Human Rights
And Prevention of Violent Extremism
18th Informal ASEM Seminar on Human Rights
“A European story of facts & fiction”
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Dual objective

1. Stimulate **critical thinking** around the concepts of
   - Human rights and
   - Violent radicalization

2. Give **my own perspective** on the topic focusing on Europe (Background paper - descriptive account of the story)
Why human rights & violent extremism?

Is it because:

• … violent extremism is going up?
• … more people are dying due to terrorism?
• … human rights laws are getting in the way?
• … we need to find better ways to protect ourselves?
Why human rights & violent extremism?

OR is it because:

• ... we are worried that our civil liberties are at stake?
• ... the narrative of “them” and “us” is being questioned along with the security policies that we have adopted
• ... current practices, strategies, policies and international agreements are not working?
• ... there might be another role for human rights values, practices, education and strategies for preventing violent extremism?
Which mindset?

The security mindset

✓ Priority of the state to protect
✓ Put human rights on hold
✓ Security threads are increasing
✓ Lack of trust, protect the borders, immigration controls

The human rights mindset

✓ Even terrorists have human rights
✓ Due process and fair trail
✓ Civil liberties cannot be compromised in the name of security
✓ Universality
Reconciling the mindsets

Human rights: “The unicorn of reconciliation”
- The unicorn that we all dream about, but never see!
- The solution that we always want to reach for, but never do!
- The all loved one, but never experienced!
We must act now

The road that we have taken for security policy and practice in Europe and internationally is leading to further division and the erosion of our societal values.

This is by no coincidence
In Europe ...

We are in a democratic deficit perpetuated by a number of challenges such as the economic downturn, fears of security, nationalism and the continuous marginalisation of the disempowered.

To maintain this deficit, control is exercised through fear:

- Security terror (terrorism & radicalisation)
- Financial terror (financial crisis)
- Identity terror (nationalism)
How secure is Europe?
The new reality
Let's take a step back - how did we get here in the first place in Europe?

The ideologies that provide inspiration for extremist groups (see London, Brussels, Paris, Madrid, Manchester)

- religious inspired extremism
- left wing
- anarchist
- right wing
- nationalist and separatist ideologies
Terrorist attacks in the EU (failed, stopped or completed)

205 in total with 107 of them in the UK

Did you think there were more?

Why so many in the UK?
How many died in 2017?

- 61 in total
- 38 in the UK in 6 different attacks!
And yet, the UK has ...

✓ One of the most up-to-date, "informed" and scientific security strategies in Europe

✓ Spends more on security than any other European country

✓ The most up to date, strict anti-terrorist and security legislation
And of course the UK ...

I've ad enuff of this shite, I'm off lads
And the EU ...
Reality check! Deaths per 100,000 population in Europe

- 265 - cancer
- 132 heart
- 11.7 suicide
- 5.9 traffic
- 1.06 consumer products!
- 0.03 terrorism
- 0.01 lightening
Where do we go from here?

✓ Address the root causes of polarisation and the hate attitudes that foster division
✓ Listen and respond to communities
✓ Find the unicorn of reconciliation
✓ Learn from each other and work together (not walk away ...)

Asia-Europe Meeting
Keeping the seminar focused:

✓ Pull & Push factors
✓ The role of community
✓ Gender
✓ Young people
During the seminar ...

REMEMBER
The five victims of terror

- **Primary victims:** those who have been victimised physically

- **Collateral victims:** those who have witnessed the attack and are not physically wounded, but still might suffer from traumatic consequences

- **Secondary victims:** family members (relatives) and those who are very close (intimate friends, close colleagues, etc.) to the primary victims

- **Tertiary/ vicarious victims:** those who feel affected and concerned by what happened (the ‘public’)

- **The forgotten victims:** the relatives of the offenders and their community. They are terrified by what their son/brother/neighbour has done and they fear undergoing ‘collateral’ violence.
The target: the public

- The essential victim (target) is the vicarious victim i.e. the public

- Attack = terrifying message -> to the public -> to disturb social life

- Making physical/ primary victims is just the tool/ message generators

- Achieving such high impact on the whole community is possible only through the help of the media, the message transmitters

- Without modern media, terrorism in its modern form would probably not exist.
The why

- **The micro-level:** the ‘vulnerability’ of the radicalised

- **The meso-level:** the supportive or even complicit social surrounding

- **The macro-level:** the radicalisation of a part of the relevant public opinion.
Final words ...

• Think outside the box

• Not all radicalization actions are bad ... “Remember remember the 5\textsuperscript{th} of November of Gunpowder, Treason and Plot”

• Europe - Asia: working together
• Which mindset?

• Find the unicorn!
Thank You!

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