**Arab West Report, December 31, 2009**
**Title: De-radicalization Conference**
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On December 2-3 2009, a de-radicalization Conference was held at the Golden Tulip Flamenco Hotel. The conference was hosted by the Danish-Egyptian Dialogue Institute. One of the presenters at the conference was Hosam Tamam, who works for *IslamOnline*. Tamam spoke on 'Muslim Intellectuals and de-radicalization'.

According to Tamam, religion is not the source of violence, but is a product of social and economic conditions. However, what are important are the historical conditions which caused the appearance of the phenomenon of Islamic violence that has become a trend in Egyptian society.

It is important to understand this phenomenon through the social and political conditions that surround it. Wahhabism-Salafism is generally accused of being primarily responsible for violence; sometimes it revolts and other times it leads peaceful relations with the government, so the reasons need to be known.

Nowadays the Salafi revolution is a result of the invasion of US forces in Saudi Arabia. Saudis do not accept foreigners, especially ones who are not Muslims. That is why some Saudis demand the killing of the king, because he let them enter the country.

On the other hand Tamam believes that the items of the conference are not suitable as they concentrated on the cultural sides. On the contrary, the main items should be the political peaceful change to solve the problem.

The end of the last decade witnessed one of the greatest intellectual and motor transformations in the process of the Islamic action in Egypt as represented in the initiative launched by the Islamic group to stop all the hostilities between them and the state. Furthermore, this situation gives the group the chance to form political and social reform groups, which use only peaceful means for spreading the good thought under the banner of Islam and avoid using jihād work to achieve reform. These are called reviews for Islamic groups.

Tamam added that there are three types of reviews for Islamic groups:
- Reviews of Islamic groups by themselves

- Reviews which presented in the book "jurisprudence of jihad" by *Shaykh* Yūsuf al-Qaradawi  it represents the Sunni movement against violence, this trend condemns both jihad before the order of the leader and the idea of war
- The trend of non-violent Islam, Gowdat Saeed present this trend in his book " the knowledge of the god on earth," he thinks this idea will remove the violence on earth

Jihādist actions in Egypt resembled a social movement; Islamic groups were formed through gatherings in mosques and social places.  However, nowadays jihādist actions are conducted through organized groups with large numbers.

One important thing that should be kept in mind is that the experience is before the organizations in forming the Islamic groups on both sides peaceful and political one.

The Muslim Brotherhood group is not a product of the Islamic reviews; it started its political work 1984 and did not have a completed political vision.

The reviews are the final product of Jihādist actions and all jihādist work in Egypt. Moreover the reviews were done under the supervision of the Egyptian state.

Unfortunately the Egyptian elite did not give much support to the reviews.  On the contrary, it was the security organizations that were the primary backers of the reviews.  Egypt closed the file of the Islamic groups before the September 11th attacks and this helped it to avoid being subject to terrorist attacks.  Furthermore there is no relationship between Islamic groups and the Azhar; these groups are the result of Western modernity.

Are these reviews a good way to find out about the future of Islamic violence? When asked, Tamam replied with a firm no.

The reviews are undoubtedly important, but the situation has changed.  In the past, Islamic groups had many young people who were ready to do jihād work and they gathered in social places to discuss their work.  On the contrary, nowadays a large percentage of the groups who took part in the reviews have no ability to participate in society, as their leaders were imprisoned for around 50 years.  Besides they have no connections or relations with social life, nor any younger generations involved in the groups.  That is why merging them into society should be carried out at different levels, such as politically and socially. That is why Jihādists will not do jihād work anymore.

On the other hand, this is a time of individual religiosity and there are no groups or organizations. This individual religiosity is more dangerous, especially in the globalization age. In the past, the person was aiming to be religious through a jihādist group. Now, he can do so without the help of an organization. In other words, we are in the age of excessive religiosity. This is more difficult as you can negotiate with leaders of the groups but it is impossible with lone individuals.

Tamam was talking about a very important and complicated point—the reviews of the Islamic groups, when unexpectedly he misled the audience as he was disorganized and he did not prepare his idea well.  Moreover, he was moving through points without finishing them completely. Thus, his lecture became weak and unhelpful.


