage in violence? This keynote will explore the life histories of several former racist extremists to try to answer this question. First person discussions with extremists who were involved in violent activity, some incarcerated, and others who were not directly involved in such activities, will form the basis of my discussion. The pathways have some things in common, mostly familial and structural, but in other cases they do not. The anecdotal evidence from these interviews show the insufficiency of current US government-favored models of radicalization and point to other possibilities to be explored. Also included will be an examination of the role of web search mechanisms in radicalizing individuals. This examination will draw heavily on the experience of Dylann Roof, the white supremacist who murdered black worshipers in Charleston, S.C., last summer.

9:45 – 10:00 a.m.   Break

10 – 11:30 a.m.   Plenary: *Government Efforts to Prevent Violent Extremism*

Each representative will discuss their agency’s policies, programs, and tools to prevent and build resilience to violent extremism in the US.

- Erin Wilson, Senior Officer, National Counterterrorism Center
- Michael E. Rolince, Senior Advisor, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Countering Violent Extremism Section
- Abdirizak Farah, Senior Policy Advisor, Civil Rights and Civil Liberties Office, Department of Homeland Security
- Moderator: Brette Steele, Deputy Director of the CVE Task Force, Department of Homeland Security

11:30 – 12:30 p.m.   Lunch

12:30 – 2:00 p.m.   Session 2: 1.5-hour workshops (Select one)

**Civil Resistance to Counter Violent Non-State Actors: Realistic Possibilities and Lessons from Organized People**, Maria J. Stephan, Ph.D., Senior Policy Fellow, The United States Institute of Peace and Hardy Merriman, President, International Center on Nonviolent Conflict

Can ordinary people organize nonviolently to challenge violent non-state actors? This workshop will look into various nonviolent strategies used by civilians in Iraq, Syria, Liberia, Bosnia, Colombia, and elsewhere to push back against violent armed groups. In a number of places, mobilized local communities and civilians were able to address their own organizational weaknesses and exploit vulnerabilities of armed actors to carve autonomy, establish safer living spaces and reduce deadly violence. By drawing on specific examples and exploring other ways for civilians to contain and challenge violent armed groups, this workshop will aim to outline civil resistance methods, their potential applicability to counter violent extremism, as well as costs and risks of nonviolent organizing vis-à-vis armed strategies in a terror-torn environment. As a baseline, this workshop will also introduce participants to the field of civil resistance, explain its main tenants, historical record and discuss attributes of nonviolent movements that make them successful.

**Community Awareness Brief: Violent Extremism**, Erin Wilson, National Counterterrorism Center; Abdirizak Farah, Senior Policy Advisor, Civil Rights and Civil Liberties Office, Department of Homeland Security
**Arab Peace Corps vs Daesh? Sustainable Solution to Countering Youth Radicalization**

Sami Jamil Jadallah, Founder/Director at The Arab Peace Corps, Founder, Director, The Arab Peace Corps and Chic Dambach, Former President and CEO of National Peace Corps Association

This presentation will demonstrate the benefits and impact of the new initiative of the New Arab Foundation, the Arab Peace Corps, which is designed to shift the narrative on and about young people in the Arab world. Following the model of the Peace Corps, and in partnership with the National Peace Corps Association, the Arab Peace Corps is designed to address the prevalent and complex geopolitical challenges that have plagued the Arab world for decades and have had devastating effects on the young people. Significant segments of the Arab populations are disenfranchised, jobless and frustrated with the lack of basic services, economic opportunities, and government transparency and accountability which leads to negative, self-perpetuating cycle of ever-expanding numbers of young men and women who are without a quality education or jobs which further leads to hopelessness, despair, and vulnerability to recruitment by extremist groups. The Arab Peace Corps programs redirect this youthful energy into positive, self-reinforcing contributions to the greater good through each person’s achievement of sense of belonging to the greater community and an increased sense of self-worth, thus eliminating the vulnerabilities exploited by violent extremist organizations.

**Bringing Lessons Learned Overseas Back Home: Preventing Youth Participation in Violent Extremism Through University Community Engagement**

Mary Hope Schwoebel, Assistant Professor, Nova Southeastern University

Domestic and foreign policy-makers have identified three types of violent extremism: US-based right wing violent extremists, US citizens who become Islamist violent extremists (some of whom carry out attacks in the US and some of whom join groups overseas), and Islamist violent extremists in majority Muslim countries overseas. This presentation will examine the push and pull factors that drive youth to join violent extremist groups and/or commit violence in the name of such groups; the commonalities and differences in terms of push and pull factors, between each of the three types. In particular, it will examine the similarities and the differences between young women and young men in relation to their motivations and the processes of radicalization and recruitment. The presentation will describe interventions carried out by educational institutions in Muslim majority countries in South Asia and Africa to prevent youth radicalization and recruitment. Finally, it will discuss the relevance of replicating these interventions for addressing youth radicalization and recruitment in the United States, both Islamist and right wing.

