



IN THE EYE OF THE STORM

PAKISTAN STUDY TOUR (May 2010)

International Conferences, Seminars, Symposia

CONTENTS

No.	Title	Page No.
1.	Executive Summary	01
2.	Objectives of the Study Tour to Pakistan	04
3.	<i>Multan-London International Conference 'Extremism, Education & Rehabilitation'</i> Baha-ud-Din Zakariya University, Multan	05
4.	<i>'Deradicalisation & Rehabilitation; Perspectives'</i> <i>Defence & Strategic Studies Department Quaid-e-Azam University, Islamabad</i>	17
5.	<i>'Deradicalisation in Society & Education: a seminar'</i> University of Lahore	20
6.	<i>'Psychology of Radicalisation: a symposium'</i> Superior University Lahore	24
7.	<i>'Youth & Rehabilitation'</i> <i>A meeting with Chairman Youth Parliament, Pakistan</i>	26
8.	<i>'Interfaith Harmony & Deradicalisation'</i> <i>Meeting with Rt. Rev. Alexander John Malik Bishop of Lahore</i>	29
9.	Delegates' Biographies	31



Executive Summary

In May 2010, a European delegation comprising delegates from England, Scotland and Germany visited Pakistan in leadership of Toaha Qureshi MBE, Chairman Forum for International Relations Development to attend a series of international conferences, seminars and symposia. These activities were held in Pakistan in collaboration with five public and private universities from Pakistan. The delegates included academics, practitioners and community lobbyists. The delegation included Mr. Alan Weston, Mrs. Catriona Robertson, Mr. A. R. Tanko, Dr. Harald Weilnböck, Arif A. Malik and Mr. Toaha Qureshi, MBE.

Over 1000 assorted people from academia, policy-making institutes, think tanks, intellectuals, journalists, researchers, Government of Pakistan officials, Members of Parliament, Islamic and secular scholars, and those of other faiths participated in these activities.

The Pakistan tour was organized by Forum for International Relations Development (FIRD) in collaboration with other organisations including Stockwell Green Community Services (SGCS), Baha-ud-Din Zakariya University Multan, Quaid-e-Azam University Islamabad, the University of Lahore, Superior University, Lahore, the University of Management & Technology, Lahore, Violence Prevention Network, Berlin, Clapham and Stockwell Faith Forum and the LCBMIT.

The six member delegation of experts travelled from the United Kingdom and Germany to Pakistan to attend these conferences, to share and exchange ideas on how education might play a pivotal role in rehabilitating individuals or communities who were traumatised at the hands of extremism.

The purpose of the delegation's visit to Pakistan was to address the question of how education may help the societies and countries dealing with violent extremism and how institutions from Pakistan may learn from the best practices of British/European institutions in the areas of rehabilitation and offender management. An attempt was made to explore the psychology of extremism and the various approaches to dealing with it. The activity mainly took place in the form of dialogue, discussion, conferences and symposiums including press conferences and televised debates shown in over 120 countries.

The delegates also met high profile government officials, opinion leaders and different faith leaders.



The visitors observed that Pakistan was deeply stuck in the quagmire of extremism. The strain was obvious throughout the trip as Pakistan had been frequently dubbed as the 'eye of the storm', 'a migraine for the world' and the 'hotbed' of extremism born out of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 and its aftermath. They also noticed that academia, intelligentsia and students were concerned about the challenge posed by extremism and the lack of education for all as a universal right. However, the state apparatus was seen to be hopelessly struggling to counter the menace.

Due to its massive population of approximately 180 million people and meagre financial resources, Pakistan was looking to its international partners for leadership and support.

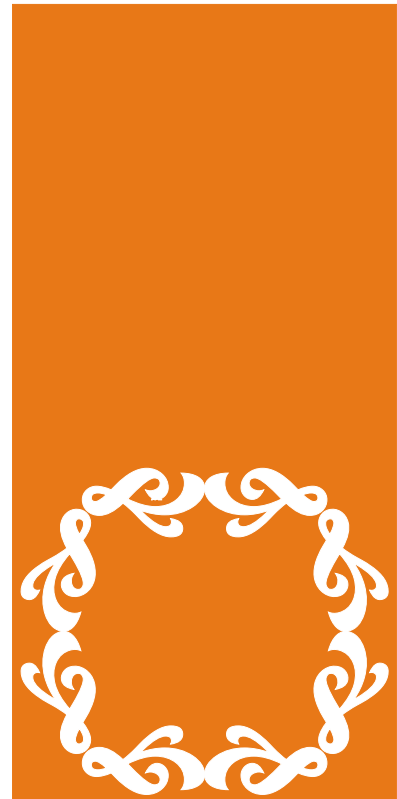
Unfortunately due to financial restraints, very little could be done to rehabilitate and restore ex combatants or offenders or consult with and support vulnerable victim communities.

In fact the delegates quickly came to see that most Pakistanis were, or had been, victimised by the situation they found themselves in, caught between war and struggles by outside states for influence and power.

That generated the never ending vicious circle in which violence was begetting more violence.

