Rethinking the Concept of Human Security and Its Approaches to Preventing and Combating Violent Extremism in Tunisia

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1 Context and Preface

This project aims to analyze the relational patterns linking human security approaches to the security policies of the state, and to examine the impact of these relations on the prevention and control of violent extremism.

The research team sought to assess human security approaches with a view to rethinking them in ways that fit the specific context in which they are implemented. The ultimate goal is to develop effective approaches to countering and preventing violent extremism in West Asia and North Africa, in order to contain social tensions, enhance the resilience of societies, and build their capacity to deal with potential conflicts. The project is implemented simultaneously in Tunisia, Jordan, and Lebanon, in partnership between the Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research, the West Asia-North Africa Institute, the Jasmine Foundation for Research and Communication (Tunisia) and the Lebanese Center for Policy Studies.

Field research in Tunisia was conducted over a period of 12 months, covering six regions including Tunis, Manouba, Bizerte, Beja and Medenine, with the participation of more than 650 local activists, community stakeholders, and citizens. Data collection methods consisted in 56 individual interviews with stakeholders and local actors; 12 workshops involving 300 participants including local and regional actors and civil society organizations, representatives of international organizations, imams, and youth activists; 6 post-data collection verification focus groups with the same participant makeup; and 6 focus groups involving marginalized individuals vulnerable to recruitment by extremist groups. Field activities were concluded with a policy lab attended by 56 representatives of government agencies, civil society, imams, the private sector, and security policy actors to discuss their views and aspirations concerning the concept of human security, its approaches, and its relationship with the prevention of violent extremism.

2 Introduction

Sufficient human security is of the essence of humanity. But human insecurity is easier to define and discuss by research participants.

Growing interest has emerged, in the current Arab context, in the concept of human security and its various approaches as part of broad social and political transformations,[1] and against a background of violence, particularly violent religious extremism.

In this report we look into the most effective human security approaches to preventing violent extremism, containing social tensions, and enhancing the resilience of societies in the face of all manners of perverse phenomena. The report also tries to assess the relationship between human security and hard security policy and the role such policy plays in preventing violent extremism or inducing it.

This study goes beyond academic, diagnostic research by making proposals and political recommendations, with the fight against radicalism as its main focus. At the same time, contrary to technical, pragmatic studies that are primarily concerned with laying down recommendations and reform proposals, this study places equal emphasis on deep conceptual examination of the roots of certain intellectual and political dynamics and their role in the production of violent extremist action.

This is not achieved through the suggestion of simplistic, reductive, off-the-shelf solutions, but rather by shedding light on the true nature of the phenomenon and understanding its causes in relation to the failed applications of human security approaches and the consequences thereof. In light of this, gaps and the necessary interventions they call for are identified within a comprehensive de-radicalisation framework based on providing human security approaches with a dynamic quality and an operational capacity.

The findings and lessons learned in this case study, which we present in this report, will contribute to the theory of change that the broader research project[2] aims to develop, based on results of the field studies and in light of the accumulated experience of the research teams in Jordan, Lebanon and Tunisia.

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[1] See: *al-thawrah al-tunisiyah al-qadih al-mahallitahtamijhar al-ulum al-insaniyyah* [The Tunisian Revolution, the Local Trigger Under the Microscope of Human Sciences], (Beirut: al-Markaz al-Arabi li al-Abhath wa Dirasat al-Siyasat, 2014).

[2] See project page, "Effective Human Security Approaches", available at: http://wanainstitute.org/en/project/towards-more-effective-human-security-approaches-context-emerging-threat-violent-extremism

3 Human Security

3.1 Human Security Definition

In this project we sought to achieve a common understanding among the three research teams (in Tunisia, Jordan, and Lebanon) about the notion of human security and its approaches. What resulted was our adoption of the following comprehensive definition of human security:

"Human security is a state of individual peace of mind based on the assurance of being able to exercise one's freedom of choice, to meet one's basic material needs, and to have a stable job and an adequate income. These assurances in turn guarantee economic security, food security, adequate health care, suitable environmental conditions, and safety from abuse and physical violence, all of which contribute to a feeling of having one's place in society and of being treated accordingly. Likewise, human security entails being able to freely exercise one's political, social, and cultural rights, free from any form of interference, including by the state itself".[3]

The following **seven approaches** to human security further detail the different dimensions of the concept:

– **Economic Security:** Economic security implies ensuring a basic income that meets people's needs, guaranteeing adequate housing and a decent standard of living. It involves providing suitable employment opportunities based on qualifications, and aiming towards achieving social justice through equality and fairness in the distribution of resources and returns.

– **Food Security:** Food security requires that all people have the purchasing power necessary to obtain basic food at all times.

– **Environmental Security:** Environmental security aims to protect people from ravages to the natural environment caused by individuals or the state, and to conserve environmental resources.

– **Health Security:** Health security requires ensuring adequate health care for all individuals and taking preventive measures to reduce the spread of diseases.

– **Personal Security:** Personal security aims to protect people from physical and psychological violence whether from the state or external states, or from violent individuals.

– **Community Security:** Community security is concerned with the individual's sense of belonging in society. It aims to ensure healthy social relationships and to protect people from nationalistic, religious and ethnic intolerance.

– **Political Security:** Political security is about upholding people's right to express their opinions and protecting them from repression.[4]

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[3] Mohamed Al-Adawi, "Human Security and the Human Rights System A Study in Concepts and Interrelationships", Department of Political Science and Public Administration, Assiut University. p. 8. , accessed via https://www.policemc.gov.bh/mcms-store/pdf

[4] United Nations Development Programme. "*Human Development Report.*" (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), p.24-33. accessed via http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/reports/255/hdr_1994_en_complete_nostats.pdf

3.2 The Concept of Human Security Between Knowledge and Perception

The concept of human security did not feature in the vocabulary employed by research participants. They related various problems in their daily lives, without being able to express these problems in terms of human security.

Interviewees who were representatives of the state did not seem to have a good grasp of the concept of human security and its approaches and applications. This was not the case with the representatives of international organizations.[5] It was clear, however, that even though the concept did not feature in participants' vocabulary, they nevertheless displayed some limited understanding and awareness of the concept. Human security was understood and present at a conceptual level, but absent at the level of operational knowledge. Participants attributed this to the following reasons:

- **Obstacles to Understanding the Concept of Human Security and Related Concepts:[6]**
    o The absence of a concept of the common good;
    o The fact that security in the citizen's mind is associated with state authority means it necessarily perceived as hard security;
    o An unwillingness to promote the concept, making it inaccessible and difficult to grasp to the average citizen;
    o The lack of a strong tradition of learning and inquiry in the society.

- **Obstacles Related to Policy and Legislation:[7]**
    o An excessively legalistic and procedural view by the state and the public of rights at their most basic level;
    o Lack of public knowledge about laws relating to human security;
    o The gap between Tunisian legislation and international legislation;
    o The absence of human security as a concept at the level of state strategists;
    o The lack of a state(?) vision for developing the individual and society;
    o Poor strategic policy planning;
    o The absence of a dedicated body for the deployment and evaluation of human security strategies;

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[5] The most prominent example was in the context of the research work at Menzel Bourguiba. We noticed during individual interviews that most of those who had no knowledge of the concept of human security were State representatives (e.g. municipal council members). This reflected the absence of a strategy based on human security approaches at the level of local government structures in the region. On the contrary, local civil society activists (e.g. scouts), private sector representatives (e.g. Enda Finance), and, especially, representatives of international organizations (e.g. Carnegie Foundation) showed a good grasp of the concept. This tendency was confirmed in the other regions, albeit to varying degrees. This revealed a clear gap in the awareness about the importance of human security approaches between regional authority, on the one hand, and local civil society and international organizations, on the other.

[6] Participants, Policy Lab, Tunis, 07 March 2019.

[7] Ibid.

o The absence of a holistic approach to human security. This is reflected in the work of state agencies and the lack of communication and coordination between them;

o The absence of human security as a concept in social networks, like family and the media, whose responsibility it is to develop individuals and foster their inner balance and resilience;

o The absence of the concept in educational curricula at all levels.

- **Obstacles Related to the Citizen's Perception of Security:[8]**
  o The citizen's need for security in its narrow, traditional sense;
  o The lack of awareness campaigns to promote the concept and disseminate it in the community;
  o The declining trust in state institutions;
  o The declining emphasis on shared values and principles and the growing gap between generations;
  o The fact that past state policy was dominated by hard security approaches;
  o The confusion surrounding a number of important concepts like the state and citizenship.

