



BARCELONA DECLARATION:

Plan of Action of the Euro-Mediterranean civil society to prevent all forms of violent extremism

Barcelona, January, 30th 2017

OPEV

observatory to prevent
extremist violence



Author:



OPEV
observatory to prevent
extremist violence



The Barcelona Declaration is the result of a participative and deliberative process that has count with the active participation of 320 persons representing 172 organizations from 22 countries. The results of the debate, have been elaborated by the NOVACT Research team in cooperation with the Coordination of Maghrebi Human Rights Organizations (CMODH). The Barcelona Declaration is the first publication of the Observatory to Prevent Violent Extremism, created in Barcelona, the past 30 of January, 2017.

Coordination team:

The Barcelona declaration has counted with a coordination team in charge of (1) leading the process of identification of key Euro-Mediterranean organizations with relevant experience on Preventing Violent Extremism and (2) suggesting a first draft document that was the base for the debate during the participative process. The coordination team was formed by prominent Peacebuilding and Human Rights organizations with pioneer experience regarding the Prevention of Violent Extremism. The organizations members of the coordination team were: From Europe: Fundación Al Fanar, IDHC- Institut de Drets Humans de Catalunya, NOVACT- International Institute for Nonviolent Action, PAX for Peace, SOS Racisme, UPP- Un Ponte Per. From Maghreb: AMDH- Association Marocaine des Droits Humaines, Association Mauritanienne des Droits Humaines, ASDHOM- Association de Défense des Droits Humaines au Maroc, IMDH- Instance Marocaine des Droits Humains, Forum Vérité et Justice, Free Sight Association, LADDH- Ligue Algérienne de Défense des Droits Humaines, LMMDH- Ligue Marocaine pour la Défense des Droits Humaines, LTDH- Ligue Tunisienne des Droits Humaines. From Mashreq: ARDD Legal Aid, ISF- Iraqi Social Forum, PSCC- People Struggle Coordination Committee, PPM- Permanent Peace Movement, UKKSD - Unabhängiges Komitee für Sozialentwicklung und selbstorganisierte Demokratie

Framework:

The Barcelona Declaration has been possible thanks to the support and participation of:

With the support of:



Generalitat de Catalunya
Gobierno de Cataluña



Ajuntament
de Barcelona

With the participation of:



Legal Deposit:

This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Non-Commercial – Non Derivative Works 2.5 Spain license. This work may be copied, distributed, publicly broadcast, translated and modified, provided that this is for non-commercial ends and that its authorship be recognized using the following text: Observatory to Prevent Violent Extremism - OPEV (Author), Barcelona Declaration: Plan of Action of the Euro-Mediterranean Civil Society to Prevent Violent Extremism (2017).



Plan of Action of the Euro-Mediterranean civil society to prevent all forms of violent extremism.

Barcelona, 30 of January 2017

INDEX OF THE DOCUMENT

I.	Introduction	7
II.	The role of civil society preventing violent extremism.....	8
III.	Actors, concepts and definitions	9
IV.	Impact of Violent Extremism in the Euro-Mediterranean Region	11
V.	Context and drivers of violent extremism	13
	A. Conditions and the structural context conducive to violent extremism	16
	✓ Lack of socioeconomic opportunities	
	✓ Marginalization and discrimination	
	✓ Political terror, violations of human rights and the rule of law	
	✓ Prolonged and unresolved conflicts	
	✓ Indoctrination in prisons	
	B. Processes of indoctrination	
VI.	An Agenda for Action	18
	✓ GOAL 1: Monitor the drivers and impact of ALL forms of violent extremism	
	✓ GOAL 2: Reinforce education and community resilience	
	✓ GOAL 3: Strengthen the responsibility to protect the victims	
	✓ GOAL 4: Ensure the protection of Human Rights in Counter Terrorism laws	
	✓ GOAL 5: Promote gender justice and expose gender specificities	
	✓ GOAL 6: Reinforce the role of youth as actors for change	
	✓ GOAL 7: Promote democratic values and protect civil society space	
	✓ GOAL 8: Raise alternative narratives in social media and traditional media	
	✓ GOAL 9: Promote the adoption of local, regional and National Plans of Actions	
	✓ GOAL 10: Establish an Observatory to Prevent Violent Extremism	

I. Introduction

1. In January 2017, more than 320 representatives of 172 civil society organisations and social movements from 22 countries of the Euro-Mediterranean Region, met in Barcelona to discuss the prevention of violent extremism. The Barcelona Conference: “Towards a new paradigm: Preventing Violent Extremism”, focused on planning a constructive contribution of the civil society organizations to prevent violent extremism in view of the lessons learned over the past decades and the challenges that lie ahead.

2. The following “Plan of Action of the Euro-Mediterranean civil society to prevent all forms of violent extremism” collects the main conclusions of the Barcelona Conference and provides a real opportunity for all the actors of the Euro-Mediterranean community to unite and adjust their actions and pursue inclusive approaches against division, intolerance and hatred. This Plan of Action represents an unprecedented effort to reconcile the civil society vision of the Northern and Southern Bank of the Mediterranean. We consider that only a real and honest transnational partnership can help us establish an effective path towards preventing all forms of violent extremism.

3. We consider that violent extremist is an affront to the values of the civil society committed with maintaining positive peace, promoting real democracies, human security, sustainable development and protecting human rights. Violent extremism is undermining our humanity in all the Euro-Mediterranean Region. Extremist movements are cynically distorting and exploiting religious beliefs, ethnic differences and political ideologies to gain political power and act against human rights and fundamental freedoms. Fanatic movements which are spreading racist, ultra-nationalist and extreme-right ideologies are gaining momentum and institutional representation.

