* **SECURITY AND RESILIENCE GROUP , Tunis 25-27 April 2017**
* **Summary of discussion:**
* Organizational Issue: Please note sessions 1 and 2, both on CVE, were effectlvely merged, the discussion on root causes leading naturally to what kind of resilience processes should be pursued. Also, Sessions 3 and 4 were switched. Because Anna Reece was speaking o the last day, it was decided to pursue the discussion of security sector reform last.
* Summary: The discussions throughout were rich and fruitful with many varying views and levels of input brought forward. What was also clear is that the complexity of the issue is high, with an enormous number of variables involved, and that the practical understanding of root causes and how to act in a succesfully preventive fashion was not yet clear.
* Therefore, the group's recommendations focused more on developing vehicles, frameworks and platforms that would improve and deepen the understanding of PVE/CVE at the national level in the Arab world, as well as provide ways for better CSO/state partnership and cooperation on the issue. The EU's role in both, and in assisting in creating a better political ambiance for all these efforts, was also made clear and emphasized.
* Throughout the discussion, there was a regular reference to the clear need to deal with youth as the most vulnerable group on this issue, and to develop resilience with them especially through education, including on such basic issues as 'societal values'.
* Also, it is important to recognize an overall 'chapeau' to all recommendations: The group ***calls on the EU to reinforce its commitment to human rights in policies related to CVE/PVE***
* The primary recommendation is listed at bottom of each session; however, as can be seen, many other recommendations have been put forward during each session, woven into discussion of specific themes.
* An Annex has been included regarding useful comments by Luca GERVASONI from NOVACT in his presentation to Session 1 as well as in his leadership of the cross cutting session.

**SESSION 1) CVE - Analyzing Root Causes**

There is a very wide range of possible root causes:

- Clear correlation between corruption and development of violent extremist groups

- Economic inequalities, and economic opportunity. If state provided decent living and opportunities for young people these young people wouldn't join the Daesh.

- Emotional and psychological factors, brainwashing, specific narratives including online. Engineers who belong to middle class, have a decent life, but yet join Daesh. Demonstrated attractiveness of the Daesh narrative

- Security is ultimately dependent on respect for human rights.

- Lack of inclusiveness, youth and women leadership is key. Security reforms need full engagement of CSOs, women and youth.

- Lack of trust in globalisation to resolve problems.

- Failure of state model, authoritarianism, lack of trust between citizens and local government.

- Lack of development, marginalisation, especially in decision processes

- Hard security reaction to violent extremism is arrest, jail and even killing extremists, but it doesn’t work

- Dangerous to spread the idea violent extremism is about Islam.

- Why is violent extremisms spreading now? "Industrialisation" of extremism. Role of Internet and communication accessible to all. Young people leverage this power to contribute to their lives.

- Need to focus on young people who have this power through digital communication and help them contribute and become positive agents of change.

- Education – Teachers and family have responsibility. Children don't develop a critical sense. Even in universities, students not given tools to have synthetic views Need also to work on social sciences and perceive problem of integration and social cohesion in the whole region.

- Deliberate confusion of definitions of extremism and terrorism. CT laws are applied sometimes wrongly to social categories. Adopt the UN definition of violent extremism and terrorism.

- Human values ignored in society today in favour of money and materialism.

- Gender based violence is also an issue, very negative masculine values transferred in societies. Violent narratives are addressing male "strength" and authoritarian approach that is translated into violent behaviour. More positive masculinity needed to address violent attitudes.

- Emphasis on Youth: Youth is a main issue, they are resentful of their situation, which can lead to radicalization.

*-* Despite all of the above, *m*any judgements on what causes radicalisation are still theoretical. Therefore, need a closer view of the issue at national level, including real planning taking into account individual country context. Further understanding and study needed. No organised methodological knowledge today. Work with the states and government on processes linked to violent extremism and on security reform. There is not enough research and information available at the national level and in Arabic.

**Recommendation:** *Support the development of a better national methodological research framework to better understand root causes for PVE.*

**SESSION 2) - Developing Resilience at the Community and Societal Level**

- Fundamental to address question of inequalities

- Preventative: need to act before the radicalisation takes place. Democracy best answer to terrorism. Support for democracy.

- Need comprehensive strategy in order to eradicate the phenomena of radicalisation, taking into account the factor of education to prevent youth from falling into radicalism.

- Important role of culture to strengthen mutual understanding and respect.

- Barcelona forum applies rather to Spain, but we can learn from this experience.