The delegates witnessed with deep concern that the time to act was now as it was next to impossible for Pakistan to clean the "Aegean's stable" on its own in a situation where there was such vast need and inequality. Much of the impact of the meetings and debating sessions focused on dealing with wrong perceptions commonly held about the way that Muslims and in particular Pakistani Muslims were treated in the UK.

The delegates were living proof that Muslim and those of other or no faith could still live and work together positively.



The visit ended on a high note with the affirmation to generate more awareness among the masses, decision makers and policy makers about the severity of the situation in Pakistan.

The delegates were delighted to notice that most of the audience agreed that a rehabilitation strategy was imperative for Pakistan's success in its war against violent extremism. The audiences also concurred that general education on a wide scale was necessary to combat the underlying causes that fed the extremism faced by a large part of the country.

They appreciated that the matter was quite intricate and that its scale in a population of over 180 million meant that there were no quick fixes and it needed to be dealt with pragmatism and precision, keeping Pakistan's peculiar cultural and geographical problems in perspective.

In fact keeping perspective on both sides, in Pakistan and in the Western media would in itself be an ongoing challenge. It was grasped that much could be learnt from the best practices executed in the UK, Germany and Northern Ireland.

It was felt that although it was a "thousand mile" daunting journey and we could only take baby steps in the right direction, they may prove best to achieve the desired outcomes.

All in all, awareness-raising tours and engagement were more likely to help create a groundswell for change and greater equality. Through this, the spread of access to education as a means of moving from lives of poverty to futures of hope and prosperity offered a tangible way of freeing Pakistan from the tyranny of terrorists and the bigotry of unenlightenment.

Objectives of the Study Tour to Pakistan



The SGCS delegations' trip to Pakistan was organised to attend conferences, seminars, symposia and debates to:

> Create awareness and understanding within communities and academic institutions about the effects of extremism in societies.

> Understand the psychology of radicalisation and how to diffuse it.

> Gain an insight into the threat of violent extremism.

> Encourage ownership of the problem and finding ways for academic institutions and local and international communities to tackle extremism through employability enhancement mechanisms and psychologically based methods of prevention and intervention.

> The UK-Pakistan-Germany comparative of best practices in the field of countering radicalisation & rehabilitation

> Extremism and academic work: research and models of education, prevention and intervention.

> Provide an insight into the important role that education can play in combatting violent extremism.

> Share good practices and research in rehabilitation drawing from UK experiences, particularly the Northern Ireland model.

> The role of education through the media to counter extremism find methods and develop models of effectively consulting institutions and governments on issues of extremism and radicalisation.



Multan-London International Conference

*Extremism,
Education &
Rehabilitation*

**Baha-Ud-Din
Zakariya University &
Multan**

Organisers

- FIRD (Forum for International Relations Development)
- SGCS (Stockwell Green Community Services, UK)
- LCBMIT (London College of BMIT, UK)

Local Collaboration

- Bahauddin Zakariya University, Pakistan
- British University College Network, Pakistan

Rationale

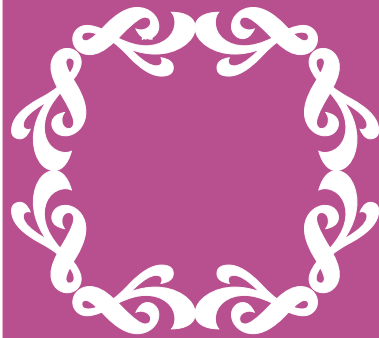
The menace of extremism globally, and particularly in Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan, has tarnished the very fabric of societies in the region.

The hundreds of thousands of lives lost and trillions of dollars spent on the so-called War against Terrorism could be used more positively by providing education and work opportunities other than being paid fighters.

Less was being done to broker peace and rehabilitate ex-combatants and offenders rather than continue ineffective conflicts. FIRD partnered up with one of the largest universities in Pakistan (Baha-ud-Din Zakariya University, Multan) to put these questions before academics and students; how education might help the respective societies to build the bridges of peace and understanding in the face of international inequality and a global history of tension and warfare. Foreign and national delegates were invited to speak on the occasion and share their experiences with assorted audience that included academicians, students, journalists, practitioners and officials.

Throughout the Study Tour, the audiences and delegations contained high numbers of both men and women.

> Find methods and develop models of effectively consulting institutions and governments on issues of extremism and radicalisation.



Arrival of Delegation

The guests arrived at 10:15am and the formal proceedings started at 10:30am

Opening of the Conference

Mr. Rana Akram, Chairman, Department of Islamic Studies, introduced the guests to the audience who had travelled from Europe and different universities of Pakistan.