3.3 Concept Bias

The lack of knowledge about the concept of human security among participants, despite the presence of representatives of the state and its institutions, is not surprising. When we look at public policy as it pertains to the application of human security in the Tunisian context, we find a total absence of this concept or equivalent notions in the official discourse of top government officials. The lack of understanding was evident in the discussions and conclusions of the policy lab that the research team organized. It was clear that state representatives and policymakers who were present had merely a vague and superficial understanding of the different dimensions and approaches of the concept, contrary to other stakeholders from outside the formal government system.[9]

The absence of human security as a global concept does not necessarily imply that its approaches or component aspects are fully absent from public policy. A number of public policy initiatives—the extent of their effectiveness notwithstanding—indicated a political will to bring about change in certain areas related to human security, through the mobilization of necessary material and human resources, the development of strategies, and the adoption of concrete, authoritative measures. The most important of these initiatives is in relation to personal security, especially the fight against violent extremism. The prime minister's announcement regarding a new public policy initiative aimed at reforming the Tunisian health system is another example.[10]

The state's adoption of policy initiatives in an area of human security should not be limited declarations, expressions of intention, or the initiation of public debates. It is necessary to take

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[8] Ibid.

[9] Ibid.

[10] Amina Zayani, " Urgent Government Action to Improve the Health Sector in Tunisia. ", The New Arab, 28 March 2019 , accessed via: https://www.alaraby.co.uk/

practical and serious measures that are part of a strategic plan supported by dedicated financial and human resources. In fact, this is exactly what lacked in many of the so-called policy initiatives announced since 2011. Examples include initiatives about education reform, environment protection, and other burning issues relating to people's most basic needs and which call for urgent and focused action.[11]

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[11] Constitution of the Republic of Tunisia, "Citizens are equal in rights and duties. They are equal before the law without discrimination. The state guarantees individual and collective rights and freedoms. It ensures for citizens the conditions for a dignified life." Article 21, 26 January 2014.

4 Violent Extremism

4.1 Definition

One reason it is difficult to provide a precise definition of violent extremism is the complexity of the phenomenon itself. Despite the fact that the term is frequently used in the work of national and international organizations, there is no precise definition that is universally accepted.

Some international organizations, through their work on implementing the UN Secretary-General's plan of action and the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, have addressed defining extremism, violent extremism, and other related concepts.

One study defines extremism is understood as "believing in ideas that are far removed from what most people think is true and reasonable and engaging in actions in support of these ideas".[12] It is, then, to adopt positions and behaviours that are unusual and uncommon among members of the group. Based on general usage, it can be said to mean adopting or developing ideologies that defy the status quo, reject dialogue and understanding, and are usually followed by profound political changes.

As for violent extremism, it refers to "the beliefs and actions of those who support the use of violence to achieve ideological, religious, or political ends." It is the ideologically-motivated use of violence in rebellion against existing conditions and against a group's political and moral values.

Going back to the results of the field study, it is important to note the clear inability to provide a working definition for the phenomenon of violent extremism. According to some participants, it is an "artificial problem" and "the work of intelligence services."[13] Others view it as primarily "secular, leftist, anti-religious extremism." This view was expressed by part of the group representing the religious establishment. Others in the same group shared the view of representatives of the education sector who see the phenomenon as the result of religious misconceptions and the decline of the educational system.[14]

Overall, the definitions tend to frame the phenomenon as a reaction to some underlying issue. Social inequality and economic vulnerability are often mentioned as the root causes of the problem. But others link it to the "oppressive practices" of security forces. This view was mainly expressed by young people from "marginalized" or "peripheral" areas such as Douar Hicher. We shall discuss these various factors later in the paper.

The research team proposed a definition which was approved and adopted by all the participants in the various activities. According to this definition, violent extremism is "the manifestation of a rift in the social fabric, expressed by the rejection of the established social order, withdrawal

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[12] L.Pauwels, F. Brion, and B. De Ruyver, «Comprendre et expliquer le rôle des nouveaux médias sociaux dans la formation de l'extrémisme violent ». (Brussels: Politique scientifique fédérale, 2014).
 accessed via : http://www.belspo.be/belspo/fedra/TA/synTA043_fr.pdf
[13] "Human Security and Violent Extremism" workshop, Menzel Bourguiba, 10 -11 October 2018.
[14] Ibid.

from society, and the adherence to organized groups that seek to impose their ideological convictions on society through the use of violence".[15]

4.2 Its Distinctive Features in the Tunisian Context

The first observation that comes out of field research findings is a confirmation of the hypothesis concerning the spatial distribution of violent extremism in Tunisia. That is, the phenomenon appears to be mainly concentrated in three types of areas. First, in the new working-class neighborhoods of the capital, Tunis, which have been transformed by failed urban policies into zones of marginalization and social exclusion. Examples include Douar Hicher and Ettadhamen. Second, in newly-established districts where integration policies have failed. Menzel Bourguiba is one such example. Thirdly, in interior and border regions, like Ben Guerdene, which have largely been left out of the development process.

The second noteworthy observation is the general tendency among participants to make distinctions within the phenomenon itself. Throughout the workshops and focus groups, without exception, exchanges between the facilitator and participants concluded with a recognition that extremism has different levels. Generally speaking, this meant distinguishing between extremism and violent extremism in the Tunisian context. The same idea was articulated in an individual interview with one of the most influential experts on the question of violent extremism.[16]

These preliminary observations are in line with the findings of a research project conducted by the Tunisian Institute for Strategic Studies in 2014. In the context of that project, researchers proposed to divide violent extremism into two categories: **adherents** and potential **social incubators**. The adoption of this classification, and its attendant subcategories, relies on two important considerations. The first is an understanding of the varying levels of deficiency in human security and the possible role each deficiency plays in strengthening the phenomenon of violent extremism. The second consideration is an awareness of interventions that turn human security approaches into solutions to violent extremism by identifying weaknesses and designing relevant reform measures.

The first category—adherents—can be further divided into two classes: **field commanders** and **preachers**. The second category—social incubators—can also be divided into two classes: the **indifferent** and the **receptive**. The rank and file are shared by both adherents and potential incubators.

The commanders are those with experience in the "**field**", on the front lines. In other words, those returning from conflict hotspots, such as Iraq and Afghanistan, or those who were

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[15] Definitions of violent extremism differed significantly among participants in the workshops. But there were two points that everyone agreed about: the fact that the phenomenon is foreign to Tunisian society and that it is fed by social division. On the basis of this observation, we have provided the above definition.

[16] Interview with project coordinator at the Center for Economic and Social Research, Tunis, 30 June 2018.

implicated in "terrorism" cases and benefited from the general amnesty like the leader of Ansar al-Sharia, Saifullah bin Hussein, known as Abu Iyad.[17]

The preachers are those who are familiar with the founding texts of the "armed struggle" ideology. At conflict hotspots, they are referred to as **"shar'iyun"** (those well-versed in the literature). Their role is recruitment and mobilization. Bilal al-Shawashi, known as Abu Hammam al-Muhajir, is one such preacher.[18]

There is an overlap between these adherents and their roles, and positions are complementary. Despite being at the top ranks, and having knowledge of key founding texts, they have not been able to produce scholarly authoritative knowledge.

The rank and file makes up the bulk of violent extremist groups. In Tunisia, the majority of adherents are of this category. However, extremist groups seem unable to leverage these numbers into organized structures and to transform a quantitative advantage into a qualitative one.

The reason for this is that this class is subject to a dynamic of **"disengagement"**. In other words, the rank-and-file Tunisian Salafi jihadist has a short life span. Based on our study of the phenomenon, adherence to Salafist activity does not extend beyond four years. Hence the need for **"continuous** recruitment" in order to sustain numerical relevance.[19]

The receptive are those who are prone to being "swallowed up" (phagocytosis), through the processes of assimilation and integration within another social category.

i.e. those who have the psycho-social predispositions to adhere to violent radical ideology.

The indifferent are neutral with regards to the phenomenon, in the sense of accepting its existence without having all the psycho-social predispositions to adhere to it or sympathize with it.

