REPORTS OF THE COURSE

GROUP 1

SPECIFIC MEASURES:
DISENGAGEMENT INTERVENTIONS IN PRISONS

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I. INTRODUCTION

Group 1 started its discussion on the 4th of September 2017. The group elected by consensus the chairperson, co-chairperson, rapporteur and co-rapporteur. Five topics were decided by the group as the most important to address:

A. How do we manage prison staff and other people who work with organized crime members and violent extremists?

B. How do we classify, allocate and accommodate violent extremists in prison?

C. How can we assess violent extremists' risk and needs?

D. What are methods and approaches to delivering interventions, especially psychological and cognitive interventions?

E. How can we involve community and governmental organizations in the process of reintegration of rehabilitated violent extremist offenders into the community?

II. SUMMARY OF THE DISCUSSIONS

Brief summary of the problem (definitions) the group discussed:

1. The logic behind disengagement programmes: Radical Islamism has been an enduring problem for many nations, but it became a prominent international priority only after the 9/11 attacks. Counterterrorism campaigns in many theatres around the world have produced a mounting number of incarcerated Islamist extremists. These detainees present a dual problem for the nations holding them. Firstly, most states do not want to hold the growing numbers of extremists in their prisons indefinitely, and, in many cases, they lack the resources to do so. They have, therefore, searched for a way to rehabilitate these prisoners so that they can be released without posing a threat to society. Secondly, many states have recognized that prisons are often incubators of radicalization, and, in an effort to stymie this process, they have sought to tackle radicalization in their penitentiaries by reforming violent extremist detainees.

2. Radicalization: Most of the definitions currently in circulation describe radicalization as the process (or processes) whereby individuals or groups come to approve of and (ultimately) participate in the use of violence for political aims. *(Ms. Chiara Bologna, UNICRI, Preventing and Countering terrorism and violent*

extremism, 167th UNAFEI International Training Course (5 September 2017)

3. Disengagement entails a change in behaviour (i.e., refraining from violence and withdrawing from a radical organization) but not necessarily a change in beliefs. A person could exit a radical organization and refrain from violence but nevertheless retain a radical worldview. *(Dr. Andrea Moser, Correctional Service Canada Management of Radicalized Offenders and Security Threat Groups in a Correctional Context, 167th UNAFEI International Training Course (30 August 2017)*

A. How Do We Manage Prison Staff and Other People Who Work with Organized Crime Members and Violent Extremists?
Individuals play an integral role in any workforce. Prison systems cannot function well if there are no staff members to implement its core responsibilities. Hence prison administrations should recognize this and devote significant time and resources to the recruitment, selection and training of personnel who work in prison. Ensuring that prisons holding violent extremist prisoners have a sufficient number of good quality and well-trained staff should be a priority for all prison systems.

1. Quality of Prison Staff
Staff working with violent extremist prisoners requires a good combination of personal qualities and technical skills, and high standards of personal and professional conduct. They need personal qualities that enable them to deal with all prisoners, including the difficult, dangerous and manipulative, in an even-handed, humane and just manner. It should be remembered that people joining the prison administration do so with a range of existing skills, knowledge and abilities.

2. Recruitment and Selection of Staff
Safeguards should be put in place to ensure that staff selected to work with violent extremist prisoners are not members of violent extremist groups, criminal gangs or associated with organized crime, and are not being used to infiltrate the prison.

Every effort should be made to recruit staff from ethnic, religious and racial minorities and indigenous peoples represented among the violent extremist prisoner population. This will help to ensure a better understanding among staff about different cultures and establish a nondiscriminatory attitude towards prisoners from minority groups and indigenous peoples.

Particular attention needs to be paid to the recruitment of specialist staff. These are likely to be individuals who are already trained in a specific profession. They will include faith leaders, teachers, instructors and health-care staff. Adequate numbers of specialist staff, such as psychiatrists, psychologists and social workers, should also be appointed to prisons holding violent extremist prisoners, given the requirement to address the complex needs of this group of prisoners.

3. Training and Development of Staff
Training, which is crucial to any environment, is especially important for people working with violent extremist prisoners. International standards indicate that prison staff should receive training before beginning work in prison (pre-service "orientation" training) and throughout their careers in the prison administration (in-service "refresher" training).

Introductory-level modules such as on "Managing violent extremists in prison" or on "Identifying radicalization to violence within prison" can be delivered to new staff as part of their primary orientation training. In addition, it is important to offer courses that educate and sensitize staff to linguistic, cultural and religious diversity.