4. Over the past decades, our Euro-Mediterranean governments have sought to address violent extremism within the context of security-only counter-terrorism measures. We consider that security-only counter-terrorism strategies cannot dry up the emotional and social wellsprings of violent radicalization and, indeed, can make matters worse. In the name of the fight against terrorism, we have observed an extensive use of military power and the adoption of a repressive legal arsenal, that has not only been highly ineffective, but also responsible for dramatic human rights violations and increasing global human suffering. The anxiety to respond has also fostered overreactions in terms of Homeland Security, whereby our fundamental freedoms and civil and political rights have been restricted, subjected to massive vigilance and democratic and plural values have been limited by a general state of emergency.

5. There is a need to define a new, more comprehensive and effective approach in front of the rise of violent extremism. The UN Secretary-General recently presented the Plan of

Action to Prevent Violent Extremism to the UN General Assembly. The UN Action Plan calls for concerted action to support national, regional and global efforts.

6. This Plan of Action aims to contribute to this new paradigm by defining a more comprehensive and concrete approach that identifies systematic and preventive strategies which directly address the causes and drivers of violent extremism. We aim to harness the idealism, hope, creativity, and energy of civil society groups all around the Euro-Mediterranean Region to generate an effective alternative in front of violent radicalisation. We must all stand in front of violent extremism. And we are ready to contribute.

II. The role of civil society preventing violent extremism

7. Civil society represents an underused resource to confront violent extremism. We can offer a positive and nonviolent vision of our future together that can create an effective alternative message in front of the voices and groups that promote violence. Civil society needs to be supported, protected and empowered to make a constructive contribution to confront violent extremism.

8. We should all agree that when security authorities need to respond, we have in fact already failed in our longing for peaceful existence. When the State impose a response based on security-only measures, it is because there has been a failure to deal with the factors that lead to extremism and violence. Civil Society is the key actor with the legitimacy, the capillarity, and the capabilities to foster community resilience in front of the violent extremist message.

9. We are aware that various international statements at all levels have highlighted the role of civil society in a comprehensive and multidimensional response to the threat of violent extremism. The United Nations' General Assembly in its resolution adopting the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, confirmed the determination of Member States to "further encourage non-governmental organisations and civil society to engage, as appropriate, on how to enhance efforts to implement the Strategy."

10. In the framework of the OSCE, the African Union, the Arab League, the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation or the European Union, among others, it has been recognized that it is critically important to engage civil society in finding common political settlements for conflicts and to promote human rights and tolerance as essential elements in the prevention of violent extremism. We are aware of the ongoing efforts of the European, North African and Middle Eastern national and regional initiatives, as well as current local policies, actions and plans aligned with the principles of preventing violent extremism.

11. However, the good-willing positions expressed have not been followed by real on-the-ground measures to reinforce the civil society contribution to prevent violent extremism. Actually, there is a growing concern that states are interested in restraining the space of civil society. In the name of fighting terrorism, governments have curtailed political freedoms and imposed restrictive measures against human rights defenders and civil society activists in many countries. States systematically invoke national security and public safety to shrink the space of independent civil society activities. In many countries, special legislative and regulatory measures have been used to crack down on NGOs and activists who advocate for social change and criticize government policies. These measures make it more difficult for civil society actors to promote human rights and tolerance as an essential element in the prevention of violent extremism. It is essential to maintain and protect civil society if we want to address the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism.

12. We are convinced that the creation of open, equitable, inclusive, socially cohesive and plural societies, based on the full respect of human rights and with economic opportunities for all, represents the most tangible and meaningful alternative to violent extremism and the most promising strategy to render it unattractive. We consider that civil society has a proven capacity for broad-based mobilization and for creating bottom-up claims that foster responsive governance.

III. Actors, concepts and working definitions

13. We acknowledge that the lack of universally accepted definition of the terms "radicalization", "violent extremism", "hate speech" or "terrorism" in governments or academia is a challenge for all those who want to establish effective measures to counter violence and prevent violent extremism in our societies. The lack of clear definitions is especially worrying when we consider that mass media are daily using these terms in a variety of forms, compelling hegemonic definitions that are potentially incompatible with Universal Human Rights norms and standards. Even more disturbing is the state's capacity to categorize individuals or groups as being "terrorist" or "violent extremists". There are historical and present proofs that when states are lacking democracy and rule of law, state capacity can be used to stigmatize human rights defenders as terrorists, enemies of the State or political opponents. Recognizing this situation, our aim is to contribute to provide working definitions of those concepts in order to have a common basis and approach.

14. The present Plan of Action considers the term radicalization as a synonym of indoctrination, a process by which an individual, group or state comes to adopt increasingly extreme political, social, or religious ideas and aspirations that reject the *status quo*. The term radicalization does not imply, necessarily a negative connotation. Processes of

peaceful radicalization do exist and they also aspire to reject the status quo; individual or collective grievances are channeled adopting subversive ideologies that fight for social and democratic progress. It is important to make some distinctions between radicals, those people holding radical ideas, and violent radicals, those who adopt violent extremist ideologies. There are multiple pathways that constitute the process of radicalization, which can be independent but are usually mutually reinforcing. The indoctrination, specially addressed by violent means remains one of the most dangerous ones.