- Work with youth at community level, especially youth working with youth and building partnerships. Foster mentorships and build trust among youth, including with local government. Increase engagement with young people, develop dialogue platforms for them, including virtual. Increase mobility opportunities for young people, cultural and educational. Virtual exchanges can help address econ/social factors for those who cannot travel. Need voice for and link to European youth as well. Help tackle xenophobic and hate speech on both side of MED to ensure that the new generation of voters gets another narratives.

- Education: Address the issue of teachers that are spreading violent ideologies. School curricula, spreading and disseminating violence and radicalism. Universities, should play more significant role, in raising awareness and reinforcing capacity of association.

- Address issue of recruitment in prisons, need to enhance communication skills and mediation. Change police model.

- Countering narratives doesn't work. Need to develop a different approach: positive narrative. Work with the media sector which should be the voice of people not the spokesperson of a party or another.

- Informal education (forums and seminars) and innovative approaches e.g. art, music, sport…

- Economic: Tackle corruption and build trust between citizens and the government. Increase communication and dialogue between citizens and the state. Global problem: 5% of population getting 80% of total wealth. Improve trade relations between countries, address issues of econ development and growth. Address unemployment and rights at the work place.

- International community should support economic and social development. Support to CSOs that should have a stronger role, and accompany the state in decision making and policy development, including in national startegies and plans of action for CVE/PVE.

- Allow CS to have its power, and authority in the region. Support could be financial support or capacity building support. CS is part of solution that needs to be grass-root and local, especially regarding security response.

- The EU can assist by reinforcing multilateral support of CS role including through UN approval of national plans of action.

- Informal movements are more and more vocal in Tunisia. How can we work with them? Even if informal, they have structure and practice that are different than the usual structures. How can we help CS to work with these movements?

- Need to work better with private sector.

- Important to learn from errors being committed right now, study all what has been done, and try avoid replicate mistakes in future.

- Need to build bridge between the different specialists in the field and work jointly to combat terrorism.

- We should also highlight the success stories. Building large networks including role of families and different political parties.

- Envision a tool for CS to do outreach in media on good practices and alternatives to violence.

- PVE needs to be faced at national level and regional level

**Recommendations:**

*1) In order to strengthen resilience, create a platform for positive narratives and success stories, to learn from difficult cases, increase connectivity between CSOs, understand better the impact of initiatives, and develop dialogue between EU and the southern neighbourhood, especially among youth.*

*2) EU to expand its commitments to the various streams of current actions, discussed above, regarding PVE/CVE, including reform of education; addressing inequalities, among others, and to also strengthen state and civil society capacities in that regard.*

**SESSIONS 3) - How to improve the context in which CSOs operate ?**

- There is a major gap between state activity on PVE/CVE and CS actions. There is a need to bridge this in order for more effective societal response to be achieved.

- Relatedly, EU and other donors are currently fuelling this gap by their support of states on security issues, including arms shipments and other hard security reactions.

- CSOs often have lack of sustainability due to funding cycle and approaches of donors. Therefore, there is a need for capacity building of CS, otherwise **state claims that CSOs are not effective.** Complexities of projects and funding approvals need to be improved. Access to financing still only for some networks, and we need more transparency and equal chance to access to financing

- CSO approach should be "do no harm". Ensure activities financed won't create worse conditions.

- Need to know better what is already being done at EU, what instruments CSOs can connect to and work with. E.g. more information needed on PVE/CVE and inter-relations with instrument for peace and stability. Need for improved mechanisms of accountability of the state

- Activists are being arrested, especially HR defenders. EU needs to intervene to prevent this.

- Political leaders need to become more awarene of what they say and the negative impact that they have on the context.

- Media professional should respect professional ethics. Media is spreading violent narratives consciously or unconsciously.

- Donors should have coordination mechanism in order not to duplicate efforts.

- The specific context of Palestine, which differs from all othe Arab states, needs to be considered and given special attention to.

**Recommendation:** *There is a need for improved networks of action between CS and the state regarding PVE policies and increased partnership on national plans of action. CS and the state need to work in closer partnership. The EU can assist to remove blockages for CS operations and build capacities further in pursuing PVE/CVE, and SSR.*

**SESSION 4) - Dealing with Security Sector Reform**

Discussion in this session reverted sometimes to developing local resilience, through education and media, as a key element in ensuring proper SSR.

- SSR needs full engagement of CSOs, women and youth.

