

INDIVIDUAL PRESENTATION ON THE REHABILITATION AND SOCIAL REINTEGRATION OF ORGANIZED CRIME MEMBERS AND TERRORISTS

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The topic of extremist offenders in Morocco surfaced in May 2003 as five suicide bombings took place in Casablanca. In the ensuing crack-down, the Moroccan authorities arrested 1100 terrorist suspects (more than 50 sentenced to life in prison and 16 to death). Since then, several terrorist cells have been dismantled and many radicals have been arrested for the formation of terrorist groups and the preparation for terrorist attacks. Thus, the Moroccan Prison Department has adopted different approaches to manage this specific category of offenders by ensuring effective security measures and developing and implementing suitable reintegration programmes.

The present paper emphasizes the new management mode of offenders in Moroccan prisons, in terms of security and reintegration, while providing some relevant statistical data on regular and extremist offenders.

A. Statistical Data on Extremist Offenders in Morocco

1. Extremist Offenders in Morocco since 2008

Year	Extremist offenders	Prison population	%
2008	852	59212	1.43
2009	730	57563	1.26
2010	755	64877	1.16
2011	635	64833	0.97
2012	582	70758	0.82
2013	604	72005	0.83
2014	764	74941	1.01
2015	915	74039	1,23
2016	970	76139	1.27
March 2017	1062	77784	1,36

From 2008 up until 2012, the vast majority of offenders were incarcerated since the 16th May 2003 attacks. However, starting from 2012 up until the ongoing year, the number of extremist offenders grew bigger due to the increasing scale of the various hotbeds of tension in the world, namely Syria, Iraq, the Sahelo-sub-Saharan region, and the south of Libya.

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2. Extremist Offenders of Foreign and Dual Nationality

Nationality	Number
Algerian	2
French	3
Tunisian	1
Italian	1
Chadian	1
Turkish	1
French-Algerian	1
Moroccan-French	5
Moroccan-Belgian	6
Moroccan-Dutch	1
Moroccan-Hispanic	1
Total	23

B. The New Security Approach in Extremist Offenders' Management

The management mode of extremist offenders in Morocco has evolved gradually. Up until 2014, extremist offenders were gathered in four correctional facilities. Hence, they were able to undertake collective and concerted actions, like the riot they started in one correctional facility. From then on, the Correctional Department decided to reconsider extremist offenders' classification by dispersing them in 47 correctional facilities, mixing most of them with common-law offenders. However, this procedure also proved to have some drawbacks, such as the tendency of extremist offenders to indoctrinate regular ones. In line with these measures, the UNODC Handbook on the Management of Violent Extremist Prisoners suggests that: "*violent extremists should be categorized according to the security risk (escape) and control risk (likelihood of participating in activity that would disrupt the prison or radicalize other prisoners to violence) that corresponds to the findings of their risk assessment*".

The Prison Department had also to cope with the increase of extremist offenders arrested since 2003 (815 out of 1074 offenders) connected in any way with the new hotbeds of tension, especially in Syria and Iraq. This led to the occurrence of extremist rhetoric and attitudes in prisons, as well as connections with drug traffickers likely to provide financial support and to smuggle contraband.

C. The New Classification System in Moroccan Prisons

This system consists in separating extremist from regular offenders according to their risk degree. Similarly, the UNODC Handbook on the Management of Violent Extremist Prisoners states that: "*the classification process is based on the information gained through the individual risk and needs assessment of each prisoner and may be further informed by potential health issues assessed in the course of the medical examination upon admission*".

After the risk and needs assessment process, extremist offenders are classified in four subcategories to ensure complete or partial isolation and efficient supervision:

- *Subcategory 1* includes: "*indoctrinators*", "*instigators*", "*leaders*", "*hard-liners*", the "*indoctrinated*", and "*suppliers of material support*" for potential disruptive actions. Individual cells contain "*indoctrinators*", "*leaders*", "*instigators*", the "*indoctrinated*" and "*indoctrinators*". "*Hard-liners*" and "*suppliers of material support*" are accommodated in collective cells with five beds.

The said category has access to separate courtyards in restricted groups, with restrictions in all movements, namely during visitation, health care, food service and reintegration programmes.

- *Subcategory 2* comprises: introverted extremist offenders and those with psychological vulnerabilities. Besides, the said category houses ideological review offenders, as well as royal pardon/amnesty requests offenders. This isolated category is housed in high supervision units in cells with a capacity of 7 beds each. Collective recreation is organized in successive groups so as to avoid any mass movements. Offenders of this category can be directed in groups under close supervision for indoor medical examination and outdoor hospitalization.
- *Subcategory 3*: is placed in cells with an accommodation capacity of 9 beds and is constituted of compliant offenders yet under supervision. This has reduced the number of prison facilities for this category of offenders from 47 in 2016 to only 18 in April 2017.

D. Extremist Offenders' Participation in Regular Reintegration Programmes in 2016

Programmes	Regular Offenders	Extremist Offenders	Percentage among Extremist Offenders
Vocational training	7341	51	4.80 %
Educational programmes	3920	201	18.92 %
Literacy programmes	6666	40	3.76 %
Total	17927	292	27.48 %

In Moroccan prisons, as illustrated in the table above, extremist offenders are less involved in vocational training programmes than their regular counterparts, preferring higher education in different fields, mainly in religious sciences, law and sociology on account of the fact that only **9.03%** of them are unemployed. It is worth noting that sentence length may justify their desire to pursue long-term studies.

