

**Co-Chairs' Summary Report of the  
ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) Workshop on Counter Radicalisation  
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 25-26 March 2015**

**Introduction**

1. Pursuant to the 21<sup>st</sup> ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) Ministerial Meeting in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar on 10 August 2014, the ARF Workshop on Counter Radicalisation was held on 25-26 March, 2015 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The Workshop was co-chaired by Malaysia and Japan, and brought together officials involved in counterterrorism efforts from ARF Participating Countries to reflect upon common challenges in countering radicalisation.

2. H.E. Ambassador Datin Paduka Rashidah Ramli, Director-General of Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter Terrorism (SEARCCT), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia officiated the Workshop on 25 March 2015. The Workshop was co-chaired by Mr. Mohammad Azhar Mazlan, Deputy-Director General, SEARCCT and Mr. Yoshi Kodama, Minister, Embassy of Japan in Kuala Lumpur.

3. 95 participants from ARF Participating Countries except Sri Lanka, Papua New Guinea, Pakistan, Mongolia, Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Canada, attended the Workshop. Representatives of the United Nations, International Committee Red Cross (ICRC), Malaysia and Medical Relief Society Malaysia (MERCY) as well as the ASEAN Secretariat were also present. The Agenda and the List of Participants appear as **ANNEX 1** and **ANNEX 2** respectively.

**Opening Ceremony and Welcome Remark**

4. In her welcoming remarks, H.E. Ambassador Datin Paduka Rashidah Ramli expressed her appreciation to the speakers and participants for their participation at the Workshop. She pointed out that as of 2015, there were nearly 21,000 Foreign Terrorist Fighters (FTFs) from 91 countries in Syria and Iraq. Their influence and impact not only brought an influx of terrorists to those regions, but also acted as a catalyst for localised acts of terror. She further shared that in the Southeast Asia region, 22 extremist groups have pledged allegiance to ISIS and this would affect the security of the region. She reiterated the need for greater coordination, cooperation and collaboration between ARF Participating Countries in combating terrorism and countering radicalisation. The welcome remarks is attached as **ANNEX 3**.

## Opening Remarks by Co-Chairs

5. In his opening remarks, Mr. Mohammad Azhar Mazlan indicated the need to form a 'backbone network' of experts and policy makers in countering radicalisation. He reiterated the need to address the gaps and loopholes in countering radicalisation. His opening remarks is attached as **ANNEX 4**.

6. In his opening remarks, Mr. Yoshi Kodama acknowledged that the cooperation amongst the ARF Participating Countries in combating terrorism and transnational crime has expanded and deepened. Thus notwithstanding, the recent tragedy, for example in Ottawa, Sydney, Paris and Tunis showed that much effort was still needed to overcome this problem. He also mentioned Japan's resolute condemnation of all acts of terror in all its forms and manifestation, including the murder of Japanese and other hostages. His opening remarks is attached as **ANNEX 5**.

## Panel Session

### Panel Session One: The Theoretical and Conceptual Framework of Radicalisation and De-Radicalisation

7. Panel Session One focused on understanding the theoretical and conceptual framework of radicalisation in order to formulate and craft policies on counter-radicalisation. It further examined the various disengagement and de-radicalisation models through the study of both their functions and limitations as well as the effectiveness of de-radicalisation method used by various countries. The session was moderated by Associate Prof. Dr. Hamidin Abdul Hamid, Chief Executive Officer, Razak School of Government, Malaysia and featured two (2) panellists as follows:

- 7.1 Associate Prof. Dr. Kumar Ramakrishna  
Head of the Centre of Excellence for National Security (CENS)  
S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS)  
Singapore; and

- 7.2 Prof. Emeritus Dr. Alex Peter Schmid  
Research Fellow at the International Centre for Counter-Terrorism (ICCT) and Director for Terrorism Research Initiative (TRI)  
The Netherlands.

8. Associate Prof. Dr. Kumar Ramakrishna presented that the current configuration of the globalised Al Qaeda movement comprised of four distinct, but not mutually exclusive, dimensions in 'descending order of sophistication' namely 'Al-Qaeda Central', 'Al-Qaeda Affiliates and Associates', 'Al-Qaeda Network' and 'Al-Qaeda Galaxy'. He emphasized that extremists could never accept a religiously diverse and plural society like Singapore, Malaysia or other multicultural societies. He explained that the extremists state of mind tolerate no diversity. He further explained that extremists often had an inflexible "closed mind". He elaborated that they only conformed to a simplified mono-causal interpretation of the world of "whether you are either with them or against them, part of problem or part of the solution". His presentation slide is attached as **ANNEX 6**.