**Conference Report: De-radicalization Coalition Building: Lessons from the Past and Future**

Contributed by Dr.Rasmus Alenius Boserup, Director of the Danish-Egyptian Dialogue Institute

A de-radicalization Conference in Egypt was held on the 23rd of December 2009 in the Golden Tulip Flamenco Hotel, Cairo.  It was hosted by the Danish-Egyptian Dialogue Institute.  About twelve papers were presented, mostly by Egyptians, but with contributions from Norway, Denmark and the United Kingdom.

The general study of religious radicalization tends to either oversimplify the process by stressing single factor explanations, or to overemphasize the complexity of the phenomenon and arrive at the pessimistic conclusion that it is impossible to identify "a typical terrorist" and typical ways of becoming a terrorist.  Both of these views are too extreme.  Radicalization is a process; individuals do not typically wake up with a sudden perception that drives them to join a radical Islamic group.  Indeed, they experience an often extensive socialization process that includes exposure to movement ideas, debate and deliberation, and even experimentation with alternative groups.  Only when an individual is convinced that he/she has found the group that represents the "true" version of Islam is he or she likely to join.

In comparison to past conferences in the series, there was a remarkable emphasis on de-radicalization topics, derived entirely from the subjects of submitted papers, rather than due to any choice of the organizers.  Perhaps this reflects trends in research topics, but it may also have something to do with the closeness of the conference about "Disengagement and De-

Radicalization from Terrorism" that co-sponsored with Georgetown University's Center for Peace and Security Studies on the 13th of November 2009. John Horgan, an applied forensic psychologist, discussed the findings of his fieldwork interviews in Europe, the Middle East, and South Asia with former members of radical and extremist groups, ranging from the IRA to Al Qaeda, and from European neo-Nazis to Pakistan's Jamaat-e-Islami. He argued that the inability of governments to stem the tide of terrorist recruitment reflects a lack of knowledge about the underlying processes. In addition, Horgan drew the important distinction between "disengagement" and "de-radicalization". Disengagement is a behavioral change, usually the result of breaking off participation in terrorism; whereas de-radicalization is a cognitive change, usually the result of a reorientation in belief or ideology.

So, there is recent attention paid to the phenomenon of disengagement from the increasing visibility of former terrorists, increased research on group weaknesses, and the increasing prevalence of de-radicalization programs in countries such as Saudi Arabia.

In the space available I cannot do justice to all the excellent papers presented, so I will pick out some of the highlights for me personally, which are based on my interests.

### (A) Scope and purpose:

The purpose of this conference will be to analyze the proliferation of radicalization processes all over the world and how to face them. For an inductive analysis, the initiatives in Egypt and Great Britain will be used as a case study. So, this conference is expected to be beneficial to everyone concerned about radicalization through the different directions that presented in it.

### (B)Conference Approach:

The conference has provided a conceptual framework for understanding the proliferation of radicalization and how it can be prevented. The framework has derived by using some conceptual clarifications about de-radicalization and disengagement for analytical purposes. Common pathways identified through using lecturers, and other accounts will then be validated given the information available about de-radicalization.

### (C)Conference Outline:

**1. Opening session: keynote speakers:**

Tore Bjorgo: "What are de-radicalization and disengagement?"

He presented the main topics of his study that was titled: "Leaving Terrorism Behind: Individual and Collective Disengagement" through the following points:

1) Some conceptual clarifications about de-radicalization and disengagement to facilitate the teaching of it to all people.

2) New approaches in counter-terrorism:

- Reducing recruitment to terrorism by preventing violent radicalization.
- Making terrorists quit "de-radicalization".
- Conceptual confusion; in the new discourse on radicalization/de-radicalization.

Bjorgo concluded that there are complex relations between radical values and radical behavior because individuals do not necessarily join extremist groups. Some members acquire extremist views because they have joined such a group for other reasons and may later dispose of their radical views as a consequence of having left an extremist group rather than as a cause for leaving the group.

3) Bjorgo also distinguished between de-radicalization and disengagement according to their definitions; de-radicalization is defined as a change in values and ideas away from embracing radical and/or violent policies, whereas disengagement is defined as a change in behavior or engagement in political violence.