- CSOs should be a watchdog, a moderator, provide realistic look of what is going on in our societies. CS can do parallel or shadow reporting. Need an observatory to monitor work of the police forces. E.g. forced disappearances and cases of torture.

- Promoting democratic transition is key. Equity, equality and reconciliation are as important as governing through security.

- CSO capaity has to be raised in order to deal effectively with state/security forces and institutions.

- Best practices: try to better understand VE and terrorism and how to respond, support multi-stakeholders spaces on CT laws, involving the EU, CSOs, CT national commission, business, media. More cooperation between north and south CSO. New CSOs have emerged with countering terrorism as main goal. We should work jointly and agree on how we should respond.

- Need to involve networks of research in political sciences, jurists, specialists in education, in development and defence. Work jointly with ministries, especially Interior ministers.

- Security approach is used in order to violate human rights (HR), yet when HR are violated, it supports VE/terrorism. We need to be sure HR will be respected while SSR and CT laws are designed/approved. CS needs to be involved in that regard.

- HR of refugees is a key issue that needs to be considered.

- Prisons are hosting and producing terrorists. CSOs should have access to prisons to help prevent prisoners from becoming terrorists and work on penal and criminal law reform. Need to review all the laws, strengthen the law and the legal systems including through education.

- Education is the backbone, because we have young societies. Education needs reforms to instil values of tolerance. CSOs to work jointly with schools, summer camps, kindergardens. Address violence in school curriculum. Values such as 'bravery' can lead to violence. Need to propose new educational policy, to review school manuals, also work with young people for developing critical sense regarding information online. CSOs should play significant role in addressing the issue of violence in games, and on social media that are accessible to the kids.

- Media is very influential and they sometimes back or support extremist narratives. Need to work with the media sectors that are a voice to the community.

- The EU has a strong role in supporting CSOs activities related to CVE/PVE/SR in the region.

- Issue of accountability, access to justice and space for CSOs. Mechanisms available right now do not empower CS to hold anyone accountable.

- Rule of law is a macro framework that we avoid discussing here but should.

- Concept of "societal police" which could stand between terrorists and people. In Tunis, people who live near mountains are the first barrier against terrorists. These people are often supported by CSOs. Adoption of non-violent measures, because we are facing violence and we need to enter a more offensive phase, non-violent means of course. Others warned against using language such as 'offensive'.

- SR issue in region is quite new and therefore governments of the region are not receptive to in-depth reform. Need to take their perception on board and careful when speaking about societal police, or civil policing, which could lead to an end of the dialogue. We need need to build trust and consensus and reinforce capacity of security organisation within the existing structure, improve it.

- We need reconciliation, to build a new relationship between citizens and the police. Trust and good relationship between police and citizens is needed as terrorism is a common concern. In many cases citizens were able to catch terrorists and play a significant role through cooperation with police.

- CSOs need to also be given a role in combatting cybercrime. Need more analysis on work done by other countries across the region. Lack of funding at national and regional level to build capacity there. Through cybersecurity, we can touch upon governance.

- Question of mass surveillance should be addressed. There is not always agreement between state and private security companies. Better control needed of private companies responsible for mass violations of HR.

- P5+ Korea are supplying most of the arms in the region. EU countries are also supplying abusive regimes with weapons that are used against peaceful demonstrators or groups. In the Mashreq, Middle East countries and Gulf countries like Bahrain, KSA, UAE. EU Code of conduct on arms exports is not being respected.

- Many states and systems fighting terrorism and at same time are financing and funding these violent groups - so double discourses and standards need to be avoided.

**Recommendation:** *Call on EU to cease arms supply to regimes and governments engaged in mass human rights abuses, reinforce EU code of conduct on arms export in order to create a much better context to pursue CVE and PVE.*

**Annex: NOVACT presentation on countering extremist narrative.**

How to respond?

1. Monitor drivers and impact of all form of violent extremism

2. Reinforce education and community resilience

3. Strengthen responsibility to protect the victims

4. Protection of human rights in CT laws

5. Promote gender justice

6. Reinforce the role of youth as actors for change

7. Promote democratic values and protect CS spaces

8. Raise alternative narratives in social media and traditional media

9. Promote the adoption of local and regional and national plans of action

**Annex - Cross Cutting Exchange on CVE/PVE**

A discussion of wording of last year's recommendations. A dissatisfaction and desire to improve the wording from last year.

An emphasis on success stories, many pariticpants listed several cases of successes stories, including use of female Imams in Morocco to spread more moderate messaging, and