**Peace Pedagogy and CVE: The Case of France**

Cheryl Lynn Duckworth, Ph.D., Assoc. Professor of Conflict Resolution and Peace Education, Nova Southeastern Univ.

Classrooms are often overlooked in terms of CVE, yet they are major shapers of social and political identity and thus relevant to discussions of preventing radicalization. This paper explores the case of France, examining its pedagogy in terms of citizenship narratives in particular. Especially when examining the citizenship narrative students receive in school, dynamics of exclusion and marginalization of France’s Maghrebi students emerge clearly. In terms of CVE theory, this can create a “push” factor possibly aiding in the recruitment of Maghrebi youth in France. Thus one can ask, is there in France a “school to terror” pipeline, similar to the “school to prison pipeline” that exists in the US? Drawing on her direct experience of nearly fifteen years with designing and implementing peace education, the presentation describes how peace pedagogy can be applied in France to prevent acts of violent extremism, build school cultures of peace and ensure full citizenship for France’s Maghrebi youth. The presentation addresses and engages the audience in key principles of curriculum design for peace education that addresses historical trauma. It further engages CVE theory from both a practical as well as a critical framework, exploring how the CVE frame can be of use to the field of conflict resolution/peace studies, and ways in which we should be aware of potential stigmatization which CVE theory can inadvertently create.


Tony Sgro, Chief Executive Officer and Founder, EdVenture Partners; Adriana M. Boveda, Assistant Professor of Marketing, Saunders College of Business, Rochester Institute of Technology; Olivia Hauck, Co-Chief Executive Officer, It’s Time; Jessica
The P2P: Challenging Extremism (P2P) initiative provides an opportunity for university students around the world to create and activate their own social and digital media campaigns to challenge hate speech and extremist ideology, propaganda and recruitment messaging. It seeks to be part of a solution by empowering the same people extremist groups are most actively trying to recruit – young people, and was developed to halt the digital momentum - and - contest the on line space effectively being manipulated by ISIL and other extremist groups. Tony’s P2P presentation will be divided into two parts: the first will be an overview of the P2P academic partnership model so the audience will understand how we bring P2P to life on universities campuses and in syllabi, then, there will be a review of a variety of student developed P2P campaigns to bring to life what tech-savvy university students around the world are doing to push back on hate and extremism on their campuses, communities, countries and globally. There will be a special presentation made by an award winning or honorary mention P2P university team (TBA). This P2P team will highlight how their social or digital media initiative, product or tool P2P campaign was created and used to effectively challenge extremism.

There will be a special presentation made by university students from the Rochester Institute of Technology, 1st Place Finalist of the Peer to Peer: Challenging Extremism State Department event with their award winning It’s Time: ExOut Extremism campaign. This P2P team will highlight how their social or digital media initiative, product or tool P2P campaign was created and used to effectively challenge extremism.

3:45 – 4:00 p.m. Break

4:00 – 5:00 p.m. The Role of Religious Communities in Countering Violent Extremism, Qamar-ul Huda, Ph.D., Senior Policy Advisor, U.S. Secretary John Kerry’s Office of Religion and Global Affairs, U.S. Department of State
There is tremendous amount of expectations and pressure on religious communities as civil society actors to take a leading role in preventing and mitigating violent extremism. Either by detecting extremism or creating interventions or being on the forefront of rehabilitating and reintegrating former fighters, religious leaders are critical stakeholders in this arena. What lessons have we learned with their experiences and how have religious communities impacted the field of CVE?

Day 3: What Role Can Colleges and Universities Play in Addressing and Reducing the Challenges in Our Communities

Some of the themes that will be considered include:
- What mechanisms are there for rehabilitation/exiting?
- What strategies are optimal for response by colleges and universities when these incidents occur in their communities?

Saturday, October 8 (9:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.)