Similarly, the general prison population benefits from sessions of Quran memorization, guidance and religious counselling, delivered by scholars affiliated to the Moroccan Department of Religious Endowment and Islamic Affairs, with the purpose of safeguarding prison population from radicalization. Moreover, 109 extremist offenders out of 9,321 participated in Quran memorization programmes. In addition, 228 extremist offenders out of 90,460 participated in religious guidance and counselling sessions. However, extremist offenders' low rate of participation in these programmes may be due to the prejudice they hold against official Islamic scholars. However, many of them are fully involved in religious contests, such as Quran psalmody, prophetic Hadiths memorization and Quranic exegesis.

1. Counter-Radicalization Programmes

In early 2016, the Moroccan Correctional department signed a convention with the UNDP on support for Prison system reform, in cooperation with the Rabita Mohammedia of Islamic scholars, which developed and implemented a specific programme funded by the Japanese government, aiming namely at training correctional staff members and religious scholars to identify and analyse extremist signs, attitudes and behaviours, by deconstructing extremist religious rhetoric to prevent regular offenders' radicalization.

The first category of participants is constituted mainly of security chiefs and social workers trained by experts from the Rabita Mohammedia of Islamic scholars. The second category includes peer educators trained by the first category. The training is more didactic than pedagogical, as the kind of language used during sensitizing and persuasion activities is made clear to all offenders.

The training of peer educators started in 6 piloting prison facilities with a view to training 120 peer educators in 60 training sessions. Each session involves 20 offenders, i.e. the total number of offenders to sensitize is 22.000 offenders. For their part, peer educators are assisted by supervisors among the trained correctional staff and religious scholars. Being in charge of the overall follow-up of sensitizing activities, each supervisor assists binomial teams in implementing an evaluation grid on a quarterly basis in each of the six corrections. Hence, to implement the training programme, the Rabita Mohammedia of Ulemas developed a training guide aimed at achieving capacity and skill building relating to counter-radicalization in corrections.

The table below illustrates the number of extremist offenders involved in peer education. Two extremist offenders operated as peer educators for offenders' sensitization:

Target Population	Regular Offenders	Extremist Offenders	
		Salafi-Jihadists	ISIL Jihadists FTFs/Supporters/ Sympathizers
500	465	11	24

Some extremist offenders expressed their wish to participate in peer education:

Salafi-Jihadists	ISIL Jihadists FTFs/Supporters/ Sympathizers	Total
09	06	15

2. Creating Room for Open Debate and Interaction

Two major events were held in this regard. The first one under the theme: "*Citizenship as a key to reinsertion*", which is a summer university organized in September 2016 by the Correctional Department in partnership with national reintegration, human rights and academic institutions and organizations.

In 2017, a Spring University was organized under the theme: "*The Preparation of Inmates: What Role Could Elected Representatives Play?*" Among addressed topics was offenders' voting, (especially those who are not deemed eligible), as well as the role of the parliament in supporting Prisons' overall strategy and offenders' reintegration programmes. Noteworthy, 17 Extremist offenders out of 129 have partaken in activities conducted by the two universities and 20 offenders out of 165 in the second one. Participants have had a successful education path or vocational training. They even have shown great interest in the topics covered and interacted constructively with the lecturers. The general purpose of the meeting was to make extremist offenders call in question their extremist mode of thinking.

The two universities had very positive feedback on the public opinion, more importantly on extremist offenders. At the closing ceremony of Spring University, a speech was delivered by a Salafi jihadist extremist offender connected with the 16th May 2003 terrorist attacks in Casablanca, Morocco. During the event, he expressed his readiness and that of his counterparts to interact positively and constructively with all kinds of initiatives aiming at their reintegration in society, expressing their will to prohibit extremist thoughts and remain devoted to the Moroccan state's fundamental constants.

Civil society actors, members of diplomatic missions and local representatives have all highly appreciated and encouraged the initiative. Likewise, the head of the Prison Department received several letters of gratitude, not only from extremist offenders participating in those debate platforms, but also from those who did not participate at all: they manifested their interest and wished such an approach in offenders' reintegration may continue.

3. Cooperation with International Agencies and NGOs on Deradicalization via Staff Training

Staff training is a key factor to successful deradicalization. In this respect, correctional personnel are to be sensitized and well trained on detecting signs of radicalization. They are also required to learn ways and techniques of radicalization, accountability, professional confidentiality, effective professional communication, conflict management, mediation, ethics, etc. as a means of preventing regular offenders' manipulation or recruitment by radical offenders. To this end, a training guide was developed in 2016 on radicalization prevention in prisons.

In 2016, all correctional psychologists were involved in a training programme delivered by international experts in cooperation with UNICRI on psycho-social assistance to prison populations in general and extremist offenders in particular, while implementing related good practices.

In cooperation with the Global Centre on Cooperative Security (GCCS) a tailored and targeted a training programme (CVE/P) was developed, which was conducted in March 2017 on behalf of 23 frontline prison officials to help them better manage extremist offenders by focusing on understanding and identifying violent extremism and radicalization, identifying the best methods and practices in the management of extremist offenders, as well as defining the role of correctional staff in addressing radicalization in prisons.