



Religious Identity, Belonging and Radicalization: Implications for International C/PVE Programs

Date: July 12, 2017, New York.

Venue: Global Center on Cooperative Security, 747, Third Avenue, New York City 10017

Agenda

Breakfast: 8.30am – 9.00am

1. Welcome 9.00 - 9:15

Melissa Lefas, Director, Criminal Justice and Rule of Law Programs, Global Center on Cooperative security

Sarah Cliffe, Director, NYU – CIC

Jacob Udo-Udo Jacob, Visting Scholar, NYU - CIC

2. SESSION 1 9.15 – 10.30

What do we know about Religious Identity and the nexus between Group Identity, belonging and the dehumanization of the religious Other

Presentations and discussions in this session will begin by exploring the differences between religious identity and other forms of identity (such as ethnic, gender or racial identities); factors that influence the formation/construction and strength of religious identity over time; theories and research evidence on how religious identities are acquired and transmitted. We will also go on to explore the concept of group identity and belonging and how dissimilar or religious Others are categorized, labeled, stigmatized and dehumanized. Discussions should draw from projects or research undertaken in the field.

Core Session questions:

What is religious identity?

Why is religious identity important (when compared with other ascribed or avowed identities including ethnic, gender or racial identities)?

What are the factors that influence the formation/construction and strength of religious identity over time?

What can we learn from theories and research evidence on how religious

identities are acquired and transmitted vertically from generation to generation (or from religious leaders to followers) and horizontally, from peer to peer?

What do people derive from group membership?

Why are non-members at times not only excluded but dehumanized?

3. **Coffee break** **10.30 – 10.45**

4. **SESSION 2** **10.45 – 12.45**

Approaches to transforming/negotiating religious identities and collectivities and how/where are Religious Identity discourses present in current C-PVE programs and debates

Presentations and discussions in this session will provide case studies of projects in the field that have sought to bring religious communities together, and point to successful or unsuccessful cases of healing and inter-religious dialogue in divided, transition or post-conflict societies. We will also explore how identity discourses have informed the UN's Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and Plan of Action to PVE; framework for countering extremism; international good practices, codes and standards in C/PVE; UNSCR 2354, guidelines on countering terrorist narratives. Discussions can also explore challenges in C/PVE.

Core Session questions:

What can we learn from projects that bring religious groups and leaders together?

How were variegated religious identities and complex relationships negotiated and transformed in those projects?

How can identity discourses contribute to or feature in counter narrative campaigns or as part of a comprehensive approach to the threat of terrorism and VE?

What can it contribute to current UN Plan of Action to PVE?

5. **Closing Remarks/Wrap up** **12.45 – 13.00**

6. **Departure** **13:00**