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CONSULTATIVE SESSION ON PREVENTING AND COUNTERING VIOLENT EXTREMISM AND GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE RESPONSE TO TERRORISM

“Violent extremism is a direct assault on the United Nations Charter and a grave threat to international peace and security...Addressing this challenge goes to the heart of the United Nations. And it compels us to act in a way that solves – rather than multiplies -- the problem.”

UN Secretary General Guterres



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CONSULTATIVE SESSION ON PREVENTING AND COUNTERING VIOLENT EXTREMISM AND GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE RESPONSE TO TERRORISM

8-9 October 2018



NCTC in collaboration with United Nations Office for Drugs and Crime and Ministry of Foreign Affairs has conducted a consultative session themed “Consultative session on Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism and Gender Mainstreaming in Criminal Justice Response to Terrorism” which was held in Male from 8th to 9th of this month

The main objective of this session was to identify national experiences, good practices, challenges, unique approaches and lessons learned in the Maldives. The second objective was to identify priority needs of Maldives as well as emerging threats and trends concerning the terrorism situation within the country, at the national and regional level.

The guest of honour of the workshop was Mr. Javid Faisal, the head of International Relations Department of MoFA. The team of experts from UNODC was headed by Hidemi Yuki, programme officer of UNODC. Thirty

five participants from thirty organisations comprising of government institutions, public companies, and NGOs participated in this two-day event.

Violent extremism presents a significant threat to peace and



security of Maldives, the region, and the world at large. Violent extremism also violates human rights, weakens development, and can result in the denial of opportunities and the loss of human life.

Therefore PCVE is an important component for achieving Sustainable

Development Goals (SDGs) as well. PCVE mainly addresses SDG 16, namely, the promotion of peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, the provision of access to justice for all, and building effective, accountable institutions at all levels.

The United Nations coordinates its PCVE work under the UN Global Counter-terrorism Strategy and the Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism. The Plan of Action includes more than 70 recommendations for member nations to follow.

United Nations Security Council resolution 2242 (2015) reaffirmed that women's empowerment and gender equality are critical to conflict prevention and broader efforts to maintain international peace and security. It further recognized the need to increase the role of women in countering violent extremism leading to terrorism and to mainstream gender in the activities of United Nations counter-terrorism and countering violent extremism bodies.

Women have an important role to play

The session also involved consultative meetings with relevant officials and experts to discuss national experiences, good practices, challenges, unique approaches and lessons learned on the multifaceted role of women in counter terrorism and countering violent extremism leading to terrorism in the Maldives .

The consultations were carried out in four sessions. During the morning session of the first day, the current and emerging trends concerning violent extremism in the Maldives,

During the afternoon session of the first day, government officials were given an opportunity to review UNODC's planned activities in support of preventing and countering violent extremism leading to terrorism. The participants also identified the priority needs in respect of capacity building and technical assistance during this session

During the morning session of the second day, the main focus was on civil society engagement. During the session, the civil society



in countering terrorism and violent extremism leading to terrorism, and gender mainstreaming significantly contributes to the effectiveness of counter-terrorism initiatives.

In most countries, women's involvement in counter-terrorism efforts have been limited to 'soft approach' of education and community engagement. The aim of this consultative session was to integrate and increase the participation of women in law enforcement and Judicial process.

neighbouring countries and the region were discussed. Pertinent government agencies and ministries gave a summary of their ongoing work in this area and their priorities. The development of national action plan on countering violent extremism was also discussed during this session. During the session, a brief introduction to the two UNODC projects on preventing and countering violent extremism and gender mainstreaming in the criminal justice response to terrorism were also given.

organisations' engagement in preventing and countering violent extremism, adopting a 'whole-of-society' approach and incorporating best practices in establishing collaboration and cooperation between government authorities and civil society were discussed.

The last session was on specialised meetings. During the session bilateral meetings were conducted with law enforcement, legal and security agencies to discuss the way forward.

DG MEETS THE MINISTER OF ISLAMIC AFFAIRS

1 October 2018

Director General of National Counter Terrorism Centre Brigadier General Zakariyya Mansoor met the Minister of Islamic Affairs to discuss the Counter Violent Extremism efforts that are underway and to discuss about the continuity of the excellent collaborative effort with the Ministry of Islamic Affairs. DG highlighted that the Ministry had always remained steadfast in assisting NCTC in its effort to Prevent and Counter Violent Extremism in the Maldives. DG further highlighted that programs like “Hukuru Ufaa”, “Rahmathul Lil Aalameen”, “Imam Refresher Course”, “Daawaa Program with



renowned International Scholars”, all played a huge role in giving the proper message of Islam, which is Peace, Tolerance and Piety. Minister of Islamic Affairs also expressed his gratitude for giving his staff the opportunity to participate in international programs on promotion of peace

and gave the assurance that his staff would always assist NCTC in our effort. He also stressed that NCTC is spearheading an effort which is also a mandate of the Ministry of Islamic Affairs and as such, all resources and personnel of the ministry would always be at the disposal of NCTC.