15. We understand violent extremism(s) as the ideologies that aspire to achieve political power opting for the use of violent means over persuasion. Violent extremist ideologies are based in totalitarian, fanatic, intolerant, patriarchal, anti-democratic and anti-pluralistic values. Violent extremist ideologies can be adopted by individuals, groups, corporations or states. We aim to include in our definition of violent extremism all ideologies advocating, maintaining or generating Structural, Cultural and Direct Violence. It is relevant to underline that no society, religious creed or worldview is immune to violent extremism; the definition includes, among others, right or left movements, ethnical, national, class, gender or fundamentalist religious movements. We understand the violence generated by violent extremist ideologies in all its dimensions: direct, cultural and structural violence. The main acts of violence that interest to this Plan of Action are hate speech, hate crimes, terrorism and structural violence.

16. We understand hate speech as the advocacy of hatred based on nationality, race or religion. Hate speech is speech that attacks a person or group on the basis of attributes such as gender, ethnic origin, race, religion, disability or sexual orientation. Hate speech should be considered as the propaganda and indoctrination processes of violent extremist movements to legitimize their violent ideologies. It is particularly dangerous when promoted by officials and medias.

17. We understand hate crimes as prejudice-motivated criminal acts, that occurs when a perpetrator targets a victim because of his/her perceived membership to a certain social group: sex, ethnicity, disability, language, nationality, religion or gender identity.

18. We understand structural violence as acts of violence promoted by institutions and states that have adopted violent extremist ideologies and put limitations on groups of people constraining them from achieving the quality of life that would have otherwise been possible. These limitations could be political, economic, religious, cultural or legal. Structural violence generates non-natural violence and deaths provoked by stress, shame, discrimination and denigration that results from lower status and lack of dignity.

19. We understand terrorism as an anxiety-inspiring method of repeated violent action, employed by (semi-) clandestine individual, groups or states, for idiosyncratic, criminal or political reasons, whereby - in contrast to assassination - the direct targets of violence are

not the main targets. The immediate human victims of violence are generally chosen randomly (targets of opportunity) or selectively (representative or symbolic targets) from a target population, and serve as message generators. This definition was the result of the work of Schmidt and Jongman in "Political Terrorism. A new guide to Actors, Authors, Concepts, Data Bases, Theories and Literature", 1988.

IV. Impact of Violent Extremism in the Euro–Mediterranean Region

20. Violent extremism undermines our collective efforts towards maintaining peace and human security, fostering sustainable development, protecting human rights, promoting democracy and justice, responding humanitarian crisis and providing access to the basic services in the Euro-Mediterranean region.

21. Several violent extremist ideologies are present in the region generating an exceptional level of hate crimes, hate speech, terrorism activity and structural violence in all the region. A general lack of social cohesion, lack of confidence in governments and authorities, political violence and the persistent presence of unresolved and legitimate collective grievances have fueled violence and polarization to a level with no precedents since the mid XX century. Extreme-right populist, racist and islamophobic movements are pressuring governments towards intolerance and hate. Fanatic and fundamentalist violent extremist ideologies are gaining political power and radicalizing the public opinion of different countries against human rights and fundamental freedoms.

22. In terms of peace and security, violent extremist groups are contributing significantly to the cycle of insecurity and armed conflict affecting our region. The Mediterranean region remains one of the most insecure areas in the world, due to the existing armed conflicts fueled by the weapons trade, failed states, military occupations, dictatorships and repressive governments. Civilian population is put in danger, national and regional stability are largely undermined, there is an exacerbation of connections with transnational organized crime to increase their financial resources, and the generation of significant revenues from human trafficking. On the other hand, the need to protect citizens from the consequences of both intentional and unintentional human acts, as well as natural hazards and technical failures, has become an important strand in the European security discourse.

23. The global economic expense on counter-terrorism is much bigger on the one devoted to conflict prevention, peacekeeping and peacebuilding. By responding to this threat, violent extremism has provoked an over-reaction among states, conceiving action for their own propaganda ends, as well as systematic human rights violations and deprivation of essential freedoms. It is also worrying both by the rise of hatred speech, mostly perpetrated by totalitarian movements, who are gaining political space.

24. Concerning the different components of sustainable development, it is important to note that violent extremism not only deprives people of their freedoms, but limits opportunities to expand their capabilities. Current development challenges, such as inequalities, poverty and poor governance, violent extremism exacerbates those grievances (such the unequal access to justice), and creates a vicious cycle of decline, which particularly affects marginalized groups and can affect the social cohesion. While poverty cannot be proven to have a direct causal relationship to terrorism it is clear that extremist violence impact has been born most heavily by citizens in developing countries, even if recruitment and radicalization to violent extremism also happens in developed countries.

25. Most governments in the region are spending increasingly large amounts of revenue to deal with the threats and consequences of violent extremism, taking away resources from other activities. The investment in Homeland and Defence Security and other counter-violent extremism measures have direct effects in several countries, where a notorious allocation of the budget has been dedicated to this sector to the detriment of other socio-economic activities. The perception of insecurity increases this trend.

26. There is no doubt of the massive and systematic human rights violations committed by violent extremist groups in the Euro-Mediterranean region. Ranging from the right to life, as well as and the right to liberty and security of person, to freedom of expression, association, and thought, conscience and creed. Those groups also violate the rights of women and girls, including through sexual enslavement, forced marriages and encroachment on their rights to education and participation in public life.

27. The overly broad application of counter-terrorism measures has had a profound detrimental impact on the enjoyment of human rights. Criminalising or otherwise prohibiting or sanctioning conduct without a clear definition is incompatible with the principle of legality, a basic rule of law precept. Counter-violence initiatives may compromise human rights and fundamental freedoms of the population they target, undermine the work of human rights defenders as well as the independence of civil society. Several governments in the region already routinely label political opponents, journalists, and human rights defenders as “extremists” or “terrorists”.