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[17] Seifallah Ben Omar Ben Hassine, known as Abu Ayyad al-Tunisi, is the founder and leader of Ansar al-Sharia (Tunisia). He was born 8 November 1965 in Menzel Bourguiba in northern Tunisia. He fled Tunisia in 1987. He first moved to Morocco where he studied in the Faculty of Legal Sciences at the Mohammed I University. He later went to the United Kingdom in the 1990s and studied under the al-Qaeda cleric Abu Qatada. He then fought alongside Osama bin Laden in Afghanistan and in 2000 was the co-founder of a group of Tunisian militants known as the Tunisian Combat Group. He was arrested in Turkey in February 2003, and extradited to Tunisia. A military court sentenced him to 43 years in prison. After the Tunisian Revolution, he was released from jail in March 2011 under an amnesty and founded Ansar al-Sharia (Tunisia) in late April 2011. In 2013, he went into hiding shortly after Ansar al-Sharia was listed as a terrorist organization. There were numerous reports of his arrest and death in Libya. However, his death was never officially confirmed.

[18] Bilal Al-Shawashi is one of the most prominent advocates of the jihadist movement in Tunisia. His drew attention after the revolution and made a number of television appearances. He, too, left Tunisia after the Ansar al-Sharia was listed as a terrorist organization. He went to Syria in 2014. He went through a number of armed groups before joining ISIS. There are reports that he might have left ISIS in December 2016 and returned to Tunisia where he plotted a number of terrorist attacks.

[19] See details in Mohamed El-Hajj Salem, M. *Al-Salafiyah al-Jihadiyah fi Tunis, al-Waqiwa al-Maalat* [Salafist Jihadism in Tunisia, Reality and Outcomes], (Tunis: Tunisian Institute for Strategic, Studies, 2014), p. 367.

4.3 Factors: From the Single Factor to the Interplay of Factors

Close investigation of the phenomenon of violent extremism in Tunisia enabled us to define its precise features. Starting from a one-sided, reductive interpretation of the factors contributing to the emergence and spread of this phenomenon, we evolved to a comprehensive and multi-faceted interpretation. Even if we accept that marginalization (commonly interpreted to be the cause of violent extremism in Tunisia) can by itself explain the failings of human security approaches, we cannot overlook the fact that marginalization varies in degree and that moderate marginalization cannot lead to the same outcomes as a higher level of marginalization.

We shall, therefore, discuss the various factors as they relate to the different forms and layers of the phenomenon. It should be noted here that the following, with the exception of the last point regarding the reintegration and rehabilitation of returning combatants, have been drawn directly from the field work conducted in the six regions covered in the Tunisia study:

– To a degree, indifference towards the phenomenon of violent extremism results from a lack of social consciousness. Research participants talk about a decline in intellectual security as well as security in one's identity, which they attribute to the family and the education system.
– To a degree, receptivity is the combined result of lack of social consciousness and lack of prospects, especially in terms of economic empowerment. Or, in other words, receptivity occurs when a decline in intellectual security is compounded by a decline in employment opportunities and economic security.
– To a degree, adherence of the rank and file to violent extremist ideology is the result of the above factors, combined with a feeling of oppression and rejection from society that results from exclusion from all spheres of economic, political, and cultural activity. It is a manifestation of the failure of the social justice approach. It results in social fragmentation and leads to a state of alienation and self-exclusion. Strong resentment builds up inside those involved, pushing them to look for any way to dissociate and distance themselves from their community.
– To a degree, the class of preachers emerges from a context of deficient spiritual security owing to the failure of official religious discourse and formal religious institutions (derived from the moderation for which the religious establishment normally stands). The emerging different religious discourses yields an environment that is receptive to extremist religious ideology, and the emergence of this category of preachers with its toxic, pseudo-religious discourse.
– To a degree, the class of field commanders is composed of those with prison or combat experience acquired at various hotspots. A serious question arises here as to the effectiveness of rehabilitation and reintegration policies within and without correctional institutions, especially considering the issue of returnees from conflict hotspots whose number is expected to rise.

5 Hard Security

5.1 Definition

Security is a situation in which fear is absent and humankind is free from all threats. In practical terms, means of achieving security may take different forms. One of these forms is referred to as hard security. This approach is primarily concerned with physical and direct threats of a traditional, military nature. In response to such threats, the state adopts direct military solutions, characterized by use of force without consideration for the threat's various dimensions, such as root causes and effects on individuals and society.

Despite the legitimacy of the state's use of force and violence, many today are calling for more flexible and all-encompassing solutions to emerging threats. Security agencies are increasingly accused of becoming a major cause of the growing problem of violent extremism.[20] In certain cases, the phenomenon is even seen as a reaction to the excessive reliance on hard security in response to any type of threat, whatever its level. We are thus locked in a vicious circle—considering that in many cases hard security has proven reasonably effective—in which hard security stands as **a solution and a problem at the same time**.

5.2 Characteristics of the Police Institution in the Authoritarian State

There is no doubt that past authoritarian regimes in Tunisia, particularly the Ben Ali regime, deliberately diverted the security apparatus from its original function and used it to impose their authority through intimidation and oppression. These regimes bred a tyrannical security elite and created a police-state, wherein the police and state bureaucracy structures were intertwined with the ruling party structure. The police was further supported by other security agencies including the National Guard, the secret police, and intelligence services,[21] all of which are together referred to in Tunisian slang as "*el hakem*" (the ruler; the holder of authority).

According to a view that we support and aim to build upon, the problem has anthropological roots that go back to the Hafsid rule. In his historiography, in the section about the police institution, Ibn Khaldun writes "In Ifriqiyah, the holder of the office of chief of police is at this time called the 'magistrate' (*hakem*),"[22] because he deviates from his primary role to become a sort of ruler, and an oppressive one at that. "The person in charge of the investigation stage, and of afterwards executing the legal punishments due when the judge no [longer] has anything to do with [the case] … Occasionally, he was given sole jurisdiction over capital crimes and legal punishments." He would impose "preventive punishments before crimes had been committed."[23]

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[20] Frederic Burnand, " Beyond Military Logic in Fighting Violent Extremism", 7 April 2016, accessed via : https://www.swissinfo.ch/fre/gen%C3%A8ve-internationale_sortir-du-tout-s%C3%A9curitaire-face-%C3%A0-l-extr%C3%A9misme-violent/42072850

[21] Adel Belkahla, *Al-Itida ala MunadhiliHuquq al-Insan bi al-Bilad al-TunisiyahwaIstratijia al-Dawlah al-Tasalutiya*h (1991-2007) [Attacks on Human Rights Activists in Tunisia and the Strategy of the Authoritarian State (1991-2007)]. (Tunisia: Al-Atrash Book Complex,2016), p. 19.

[22] Ibn Khaldun (1377), *Al-Muqaddimah* [Prolegomena]. (Beirut: Dar Al-Jil, 2003), p. 223.

[23] Ibid, p.224.

These executive powers were not applied over all classes, but only over "low elements," meaning over the marginalized.[24]

One response to the authoritarian state's strategy of producing regions of exclusion is to integrate into the very agencies of oppression, according to a logic of "we shall be as you wished." Such a reaction follows from the realization that it is impossible to escape the circle of exclusion and the lack of prospects outside the leftover jobs that are designed to be the lot of the marginalized. This type of integration is therefore unhealthy and harmful as it only reinforces the authoritarian structure, and never benefits those involved.

This historical reference is significant in that it reveals a recurring pattern, since the Hafsid era, in which the authoritarian state in Tunisia realizes the importance of producing a "fake ruler (*hakem*)" to support its oppressive regime. In the event of an uprising, the target will be the immediate oppressor, the "fake ruler," who gave the illusion—cultivated by the actual rulers—of having real power.[25] This is why the culmination of the social protests in Tunisia of December 2010–January 2011, was the rally that took place in front of the Interior Ministry—as a symbol of the "ruler" (*hakem*)—and the torching of several police stations.[26]

5.3 Role of the Authoritarian State' Oppressive Practices in the Emergence of Violent Extremism: An Analytical Reading

The feeling of marginalization and social exclusion took root under authoritarianism. It was exacerbated by the sense of injustice resulting from the oppression perpetrated through the structures of the one-party, police-state apparatus. The result was very high levels of violent tendencies concentrated in marginalized zones. These tendencies met a toxic pseudo-religious discourse to give rise to violent radical groups.