8:00 – 8:30 a.m. Registration

8:45 – 10:15 a.m. Morning Keynote – Personal Stories from the Field: The Role of Youth in Preventing Violent Extremism in their Local and Global Communities
- Achaleke Christian Leke, Youth, Peace and Counter Violent Extremism Activist, United Network of Young Peacebuilders, Cameroon Youth Ambassador to the Commonwealth
- Saba Ismail, Co-Founder, AWARE Girls
- Facilitator: Saji Prelis, Director of Children and Youth Programs, Search for Common Ground

10:35 - 12:05 a.m. Session 3: 1.5-hour workshops (Select one)
The Role and Responsibility of Global Citizenship Education in Preventing Violence, Extremism and Radicalization of Young People, Dr. Aleksandra Nesic, School for International Training, Graduate Institute of World Learning; Visiting Faculty, Joint Special Operations University (JSOU), US Special Operations Command

This session demonstrates how global citizenship education must be placed at the core of conflict and violence prevention and peacebuilding programs. It argues that global citizenship education is more than the conceptual democratic narrative often attached to it, and it suggests that a paradigm shift among educators and educational institutions must occur to acknowledge the critical value that global citizenship education brings directly to the prevention of violence, extremism and radicalization of young people in and outside the United States. The author demonstrates how an identity can be transformed when students are engaged in intercultural and other global citizenship educational opportunities, and how once cultural sensitivity is achieved, the potential for radicalization is minimized. This session aims to increase understanding of how identity transformation can be achieved through employing the pedagogies of global citizenship educational programs and create positive (inter)personal changes among the youth and build lasting and sustainable peace among societies.

Peacebuilding Approaches to Violent Extremism - Case Studies from Pakistan, Saba Ismail, Co-Founder, AWARE Girls

This workshop will review peacebuilding approaches to violent extremism through case studies from the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province of Pakistan. Ismail will share her grass roots approach, keeping youth in the center, while creating positive role models for youth. She will share how she works to strengthen the ability of the community to use conflict resolution approaches. This will be followed by an exercise where participants will be provided with violent extremism case studies and each group will be provided with a peacebuilding model and a CVE strategy to apply. While developing the strategy and model each group will identify the objective, identify the stakeholders and institutions with whom they will partner, the strategy and its impact.

Teaching Civil Resistance: How Changing the Discourse around Struggle (by showing powerful, viable alternatives to violence) Can Have an Impact, Hardy Merriman, President, International Center on Nonviolent Conflict

The field of civil resistance provides numerous examples--and a body of theory and empirical research--of how ordinary people in societies around the world can nonviolently struggle for and win their rights, freedom, and justice. Whether we look at the US Civil Rights Movement; anti-corruption campaigns happening in places such as Kenya, India, or Guatemala; or struggles against dictatorship such as the anti-Apartheid struggle in South Africa or the 2011 overthrow of the Ben Ali government in Tunisia, we see that strategic, organized, and disciplined nonviolent movements wield real power and can coerce change against intractable and violent adversaries. When successful, these movements both reduce conditions of marginalization, corruption and unaccountable governance that can drive people towards violent extremism; and they also provide a model for a different and more effective form of struggle (and power) than violence. Therefore, teaching about civil resistance, its history, and how it is relevant today (a recent study shows that there are more nonviolent movements happening today than at any point over the last century) is an important aspect of reducing deadly violence in the world. The workshop will share groundbreaking research, cases, and best practices in teaching about civil resistance to diverse audiences, both nationally and internationally.

College/University Law Enforcement’s Perspective on Peacebuilding Approaches Violent Extremism and Recruitment, Ali G. Awadi, Ph.D., CHS-V, Director of Public Safety, Allegheny College

As an American – Arab, a Muslim and Director of Public Safety and Chief of Police, Dr. Ali Awadi will share his unique perspective on what types of policies, procedures, and training make for good practices in higher education settings. He will share examples for diverse settings from small rural liberal arts colleges to larger public urban universities. His suggestions are rooted in effective community policing on college campuses and officer training on diversity and ethnic identity.
Recruitment and Mobilization of Youth in Armed Insurgency and the Challenges of Rehabilitation and Reintegration: A Case from Nepal, Tulasi Bhandari, PhD Candidate, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin

Based on long-term research in Nepal, this workshop is designed to present, from an international perspective, both the trends of recruitment and mobilization of youth during armed insurgencies and demobilization, rehabilitation and reintegration practices in a post-conflict environment. With an emphasis on issues related to identity, key historic events of the war will be covered and strategies employed for youth mobilization by the insurgents will be shared. The presentation will combine short clips of visual narratives to show the glimpse of Nepal's civil war context as well as the violent mindset of youth with extreme hatred and their preparedness to "kill or die". With a brief assessment of the international practice of disarmament, demobilization and rehabilitation, the workshop will include a discussion of current challenges and possible recommendations for future practice.

12:05 – 1:05 p.m.   Lunch (provided)

1:05 – 4:30 p.m.   Working Group: Colleges and University teams consider the application of the content to their curriculum, programming and/or policies and procedures.

EXHIBITS – Local, State, Federal and International Organizations will have an opportunity to share their resources and information throughout the three-day conference.