28. In terms of humanitarian action and access to basic services, the region is facing a situation where the number of forced refugees and internal displaced persons is the highest on record, a situation to which violent extremism has been a significant contributing factor. The inaction about asylum policies implemented in the current migrant crisis in Europe has been aggravated by the choice of the securitization of borders as the main state’s response.

V. Context and drivers of violent extremism

29. In the past decade and a half, we have seen an enormous research effort on the context and drivers of violent extremism in the Euro-Mediterranean Region. However, this Plan of Action considers that while there are some recognizable trends and patterns, there are only few areas that have been intensively observed while others have been diminished or poorly investigated. On one hand, we have observed that many research efforts have focused on understanding the context and drivers of radicalization of individuals and particular communities, while other potential perpetrators, like states, have been disregarded. Research efforts have mostly aimed at understanding a particular type of violent extremism, *jihadism*. Others, like the context and drivers conducive towards the adoption of islamophobic or extreme right violent ideologies have mostly been neglected. We consider that this pathway is reinforcing a worrying link between violent extremism and particular interpretations of Islam, which we believe is a dangerous mistake that can even reinforce other violent extremisms. More research, both qualitative and quantitative, is required on all perpetrators and on all violent extremisms present in the Euro-Mediterranean Region.

30. Qualitative research, based mainly on interviews to academics, institutions, victims, perpetrators and practitioners in the Euro-Mediterranean Region, suggest that two main categories of drivers can be distinguished: “push factors”, or the conditions conducive to violent extremism, the structural context from which it emerges and their economic sources; and “pull factors”, or the motivations and processes, which play a key role in transforming ideas and grievances into violent extremist action.

A. Conditions and the structural context conducive to violent extremism

31. Nothing can justify violent extremism but we must also acknowledge that it does not arise in a vacuum. The available qualitative evidence points to the presence of certain recurrent drivers, which are common among a wide variety of countries of the Euro-Mediterranean Region and which lead, sometimes in isolation and sometimes in combination with other factors, to radicalization and violent extremism.

Lack of socioeconomic opportunities

32. During the last decades, the unprecedented economic crisis affecting the Euro-Mediterranean Region has generated low and negatives levels of growth. The neoliberal economic and social policies implemented by regional governments to respond to the economic crisis has generated extraordinary levels of inequality in the 2 shores of the

Mediterranean, aggravated by the general failure to create decent jobs for their youth, to reduce poverty and unemployment, to control corruption, to control and exploit natural resources and to manage relationships among different communities in line with their human rights obligations. States with high levels of inequalities are more prone to violent extremism and tend to witness a greater number of incidents linked to violent extremism. Citizens may consider weak development outcomes as confirmation of the lack of a government's legitimacy, making state institutions less effective in responding to violent extremism when it arises.

33. The existence of high levels of inequality have generated low levels of social cohesion and lack of socioeconomic and cultural opportunities and gender justice affecting particularly to stratified social classes and communities. The lack of access to opportunities of particular social classes, or specific cultural communities, generates alienation, the estrangement of people from aspects of their citizenship, and a fertile soil for the propaganda of violent extremist organisations. State actors themselves fosters those dynamics, as we can see via the construction of ghettos in several European countries. Moreover, the role of specific media used by all kind of perpetrators of violent extremism fuels fear among the population.

34. The lack of socioeconomic and cultural opportunities has wrinkled the resilience of our communities in front of the violent extremist propaganda and fostered distrust towards governments state institutions. The rising lack of a solid social contract between the governing and the governed is fueling extremist alternatives.

35. General absence of employment opportunities, especially when it affects specific regions, can make violent extremist organizations an attractive source of income.

36. Violent extremism is more likely to occur in countries with poorer socio-economic performance, such as opportunities for youth and lack of confidence in the electoral system.

Marginalization and discrimination

37. No country in the Euro-Mediterranean region is homogeneous. It is important to stress that diversity itself does not lead to or increase a country's vulnerability to violent extremism. The problem comes with inequality in accessing opportunities. The crisis has aggravated insecurities, as scarce resources and the fear of need entail social competition for wellness among the most marginalized and discriminated communities. This competition is aggravating previous structural and cultural violence systems against specific communities and social classes. When one group, whatever its demographic weight, acts monopolistically in political and economic sectors at the expense of other groups, the potential for intercommunal tensions, gender inequality, marginalization, alienation and discrimination increase, as expressed through restricted access to public services and job

opportunities and obstructions to regional development and freedom of religion. This, in turn, may incite those who feel disenfranchised to embrace violent extremism as a vehicle for advancing their goals.

Political terror, violations of human rights and the rule of law

38. Violent extremism tends to thrive in an environment characterized by political terror. When poor governance is combined with repressive policies and practices which violate human rights and the rule of law, the attractiveness of violent extremism tends to be heightened. Violations of international human rights law committed in the name of state security can facilitate violent extremism by marginalizing individuals and alienating key constituencies, thus generating community support and sympathy for and complicity in the actions of violent extremists. Violent extremists also actively seek to exploit state repression and other grievances in their fight against the state. Thus, Governments that exhibit repressive and heavy-handed security responses in violation of human rights and the rule of law, such as the profiling of certain populations, the adoption of intrusive surveillance techniques and the extension of declared states of emergency, tend to generate more violent extremists.

39. The lack of state's adequate efforts to advance the realization of economic, social and cultural rights (failing to comply with international obligations), exacerbated by discrimination against ethnic, national, gender-related, religious, linguistic and other groups and the absence or curtailment of democratic space, can provide opportunities for exploitation by violent extremists. State institutions that do not adequately fulfil their international obligations to uphold these rights can fuel grievances and undermine not only their own effectiveness but also social norms and social cohesion.