The link is only too obvious between the emergence of these groups and the growing feelings of rejection among excluded youth, feelings which drive them invariably towards extreme radicalisation as an expression of hostility towards state institutions, particularly the security apparatus. This deep hostility takes many different forms and expressions, most notably religious (e.g. Jihadist Salafism promoting physical action). The security officer who used to be called "*hakem*" (ruler) or "*hnash*" (snake), is now called "*taghut*" (tyrant). The same hostility remains unchanged except for the increasing violent tendencies and the religious labels.[27] Those youth already showed hostility towards the security apparatus before embracing Jihadist Salafism.

Among the manifestations of this hostility is the eagerness of youth in marginalized neighborhoods' to engage in violent confrontations with police forces whenever the slightest occasion presents itself. Two types of events are often the scene of such clashes: football

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[24] Ibid.

[25] Adel Belkahla, *Al-Itida ala MunadhiliHuquq al-Insan bi al-Bilad al-TunisiyahwaIstratijia al-Dawlah al-Tasalutiya*h (1991-2007) [Attacks on Human Rights Activists in Tunisia and the Strategy of the Authoritarian State (1991-2007)] (Tunisia: Al-Atrash Book Complex, 2016), p.19.

[26] "Human Security and Violent Extremism," Douar Hicher Report, 12 June 2019. accessed by: http://wanainstitute.org/sites/default/files/publications/Dowar%20Hisher%20English%20final%20report.pdf

[27] We mentioned this in the study Youth and the Salafisms: "Characteristics of Religious Radicalism, from the report The Religious State and Freedom of Conscience", Applied Social Sciences Forum 2015, p.131.

matches in stadiums and what is known in these neighborhoods as "bachelors' funerals" (funeral processions for unmarried young men), especially if the death is by drowning during an illegal immigration attempt.[28]

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[28] Ibid, 203.

6 The "New" Security Apparatus in the Face of Violent Extremism Today

Despite the reform interventions that targeted the police establishment in Tunisia since the "revolution",[29] it still shows reluctance to change. This is understandable considering the extent of its domination by the authoritarian regime and the chronic and acute state of dysfunction it was left in as a result of that influence. The impact of this influence was reflected in participants' perceptions as expressed through their repeated calls to reform the police and repair its relationship with citizens.[30]

On the other hand, participants who represent the security sector stressed the need to improve their economic situation and working conditions.[31] This highlights the importance of elaborating a comprehensive strategic vision to develop the security system and improve the economic, social, and psychological condition of its members, as well as reform its relationship with citizens.

On the other hand, participants across the board were unanimous in crediting the state's security apparatus with important and decisive successes achieved in dealing with violent extremism at the level of its leadership, i.e. field commanders, those who took up arms and engaged in fighting.

Participants also had a particularly positive impression of the effectiveness of security measures in dealing with those who have joined violent groups driven by the quest for self-affirmation, peer approval, and recognition. For this reason, a soft security approach to dealing with this class usually succeeds in deterring the youth involved and makes the path to violent extremism less appealing to them. However, hard security measures and repressive measures with this category has the opposite effect. Instead of driving those involved away from the phenomenon, it accelerates the process of adherence to it and increases its severity.[32]

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[29] Since the beginning of 2015, Prime Minister Hbib Essid sacked a number of high-ranking police officials, among them the head of Tunis' police service, and a number of senior security officials, including Sousse governor and the Secretary of State for Security, for failing to prevent a series of terrorist attacks. He later re-established the position of Director-General of National Security and gave greater authority to the permanent civil servant who oversees the Ministry of the Interior. The following month, Essid established a new ministry, the Ministry of Local Affairs, which meant withdrawing responsibility for local government from the Ministry of the Interior and limiting its jurisdiction. He sidelined the Minister of the Interior, Mohamed Gharsalli, who was a judge during the Ben Ali regime and a former governor, who was deemed responsible for the deterioration of the security sector. For further details see: Yazid Al-Sayegh *Tunisian Security and the Process of Democratic Transition*, Carnegie Middle East Center, available at: https://carnegie-mec.org/2016/02/05/ar-pub-62592?fbclid=IwAR2rlwJ4MEFMzfpwlTKhOZaGUuYJQ9apM29mcIJJGYRKMNID3LKgE3iTpDs

[30] This recommendation was made repeatedly in DouarHicher, Menzel Bourguiba, and Ben Guerdane, and these extremism hotbeds.

[31] "A representative of the police unions", who participated in the Policy Lab, Tunis, 07 March 2019.

[32] "Human Security and Violent Extremism," Policy Lab, Tunis, 07 March 2019.

7 Human Security Approaches: The Antidote to Violent Extremism

Participants agreed on the importance of adopting human security approaches to prevent and counter violent extremism. The is based on the intrinsic value of human security approaches and the perceived relationship between failures of human security programing and the drivers of violent extremism.

On the other hand, participants recognized the pivotal role of the security services, but maintained that hard security must be directed at armed groups and fighters alone.

From a practical standpoint, this view makes perfect sense considering that the strategists of violent extremism have as a key objective to wage an all-out war of attrition against the state and bring it to its knees. This is the so-called strategy of "vexation and exhaustion"[33] which consists in weakening the state's vital organs and creating parallel entities. Some of the tactics in this strategy include:

– Economic exhaustion through support for smuggling networks and the creation of a parallel economy to undermine the formal economy;
– Cultural exhaustion through the production of a toxic religious culture that has the capacity to persuade and spread in the absence of a cultural and religious antidote from the state;
– Societal exhaustion by exploiting possible social rifts and working on deepening fault lines through a wide movement of recruitment and mobilization among groups of young people who lack intellectual and cultural security.[34]

Neglecting human security approaches and relying excessively on the hard security-based approach to fighting violent extremism has resulted in a chronically overworked security and military establishment. The latter's important achievements should not hide the fact that it is alone in facing a threat that touches all sectors, affecting the state and society as a whole.[35]

It is important to highlight that by relying exclusively on a single body (the security and military apparatus), thereby wearing it down and stretching its resources without eliminating the root causes of the problem, state decision-makers only open the door to deeper and more widespread threats. The most effective approach is, therefore, to mobilize all institutions and organs of the state and all the forces of civil society to put human security approaches into practice and distribute roles according to expertise and capabilities. It makes little sense, for example, to talk about a comprehensive perspective on Tunisian security in the absence of an educational

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[33] Naji Abu Bakr, *Idarat al-Tawahush: Akhtar MarhalahSatamurrubiha al-Ummah* [Management of Savagery: The Most Critical Stage Through Which the Islamic Nation Will Pass], (Published on the Internet in 2004).
[34] Ibid.
[35] Mr. BouraouiOuni, a researcher at the organization Search for Common Grounds and former Director of International Relations at the Ministry of the Interior, stressed that limiting the fight against terrorism to the security apparatus prevents the progress of the security approach towards the perspective of comprehensive security or human security. The war on terrorism must therefore go hand in hand with the prevention of violent extremism. Policy Lab, Tunis, 07 March 2019.

approach. According to an expert who participated in the policy lab, there are major issues in the curricula and instructional methods, in addition to a divergence of views between the ministry and the unions.[36]

7.1 Rethinking the Concept of Human Security and Its Mechanisms in the Tunisian Context

It is worth noting that participants addressed their recommendations and proposed measures to all stakeholders and concerned parties, rather than to one particular, supposedly more reliable, actor. Participants considered the participatory approach bringing together actors from government institutions, civil society, international organizations and citizens to be the most reliable and effective approach.

Also noteworthy is the fact that participants did not limit their recommendations to material measures like the improvement of utilities and services. On the contrary, their main interest was in issues of social control and cohesion. Participants proposed different human security approaches that they considered crucial to the enhancement of their communities' resilience in the face of violent extremism and other social ills, even in a context of relative "material" scarcity. The alternative approaches called for by participants are as follows: identity and cultural security, linguistic security, spiritual security, community security, psychological security, educational security, family security, and others.

Our analysis shows that these approaches have a real potential for enhancing the resilience of local communities. Our investigation demonstrated a link between the absence of these approaches[37] and social tension and fragmentation. In contexts where the approaches were adopted, local communities showed determined and effective opposition to violent extremism.[38] These approaches and other material approaches to human security—according to participants' conception of the type of human security that should be aspired to in the Tunisian context—are summarized in the following paragraphs:

The human security approach is based on a number of political measures and actions directed at food and water security, economic and employment security, personal and community security, health security, urban security, environmental security, etc. The combined effect of these actions promotes the values of citizenship, inclusion, and loyalty, supports peaceful coexistence, strengthens confidence in state institutions, and provides peace of mind to the individual regarding the present and the future.