9. Prof. Alex Schmid presented the Academic Consensus Definition of terrorism and a basic typology of political terrorism. The latter can be divided into vigilante terrorism, state terrorism, state-sponsored terrorism and various forms of insurgent terrorism. He further emphasised that radicalisation often occurred amongst young people caught between two cultures. He said that Muslim youths in Western Diasporas were more susceptible to radicalisation because of a mixture of problematic family backgrounds, alienation from society as well as poor education and lack of opportunities etc. He then elaborated on the levels of radicalisation analysis, distinguishing between micro-level, meso-level and macro-level. He further elaborated on a dozen heuristic rules to prevent and combat terrorism which he developed while working for the United Nations and which he since further refined. He stressed the importance of conflict resolution as a way to prevent escalation of militancy to the level of terrorism. His presentation slide is attached as **ANNEX 7**.

#### Special Luncheon Talk: My Experience in Peace-Building

10. The Special Luncheon Talk Session revolves on the experience of Y.M. Tengku Dato' Abdul Ghafar Tengku Mohamed as the facilitator of the Framework Agreement on the Bangsamoro for the Southern Philippines Peace Process between the Philippine Government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF).

He explained that the approach undertaken on peace-building process differed from time to time due to the dynamic nature of the conflict. He further explained that peace-building measures could not be combined with counter radicalization as the issue needed to be tackled delicately. In countering radicalization, he stressed on the importance to address the root cause of the conflict.

Panel Session Two: Countering Violent Extremism at 30,000 feet (Strategic Level)

11. Panel Session Two focused on dealing with the problems of terrorism at the strategic level or coined as 30,000 feet. It looked into long term plans in countering violent terrorism. The session was moderated by Tan Sri Dato' Seri Mohamed Jawhar Hassan, ARF Expert and Eminent Person (Malaysia) and featured three (3) panellists as follows:

- 11.1 H.E. Ambassador Miles Armitage  
Ambassador for Counter-Terrorism Australia;
- 11.2 Komjen Pol Drs Saud Usman Nasution  
Head of the Indonesian National Counter-Terrorism Agency  
(*Badan Nasional Penanggulangan Terrorisme*)  
Indonesia; and
- 11.3 Datuk Mohamed Thajudeen Abdul Wahab  
Secretary of the National Security Council  
Prime Minister's Department  
Malaysia.

12. H.E. Ambassador Miles Armitage presented that in Australia, the creation of the framework and policy to countering radicalisation was designed according to the need and requirement of the grass root and community level. He further explained the reason was because extremism stemmed from the influence of their peers, authority, school, community as well as the social cultures. He also reminded each country on the need to further engage their respective national security agency, relevant agencies and the international communities to find ways in curbing extremisms and ensuring comprehensive support that would yield positive outcomes.

13. Komjen Pol Drs. Saoud presented that the Indonesian Government had taken both hard and soft approaches in countering radicalisation. Through the hard approach, the Detachment 88 had arrested a total of 991 people in the span of five (5) years from 1999 until 2014. The soft approach on the other hand, was a two-fold ways, namely, de-radicalisation and counter-radicalisation. His presentation slide is attached as **ANNEX 8**.

14. Datuk Mohamed Thajudeen Abdul Wahab presented that the Southeast Asian region remained an attractive haven to the extremists due to the large population of 230 million Muslims. He further remarked that the radicalised home grown militants posed a danger to the country's safety and security. He then outlined several strong characteristics of the IS organisation such as well-structured, well-organised, robust in nature and good information network and finance. He highlighted that the Malaysian Government used hard and soft approach methods in dealing with extremism in Malaysia. On the hard approach method, he gave the example of prosecution of terrorist based on criminal laws namely the Security Offences (Special Measures) Act 2012 (SOSMA) and the Prevention of Crime Act 1959 (POCA). He also mentioned that the Malaysian Government has formulated the White Paper to propose new laws to allow for action to be taken on Malaysians involved in militant activities, and to strengthen existing laws to enable authorities to act more effectively. In addition, Prevention of Terrorism Act 2015 has been formulated and would be tabled in Parliament session in May 2015. He underlined that through SOSMA, arrests could only be made with concrete evidence while preventive arrests could no longer be allowed. In this regard, he urged for countries that are still maintaining preventive laws to continue to do so in handling situations pertaining to terrorism. He enlightened the audience that the soft approach method on the other hand, involved online and offline counter narratives. His presentation is attached as **ANNEX 9**.

