

"Mainstreaming the Prevention of Violent Extremism in the ARF Region"

ARF Workshop co-chaired by The Philippines, Australia and the European Union

Brussels - 15/16 February 2017

Workshop's Takeaways

- P/CVE are complex and long-term tasks requiring a multi-disciplinary, coordinated "whole of society" approach. Regional and national P/CVE action plans are useful tools to build coherent and impactful P/CVE strategies. Governments are encouraged to have proper P/CVE structures in place to act as focal points among concerned stakeholders and to ensure consistency and accountability on P/CVE efforts. Ownership and sustainability should be specially taken into account when programming on P/CVE.

- Participants reiterated in particular the key role that women and the youth can and should play in preventing and countering violent extremism (P/CVE). The ARF region currently features several relevant projects aimed at fostering peace and addressing conflict. Mechanisms should be explored to improve connectivity and coordination between the many civil society and community-based initiatives working on P/CVE.

- P/CVE are highly context-specific. There is no "one-size-fits-all" formula. Local conditions should be taken into consideration and duly incorporated into P/CVE strategies and action plans.

- Addressing violent extremism in prison settings is an essential aspect of P/CVE. The management of violent extremism offenders should be seen as an important component of counter-terrorism (CT) and integrated into broader CT strategies.

- The role that Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) can play in P/CVE is paramount. National authorities should develop ICT strategies that

are up-to-date and catered to the right audiences. Engaging with and relying on private sector expertise is essential. Whenever possible, governments are encouraged to rely on and/or adapt existing strategic communications initiatives with a proven record of success.

- Efforts should continue to be placed on rehabilitation and reintegration of violent extremist offenders. Positive reinforcement, community and family engagement and education are useful strategies in this regard.

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¹ - In a contribution by the Russian Federation sent after the workshop it is proposed to add the following para: International cooperation in preventing and countering extremism as and when conducive to terrorism must be based on the solid ground of international law, and conducted in full accordance with the UN Charter and its key principles such as respect of sovereignty and equality of States, non-interference in their internal affairs, with respect to specific local realities and national traditions and that states and their competent bodies must play a decisive role in PVE/CVE efforts both at national and international levels, including any international projects that involve civil society.