More advanced training should be provided for staff working with violent extremist prisoners on a daily basis and should include topics such as: understanding violent extremism; recognizing signs of radicalization to violence; assessment of violent extremist prisoners; implementing a positive regime for violent extremist prisoners; assessment of intelligence and other information about violent extremist prisoners; and anti-conditioning and manipulation training. It is particularly important that frontline prison staff understand and are carefully attuned to the disengagement and reintegration process, even if they are not directly responsible for its delivery. Staff should avoid actions that undermine disengagement and reintegration.

(*Handbook on the Management of Violent Extremist Prisoners and the Prevention of Radicalization to Violence in Prisons 2016*)

4. Conditions of Service
   As the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the Nelson Mandela Rules) make clear, prison staff should be given appropriate status, levels of pay and conditions of employment. The conditions of service for staff working with violent extremist prisoners should reflect the challenges and importance of their role. The issue of pay requires careful consideration. If staff does not receive salary levels appropriate to the economic situation in their country, they may be open to corruption of a direct or indirect nature.

5. Contributions of Specialist Staff and Other People
   Faith professionals: Integrating appropriate faith professionals into the disengagement process should be considered, as they can play an important role in the process.

6. Psychologists
   Psychologists can play a key role in the disengagement process and should be fully integrated into those disengagement interventions. They can help identify factors in the social context and psychological make-up that made the individual vulnerable to violent extremism and the motivational factors that contributed to his or her decision to engage in violent extremist activity.

B. How Do We Classify, Allocate and Accommodate Violent Extremists in Prison?
   Governments everywhere have to ask themselves how violent extremists are different from "ordinary" prisoners and what this means for how they should be treated in prison.

1. Prison regimes for violent extremists need to be informed by a sophisticated understanding of the motivations and behaviours of politically motivated offenders, who – unlike "ordinary prisoners" – may want to mobilize outside support.

2. Radicalize other prisoners, and (in the case of violent extremists) re-create operational command structures.

3. Most practice a policy of dispersal and (partial) concentration, which distributes violent extremists among a small number of high security prisons. The overall approach can be characterized as "security first",

4. In the prison context, most difficulties in dealing with violent extremists are caused precisely by the fact that these offenders do not see themselves as criminals. Rather than quietly serving their sentences, many regard their time in prison as an opportunity to continue the "struggle",

5. Challenges in dealing with violent extremist inmates include:
   ● Preventing the radicalization of (non-violent-extremist) inmates;
   ● Preventing the maintenance and/or re-creation of operational command structures;
   ● Preventing the exploitation of the prison environment for the purpose of mobilizing outside support. In addition, prison regimes for violent extremists should also aspire to:
       ✓ Providing opportunities for deradicalization and disengagement; and
       ✓ Making a positive contribution to reducing terrorism and radicalization on the outside.

6. Concentration, Separation and Isolation
   All prison services that deal with violent extremists need to decide how to distribute this prisoner population around their systems. In most cases, this boils down to three related questions, namely whether they should all be held in one place (concentration); whether they should they be separated from the general prison population (separation); and if they should be isolated from each other (isolation). There is no one right answer, and prison administrations will need to determine the best approach to accommodation, based on specific factors within the country, such as:
   ● The size of the violent extremist population
   ● The state of the prison infrastructure

- The financial resources available
- The cultural, political and social context (*Dr. Andrea Moser, Management of radicalized offenders and security threat groups in a correctional context, 167th UNAFEI International Training Course, 30 August 2017*)

The group explored different accommodation strategies used by countries such as France, Spain, England/Wales, Morocco, Canada, Algeria and Indonesia. Some Member States adopt a mixed approach based on the influence of the violent extremist prisoner. For example, violent extremist ideologues and charismatic leaders are assessed as more likely to radicalize others than those who are criminal opportunists. Therefore, the ideologues and leaders are separated from the general population, while criminal opportunists are integrated with the general population. (*Rome Memorandum on Good Practices for Rehabilitation and Reintegration of Violent Extremist Offenders*)

The group agreed:

- To adopt a hybrid strategy that merges the ideas of separation (separate housing units) and isolation (single cells) depending on the level of influence and modus operandi based on assessment, in order to deny violent extremists the opportunity to influence vulnerable prisoners in the general population.

- That those who are successfully rehabilitated can be moved back into the general population.

C. How Can We Assess Violent Extremists' Risk and Needs?

Assessment may be conducted during an offender's stay in prison, and an assessment is also recommended: (a) at the time of determining the appropriate sanctions or measure or when diversion from formal criminal proceedings is being considered; (b) at the beginning of a period of supervision; (c) whenever there are significant changes in the offender's life; (d) when consideration is being given to a change in the nature or the level of supervision; or (e) at the end of the supervision measure.

