

RELEASE IN FULL

Dear distinguished representatives and participants, it is a great honor to be here today at the invitation of BNPT. On behalf of the U.S. Embassy, I would like to offer you an overview on countering violent extremism in the United States. My apologies in advance for any mistakes I may make in Indonesian. I am still learning!

The seal of the United States of America means “out of many, one.” The true strength of America lies not in our military or our economy but in our people. Throughout our history successive waves of immigrants from all backgrounds and walks of life have come together to become one community. We are a pluralistic Nation and a society that embraces diversity. We overcome the many challenges that we face by remaining committed to the American ideals of freedom, equality, and democracy, which transcend differences of religion, ethnicity, and place of birth. We are not perfect but we are constantly striving to live up to our ideals.

**REVIEW
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Throughout history, violent extremists—individuals who support or commit ideologically-motivated violence to further political goals—have promoted messages of divisiveness and justified the killing of innocents. The United States Constitution recognizes the freedom of expression, even for individuals who espouse unpopular or even hateful views. But when individuals or groups choose to further their grievances or ideologies through violence, by engaging in violence themselves or by recruiting and encouraging others to do so, it becomes the collective responsibility of the U.S. Government and the American people to take a stand.

In recent history, our country has faced plots by neo-Nazis and other anti-Semitic hate groups, violent white supremacists, violent eco-terrorists, criminal gangs, and international and domestic terrorist groups. The range of plots and attacks in the United States inspired or directed by al-Qa’ida and ISIL (Daesh) require a fresh look at the strategy to counter violent extremism. This strategy is based firmly on a law-enforcement approach that upholds the civil rights and the civil liberties of every American citizen. It is also critical that we not allow the very real threat of violent extremism to become a tool used by the forces of intolerance to divide society.

As President Obama has said, “As extremists try to inspire acts of violence within our borders, we are responding with the strength of our communities, with the respect for the rule of law, and with the conviction that Muslim Americans are part of our American family.”

Before proceeding further let me take a minute to explain the American system of government. There are three levels of government the federal, state, and local. You may be familiar with the White House, the U.S. Congress, and the Supreme Court; these are the three federal branches of government. Each of the 50 states also has a similar structure at the state level, with the Governor being the chief executive of the state. In addition, there are also local authorities at the county and city level. Unlike Indonesia, the United States does not have a national police force. There are 65 federal agencies and more than 17,000 state and local law enforcement agencies in the United States that employ full time personnel and are authorized to make arrests and carry firearms. This means that everything we do at the national level needs to be closely coordinated with the state and local levels.

The 2011 White House strategy states that the Federal Government is focused on three core areas of CVE activity: (1) enhancing engagement with and support to local communities that may be targeted by violent extremists; (2) building government and law enforcement expertise for preventing violent extremism; and (3) countering violent extremist propaganda while promoting our ideals. The U.S. Department of Homeland Security, the U.S. Department of Justice, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the National Counterterrorism Center are the key federal agencies that are working to implement this strategy.

Communities play a strong role in CVE efforts—they are the first line of defense against violent extremists, and are best suited to lead in both counternarrative and intervention measures. It is very important that CVE efforts address community grievances, protect civil rights, build trust between communities and law enforcement agencies, and promote immigrant integration and community resilience. Communities have more credibility than government to undermine key recruiting narratives used by violent extremist groups, such as al-Qaida, al-Shabaab, ISIL, and related affiliates and they are more suited to know when and how to engage with a vulnerable individual.

Let me discuss four examples of how the federal government promotes CVE.

Community-Oriented Policing

The federal government has partnered with local governments, public health professionals, mental health experts, educators, faith-based leaders, non-governmental organizations providers in greater Boston, Los Angeles and Minneapolis-St. Paul to implement strategic prevention frameworks that address the unique issues facing their local communities. In the same way local partners have developed frameworks to address drug and gang prevention, they are developing frameworks to address violent extremism prevention. DHS and FBI organize town halls, youth roundtables, and issue based meetings to engage the community.

For example, there are over 30,000 Somalis that live in Minnesota, mostly in the Minneapolis St. Paul area. Terrorism organizations often target this group of Somalis to encourage their young men to become foreign fighters. Over the past decade in the local police department has built a strong relationship with the community. Both the FBI and local police departments now attend numerous community meetings. Local police and FBI officials participate in Somali Independence Day celebrations each June. The city of St. Paul has created an elder council of Somali leaders to advise the department and air concerns. Because of the relationships built with the community, local law enforcement agencies and the FBI have prevented several local young men from traveling overseas to fight for or with terrorist organizations. Communities have also taken a lead in creating counternarratives to violent extremists. For instance, Somali communities in Minneapolis have created a You Tube documentary, "Broken Dreams" (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8UczR3yymLc>) to highlight the bankrupt ideology of this terrorist group. And communities are utilizing social media to challenge ISIL online.

