

SECURITY AND RADICALIZATION ON TURKEY-IRAQ RELATIONS WORKSHOP

On May 12, 2017, the last meeting of the series of workshops customarily held since 2014 in cooperation with ORSAM and Al-Nahrain Research Centre operating under auspices of the National Security Undersecretariat of the Iraqi Prime Ministry was organized under the title of “Security and Radicalization” in Ankara.

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At the workshop, the following issues were primarily addressed:

- Common security threats,
- Border security,
- Areas of cooperation in the security sector,
- Counterterrorism,
- Fighting against PKK and affiliated organizations,
- ISIS and afterwards,
- Human security,
- Violent extremism,
- Religious radicalization,
- Ethnic radicalization,
- Global and regional cooperation in the struggle against radicalization,
- Social and economic dimension of the struggle against radicalization,
- Radicalization and foreign terrorist fighters.



The following points were highlighted at the workshop held within the scope of these subjects.

- * Turkey and Iraq have common responsibilities against radicalization. For this reason, it is not possible for one of these two countries to act and fight radicalization all alone.

There is a wide need of cooperation between Turkey and Iraq regarding the struggle against terrorist organizations.

- * The existence of terrorist organizations prompts countries to spend their public resources on security areas instead of on their citizens' sovereignty and welfare.

- * With the collapse of state structures, an exportation of crisis has made an appearance. This exportation of crisis paves the way for external interventions in the region. If a solution is not found by the regional countries to the problem, the threat of intervention will always be there.

- * Instead of taking countries as primary actors, support given to the terrorist organizations as a policy-making tool, directly or indirectly, by third countries and exhibiting some facilitating approaches as a means of policy-making threaten both states' sovereignties and create new security-related problems. At this point, Turkey and Iraq are in a great need of a very broad cooperation in combating the terrorist organizations. The primary need is to develop a common perspective towards terrorism.

- * Even if terrorism is a threat in social and political terms, radicalization and violence are greater threats that will prevail.

- * Radicalization has psychological, sociological, political, economic, educational, cultural, security-related, international, financial and network-related dimensions. The competence to combat each of these separately is not an ability that a state alone can possess.

- * Another problem radicalism brings about is that the middle class dies out. If the privilege of belonging to the middle class and of being a citizen is not recovered again, it is not possible to obviate radicalization.

- * The current conjuncture has begun to change the structure of terrorist organizations. Therefore, appropriate tactics, strategies and solutions should be developed for the changing structure of terrorist organizations.

- * Radicalization is not just a matter of religion. Radicalization includes all violence-led sections.

- * It is easy to see that in every environment where a conflict exists, people who have tendency to be radicalized constitute the majority of that society. Besides, when we look at the radicalized people, we see that they



are not merely consisted of uneducated ones; instead, there are those with higher education levels.

- * Radicalized structures also affect the sovereignty of states in a negative manner. In this sense, state security has turned into a fundamental crisis in the Middle East.

- * The absence of any institution that will vitalize regional security governance constitutes an obstacle before the prevention of radicalization and violence.

- * With their transnational characters like ISIS, terrorist organizations such as the PKK threaten not only the country where they are, but all of the countries in a direct or indirect way.

- * Terrorist organizations learn terror methods from one another. It is known that terrorist organizations transfer tools of terror directly or indirectly to each other.

- * Any terrorist organization in a country sets the ground for other terrorist organizations when it weakens the security bureaucracy or security institutions in a country.

* Combating radicalization with military forces or kinetic measures will only mean fighting in one direction. That is why one of the most crucial dimensions of radicalization studies is definitely the cultural-ideological and educational dimension.

* A good political atmosphere is needed to combat radicalization. The absolute pathways in front of radical minds should be absolutely prohibited from turning into terrorist activities.

* It is necessary to bring forward a common definition that can protect the interests of all of the countries and parties.

* It is necessary to establish a solid relationship between governments and citizens in order to prevent radicalization. There exist societies exposed to danger in a number of countries. There must be mutual trust and common sense elements with a view to eliminating these hazards.

* A comprehensive platform for combating radicalism should be formed. It is significant to establish a platform including all social segments such as clergy, academics, bureaucrats, tribal chiefs, young people and women.

* Restabilization of Iraq will pave the way for the solution of many problems in the Middle East. In this context, Iraq should achieve in her struggle against ISIS as soon as possible, establish full sovereignty over her territory, and no opportunities should be given to terrorist organizations.

* The removal of the basic factors that clear the way for ISIS as well as the military defeat of the ISIS is significant. It is crucial to prevent the emergence of a management vacuum after military operations and to take into account all the priorities of the people in the region for ensuring stability. All Iraqi people should be politically, socially and economically integrated into the state.

* It is significant that all Iraqi groups and the international community focus on the construction of a secure, cohesive and stable Iraq that gives particular importance to the territorial integrity and political unity of the country on the basis of a comprehensive understanding.

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- * Another threat before the permanent stabilization of Iraq is the existence of the PKK terrorist organization. Turkey's sensitivity to the fight against PKK is known and accepted by Iraq.
- * Turkey has a very good intention in strengthening and diversifying bilateral cooperation with Iraq. There is a good background and sufficient opportunity to continue cooperation and dialogue within an approach that prioritizes common interests based on good neighbour relations between Turkey and Iraq. Keeping the dialogue paths open will empower the cooperation. Benefiting from the facilities they have, both states can create not only bilateral but also regional dynamics in the areas of stability and cooperation.
- * There will be opportunities regarding the development of cooperation in security, military, intelligence fields, and the rehabilitation and reconstruction of the territories liberated from the terrorist organization ISIS.

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Ortadoğu Stratejik Araştırmalar Merkezi (ORSAM)

Süleyman Nazif Sokak No: 12-B Çankaya / Ankara

Tel: 0 (312) 430 26 09 Fax: 0 (312) 430 39 48

www.orsam.org.tr