These objectives can be fulfilled through the development of a national strategy for the achievement of human security. All resources at state and societal levels should be mobilized to ensure the successful and sustained implementation of the various projects and programs. It is of vital importance to include education reform as part of this strategy. In addition to supporting the family—as the primary socializing agent—in educating young people and providing them

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[36] Hmida Ennaifer, Tunisian intellectual, university professor, and member of The Tunisian Academy of Sciences, Letters and Arts "Beït al-Hikma," Policy Lab, Tunis, 07 March 2019.

[37] Unpublished report by the Jasmine Foundation for this project on Menzel Bourguiba.

[38] Unpublished reports by the Jasmine Foundation for this project on Teboursouk and Djerba.

with emotional and family security, the state must work towards developing formal educational institutions, rethinking existing programs, and reassessing the work conditions within the education system.

As for the relationship of the individual to the state (the dialectic of rights and duties), reviewing it as part of the human security strategy becomes imperative in order to safeguard individual freedoms and shield them from all forms of violation. This should include upholding economic and social rights as a foundation for human dignity, which is itself the cornerstone of human security. One of the most important gateways to achieving human security is the economic and political empowerment of women as active members of society. This extends from fighting discrimination and developing integration strategies to gender-sensitive public policy and equal opportunity in all domains.[39]

This definition is the product of the work conducted during the policy lab. It is based on detailed recommendations formulated by participants in the different case study regions. The recommendations, below, can be classified according to the various areas of human security.

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[39] "Human Security and Violent Extremism" Policy Lab findings, 07 March 2019.

8 Practical Recommendations Towards the Advancement of Human Security in the Tunisian Context

8.1 Food and Water Security

– Instituting a community dialogue on the issue of seeds, drawing on scientific research, field studies, and the experience of countries that have managed to assert their sovereignty over their national seeds;[40]

– Establishing a local agenda on the issue of seeds and preparing a local Climate Adaptation Plan;[41]

– Carrying out a seed inventory, cultivating indigenous seeds, differentiating them from hybrid products, and encouraging farmers to use them;[42]

– Encouraging investment in the agricultural sector by adopting the following solutions:

  o Simplifying procedures for obtaining grants and tax exemptions for farmers and investors;[43]

  o Adopting direct-to-consumer marketing systems and establishing sales points in all areas to market the agricultural products while ensuring their quality and price, and tracing their source.[44]

– Educating farmers (outreach campaigns) about state-granted privileges, especially the provisions of Law no. 71- 2016;[45]

– Providing training courses to integrate them in programs offered by civil society organizations and regional agencies for agriculture development, so as to benefit from modernized methods of agriculture, irrigation, and marketing;[46]

– Capitalizing on agricultural products in order to create added value in the regions by, on the one hand, encouraging the creation of projects that manufacture the agricultural products and, on the other hand, labeling the seeds in a way that indicates their origin and source in accordance with Law no. 57-1999 dated 28 June 1999;[47]

– Creating a permanent link between schools and farmers by establishing model farms in schools to educate young people on the importance of agriculture and familiarize them with its methods;[48]

– Developing a regional strategy for water management based on a participatory approach and supervised by a committee of experts;[49]

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[40] Verification Focus Group Discussion, Teboursouk, 12 January 2019.
[41] Ibid.
[42] Ibid.
[43] Ibid.
[44] Ibid.
[45] Ibid.
[46] Ibid.
[47] Ibid.
[48] Ibid.
[49] Ibid.

–   Accelerating the ratification of the Water Act in its new version, taking into account the proposals of specialised civil society organisations to restructure the water associations in terms of structure and work method;[50]

–   Establishing a technologically advanced system that facilitates the exchange of data between different administrations/departments in the regions, enables citizens to access information and submit complaints and recommendations, and ensures control over water resources;[51]

–   Encouraging investment in the organic farming sector and the establishment of business projects focused on the processing of agricultural products, particularly organic ones, such as figs, grapes and olives, through microcredits and support in the form of advice, guidance, and training about manufacturing, marketing, and management methods.[52]

8.2 Economic and Employment Security

–   Working on reducing the unemployment rate and promoting economic advancement in the regions by:

o   Restructuring the administrative system and alleviating the bureaucratic obstacles hindering entrepreneurship development. Despite the revision of Investment Law no. 71-2016, the procedures have not evolved significantly and remain in the way of starting businesses, especially in the interior regions of Tunisia;[53]

o   Introducing to each municipality single, unified counters that will handle the entire range of administrative procedures related to starting up a business, to facilitate the process and avoid time loss;[54]

o   Publicizing tax advantages for small enterprises, encouraging entrepreneurship and start-ups tailored to the specificities of each region and that work to leverage and enrich its existing resources;[55]

o   Assisting entrepreneurs and start-up owners in the preparation of studies, networking, and marketing;[56]

o   Empowering young people and providing access to low-interest loans;[57]

o   Developing the structures and institutions of the social and solidarity economy;[58]

o   Fighting vulnerable employment and improving the private sector's working conditions by jumpstarting the oversight role of state institutions and trade unions as well as encouraging corporate social responsibility, pursuant to Law no. 35-2018 dated 11 June 2018 on corporate social responsibility.[59]

–   Encouraging start-ups working in the field of social and solidarity economy. Accelerating the ratification of the law on social and solidarity economy organizations, helping local

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[50] Ibid.

[51] Ibid.

[52] Verification Focus Group Discussion, Djerba, 27 January 2019.

[53] Verification Focus Group Discussion, Menzel Bourguiba, 05 January 2019.

[54] Ibid.

[55] Ibid.

[56] Ibid.

[57] Ibid.

[58] Ibid.

[59] Ibid.

communities to carry out feasibility and viability studies and providing legal aid and expertise necessary for the success of such projects;[60]

– Promoting local products, especially local original handicrafts, by establishing quality labels specific to the regions and creating centers aimed at preserving common knowledge of traditional work methods;

– Encouraging the establishment of development banks and regional development funds and facilitating access to the loan system by easing administrative obstacles and reviewing interest rates on loans;[61]

– Organizing training workshops covering employment and investment mechanisms on a regular basis. The objective would mainly be to raise awareness about the advantages offered by the 2016 Investment Law and all the necessary procedures for starting and managing new businesses. The trainings should be targeted at all groups, with a special focus on women and higher education graduates;[62]

– Working towards curbing the parallel economy by integrating it into the official economy through reduced customs duties and operationalizing free trade zones, taking into account the present economic and social condition of border regions.[63]

8.3 Urban Security

– In a participatory manner, developing a concrete and detailed plan for the gradual implementation of decentralization pursuant to Chapter VII of the 2014 Constitution and the 2018 Local Authorities Code;[64]

– Ensuring fairness and equal opportunity, and reducing disparities, between institutions and regions;[65]

– Strategically and urgently redeveloping urban and land-use planning and ensuring the participation of all actors from state institutions, local communities, research organizations, private and public institutions, civil society and private citizens;[66]

– Developing urban policy around social integration, and devising effective and efficient means for its implementation; building sports and cultural facilities, modern markets, and showrooms for local products, with a view to managing them in a participatory, transparent, and integrated manner;[67]

– Freeing marginalized regions from isolation through town twinning within and outside the country; creating enduring bridges for cultural and economic exchange through mutual visits, economic partnerships, joint research projects, the sharing of expertise in all fields, etc.[68]

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[60] Verification Focus Group Discussion, Ben Guerdane, 26 January 2019.

[61] Ibid.

[62] Ibid.

[63] Ibid.

[64] Verification Focus Group Discussion, Djerba, 27 January 2019.

[65] Verification Focus Group Discussion, Carthage, 01 March 2019.

[66] Verification Focus Group Discussion, Djerba, 27 January 2019.

[67] Verification Focus Group Discussion, Carthage, 01 March 2019.

[68] Verification Focus Group Discussion, Douar Hicher, 15 February 2019.