There are methods and instruments to evaluate the key factors that may have an impact on the likelihood that an offender will reoffend. These risk factors are defined as prior factors that increase the probability (risk) of reoffending and the potential danger an offender may thus represent to the victim and the community.

Knowledge about risk factors associated with recidivism can be used to develop profiles of high-risk offenders (forensic profiles) to help practitioners and decision makers identify candidates for various forms of intervention. Evidence suggests that an accumulation of risk factors in an individual's life is associated with a higher likelihood of involvement in criminal behaviour.

A lot of work has been done to try to identify an empirical framework capable of supporting decisions concerning the treatment of offenders and their successful reintegration into the community.

The risk-needs-responsivity (RNR) framework is one of those frameworks, initially based on research to identify the risk factors associated with recidivism (as outlined in the *UNODC Introductory Handbook on the prevention of recidivism and the social reintegration of offenders* p 38).

1. Risk
   - What do we know about offender characteristics that are associated with reoffending
   - Risk factors are not necessarily causal factors (behavioural and cognitive markers)
   - Risk factors can be static or dynamic
   - High-risk offenders can be identified

2. Needs
   - Needs that are criminogenic (associated with reoffending)
   - Needs that can be addressed by treatment or other interventions
   - Needs may vary by types of offender (e.g. violent offenders)
   - Needs may vary by age (young offenders)

3. Responsivity
   - General responsivity (emphasis on cognitive social learning interventions within a supportive structure)
   - Specific responsivity (motivation, special characteristics of offenders, special circumstances, culture)

These risk factors are not necessarily causal, but their identification led to the formulation of the notion of "criminogenic needs" associated with the factors and are therefore related in a more "causal way" to reoffending. These criminogenic needs can be understood as issues that must be addressed by treatment, including various cognitive-behavioural intervention techniques.

Furthermore, a risk/needs assessment is not complete without a corollary assessment of protective (or resiliency) factors. These are factors that reduce the risks for the onset and repeat offending behaviour associated with the risk factors.

A number of tools have been developed and validated for different types of offenders in order to proceed as systematically as possible with the identification of risk factors in individual offenders. However, there are quite few specific tools for violent extremists at the moment, for example, VERA-II (Pressman, D. and Flockton, J. (2014) "Violent extremist risk assessment: issues and applications of the VERA II in a high security setting", chapter 9 in Silke, A. (ed.) *Prisons, Terrorism and Extremist – Critical Issues in Management, Radicalization and Reform.*) and ERG22 (Lloyd, M and Dean, C. (2015) "The Development of Structured Guidelines for Assessing Risk in Extremist Offenders", *Journal of Threat Assessment and Management, 2015, Vol.2, No. 1,40-52.*)

Summary of scored areas for VERA II

	Risk Factors (Not changeable)	Need Factor (Changeable)
Beliefs and attitudes	Victim of personal or group injustice and grievances	Feelings of hate, frustration, persecution and / or alienation
		Dehumanization of identified targets of injustice
		Rejection of democratic, pluralistic society and values
		Attachment to ideology justifying violence
		Hostility to national collective identity/identity conflict
		Lack of understanding or empathy for those outside own group
Context and intent	Seeker, consumer, developer of violent extremist materials	Anger and expressed intent to act violently
	Identification of target (person, place, group) in response to perceived injustice	Expressed desire to die for cause or martyrdom
	Active personal contact with violent extremists	Expressed intent to plan, prepare violent action
		Susceptible to influence, authority, indoctrination
History and capability	Early exposure to pro-violence militant ideology	
	Network of family, friends involved in violent action	
	Prior criminal history of violence	
	Tactical, paramilitary, explosive train-	

	ing	
	Extremist ideological training	
	Access to funds, resources, organizational skills	
Commitment and motivation		Driven by perceived noble cause/ glorification of violent action/religious obligation
		Driven by opportunism, excitement, adventure
		Driven by comradery, group belonging, status in group, social needs
		Driven by moral imperative, moral superiority, identity
		Driven by excitement, adventure
Protective items	Re-interpretation of ideology less rigid, absolute; rejection of violence to obtain goals, change of vision of enemy; involvement with offence-related programmes; community support for non-violence, family support for non-violence.	

D. What Are the Methods and Approaches to Delivering Interventions, Especially Psychological and Cognitive Interventions?

Key Components of Successful Disengagement Programmes:

1. To effectively challenge radical Islamism, a programme must employ an interlocutor whom the militants view as credible. In addition, after the programme has been completed, graduates must be carefully monitored and offered continued support to reduce the likelihood of recidivism.