Diaa Rashwan: "The Renunciation of Violence by Egyptian Jihadi Organizations"

In his keynote papers, Mr. Diaa Rashwan gave us a fascinating insight into the discussion of renunciation of violence by Egyptian jihadi organizations when he said that: "We must first define the groups and place them within the broader spectrum of Islamist groups in Egypt and the wider world." He proceeded to discuss in detail the notion of the Egyptian Jihadi groups as they referred to the Gama'a al-Islamiya(literally, the Islamic Group) and the Jihad, both of which emerged in Egypt in the 1970s and engaged in various forms of violence and terrorism

in the country. Until they made this move, these two groups were responsible for more than 95 per cent of the terrorism in Egypt in this period([1]).

Similarly, there is another study related to radicalization in Egypt that titled in: "Egypt and North Africa: Political Islam and Regional Instability"([2]), but it has linked this issue by the political stability in Egypt, so, we can briefly mention its main conclusions as follows:

1) The immediate risk of political stability caused by a radicalization of the domestic Islamist movement in Egypt seems rather small. This is mainly due to two factors.

2) First of all, the moderate Muslim Brotherhood continues to dominate the national Islamist spectrum in Egypt and remains committed to a gradualist and accommodating approach. As long as the Brotherhood is able to exert this function, the risk of radical groups emerging in Egypt alongside the moderate mainstream is greatly reduced. Secondly, the infrastructure of radical Islamist networks that had been built up during the 1970s and 1980s has been largely dismantled by the repressive state campaigns of the 1990s and has not been reconfigured to this day.

Anja Dalgaard-Nilesen: "Prevention and De-radicalization: a Danish perspective."

## 2. De-radicalization policies: An Overview of concrete National Experiences:

Omar Ashour: "The De-radicalization of Jihadists: Experience from Egypt and Algeria."

His opinion can be summarized as follows: Whereas the organizational arguments can partially explain several cases of further radicalization, they do not explain the root causes of that process. All of the radical Islamist ideologies and movements, as well as many others, were born in strong, centralized states like Egypt and Saudi Arabia. Factionalization and de-centralization have only affected these groups in a secondary stage. "Failed states" acted as facilitating grounds, mainly for mobilization, recruitment, training and resource gathering (as in the case of Afghanistan), but not as a cause behind initial radicalization.

Fouad Allam: "De-radicalization Initiatives in Egypt.

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[1]) Diaa Rashwan, "The conference about De-radicalization Coalition Building: Lessons from the past and future challenges" that has been held in2-3December2009 in the Golden Tulip Flamingo.

[2]) Koehler.Kevin and Warkotsch.Jana,"Egypt and North Africa: Political Islam and Regional Instability", 2009,p. 18 in: http://www.ecoi.net/file_upload/1226_1251461074_4a9793a32.pdf

Noel Warr: De-radicalization Initiatives in Great Britain.

## 3. Renouncing Violence: Strategies of Ideological transformation:

Gamal Al-Banna: "The call for Islamic renovation and de-radicalization."

Al-Banna discussed the reviews of Islamic Groups, and expressed his agreement with their roles in the de-radicalization process.

Hussam Tamam: "Muslim Intellectuals and De-radicalization."
His opinion was against the previous opinion of Gamal Al-Banna, because he said that these reviews are shaping a main reason to radicalization, especially since they lack the governmental support.

## 4. Re-integration of Ex-activists: State and Civil Society Initiatives:

Amr Al-Shobaki: "De-radicalization: the Role of Civil Society."

Hanif Qadir: "Radicalization and De-radicalization: a personal journey." Qadir focused on the American occupation of Iraq as a case study, and illustrated it with a slide show of the American violence that Iraq faced.

Abu Al-Ala Mady: "De-radicalization: What's next?"

Finally, the success of any de-radicalization process depends heavily on understanding of radicalization firstly, then de-radicalization. Hence, we should refer to radicalization as follows:

**Radicalization**: if we want to realize the meaning of de-radicalization, we should map out the radicalization process in four stages. Mady argues that initial receptivity to religious seeking among UK Muslims is a direct result of an identity crisis. The state triggers a cognitive opening, making individuals vulnerable to outside influences. Cloaked in their new "Islamic identity", Muslims suffer a sense of moral outrage at apparent injustices against all Muslims, both globally and locally. This becomes a central theme, as outside influences resonate with their personal experiences of discrimination. From here begins the process of recruitment through gradual indoctrination, which marks the second stage. Social bonds play a critical role at this stage and sometimes precede ideological commitments. Next, the third stage involves a process of activism, when the fully indoctrinated individual undergoes a replication process by

spreading and passing on his or her convictions to others to whom he or she has links. Progression along this path carries the individual to fanaticism, the acme of radicalization-the final stage. A graphic representation of this journey is depicted in Figure1.