8.4 Environmental Security

–   Waste recovery and management with the participation of the relevant stakeholders;[69]
–   Encouraging new environmental start-ups, especially those working in the field of waste recovery and management according to approved standards, by reducing administrative hurdles to training and licensing, and facilitating access to tax and customs duties cuts.[70]

8.5 Societal Security

–   The adoption of a participatory approach in the formulation of community programs, on the basis of previous and carefully selected studies of the cultural specificities and real needs of the region. This, pursuant to Chapter VII of the Tunisian Constitution of 2014, in particular Chapter 139, which states: "Local authorities shall adopt the mechanisms of participatory democracy and the principles of open governance to ensure the broadest participation of citizens and of civil society in the preparation of development programmes and land use planning, and follow up on their implementation, in conformity with the law." These principles are enshrined in The Local Authorities Code;[71]
–   The operationalization of the principles of citizen monitoring and social accountability of public institutions, enabling citizens and civil society to access information and adopting an open government system;[72]
–   Promoting a proactive and inclusive civil society, one that is open to all classes and social groups and maintains a shared sense of belonging (Scouting is an example). A society that brings together all citizens in the region, whatever their differences, around citizenship programs in the spirit of dialogue and interaction between members of the community. Such programs may include joint campaigns, periodic gatherings, and social projects aimed at developing the region and reinforcing social bonds;[73]
–   Establishing a special system for mediation and conflict resolution adapted to the cultural and social characteristics of the region, by setting up specialized committees composed of local community leaders who are provided with training and the necessary tools for mediation and conflict resolution;[74]
–   The formation of a civic coalition between various local associations to work in coordination with the local and central authorities and focus on countering violent extremism by strengthening human security approaches. The coalition would also act as an intermediary between the authorities and the local community to manage and resolve disputes. This coalition would play the role of a social elevator that collects and prioritizes the local community's needs, and communicates them to the authorities as

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[69] Verification Focus Group Discussion, Djerba, 27 January 2019.
[70] Ibid.
[71] Verification Focus Group Discussion, Menzel Bourguiba, 05 January 2019.
[72] Ibid.
[73] Verification Focus Group Discussion, Carthage, 01 March 2019.
[74] Verification Focus Group Discussion, Ben Guerdane, 26 January 2019.

well as contributes to the formulation, implementation, development and evaluation of local policies.[75]

8.6 Personal Security

– The government should initiate a national dialogue about reforming the security apparatus and repairing its relationship with citizens. The dialogue should take place on two fundamental levels. The first level concerns citizens' view of the security apparatus as a whole and of security agents in particular. This view is characterized by a negative perception that borders on hostility. The second level relates to the conduct of the security apparatus in its interaction with citizens. There is a need, at this level, to emphasize the importance of respecting due process in a way that preserves human rights, including the right to bodily integrity, the right to freedom of movement, The right to counsel, the inviolability of the home, the right to organize, demonstrate, and strike, the freedom of expression, and other basic rights;[76]

– Working on a national strategy to reform the security apparatus in a participatory manner with the contribution of all participants and with respect for local specificities. This primary aim should be to create an environment of mutual trust between citizens and this body by:
  o Restructuring the security apparatus;[77]
  o Building the security agents' skills in the areas of communication, attentiveness to the concerns of the local community, and respect for human rights and freedoms, and providing them with better knowledge of legal processes and texts related to their work;[78]
  o Establishing an information system that ensures provision of security information and public outreach through various means;[79]
  o Renovating security headquarters with respect for citizens and their dignity, and the inviolability of their lives.[80]

8.7 Health Security

– Developing a national strategy to control drug trafficking and combat medicine smuggling through a participatory and realistic process; establishing scientific criteria for monitoring and evaluation while taking into account the specificity of the regions;

– Increasing the number of rehabilitation and reintegration centers and ensuring optimal operation by making them more flexible and open to modern methods of care;

– Developing a collaborative network between security authorities, health and education institutions, civil society, and residents of the regions to ensure the efficient and effective rehabilitation and social reintegration of drug addicts.[81]

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[75] Verification Focus Group Discussion, Menzel Bourguiba, 05 January 2019
[76] Verification Focus Group Discussion, Douar Hicher, 15 February 2019.
[77] Verification Focus Group Discussion, Menzel Bourguiba, 05 January 2019
[78] Ibid.
[79] Ibid.
[80] Ibid.

8.8 Educational Security

- Countering violence and dropout rates in schools through:
    - Awareness campaigns targeted to both students and parents;
    - Encouraging young people to stay in school by offering scholarships and school supplies and setting up extra-curricular clubs (music, theater, cinema, agriculture, poetry, etc.), and organizing school trips and field visits to historical, cultural and institutional monuments;
    - Adopting participatory and inclusive approaches to education;[82]
- Psychological and social supervision and support for adolescents, by:
    - Operationalizing the work of psychologists and social workers in all educational institutions;[83]
    - Enriching the educational programs with pedagogy-based extracurricular activities (theater, music, cinema, poetry, drawing);[84]
- Renewing the programs for the Islamic Thought and Civic Education subjects by:
    - Reinforcing them in terms of their weight in year-end grades, the number of teaching hours and methodology, in accordance with the foundations of democracy and the principles of human rights and citizenship all while adopting a participatory and integrated pedagogy;[85]
    - Involving all actors, especially students and civil society organizations active in this area;[86]
    - Developing the teachers' and professors' competences in the field of modern training techniques, human rights and democracy;[87]
    - Implementing Guiding Law no. 80-2002 dated 23 July 2002,[88] relating to education and schooling, which set the terms of reference governing the educational institutions. However, these terms shall be applied with new methods and with the involvement of all stakeholders;[89]
    - Applying the principles of citizen monitoring and social accountability of public institutions, enabling citizens and civil society to access information and adopting an open government system;[90]
- Effective reform of the public education system, with a view to:
    - Ensuring the right to a quality education for all;[91]

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[81] Verification Focus Group Discussion, Douar Hicher, 15 February 2019.
[82] Ibid.
[83] Verification Focus Group Discussion, Menzel Bourguiba, 05 January 2019.
[84] Ibid.
[85] Ibid.
[86] Ibid.
[87] Ibid.
[88] See Articles 3 and 8 of "Loi d'orientation n° 2002-80 du 23 juillet 2002, relative à l'éducation et à l'enseignement scolaire."
[89] Verification Focus Group Discussion, Menzel Bourguiba, 05 January 2019.
[90] Ibid.
[91] Verification Focus Group Discussion, Carthage, 01 March 2019.

    o Ensuring a qualitative leap to bring the education system to a high standard by enhancing performance in all areas;[92]

    o Ensuring fairness and equal opportunities, and reducing disparities between institutions and regions;[93]

    o Strengthening the relationship between the school and its social environment and ensuring that it responds to the needs of society;[94]

    o Ensuring good governance in the education sector and sound management of the education system at the national, regional and local level;[95]

    o Ensuring a well-rounded education that focuses "in particular on vulnerable and marginalized groups with a view to ending all forms of discrimination and supporting social cohesion".[96]

8.9 Cultural and Identity Security

–   Promoting historical and cultural heritage by:

    o Creating economic opportunities based on non-material cultural heritage by organizing festivals and cultural events to promote regions with significant cultural and historical assets;[97]

    o Investing in material heritage by building theaters and cultural cafes around historical places;[98]

    o Developing a participatory, decentralized, bottom-up plan to establish a clear and effective cultural policy;[99]

    o Promoting cultural tourism based on the development of local strategies for tourism hubs in a participatory manner and with input from all stakeholders. The strategies should be based on the promotion of Tunisian cultural heritage and its unique features, making it marketable and economically viable, while maintaining its authenticity and without emptying it of its cultural content;[100]

    o Public schools, private schools should be committed to developing Tunisian national identity and to raising Tunisian pupils "in the spirit of loyalty and allegiance to Tunisia, to love the homeland and be proud to belong to it. Education must strengthen in them the consciousness of their national identity and the feeling of belonging to a civilization with national, Maghrebi, Arab, Islamic, African, and Mediterranean dimensions, while at the same time instilling in them an openness to human civilization universally. Education aims also to promote the values which bring Tunisians together and which are based on the primacy of knowledge, work, solidarity, tolerance, and moderation. The school lays the foundations of a society deeply committed to its cultural identity, open to

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[92] Ibid.

[93] Ibid.

[94] Ibid.

[95] Ibid.

[96] Ibid.

[97] Verification Focus Group Discussion, Teboursouk, 12 January 2019.