2. Disengagement programme is not likely to succeed unless the ties with the organization can be broken and alternative means to meet the militant's psychological and material needs are provided. (Rome Memorandum on Good Practices for Rehabilitation and Reintegration of Violent Extremist Offenders)

3. Many radical organizations not only provide for all their members' basic needs, but they also offer assistance to their members' families. Thus, disengagement programmes need to help ex-militants and their families find alternative sources of income, housing, health care, and education.

4. Disengagement programmes need to continue to monitor and support rehabilitated violent extremists after they have completed the programme to facilitate their reintegration into mainstream society.

5. It appears that it is important that efforts be made to facilitate the process of disengagement during the crucial early stages.

6. A government can take actions that make disengagement more attractive and continued extremist behaviour less appealing by implementing counterterrorism measures that increase the costs of remaining in an extremist organization while strategically offering incentives that increase the benefits of exiting.

7. It is important that these programmes continue to assist freed, rehabilitated individuals. In particular, the programme should assist the ex-militant in finding a job and locating a supportive environment (*Ms. Chiara Bologna UNICRI, Prison-based rehabilitation and reintegration approaches and community-led initiatives, 167th UNAFEI International Training Course (7 Sepember 2017)*

8. Rehabilitated violent extremists engage extremists in discussions of Islamic theology in an effort to convince the militants that their interpretation of Islam is wrong.

9. Prison Imams:

Little attention had been paid to the provision of religious services for this segment of the prison population. Only recently have prison services begun to embrace the institution of the prison imam as a counter-radicalization tool.

E. How Can We Involve Community and Governmental Organizations in the Process of Reintegration of Rehabilitated Violent Extremists into the Community?

In order to ensure public reassurance and understanding, regular work with the media (newspapers, television) should take place to explain the positive disengagement activity taking place in prison, The growing popularity of social media offers many opportunities for publicizing disengagement activity and success stories to the members of the community, including celebrities and other influential personalities, can also help inspire change among violent extremist prisoners, and could be included in disengagement interventions. The motivational themes and public service messages they deliver can be quite captivating and effective. Enhancing relationships with the private sector to support the released extremist with employment opportunities or financial support after release is also important. (*Dr. Rohan Gunaratna, Global Terrorist rehabilitation and community engagement programs: The state-of-the-Art, 167th UNAFEI International Training Course (8 September 2017).*

Good governance can deter the involvement of people from terrorist activities, and consideration should also be given to involving non-governmental organizations (NGOs), community-sector organizations and the private sector. These bodies are often not seen as being part of the system or State and, therefore, may find it easier to establish relationships with violent extremist prisoners. Engaging these groups brings the added benefit of continuity of care for the reintegration of violent extremist prisoners upon release. The prison authorities should carefully assess external bodies before they are permitted to engage with violent extremist prisoners.

III. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Recommendations

At the end of the discussion, the Group reached a consensus on the following recommendations:

1. Prison staff working on this challenging category of prisoners should be carefully selected for their integrity, humanity, professional capacity, personal suitability and ability.

2. Prison administrators should implement measures to prevent prisons from becoming locations in which violent extremism can thrive and where prisoners can be radicalized to violence. All violent extremist prisoners should be (a) separated according to gender, legal status, and age; (b) classified according to the information gained through the risk and needs assessment; and (c) categorized according to the appropriate level of security they will need to be held in.

3. Upon admission of a violent extremist prisoner, a thorough, evidence-based risk and needs assessment should be undertaken by specialized trained staff and based on structured professional judgement.

4. Disengagement interventions may consist of a variety of activities including:
Psychological counselling and support; cognitive-behavioural programmes; social work interventions; faith-based debate and dialogue;

5. In order to ensure public reassurance and understanding, regular work with the media should take place to explain the positive disengagement activity taking place in prison. Consideration should also be given to involving non-governmental organizations (NGOs), community sector organizations and the private sector.

B. Conclusion

1. The first and most crucial recommendation is to enhance security, staff training, and evidence-based assessment that contributes to classification and allocation. Furthermore, it is necessary to provide meaningful programmes and work collaboratively with the wider community, allowing violent extremists to develop stable inmate identities.

2.   The good practices outlined in this document are intended to inform and guide countries as they develop programmes designed to rehabilitate and disengage incarcerated violent extremists or to address more general issues relating to prison radicalization.

3.   The document also can be used to shape any bilateral or multilateral technical or other capacity-building assistance that is provided in this area.