Information Sharing

DHS in partnership with NCTC, developed the Community Awareness Briefing (CAB), which is designed to share unclassified information with stakeholders regarding the threat of violent extremism, as well as help communities and law enforcement develop the necessary understanding of al-Qa'ida, al-Shabaab, ISIL, and other entities' recruitment tactics as well as explore ways to address these threats at the local level. The CAB draws a parallel between the similar recruitment targets of all types of violent extremism. For example, the CAB uses the case study on the attack at a Sikh temple in Oak Creek, Wisconsin to illustrate potential for violence from all types of violent extremists. Due to the increased number of Western-based fighters traveling to foreign conflicts, such as Syria and Somalia, the CAB now includes information

relating to the foreign terrorist fighter recruitment narrative by al-Shabaab and ISIL. CABs have been successfully conducted in 15 U.S. cities thus far.

Hypothetical Exercises “Table Top”

The Community Resilience Exercise (CREX) is a half-day table-top exercise designed to improve communication between law enforcement and communities and to share ideas on how best to build community resilience against violent extremism. To date, the exercise has been held in Washington, DC; Chicago, Illinois; Seattle, Washington; Durham, North Carolina; Houston, Texas; Columbus, Ohio; and Minneapolis, Minnesota. The CREX is based on a program that has been conducted over 50 times in the United Kingdom with great success. The CREX uses an unfolding scenario of possible violent extremist activity or foreign fighter recruitment. The scenario is revealed in several stages, with participants breaking into small groups after each stage to discuss potential responses and how they should work together. The scenario is hypothetical, but based on the behaviors exhibited by past violent extremists and foreign fighters, prior to their arrest. The exercise is facilitated by an individual with credibility in both the community and government. At the end of the exercise, the facilitators help the participants create a local action plan focused on prevention and intervention.

Public Awareness Campaigns

Efforts also involve public vigilance and action, such as the "If You See Something, Say Something™" public awareness campaign. The campaign highlights the individual role of everyday citizens to protect their neighbors and the communities they call home by recognizing and reporting suspicious activity. The public must play an important role in keeping our neighborhoods and communities safe.

Countering Violent Extremism Summit

As you may be aware, the international community recently held a Global Youth Summit on Countering Violent Extremism on the margins of the UN General Assembly. More than 80 global youth leaders and organizations from more than 45 countries to build support for innovative youth-led initiatives. These young people, many of them Muslim, are coming together and using their talents and technology to push back on ISIL's propaganda, especially

online, and to protect their brothers and sisters from recruitment. I would encourage the university students here to visit www.one95.org to see what other youth leaders are doing, get connected and share best practices.

Also, I wanted to highlight the launch of another initiative at the United Nations – the Strong Cities Network. This is a network led by the mayors of major cities to share information, best practices, and support community focused programs and training to build resilience against violent extremism, while at the same time upholding the rule of law. The founding mayors of this network are very interested in having Indonesian cities participate. The FKPT members here may want to visit www.strongcitiesnetwork.org to learn more and encourage your city to join the network.

The Role of Civil Society

I'd like to stress one more time the absolutely fundamental role our civil society plays in our national efforts to counter violent extremism. Fundamentally, the role of the government is to uphold the law, protect the rights of all citizens, and create a safe space in which the work of civil society takes place. U.S. think tanks, NGOs, faith-based organizations, and other institutions are at the front lines of our national effort to protect and strengthen our commitment to diversity and tolerance. The important work these organizations do is most often performed by ordinary citizens, who recognize how important it is that we as a society preserve our most cherished values while rejecting the forces of intolerance and hate. These people donate their money and, more importantly, their time, to monitor organizations working to spread intolerant and divisive ideologies; to counter those ideologies by participating in peaceful demonstrations, multicultural or interfaith workshops, and to reach out to at-risk populations to ensure their social or material needs do not become recruiting tools for extremists. We also have religious leaders from all faiths who donate their time and energy to provide spiritual and social counseling to prisoners, gang members, and troubled youth.

Let me conclude by quoting from President Obama's remarks at the Countering Violent Extremism Summit that President Obama hosted on October 29.

“It is not going to be enough to defeat ISIL in the battlefield. We have to prevent it from radicalizing, recruiting and inspiring others to violence in the first place. And this means defeating their ideology. Ideologies are not defeated with guns, they’re defeated by better ideas - a more attractive and compelling vision.

I wish all of you the strength and resolve to develop innovative ideas to protect Indonesian communities, values, and culture from the threat of violent extremism.

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To improve effectiveness, CVE programs should be based off more realistic models for how individuals make decisions. The keynote speaker was World Bank human behavior expert Karla Hoff, PhD, who discussed her work on the 2015 World Development Report (<http://www.worldbank.org/en/publication/wdr2015>) to understand what drives human behavior. She noted that a better understanding of what may spark behavioral change could help us improve the effectiveness of programs and policy. **In particular, policies and programs should be responsive to the fact that people tend to think automatically, rather than deliberately; they should consider how social norms and cues have a large impact on behavior; and they should reflect that mental models, such as anti-violent extremist narratives, consistently shape how people see the world.** Dr. Hoff suggested that the complexity of designing programs that consider behavioral change requires a more flexible, adaptable programming model that rewards risk and views failure as part of the learning process. Her presentation catalyzed many conversations throughout the week on ways to frame CVE programs and other TSCTP interventions to improve the likelihood of success. This topical keynote, rather than a policy keynote, was a successful innovation this year that the 2016 conference planners should take into account.

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