[98] Ibid.

[99] Verification Focus Group Discussion, Djerba, 27 January 2019.

[100] Ibid.

modernity, and which takes inspiration from humanistic ideals and the universal principles of freedom, democracy, social justice, and human rights," as stated in Art. 3 of Guiding Law no. 20002-80 of 23 July 2002, on education and school instruction.[101]

8.10 Spiritual Security

–   Bridge the religious gap and unify religious discourse while respecting "the teachings of Islam and its aims characterized by openness and moderation, and to the human values and the highest principles of universal human rights, and inspired by the heritage of our civilization, accumulated over the travails of our history, from our enlightened reformist movements that are based on the foundations of our Islamic-Arab identity and on the gains of human civilization, and adhering to the national gains achieved by our people", (The preamble to the Tunisian Constitution);

–   Through the Ministry of Religious Affairs, organize training courses for the benefit of imams and preachers and create forums for their interaction. This, with a view to making sermons and lessons in mosques closer to, and more reflective of, the concerns of the population;

–   Strengthening the role of the Association for the Preservation of the Holy Quran and supervising and containing all religious actors.[102]

8.11 Linguistic Security

Initiating a dialogue between the institutions in charge of strategic planning (The Tunisian Institute for Strategic Studies, the strategic studies structures within the prime ministry), the relevant ministries (Ministry of Education, Ministry of Cultural Affairs, Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research), and official research centres and scientific councils (Tunisian Academy of Sciences, Letters, and Arts, "Beït al-Hikma," and the Center for Economic and Social Studies and Research) regarding the need to develop a language acquisition policy. This policy should be based on the methodology of language acquisition planning,[103] which calls for analysing needs, objectives, and means in light of a close examination of issues in language and dialect use. The issues can be purely linguistic, or have roots in cultural, social, economic, and political factors that turn the language or dialect from a means of social harmony into a tool of social exclusion and alienation.[104]

Social Infrastructure

In light of the general definition of human security offered by the participants and the practical recommendations made in relation to each of its different facets, we propose adopting the concept of "social infrastructure". This concept comprises, on the one hand, the quality of

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[101] Verification Focus Group Discussion, Carthage, 01 March 2019.

[102] Verification Focus Group Discussion, Douar Hicher, 15 February 2019.

[103] Michel Zakaria, *Qadhayah AlsuniyahTatbiqiyah, Dirasat Lughawiya hIjtimaiyah Nafsiyahmaa Muqaranah Turathiyah* [Applied Linguistic Issues, Linguistic Psycho-Sociological Studies with Tradition-Based Comparisons], (Beirut: Dar Al-Ilm Li Al-Malayin, 1993).

[104] Verification Focus Group Discussion, Douar Hicher, 15 February 2019.

services and utilities provided, and, on the other, of the levels of psychological and social well-being. These two levels are interdependent and together they can form a solid social infrastructure capable of countering the range of social threats behaviours facing local communities. The various practical recommendations encompassing both material and non-material approaches to human security can thus be illustrated as follows:
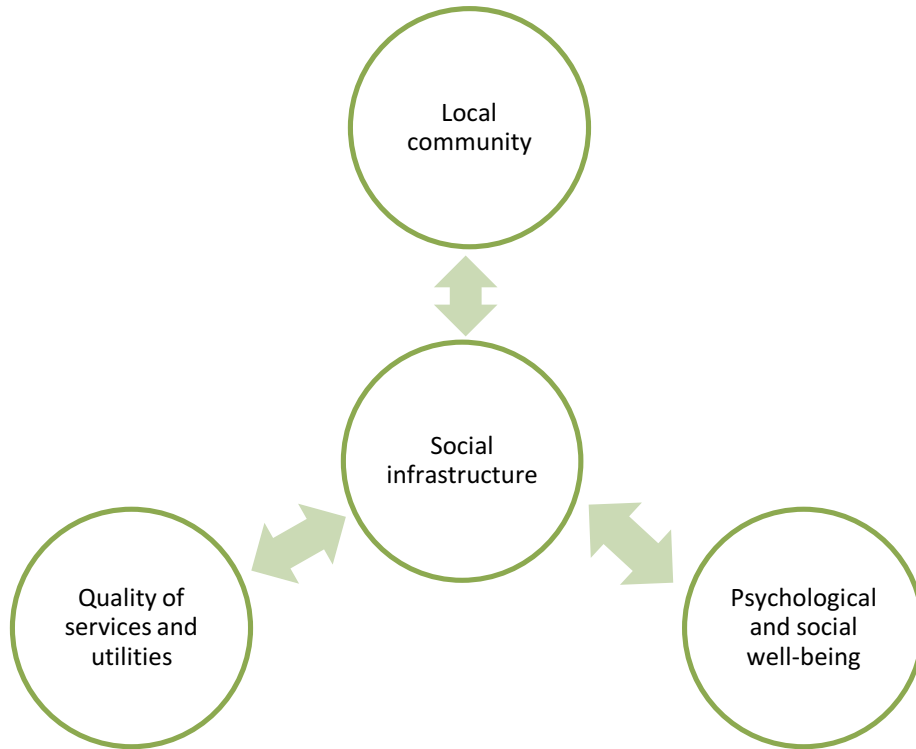
9 Towards a Dynamic Interaction Between Human Security Approaches in Order to Counter Violent Extremism

The purpose of rethinking human security and its approaches to dealing with violent extremism is to make these approaches more dynamic and responsive both to each other and to the multiple factors contributing to violent extremism in its various forms.

This dynamism can be achieved by exploiting the phenomenon itself and leveraging its internal dynamics for targeted human security-based treatment, i.e., treatment from within the ailing system itself, which we propose to implement as follows:

9.1 Boosting Resilience and Breaking the Link Between the Phenomenon and Its Potential Social Incubators.

Based on the diagnostic evaluation presented above, it is evident that the struggle for control over society is one of the most important wars waged by violent extremists against the state. In their pursuit of this goal they try to capitalize on the movement's growing ability to attract and assimilate young Tunisians and to turn them against the state and society. Potential social incubators play a central role in sustaining this mobilizing capacity, as extremists strategically take advantage of the varying levels of societal acceptance, between indifference and receptivity.

9.1.1 On Societal Indifference

Attitudes of indifference and tolerance towards violent extremism and the lack of awareness about the danger it represents reflect a serious negligence and disregard for the common good and reveal the deterioration in civic engagement, both intellectually and practically.

This phenomenon requires an educational security approach. To the participants, this approach is about sound socialization. Educational security combines with what they refer to as family security and intellectual security to guarantee civic literacy as the cornerstone of social stability. This approach involves promoting the values of civility and peaceful coexistence by socializing agents, particularly the family, the education system, and civil society associations.

9.1.2 On Societal Receptivity

At this level, the economic security approach is the best intervention. It aims at economic empowerment and job security by improving the quality of life, enhancing the quality of services and utilities provided, and developing the education system that fits the needs of the job market.

> *"The intervention of these two human security to address the issues of societal indifference and societal receptivity turns the fragile social environment from a potential incubator for violent extremism into a cohesive and highly resilient social environment capable of standing up to all forms of social ills".*

9.2 Disengagement and Defusing Violent Tendencies

9.2.1 Among the Rank and File

It is necessary here to emphasize the importance of capitalizing on the movement of disengagement among the rank and file—or what we referred to as the short life span of the rank-and-file violent extremist. This phenomenon should be met with an active social justice approach aimed at reducing social inequalities and freeing marginalized and excluded areas from isolation. Solid reintegration policies should be targeted at disengaging groups and individuals in order to bring them to the fold of the state and society. If the disengagement leads them back to isolation and the practices of rejection and marginalization which are the root causes of violence, it may cause them to relapse and fall once again into the fold of extremism, perhaps even more violently.

9.3 Ideological Reorientations and Disengagement from "Toxic Religious Views"

9.3.1 Among the Preachers

The phenomenon of violent extremism in its various forms is to a large extent an application of a range of intellectual positions on and interpretations of Islamic religious law. These positions and interpretations draw from a nonhistorical religious discourse based on a misreading of Islam's founding texts. This has translated in all manner of misconceptions about Islam's values, aims, and provisions and led to the distorted and destructive applications we are witnessing. This erroneous discourse garners support against the failure of official religious institutions marred by dysfunction and an inability to provide spiritual security to society.

