

Managing, Rehabilitating, and Reintegrating Violent Extremist Offenders

Advancing Implementation of the GCTF's
Rome Memorandum and Supporting its Detention and
Reintegration Working Group

SEPTEMBER 2014

BACKGROUND

As the number of violent extremists that are incarcerated increases across the globe, questions about how to effectively manage this specific prison population and prepare these offenders for reentry in society have been considered by various governments. While certain prisons have become breeding grounds for radicalization and recruitment, others have demonstrated that these controlled environments can also foster positive change. With the additional challenge of needing to reintegrate foreign fighters that return from their participation in conflicts abroad, states are confronted with the challenge of implementing rehabilitation and reintegration programs that prevent recidivism, (further) radicalization, and recruitment.



Detainees at Bamyan Central Prison, Afghanistan.
Photo: UN photo/Eric Kanalstein.

Recognizing the importance of this element of countering violent extremism (CVE), the 30 members of the Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF) adopted in June 2012 the *Rome Memorandum on Good Practices for Rehabilitation and Reintegration of Violent Extremist Offenders*, followed by the *Additional Good Practices on the Challenges and Strategies on the Management of Violent Extremist Detainees* in November 2012. The Rome Memorandum lists 25 good practices relating to, among other things, areas of program development, standards for prison facilities, intake and risk assessment, the role of different actors (e.g. prison staff, psychologists, religious counselors, and family members), the broad range of reintegration components and training courses (e.g. basic education, cognitive skills, and vocational skills) and the inclusion of post-release monitoring mechanisms and aftercare programs. The Additional Good Practices document complements this with an analysis of

the various internal and external challenges and obstacles authorities face in the management and reintegration of terrorism offenders, as well as a number of suggested strategies to overcome these impediments. Further emphasizing its commitment to this area of CVE, the GCTF recently transformed its South-East Asia Working Group into a thematic working group focused on detention and reintegration.

ABOUT THIS PROJECT

To help support the new Detention and Reintegration Working Group (DRWG), co-chaired by the governments of Australia and Indonesia, and further advance the implementation of the Rome Memorandum and Additional Good Practices, the Global Center on Cooperative Security (Global Center) will organize four regional workshops in 2015 and 2016 with support from the U.S. Department of State. The workshops will focus on priority issues identified by the working group, including for example the importance of training and capacity building for prison staff and the role of psychologists, educators, social workers, religious scholars, families, and communities in both rehabilitation and reintegration. Participants in each of the workshops would include these various actors, as well as corrections experts, policymakers, prison officials, and heads of national corrections training academies.

Each of the workshops would seek to:

- Disseminate good practices vertically giving prominence to important principles and good practices, including those identified by the GCTF;
- Identify and disseminate good practices horizontally among national, regional, and global stakeholders;
- Provide a regionally-focused discussion on issues across the breadth of the Rome Memorandum and the Additional Good Practices;
- Compile additional good practices and lessons learned through meeting summaries and other guidance documents for the use of local, regional, and global stakeholders, especially trainers; and,
- Foster the development of a professional community of experts working in this domain.

ABOUT THE GLOBAL CENTER ON COOPERATIVE SECURITY

The Global Center works with governments, international organizations, and civil society to develop and implement comprehensive and sustainable responses to complex international security challenges through collaborative policy research, context-sensitive programming, and capacity development. In collaboration with a global network of expert practitioners and partner organizations, the Global Center fosters stronger multilateral partnerships and convenes key stakeholders to support integrated and inclusive security policies across national, regional, and global levels.

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