40. More attention needs to be paid to devising efficient gender- and human rights-compliant reintegration strategies and programs for those who have been convicted of terrorism-related offences as well as returning foreign terrorist fighters.

Prolonged and unresolved conflicts. Lack of resolution and non-transformation of structural conflicts.

41. The Euro-Mediterranean Region is one the regions of the world with more prolonged and unresolved conflicts. The lack of international and national commitment has generated long-standing situations with high number of displaced and refugee people, and entire populations living under military occupation or in a permanent state of war for many years. These situations tend to provide fertile ground for violent extremism, not only because of the suffering and lack of governance resulting from the conflict itself, but also because such

conflicts allow violent extremist groups to exploit deep-rooted grievances in order to gather support, seize territory and resources and control populations. Urgent measures must be taken to resolve protracted conflicts. Resolving these conflicts will significantly reduce the impact of the insidious narratives of violent extremist groups. When prevention fails, our best strategy to secure lasting peace and to address violent extremism requires inclusive political solutions and accountability.

Indoctrination in prisons

42. Research shows that harsh treatment in detention facilities can play a disconcertingly powerful role in the recruitment of many individuals who have joined violent extremist groups and terrorist organisations. We are aware that several initiatives have been conducted to prevent the radicalization in prisons and the detention places. While we welcome these efforts, it is important to stress that main efforts must go to improve the prison conditions and fight against inhuman treatments of inmates. Safeguards need to be put in place to prevent the spread of extremist ideologies to other prisoners while upholding the protection afforded under international law to persons deprived of their freedom, including respect to international standards and norms relating to solitary confinement.

B. Processes of indoctrination

43. Although the conditions conducive to violent extremism affect entire populations, only a small number of individuals are indoctrinated and turn to violence. Both complex individual motivations and human agency play a key role in exploiting these conditions and transforming ideas and grievances into violent action.

44. The above-mentioned conditions and the structural context described generates alienation and estrangement among citizens and, thus, a fertile soil for violent extremist organisations. There needs to be a social context that provides some form of organization and direction to generate processes of indoctrination.

45. The social context is often established through the intervention of propaganda and hate-speech can be promoted by the state, charismatic leaders, political movements and through informal family and social networks. While it can be difficult to join terrorist organizations unless knowing one of their members, it often becomes banal to face organizations promoting violent extremist ideologies in the public arena. Social media networks, and even mass media are openly supporting and disseminating violent extremist propaganda through hate speech strategies.

46. Individuals at risk of recruitment to violent extremism often feel unable to resolve disputes peacefully and find it difficult to embrace diversity (due to a culture of violence and intolerance); they have experienced - or fear - abuse from the institutions in society holding the monopoly of violence and detention; they perceive social inequality favoring specific groups that also benefit from impunity; and they experience a lack of opportunity in terms of education, livelihood, and income. Not all individuals with such grievances embrace violence. The combination and magnitude of grievances, however, combined with personal experiences and the influence of violent extremist narratives can push or pull individuals into embracing violence as a legitimate means of redress.

47. Young people may experience identity crises and quests for meaning that have no positive outputs; exclusion or alienation from traditional decision-making processes and institutions; and stark socio-economic inequalities in employment, income, housing, and access to basic social services. Youth radicalism can be, and has often been, a critical force for progressive social change. Radicalization (as a youth phenomenon) is also about the search for identity, belonging, and recognition.

VI. An Agenda for Action

48. This Plan of Action aims to set a Euro-Mediterranean civil society agenda for action for preventing violent extremism. While we understand that security forces should have a balanced role on countering extremist violence, this Plan of Action wants to express that the role of Military and Security Forces on preventing violent extremism could be highly counter-productive and it is essential to balance the current counter terrorism efforts giving a relevant and main role to the Civil Society. Civil Society role should be accepted, this role should be promoted, must be protected, must be funded and must be encouraged.

49. We are determined to promote an agenda for action as agile and far-reaching as the phenomena itself. We acknowledge that our regional and transnational dimensions, based on a real and honest partnership, is one of our main added values to make a relevant contribution in our societies. As violent extremism do not respect borders, national and global action has to be complemented by enhanced regional cooperation.

50. We want to reinforce the message of the United Nations SG calling for the adoption of National concerted Plans of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism. National efforts should include participatory processes giving a relevant and key voice to independent civil society organizations. The following 92 action proposals, should be understood as a regional contribution to align civil society efforts in all the Region when contributing to the adoption of National Plans of Action.

GOAL 1: Monitor the drivers and impact of ALL forms of violent extremism

- 51.** Reinforce watch-dog and monitoring systems of all forms of violent extremism in the Euro-Mediterranean region, with a special focus in hate speech in traditional medias and authorities.
- 52.** Monitor and conduct a critical review of all national legislations, policies, strategies and practices aimed at preventing and countering violent extremism to ascertain whether they are firmly grounded in respect for international humanitarian law, human rights and the rule of law.
- 53.** Promote agreements with the academia and think tanks to promote critical research on the causes conducive to and drivers of ALL violent extremisms.
- 54.** Cooperate and reinforce the initiatives directed to collect data on discrimination, hate crimes, hate speech, structural and cultural violence's and terrorism.
- 55.** Monitor the perpetrators and evolution of hate speech in social media by developing big data analysis and monitoring tools.
- 56.** Develop monitoring systems to identify good practices and lessons learned when preventing violent extremism. Ensure a system to inform key civil society actors of all the Region about the main lessons learned.
- 57.** Explore and intercede to find opportunities to introduce early warning early response mechanisms (EWER) to prevent violence in addition to alternative dispute resolution mechanisms, such as dialogue, negotiation, mediation, conciliation, arbitration and restorative justice, to resolve conflict and achieve sustainable peace.