#### Panel Session Three: Countering Violent Extremism at 3,000 feet (Operational Level)

15. Panel Session Three focused on the micro perspective of countering violent extremism at the operational level. It covered the challenges and successes in countering violent extremism based on the Malaysian model, The Philippines experience and the Indonesian model. The session was moderated by Dato' MD. Hussin Nayan, Director General, Institute of Diplomacy and Foreign Relations (IDFR), Malaysia and featured three (3) panellists as follows:

- 15.1 Associate Prof. Dr. Bilveer Singh  
Associate Professor of the Department of Political Science  
National University of Singapore  
Singapore;
- 15.2 Prof. Rommel Banlaoi  
Chairman of the Board of the Philippine Institute for Peace, Violence  
and Terrorism Research (PIPVTR)  
The Philippines; and
- 15.3 Supt. Mohd Zaini Mohd. Akhir  
Special Branch (Counter Terrorism Division)  
Royal Malaysia Police  
Malaysia.

16. Associate Prof. Dr. Bilveer Singh presented that the Islamic Radicalisation is a process by which an individual adopted and internalised radical Islamist belief systems, doctrines and aspirations, including the willingness to use, support and facilitate the use of violence as a legitimate means to transform and/or overthrow the political status quo in a society. He further shared the 2 types of radicalisation namely, non-violent radicalisation and violent radicalisation. He further explained that a soft and hard approach for a long term solution should be devised in order to counter radicalisation. He made reference to the Singapore Security Framework where they pressed upon the need to strengthen national security which lies in strengthening coordination and integration among government agencies involved in national security, particularly between the external and domestic intelligence agencies. His presentation is attached as **ANNEX 10**.

17. Prof. Rommel Banlaoi presented that the roots causes of violent extremism in the Philippines stemmed from various injustices, poverty, poor governance, ideological differences and marginalisation of indigenous people. He further explained that the government of the Philippines has laid out several counter violent extremism policies such as “National Security Policy (2010-2016)”, “National Peace and Development Policy/Philippine Development Plan (2010-2016)”, “National Anti-Terrorism Law/Human Security Act of 2007”, “Internal Peace and Security Plan / *Oplan Bayanihan*”, “International Security Operation Plan / *Oplan Samahan*” and

“Local Peace and Order Policy”. He informed that The Philippines has adopted a two-pronged anti-terrorism strategies i.e. the immediate strategy to prevent terrorist incident as well as the long term strategy to address the root causes of terrorism in the Philippines. The Philippines also imply a “Whole-of-Nation” approach which involves the participations of policy makers, enforcement officers, non-government organisations (NGO) and community leaders in countering terrorism. His presentation is attached as **ANNEX 11**.

18. Supt. Mohd. Zaini Mohd. Akhir presented that Malaysia had been engaging in the field of counter terrorism and counter radicalisation since the beginning of the formation of Malaysia in the 50s. He acknowledged that the current terrorist activities posed more threat than before. He further shared that the Government of Malaysia has made several efforts in countering radicalisation such as, among others, identifying potential extremist groups before the threat escalated, conducted detailed investigation on the issue and strengthening the legislation in regards to counter terrorism and counter radicalisation.

#### Panel Session Four: Terrorist Rehabilitation

19. Panel Session Four evaluated and assessed the various terrorist rehabilitation models used by various countries around the world. The session was moderated by Mr. Mohamed Hatimi Abas, Deputy Director-General, Coordination and Implementation Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia and featured three (3) panellists as follows:

- 19.1 Mr. Tarik Gurleyen  
Pedagogical Staff at Violence Prevention Network  
Germany;
- 19.2 Ustaz Mohamed Feisal Mohamed Hassan  
Associate Research Fellow at S. Rajaratnam School of International  
Studies (RSIS)  
Singapore; and
- 19.3 Mr. Ahmad El-Muhammady  
International Islamic University Malaysia  
Malaysia, also Panel-Member to Malaysia’s Rehabilitation Program  
for Terrorist Detainee, Royal Malaysia Police.

20. Mr. Tarik Gurleyen presented the function of the Violence Prevention Network (VPN), Germany in helping to de-radicalise youths involved in right wing extremism and religious fundamentalism. His presentation is attached as **ANNEX 12**.

21. Ustaz Mohamed Feisal Mohamed Hassan presented the effort made by in Singapore in countering radicalisation by establishing the Religious Rehabilitation Group. He explained the need to understand the concept of extremism and Islam in order to tackle the issues at hand.