This phenomenon requires the adoption of a spiritual security approach which takes into account both the social and institutional dimensions of religion. The social level includes five components: faith, practice, knowledge, experience, and identity.[105] The institutional level relates to government policy on religious affairs as governed by a specific political and legal framework.

It is also important to pay attention to ideological reorientation. It should be encouraged and supported as one of the most important avenues to deradicalisation.

9.3.2 Among Field Commanders

There is no doubt that the hard security approach should be the primary approach in dealing with those who took up arms against the state and its institutions. However, the problem remains in the breeding grounds for frontliners. Often these are incarceration facilities, which represent a suitable environment for recruitment. At the same time, experience has shown that incarceration facilities are also conducive to ideological reorientation.[106] Correctional and reform

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[105] Charles Y Glock, "Toward a Typology of Religious Orientation", (New York: Columbia University Press, 1954).
[106] Bilel Talidi, *Murajaat al-Islamiyin: Dirasah fi Tahawulat al-Nasaq al-Siyasiwa al-Maarifi* [Islamists' Intellectual Reorientations: A Study in the Transformations of the Political and Epistemological Pattern], (Markaz Nama li al-Buhuthwa al-Dirasat, 2013).

institutions must therefore adopt effective reintegration approaches for field commanders, encouraging them to undertake radical intellectual reorientations.[107]
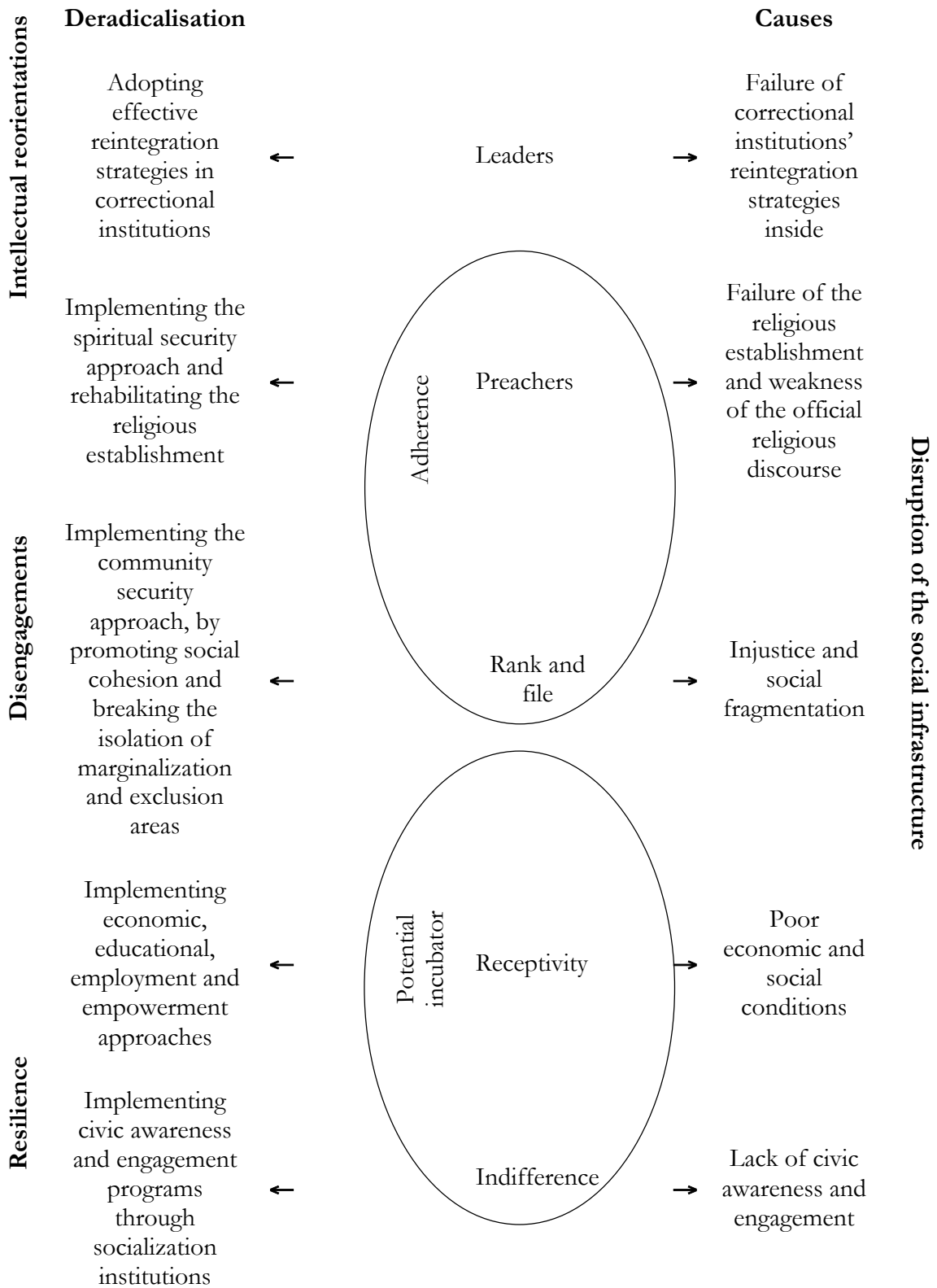
Through the dynamic and integrated implementation of these human security approaches, violent extremism can be curtailed. Its mobilization strategy would be disrupted, its methods for assimilating young people thwarted, and its potential incubators dried up. At the heart of this strategy is the promotion of civic awareness and engagement as the key to social stability and the resilience of individuals and groups with a social and psychological predisposition to engage in violent extremism.

In a parallel process, the volume of human capital contained in the rank-and-file base is drained through corrective treatment based on the implementation of economic security, empowerment, and employment approaches. These approaches seize on frequent disengagement from violent extremism to ensure smooth reintegration and preventing any possibility for relapse into more dangerous levels of violence. The great danger is for those who disengage to find themselves once again in a state of isolation, possibly even worse given their exclusion from both the community and the group which they deserted. In such situations, relapse into radicalisation can be explosive, with rapid moves towards perpetrating acts of violence.

At another level, the spiritual security approach is put into practice to rehabilitate official institutions of religion and promote intellectual reorientation among extremists. Reorientation applies primarily to the preachers of extremism, as well as field commanders in some cases. It involves intellectual reorientation from within or without the prison walls, and it can have a compounded impact if it coincides with disengagement among the rank and file and the emerging resilience of potential social incubators.

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[107] Jérémy Felkowski," *Min al-Sijnila Daish: Ay Badail fi Tunis waFaransalimujabahathathihi al-Dhahirah,"*
[From Prison to ISIS: What Options in Tunisia and France For Countering this Phenomenon?],(Nawaat,16 April 2018), accessed via: https://nawaat.org/

The Phenomenon of Violent Extremism

	Deradicalisation			Causes

Intellectual reorientations

Adopting effective reintegration strategies in correctional institutions ← Leaders → Failure of correctional institutions' reintegration strategies inside

Implementing the spiritual security approach and rehabilitating the religious establishment ← *Adherence* Preachers → Failure of the religious establishment and weakness of the official religious discourse

Disengagements

Implementing the community security approach, by promoting social cohesion and breaking the isolation of marginalization and exclusion areas ← Rank and file → Injustice and social fragmentation

Resilience

Implementing economic, educational, employment and empowerment approaches ← *Potential incubator* Receptivity → Poor economic and social conditions

Implementing civic awareness and engagement programs through socialization institutions ← Indifference → Lack of civic awareness and engagement

Disruption of the social infrastructure

10 Conclusion

This paper makes a case for the dynamic deployment of human security approaches in the fight against, and prevention of, violent extremism. The study evolved from description, analysis, and exploration to a discussion of prospects, methods, and possible solutions, sometimes weaving back and forth between these interconnected stages. We revealed the distinctive features of violent extremism and highlighted significant variations within the phenomenon. We shed light on the relationship between its root causes and different levels of failure in each of the human security approaches. We described the repercussions in each case.

We then proceeded to present a conception of human security specific to the Tunisian context, including practical and detailed recommendations for its implementation. The combined effect of the different applications of human security constitutes a solid social infrastructure capable of weathering the challenges of various social ills.

We have also been able to identify gaps and the kinds of corrective interventions they call for, within a holistic deradicalisation model based on the dynamic and integrated application of human security approaches.