GOAL 2: Reinforce education and resilience at local level

- 58.** Develop participatory strategies to prevent the emergence of violent extremisms, protect population from recruitment and from the threat of violent extremisms, and support confidence-building measures at local level by providing appropriate platforms for dialogue and the early identification of grievances.
- 59.** Strengthen local capacities for violent extremisms prevention and community resilience to violent extremism. In order to identify, manage and leverage the local partnerships needed to prevent violent extremism, CSOs must analyse local contexts to understand them, conduct trust-building processes with partners and capacity development of endogenous structures.
- 60.** Raise awareness in educational, cultural and religious institutions on the negative role of terrorists and their supporters. For that, if necessary, take appropriate measures against all forms of intolerance and discrimination based on religion or belief.

- 61.** Engage local leaders to provide a platform for intra-and inter-communal dialogue and discussions that promote tolerance and understanding between population, and voice their rejection of violent doctrines by emphasizing the peaceful and humanitarian values inherent in their beliefs.
- 62.** Design and implement awareness raising campaigns to inform communities about the different manifestations of violent extremism and their negative impact.
- 63.** Promote a free and independent space for civil society denouncing the shrinking space for free expression and the fear to be labelled as a security threat or an "extremist".
- 64.** Promote anti-rumors networks to face hatred and intolerance and reinforce local resilience in face of the message of violent extremist.
- 65.** Promote the education in diversity and mainstream shared values and common ground for social cohesion.
- 66.** Design and implement trainings targeting lawyers dealing with victims of violent extremism.
- 67.** Design and implement trainings targeting journalists informing about violent extremist movements and their impact.
- 68.** Provide human rights training to security forces, law enforcement agents and all those involved in the administration of justice regarding the respect for human rights within the context of measures taken to prevent violent extremism and in all its aspects.
- 69.** Urge individuals to leave violent extremist groups by developing programs that prioritize to provide them with educational and economic opportunities, in accordance with the needs of the wider civilian population.

GOAL 3: Strengthen the responsibility to protect the victims

- 70.** Promote an integrated framework to address violent extremism by all peaceful and nonviolent means. Preventing all forms of violent extremism requires conflict prevention and resolution, inclusive development, respect for human rights standards, and democracy reform.
- 71.** Support and empower victims of violent extremism by promoting legal trainings and awareness campaigns about their rights.
- 72.** Support and mainstream the message of victims of hate crimes and hate speech promoting a message of tolerance and mutual understanding. Victims can be the main actor for change.

73. Foster the use of strategic litigation as a mean of protection and guarantee against discrimination, hate speech, hate crimes, terrorism and structural violence.

74. Ensure programs directed to protect who protects as key actors of the social change needed to prevent violent extremism.

75. Provide medical, psychosocial and legal service support in communities that give shelter to victims of violent extremists, including victims of sexual and gender-based crimes.

GOAL 4: Ensure the protection of Human Rights in Counter Terrorism laws

76. Monitor and denounce all policies to counter violent extremism and terrorism which curtail human rights and civil liberties of individuals, for example, in the form of punitive or insensitive national counter-terrorism or migration and asylum policies and legislations.

77. Advocate for the suppression of counter-terror measures investing in “pre-crime” initiatives allowing security forces to prosecute for actions that have extremely tenuous links to actual behavior.

78. Monitor and advocate for the accountability for gross violations of international human rights law and international humanitarian law. Accountability mechanisms should have relevant gender expertise to fulfil their mandates.

79. Promote awareness raising campaigns to confront the new normal: emergency laws and emergency-like measures. Ensure that standardizing a range of intrusive measures will not become and accepted new normal.

80. Promote an international regulation of Private Military Security Corporations that are privatizing security and war.

81. Publicly question laws allowing indiscriminate mass surveillance giving intrusive powers to security and intelligence services.

82. Ensure that all persons, including those accused of “pre-crimes” will be able to adequately defend themselves.

83. Monitor and advocate against human rights violations caused by the implementation of anti-terrorism legislation through shadow reporting to the treaties committees.

84. Ensure that a declaration of a format state of emergency (as the main Homeland Security response on the fight against terrorism) strictly conforms to the requirements of international law, has no impact on non-dispensable rights, is treated as exceptional, are clear and accessible through a law, and upholds the principle of non-discrimination in the operation of all emergency measures.

85. Protect Human Rights Defenders and other civil society actors who are struggling and working for justice, dignity and social change in their societies.

86. Assist and protect human rights defenders who document all kinds of human rights violations, including those committed by state actors with the purpose of preventing indoctrination.

GOAL 5: Promote gender justice and expose gender specificities

87. Mainstream gender perspectives across efforts to prevent all forms of violent extremisms, in accordance to the UN Resolution 1325. Gender analysis of security-related decisions and interventions are needed to recognize new dimensions of violent extremism and how to prevent it.

88. Build the capacity of women and their civil society groups to engage in prevention and response efforts related to violent extremism.

89. Conduct more rigorous research and policy on women participating in armed groups, not only in terrorist organizations.

90. Advocate for the inclusion of women representation in the planning and decision-making at governmental and institutional processes.

91. Support and strengthen existing women's organisations and networks to play their peacebuilding and reconciliation roles in formal mechanisms and institutions at all decision-making levels.