22. Mr. Ahmad El-Muhammady presented that the concept of rehabilitation in Malaysia encompasses disengagement, de-radicalisation and monitoring system. In order to make rehabilitation program effective, careful planning is needed to determine the method of arrest, investigating team, and proper assessment of the individuals before exposing them to the de-radicalisation program. Rehabilitation in Malaysia based on the modules developed by religious scholars and Malaysian police aiming at de-radicalise the militants from subscribing to violent extremism. Mr. Ahmad reported that the success rate in terrorist rehabilitation in Malaysia was about 95%. He further informed that the success was due to several factors, namely, effective intelligence gathering, religious expertise, limited detention period, the implementation of prevention act i.e. Internal Security Act (ISA) and the implementation of the “Winning of Hearts and Minds” concept. He further shared that the rehabilitation process in the country focused on the religious module, socio-political module, and strategic and critical thinking modules. He added, Malaysia will continue using rehabilitation program as part of the counter-terrorism strategy and it is incorporated into the Prevention of Terrorism Act 2015 passed by Parliament last March.

#### Panel Session Five: Psychology: Bringing Them In & Getting Them Out

23. Panel Session Five covered the psychological make-up of a terrorist and why people joined the terrorist groups. It further discussed on how the authorities could apply psychology in building and developing effective disengagement as well as de-radicalisation process. The session was moderated by Dato' Akhbar Satar, President of Transparency International Malaysia and Director of the Institute of Crime and Criminology, HELP University, Malaysia and featured three (3) panellists as follows:

- 23.1 Dr. Debra Smith  
Lecturer at Navitas College of Public Safety (NCPS)  
Australia;
- 23.2 Ms. Zora Sukabdi  
Executive Director and Founder of the Global Center of Well-Being  
(GeoWB)  
Indonesia; and
- 23.3 Prof. Dr. Mohamed Hatta Shaharom  
Founding Dean and Professor of Psychiatry for the Medical Faculty  
at Cyberjaya University College of Medical Sciences  
Malaysia.

24. Dr. Debra Smith presented that in countering radicalism, it was crucial to understand the emotions of the terrorist group members and how it served as a series of incremental steps that led towards accepting a violent ideology. She opined that ISIS was successful in expanding its influence as the group focused on these emotions. Her presentation is attached as **ANNEX 13**.

25. Ms. Zora presented that terrorism in Indonesia was a culturally-rooted problem. She further explained that factors such as economic disparities, extreme ideologies and lack of education had influenced the terrorists in one way or another. She then elaborated that women could play an important role in terrorism in two ways, either by encouraging or restricting their family members to/from joining the militant groups. Her presentation is attached as **ANNEX 14**.

26. Dr. Hatta presented that a well-balanced life stemmed from a well-managed 'four domains of life', namely, 'bio', 'psycho', 'socio' and 'spiritual'. He further highlighted that the human psychology consisted of two parts, cognition and emotion. Cognition was characterised by sanity and maturity while emotion was characterised by sincerity and tranquillity. These four characters have to be blended together to ensure balanced psychological state. He summarized that in discussing terrorism and radicalization, the perception of terrorism lied in the eyes of the beholder. He noted that the term 'terrorist or freedom fighter', 'justice upholder or criminal' and 'social misfit or ideological hero' could be interchangeable. His presentation is attached as **ANNEX 15**.

### Panel Session Six: Radicalisation & the Internet

27. Panel Session Six discussed the exploitation of internet by terrorists and the possibility of strengthening the role of relevant authorities in their usage of the Internet as one of the approaches to counter radicalisation. The session was moderated by Mr. Zulkarnain Mohd. Yassin, Head of Monitoring and Enforcement Division, Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC), Malaysia and featured three (3) panellists as follows:

- 27.1 Ms. Elina Noor  
Assistant Director of Foreign Policy and Security Studies  
Institute of Strategic and International Studies (ISIS)  
Malaysia;
- 27.2 Ms. Nur Azlin Mohamed Yasin  
Associate Research Fellow at S. Rajaratnam School of International  
Studies (RSIS)  
Singapore; and
- 27.3 Dr. Zahri Hj. Yunos  
Chief Operating Officer of CyberSecurity  
Malaysia.