DG MEETS THE SENIOR LEADERSHIP OF ISLAND AVIATION SERVICE

3 October 2018

Director General of National Counter Terrorism Centre Brigadier General Zakariyya Mansoor met the Managing Director of Island Aviation Service Limited, Mr. Abdul Haris to discuss about the continuity of the excellent collaborative effort with IASL.

DG stressed the need to secure the Aviation industry and highlighted that the MOU signed with the IASL is a step in the right direction.

DG requested the MD of IASL to ensure that the collaborative mechanisms that have been



established remain in force for the future.

During the meeting, MD of IASL also

highlighted on the importance of periodic threat assessment on aviation sector, as well as training of IASL staff.

NCTC BRIEFS THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION ON THE OUTCOMES OF “EDUCATION SECTOR AWARENESS WORKSHOP ON THE THREAT OF VIOLENT EXTREMISM AND TERRORISM FOR MALDIVES”

4 October 2018

Head of Research and Publications and Head of Intelligence and Analysis of National Counter Terrorism Centre met the Minister of Education Dr. Aishath Shiham to brief her on the outcomes of the one-day awareness workshop on the role of education sector in preventing and countering violent extremism held on 8th September 2018 for the principals and senior leadership of the Schools of Greater Male Area.

In the meeting Minister was presented with the report of the workshop which gave the output of the afternoon exercise. The principals were grouped into four syndicates and each syndicate presented recommendations on the issue that was assigned to them. The report also highlighted the results of the feedback forms which gave

excellent recommendations to improve the awareness program for the future. Minister highlighted that the Principals alone would not be able to make a huge impact on the students and the parents and suggested that the next step would be to conduct similar programs for a few schools of Male to include the senior management and the Islam teachers to propagate the message of Peace and Tolerance. Minister also highlighted the importance of sustaining this effort to achieve results. NCTC expressed their gratitude to the Minister of Education for her role in stopping Extremist influences from penetrating into the school system. NCTC also expressed its gratitude for the successful implementation of all inclusive education and ensuring that no child is left behind.

NCTC CONDUCTS AFTER ACTION REVIEW OF THE REGIONAL CAPACITY BUILDING EVENT ON PREVENTION OF CHILD RECRUITMENT AND EXPLOITATION BY TERRORIST AND VIOLENT EXTREMIST GROUPS

14 October 2018

Director General of National Counter Terrorism Centre Brigadier General Zakariyya Mansoor met the participants of the “Regional Capacity Building Event on Prevention of Child Recruitment and Exploitation by Terrorist and Violent Extremist Groups” organized by UNODC. The event hosted in Bangkok, Thailand from 25th to 27th

September 2018. A delegation of 5 members from relevant agencies attended the event.

During the session, participants of the event provided an overview of the



program and discussed about the situation of child recruitment activities based on the lessons learned during the program. Furthermore, they submitted the event report with

specific recommendation focusing on taking proactive measures in the Maldives in order to prevent child recruitment and exploitation by terrorist and violent extremist groups.

PREVENTING EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN BY TERRORIST & VIOLENT EXTREMIST GROUPS*By WOI Soffan Shakir*

Recent reports by the United Nations have indicated that the numbers of children being exploited by terrorist and violent extremist groups have increased. Children may be assigned by violent extremist groups in various roles ranging from direct engagement in terrorist acts such as suicide missions and executions. They may also be employed in meager roles such as cooks and informants. However, regardless of their role, these children are subjected to extreme levels of violence, including forms of cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment. Owing to the transnational reach and propaganda of terrorist and violent extremist groups, child recruitment and exploitation are not limited to conflict ridden areas. Therefore this is a reality the Maldivian community should face if we do not take proactive measures to address this issue.

Families are particularly important in the prevention of child recruitment. Families can be the first to detect risks, and they can provide the necessary support to children. Family problems such as physical, emotional and sometimes sexual abuse by parents and other relatives and absence of guidance by parents in

broken families impact the development of the youth in a negative manner. This leads them to find protection and support in an alternate social structure and makes



them prone to be radicalized and exploited. The family is responsible for shaping attitudes of children towards non-violence, hence, absence of family or a supportive social network causes the child to be at a greater risk of exploitation. Therefore, talking to children or those in care, openly and regularly, is one of the best ways to help keep them safe. Hence, it is essential that they are provided support by their families

since families are at the core support of any individual's resilience.

A large number of children are recruited through online means. It is highly crucial that young people are kept safe from exploitation online. The principle of keeping them safe from online radicalization doesn't differ from keeping them safe from other online threats. Talking to children is one of the best ways to keep them safe. It is recommended to use parental controls on social networks, online games and browsers and on both hardware and software that can filter or monitor what a young person can see. Preventing young people from using the internet or mobile phones won't keep them safe in the long run. It is important to have conversations that help children understand how to stay safe and what to do if they ever feel scared or uncomfortable.

Radicalization is usually a process not an event. During that process it is possible to intervene to prevent vulnerable people from being exploited. Therefore, community engagement programs and educational, vocational and psychosocial support programs can be a major factor that saves children from being exploited by extremist groups.