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RELEASE IN PART B7(C)

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**From:** SMART Archive  
**Sent:** 4/29/2015 5:07:53 AM  
**To:** SMART Core  
**Subject:** All in This Together - Amman CVE Tech Camp Encourages Government, Civil Society Co-Creations

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**MRN:** 15 AMMAN 894  
**Date/DTG:** Apr 29, 2015 / 290906Z APR 15  
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**E.O.:** 13526  
**TAGS:** ECON, OEXC, PTER, TINT, KDSH, KPAO  
**Captions:** SENSITIVE  
**Reference:** 15AMMAN445  
**Subject:** All in This Together - Amman CVE Tech Camp Encourages Government, Civil Society Co-Creations

1. (SBU) SUMMARY: Embassy Amman collaborated with NEA/PPD, the Dubai Regional Media Hub, the Center for Strategic Counterterrorism Communications (CSCC), local government, and civil society for the anti-ISIL coalition's first Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) Tech Camp. The hands-on, two-day training brought together more than 75 senior Jordanian government leaders, entrepreneurs, media officials and civil society leaders from all sectors and parts of Jordan. Organized in close coordination with the GoJ, the Tech Camp focused on bridging the long-standing lack of trust and absence of cooperation between government and civil society, in this case to tackle the shared problem of countering extremist messaging and recruiting. GoJ officials, including the Minister of Media Affairs, affirmed the government's need to involve civil society in any CVE efforts. The private sector and civil society participants, for their part, expressed a new willingness to engage with government on subjects they have worried are too controversial or edgy. At the end of the highly-interactive second day, participants had created the seeds for 10 CVE campaigns -- co-creations which highlighted the possibilities when government and civil society engage together. END SUMMARY.

2. (SBU) Radicalization of youth is a major concern at both the governmental and societal levels in Jordan. GoJ and civil society leaders have requested USG assistance and training on how to counter extremist messaging aimed at youth. Embassy Amman has, separately, developed training programs for government communicators on how to unify messaging and media strategies, while also funding community and civil-society CVE programs. Additionally, Post recently trained and engaged both governmental and civil society actors during the visit of CVE Speaker [redacted] (Reftel 15 AMMAN 445). Following these initiatives, and in an effort to create synergy between civil society and governmental CVE initiatives, as well as to create a model training program that could be replicated throughout the region, Embassy Amman organized training on April 21-22 for over 75 senior government leaders, entrepreneurs, media officials and civil society leaders from throughout the country. The workshops, conceived by Post in coordination with NEA, a local implementing partner, and a CVE consulting firm with strong USG ties, featured trainers and experts from the Dubai Regional Media Hub, CSCC, the New America Foundation, Facebook, Twitter, local social media start-ups, and others.

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3. (SBU) Day 1 focused on the government participants, sharing strategic lessons learned from online counter-messaging, Coalition messaging and Media Hub efforts, a CSCC-led session on identifying and countering ISIL's narratives, and hands-on policy and strategy sessions with the social media companies. Ambassador Wells opened the training with a call for participants to undertake the "long road" battle of ideas and promote the positive vision Jordanians have for Jordan – replacing Daesh's lies with a promising narrative of the future. That theme was underscored by a mid-day keynote speech by Minister of State for Media Affairs Mohammad Al Momani, who encouraged "all concerned entities" to participate in creating a comprehensive counter message. The afternoon sessions underscored the need for government to allow space for civil society to operate, a point reiterated by the social media leaders who reminded that government officials can never have the same impact as other influencers in a person's life.

4. (U) Day 2 sessions brought in around 40 representatives of civil society, from youth leaders to Imams to social entrepreneurs. Sessions included "Digital Outreach: How the Private Sector Reaches Youth" and "Applying Private Sector Innovation Principles to Counter-Radicalization." Deputy Assistant Secretary for Digital Strategy Moira Whelan opened the day by underscoring the importance of government and civil society collaborating to counter extremist messaging. While both days were designed to be highly interactive and skills-focused, the afternoon of Day 2 was hands-on. Led by facilitators from Affinis Global, a U.S.-based community engagement and advocacy firm, participants were broken into teams – specifically formed to break down barriers between government and civil society – and challenged to design and build prototype CVE messaging campaigns, building on the skills they'd learned in the previous sessions. The emphasis was on co-creation and the absolute need for a whole-of-society approach to messaging and counter-radicalization.

5. (SBU) The afternoon session was meant as an exercise in a no-risk environment to practice the principles taught during the training, yet several campaigns with real world possibilities emerged. Each team was supplemented by a professional graphic designer to help give visual shape and flair to social media mock-ups of the ideas, and a Jordanian youth representative to serve as an instant focus group and reality check on the campaigns' appeal. "Let's Talk" creates a social media campaign providing youth with a wide-range of influential social figures to address questions in a space previously ceded mainly to extremist influencers. "A Pilot Unites Us" seeks to build on and deepen the unifying effect – and rejection of extremist ideology by promoting positive heroes – which swept the country following the horrific immolation of Jordanian pilot Muath al Kasasbeh by ISIL. A third campaign created a grassroots social media competition to celebrate everyday heroes among us, highlighting the Jordanian values that are antithetical to what Daesh represents. Embassy Amman will continue to work with some of these groups and, if further work is undertaken, could offer support to make some of these campaigns a reality.

6. (SBU) COMMENT: Several GoJ participants, sounding almost surprised, commented to EMBOFFS that the "most fruitful" aspect of the training was the introduction to and interaction with civil society representatives. While empowering civil society is a hurdle in Jordan, the two-day session quickly showed that even the most sensitive topics can be tackled in a collaborative fashion. The key takeaway was clearly internalized by both groups: CVE needs to be community-led, government-supported; co-creation is key. The government can be a convener, but it requires civil society to build a passionate response. END COMMENT.

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