92. Expose how violent extremisms affect to citizens according to their gender identity and sexual orientation and promote critical thinking on their role on prevention.

93. Strengthen interaction with women's civil society organizations regarding their impact after security interventions and improving community-level security presence.

94. Ensure that women (and other underrepresented groups) are included in national law enforcement and security agencies, as part of the violent extremism prevention framework. Importance to enhance their critical spirit in all nonviolence strategy.

95. Advocate for the implementation of protection mechanisms for vulnerable and targeted communities, including youth and women, to prevent them from embracing violent extremism (Sometimes under a double discrimination: gender and conflict situation).

GOAL 6: Reinforce the role of youth as actors for change

- 96.** Promote the inclusion of youth and educational organizations in the elaboration, monitoring and follow-up of prevention of violent extremism framework.
- 97.** Enhance the participation of youth population on designing and disseminating alternative narratives to prevent violent extremism. Bring new evidence on the contribution of young people as role models in preventing violence, conflict and violent extremism and support and promote new positive narratives on young people's role in the prevention of violent extremism.
- 98.** Contribute to supporting young people's socio-economic development with additional career options by fostering an entrepreneurial culture and offering entrepreneurship education, facilitating employment searches and job-matching, enacting regulations.
- 99.** Advocate for the inclusion of youth representation and participation in the political space through educational programs, especially on the planning and decision-making at governmental and institutional process, without discrimination. Importance to include all possible youth population: local and immigrants.
- 100.** Implement education programs that promote global justice, soft skills and critical thinking, tolerance and respect for diversity, in order to promote peace and nonviolent values.
- 101.** Explore means of introducing civic and peaceful education into school curricula, textbooks, teaching materials and trainings and awareness to teachers.
- 102.** Promote dialogue between parents, youth and adults and assists parents on unusual behavior of their children in order to react timely.
- 103.** Facilitate young people's disengagement from violent groups. Work with young population who have joined violent extremist groups to channel their aim for change into constructive, nonviolent and inclusive activities and approaches. Include drug prevention programmes in the design of the disengagement process, as well as a program in the penitentiary system.
- 104.** Establish social monitoring measurements on the recruitment and indoctrination networks of youth through violent extremist ideologies.
- 105.** Advocate for the provision of public and local entertainment facilities for youth without discrimination, in order to conduct cultural, artistic, sports and entertainment activities.

GOAL 7: Promote democratic values and protect civil society space

106. Ensure access to justice for all population (Especially vulnerable communities) and strengthen fair, effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels, in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

107. Advocate and monitor the provision of basic services in a non-discriminatory manner, ensure accountability for service delivery and the extension of state services at local level, and create an environment where entrepreneurship can flourish and societies can become more peaceful, fair and inclusive.

108. Promote the political space for nonviolent dialogue among all essential stakeholders and for the prevention of violent extremism. This dialogue should be based on the respect for the rights to freedom of expression and assembly. Also, recognize and protect nonviolent civil society groups as essential partners in creating democratic and plural societies.

109. Adopt a local- based oriented approach with the goal to solve local issues in partnership with the population. Those strategies must be firmly based on human rights and responsibility to protect norm so as to avoid putting civilian population at risk.

110. Advocate for regional and national dialogues on violent extremisms prevention with a range of actors, encompassing youth engagement, gender equality, the inclusion of marginalized groups, the role of municipalities, and positive outreach through social media and other virtual platforms. Enhance the role of culture and art to produce a culture of dialogue.

111. Advocate for the diversification of the existing state funds dedicated to countering terrorism and their allocation to violent extremisms preventing measures.

112. Supervise and advocate for the creation of state security institutions that do not abuse power and are held accountable for human rights violations.

113. Create mechanisms for civil society awareness on their rights, roles and responsibilities and Lobby the international community institutions to adopt mechanisms to protect and empower civil society.

114. Enhance the cooperation of civil society and local authorities to create social, political, cultural and economic opportunities, in both rural and urban locations.

115. Support the establishment of regional and global platforms for civil society, youth, women's organisations and religious leaders to enable them to share good practices and experience to improve work in their communities.

116. Promote the enjoyment of democratic values, economic, social and cultural rights, including human rights-based initiatives that help eliminate the conditions conducive to violent extremism.

117. Promote the implementation of transitional justice mechanisms to confront the legacies of human rights abuses and ensure redress for victims.

118. Enhance the social and economic participation of minorities groups in their contexts in order to guarantee their political rights.

119. Encourage civic and professional associations, unions and chambers of commerce to reach out through their own networks to marginalized groups so as to address challenges together through inclusive dialogue and consensual politics.

GOAL 8: Raise alternative narratives in social media and traditional media

120. Design and implement awareness raising campaigns informing about the negative impact of violent extremist ideologies targeting the same audience of hate speech promoters.

121. Strategically support and get engaged in civil resistance and nonviolent movements advocating for social change in face of injustice or political violence and terror. Strengthening the legitimacy of nonviolent movements acting in violent conflicts seem to be the most effective strategy to confront injustice, transform conflicts and reinforce community resilience.

122. Contribute to the design and development of national communication strategies, with emphasis on the social media networks that are tailored to local contexts, which are gender sensitive and based on international human rights standards, to challenge the mainstream narratives associated with violent extremism. At this respect it seems to be a priority to support nonviolent movements acting under military occupation, mainstreaming the Palestinian example and context as a symbol for all the Region.

123. Conduct more research on the relationship between the misuse of the Internet and social media by violent extremists and the factors that drive individuals towards violent extremism.

124. Promote alternative narratives that address the drivers of violent extremism, including ongoing human rights violations.