28. Ms. Elina presented that online radicalisation started in the 90s as a one-way effort to spread propagandas across the borders. It evolved from a Web 1.0 to Web 2.0 which was more interactive and included online video games, social media and RSS feed. These computer-based platforms later became mobile apps for easier access. The real game changer however was the introduction of social media such as Facebook, Twitter, Ask.fm and etc. She further shared that women were now becoming increasingly involved in extremism both offline and even more so, online. This was due to the fact that online platform seemed to provide safe haven for women to interact with men. She further shared that the terrorists had romanticised the harsh reality of the war-torn areas and lied to people. She summarised that while the Internet was increasingly seen as an easy outlet for radicalisation, it should not change the focus of countering radicalisation outside the Internet as well as responding to structural and real world causes of radicalisation. Her presentation is attached as **ANNEX 16**.

29. Ms. Nur Azlin presented on S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies' role in monitoring and handling the online presence of radicalisation. The emphasis of her presentation, as well as her main research focus, was on Indonesian and Malay language extremist online sites. She elaborated on the online presences of terrorist-inclined individuals which could be summarised as fighters, activists, supporters and sympathisers. Her presentation is attached as **ANNEX 17**.

30. Dr. Zahri Haji Yunos presented that extremists/terrorists used the Internet, among others, to share information, as a tool for psychological warfare, for data mining, recruitment as well as for fundraising. He further added that the Internet and ICT had evolved rapidly, which also affected cyber security systems such as the Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA). He then briefed on the classification of radicalisation which could be further classified into moderate, radical, extremist and terrorist. This evolution started from curiosity to sympathy and finally resorting to acts of violence.

#### Panel Session Seven: The Terrorist Narrative and the Alternatives

31. Panel Session Seven intended to identify the terrorist narrative and its resonance among the susceptible and vulnerable targets. It also explored possible alternatives including the non-violent alternatives such as humanitarian responses in order to combat terrorism. The session was moderated by Mr. Ikram Mohd. Ibrahim, Undersecretary of the Multilateral Security and International Organisations Division (MSID), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia and featured three (3) panellists as follows:

- 31.1 Dato' Dr. Ahmad Faisal Perdaus  
President of the Medical Relief Society Malaysia (MERCY)  
Malaysia;
- 31.2 Mr. Jeremy England, Head of Regional Delegation  
International Committee Red Cross (ICRC)  
Malaysia; and
- 31.3 Mr. Thomas Koruth Samuel, Director of Research and Publication  
Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter Terrorism (SEARCCT)  
Malaysia.

32. Dato' Dr. Faisal presented on definition of terrorist and how at certain point in history groups or individuals were labelled as terrorist and now labelled as heroes, liberators or freedom fighters. He concluded that the perception depends on which side the coin was. He opined that the root cause of terrorism was not caused entirely by evil motives but from a sense of hopelessness and helplessness. He stressed that in order to overcome terrorism, the government/relevant agencies needed to address the root cause of grievance of the people, among others by making honest efforts to identify and understand the source of suffering of the people and their needs, with the involvements of honest brokers in the peace and reconciliation process.

33. Mr Jeremy England presented the narrative of those people who are affected by the act of terrorism and those affected by the measures implemented by counter-terrorism. He stated that the most significant number of victims of terror were those in the countries at war, hence the focus of efforts would be on the frontline of the action. He also expressed the importance of Malaysia's role at the UN Security Council for the next two years as well as being the Chair of ASEAN in 2015, which it would provide the opportunity for Malaysia to impress on certain issues in the global agenda.

34. Mr. Thomas Koruth Samuel presented that terrorism and radicalisation was actually a battle of storytellers between the two sides. He then listed several myths that could be found in the terrorist narrative and possible counter-narrative which suited the individual scenario. He reiterated the need to utilize tools for monitoring and evaluation to ensure that we could extend our reach to every strata of the society. He summarized that the message of the counter-narratives must be delivered through creative ways in order to present the consequences of violence. He further emphasised that education was the best method to counter violence. His presentation is attached as **ANNEX 18**.

### **Closing Remarks by Co-Chairs**

35. In his closing remarks, Mr. Yoshi Kodama said that the workshop managed to promote mutual understanding of the importance of intensifying and expanding cooperation amongst ARF Member States in countering radicalisation. He reaffirmed the commitment and efforts by ARF Member States towards the eradication of terrorism and counter radicalisation for the regional safety and security. His closing remarks is attached as **ANNEX 19**.

36. In his closing remarks, Mr. Mohammad Azhar Mazlan summarised the discussion within the two-day workshop which covered the theoretical concept and the structural framework of the radicalisation and counter radicalisation. He urged the participants to utilise the knowledge and information from the workshop in countering radicalisation in their respective nations. His closing remarks is attached as **ANNEX 20**. (END)