In light of the previous lines, Sageman lists three levels of analysis: the micro-level, which focuses on terrorists; the macro-level, which focuses on the environment; and the middle-range analysis, which bridges the gap between micro and macro approaches and examines how terrorists act on the ground([3]).
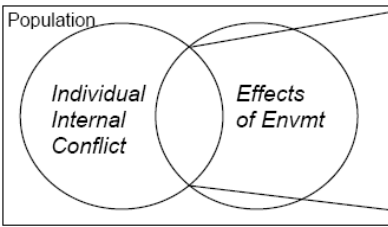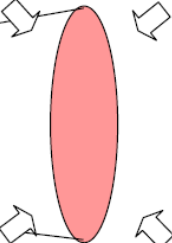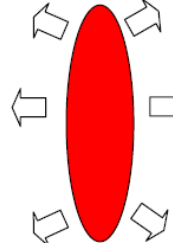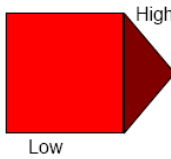
| | Crises | Gradual Indoctrination | Adopting a New Role | Radicalization |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **P R O C E S S** | Population — Individual Internal Conflict / Effects of Envmt | | | High Risk / Low |
| **D E T A I L S** | **Individual Internal Conflict**<br>• Clash of values/poor cultural integration<br>• Racial discrimination<br>• Disenfranchisement<br>• What does it mean to be a Muslim?<br>**Effects of Environment**<br>• Afghanistan War = We can defeat a Superpower<br>• Gulf War = Threat to Holy places<br>• Bosnian Crises = Muslims anywhere can be a target<br>• 9/11 = Crusades<br>• Iraq War = War against Muslims<br>• Social outreach through activism | • Contextualization of ideas<br>• Social/personal contacts<br>• Resource mobilization<br>• Culturing<br>• Persuasion<br>• Employment of reasoning analogy | • Selective incentives<br>• Social activism<br>• Owing the ideas/ intellectual affiliations<br>• Networking for recruitment<br>• Construction of interpretive schemata | **Low Risk Activism**<br>• Low risk paves way for riskier forms of contention<br>• Intellectual affiliation deters deviation<br>**High Risk Activism**<br>• Climax<br>• Further clustering<br>• "Group thinking" force-multiplier for radical thoughts |

Figure 1: Modeling the radicalization path

**Abstract:**
A conference report can be one of many kinds. However, let us make a few assumptions and from these, try to devise a picture of what a more-or-less typical conference report should look like. It all starts, of course, when you are invited to participate in a conference (Congress, Symposium, Workshop, Panel discussion, Seminar, Colloquium), the proceedings of which

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[3] Rehan Mushtaq,De-radicalization of Muslim Communities in the UK, Master Thesis, (California: Naval Postgraduate School, 2009) in: http://oai.dtic.mil/oai/oai? verb=getRecord&metadataPrefix=html&identifier=ADA501488

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will be published. At that early time, you should stop to ask yourself, and the conference convener or editor, exactly what is involved with the publication.

**Keywords:** De-radicalization, Radicalization path, Identity crisis, culture, and Re-integration.

**The key finding of conference**: The major, recommendation emerging from lecturers analysis is that the international community should seek to build an international institution that aim to "systematically develop counter-narratives (to those of terrorist groups) drawing on former terrorists and victims".

In addition to that, "just as there are multiple routes in," so, too are "there multiple routes out". The major reason for leaving terrorist groups is "disillusion from the disparity between fantasy and reality". The disillusionment frequently arises from an assessment that the group's goals are unattainable, revulsion with the group's violent methods, the unrelenting pressure of being in a terrorist group, and the competing loyalties between group and family obligations. These "push" factors need to be complemented by "pull" factors, including the availability of an exit route, an amnesty or reduced sentence for crimes committed, education and job training, and economic support.