125. Protect the independence, freedom of opinion and expression, pluralism, and diversity of the media in the national legal frameworks.

126. Protect all journalists by ensuring the prompt and thorough investigation of threats to their safety, and encourage journalists to work together to voluntarily develop media

training and industry codes of conduct which foster tolerance and respect. If necessary, provide all necessary training to consolidate its independence from any possible influence (political, religious, etc.).

127. Create coordination mechanisms between civil society and non-state stakeholders (journalists, social networks, etc.) to work on a declaration of principles to combat hate speech.

GOAL 9: Promote the adoption of local, regional and National Plans of Actions

128. Advocate for the adoption of local, regional and national plans of action to prevent violent extremism and ensure that the process of definition and adoption will include multi-stakeholder spaces of debate, and the participation of civil society.

129. Ensure that Plans of Actions do not focus exclusively on religious extremism, but consider instead the full range of extremist discourses and behaviors. Racist, ultra-nationalist or extreme-right ideologies are other current threats that foster violent extremism.

130. Advocate for limiting the participation of security state actors in implementation of prevention strategies and promote the key role of civil society in terms of Preventing violent extremism.

131. Advocate for the implementation of inclusive dialogue spaces between governments and CSOs concerning all violent extremisms prevention policies.

GOAL 10: Establish an Observatory to Prevent Violent Extremism

132. Support the creation of an Observatory to Prevent Violent Extremism (OPEV) in the Euro-Mediterranean region to support the implementation of the Plan of Action issued from the Barcelona Conference. The Observatory will not follow the State dynamics and will not support any war against terrorism.

133. The OPEV will coordinate the efforts to follow-up the implementation of this Plan of Action and the main conclusions of the Barcelona Conference.

134. The OPEV aims to be a focal point for all signers of the Plan of Action to conduct coordinated efforts to promote violent extremisms prevention actions' policy framework.

135. The OPEV will ensure the establishment of an active platform of civil society organisations from across the Euro-Mediterranean Region that encourages coordinated efforts.

- 136.** The OPEV will conduct research-action approaches to determine the key drivers of ALL violent extremisms in the Euro-Mediterranean region.
- 137.** The OPEV will conduct big data analysis and research on the propaganda and hate speech in Internet and social media.
- 138.** The OPEV will promote Regional campaigns raising alternative narratives to existing community grievances.
- 139.** The OPEV will advocate for the development and implementation of local, regional and national plans of action for the prevention of violent extremisms including CSOs and encompassing youth engagement, gender equality and the inclusion of marginalized groups. The participation of CSOs on the design of national plans of actions is specified in the UN Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism.
- 140.** The OPEV will enhance the communication and coordination of the CSOs platform issued from the Barcelona Conference by sharing all necessary elements (good practices, tools, etc.) in order to empower them and further contribute to the prevention of violent extremism.
- 141.** The OPEV will identify the best practices of the civil society organisations to prevent the violent extremism to share and foster the Euro-Mediterranean CSOs platform issued from the Barcelona Conference.
- 142.** The OPEV will provide technical support (networking, training, etc.) to the Euro-Mediterranean CSOs platform issued from the Barcelona Conference. Present an annual report on anti-terrorist laws adopted by our regional states and their impact in terms of human rights violations.
- 143.** We, the signing civil society organisations and movements of the Euro-Mediterranean region, declare the will to respect and contribute to the implementation of the Plan of Action adopted today.

Barcelona, 30 of January of 2017

About THE OPEV

The Observatory to Prevent Extremist Violence (OPEV) is an active platform of civil society organizations from across the Euro-Mediterranean Region aiming to bring a constructive contribution to prevent violent extremism. In view of the lessons learned over the past decades and the challenges that lie ahead, this platform will coordinate the efforts to follow-up the implementation of the Plan of Action of the Euro-Mediterranean civil society to prevent all forms of violent extremism. The OPEV will not follow the State dynamics and will not support any war against terrorism

About NOVACT

International Institute for Nonviolent Action promotes international peace building actions in conflict situations. Through a global network of experts and activists in the Middle East, Europe, Latin America, Africa and Asia, the Institute supports nonviolent movements, working for change and social transformation, and develops nonviolent interventions to protect vulnerable communities in conflict situations. As a committed and politically independent actor, the Institute promotes actions, innovative ideas, research, and training to influence the policies of defense, security and foreign policy in Europe and other international contexts.

Established in 1999, during the last 15 years we have developed more than 300 international projects upon request from conflict parties both state and non-state actors and international organizations and agencies. NOVACT' credibility is founded on its field-based relations. Its task is not only to understand local realities, but to offer support to local civil society and social movements through capacity building, technical assistance, academic programs or legal defense for human rights defenders.

About the CMODH

The idea of the creation of the CMODH was in Barcelona in June 2005 with the celebration of the first Mediterranean Social Forum and under the preparation of the 1st Maghreb Social Forum. CMODH action aims to support the human rights respect, both in protection and promotion areas, in the Maghrebi countries and for all its citizens. Particularly aims to:

- + Reinforce the solidarity and cooperation among its members on the fight for the human rights promotion and protection in their universal and global debate.
- + Prioritize the solidarity and cooperation on the protection of human right defenders in conformity to the international declaration for the protection of human right defenders.
- + Reinforce the solid relations among different Maghrebi associations active in the civil society.
- + Participate on the promotion of the democratic, tolerance, equity and human rights culture values, as well as to reinforce the proximity and solidarity among the people in the region.
- + Contribute to the migrants' right defense in the Maghrebi countries and their country of migration.
- + Contribute to the defense of the equity man-women for their rights.