The speakers' panel included

I) Mr. Toaha B.Z Qureshi (Chairman FIRD, SGCS, CEO LCBMIT, UK)

II) Mr. Alan Weston (European Institute of Social Services, Visiting lecturer at Middlesex University and former European Projects manager of London Probation, D.M.S., C.Q.S.W.UK)

III) Ms. Catriona Robertson (Chairperson Clapham & Stockwell Faith Forum, UK)

IV) Dr. Harald Weirnböck (University of Zurich, Violence Prevention Network, Berlin,)

V) Mr. Abdul Rehman Tanko (Journalist, UK)

VI) Prof. Dr. Muhammad Zafar Ullah (Vice Chancellor BZU, Multan, Pakistan)

VII) Dr. Qibla Ayaz (Peshawar University, Pakistan)

VIII) Prof. Zafar Iqbal Jadoon (Punjab University, Pakistan)



Session One

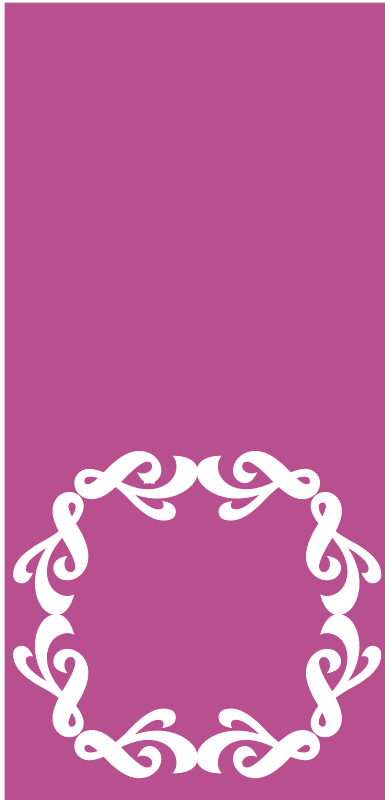
Dr. Zafar Ullah opened the Conference with a thank you to Mr. Toaha B.Z. Qureshi for bringing the academics from the UK and Germany and also lauded his community services, especially his role in assisting Muslims in UK into mainstream politics.

In identifying the complexity of extremism in Pakistan as unique in its type, he traced its roots to the rotten and moth-eaten social setup, in which "might is right" is still the modus operandi of the rich and elite to rule and plunder the poor and vulnerable. Apathy of successive governments had created a huge chasm of mistrust in the heart of masses.

Looking outside Pakistan, he cited the USA as the key factor in the rise of militancy and extremism in Pakistan, when Mujahidins became the "Holy Warriors" paid for by American money to oppose the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, only to be abandoned after the demise of the USSR administration. Some 3 million trained fighters returned to Pakistan without any prospect of work or education, other than how to fight.

According to him, dialogue between concerned groups, and disengagement of the radical groups through direct approaches, as well as social support, can be very helpful in the struggle to offer alternatives to being employed to fight others causes.

Mr. **Toaha B.Z. Qureshi, MBE**, in his key note address, termed Radicalisation as a global problem with multiple dimensions which deserved careful examination. He stressed that if we were to find some of the root causes (if not all), only then could one be in a position to devise a variety of effective mechanisms to counter the "causes" that are being exploited by those who were involved in radicalising vulnerable youth and other recipients. He said that the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan had turned the Al-Qaeda, a group into an "ideology" and thus midwived a huge surge in radicalisation not only in the UK but in other parts of the world. He stressed that continuous interference, in particular unauthorised drone attacks in Pakistan undermined the democratically elected Pakistani government and left general masses in Pakistan at the mercy of suicide bombers; a dilemma Pakistan had never been in before.



He stressed that the frustration and feeling of helplessness were giving birth to 'Internet Jihadis' who would try to cook up some explosive to attack the interests of US coalition countries. He mentioned that these individuals could be home grown or foreign nationals, be it Pakistani or the British. He pointed out that most of the 7/7 suicide bombers and 21/7 failed suicide bombers in London were not Pakistani or Afghani nationals.

He observed that for Stockwell Green Community Services, being a pioneer in devising counter radicalisation mechanisms/programmes and effective execution in the UK and abroad before 9/11 and 7/7, it was quite disappointing that even after putting such tremendous efforts by the communities and the British government, radicalisation amongst the Muslim community (and particularly amongst the youth) was growing manifold day by day. The proverbial genie seemed to have come out of the bottle. He shared that SGCS executed its four year (2004-2008) programme on radicalisation in partnership with London College of Business Management and Information Technology (LCBMIT) which was the first programme in Europe of this nature and was evaluated by the Office of Deputy Prime Minister as well as a senior researcher from the Middlesex University.

He observed that during the course of interaction with programme participants, apart from discrimination, racism and lack of opportunities, foreign policy was found as one of the fundamental root causes to sow the seeds of a violent harvest.

He referred to the lesson from Northern Ireland which bled for decades until a peaceful resolution was pursued through dialogue with the help of community ownership and involvement of the world leadership. He emphasised that only by making 'Islamic World' part of the solution and not the part of the problem could help restore peace in an otherwise world at war with itself.

He underlined that the British government had to engage itself in dialogue with the Irish Republican Army (IRA), which was a declared British terrorist organisation that carried out a series of despicable attacks on the British interests within as well as outside the UK for decades. He underscored that it was only dialogue that brought peace on the table and this model could be emulated to broker peace with the extremists (be it Al-Qaida, Talibans, or IRA).



He advocated UNO should take over the role of restoration of peace and the Organisation of Islamic conference (OIC) should be encouraged and empowered to rebuild Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan. He wondered that why a staggering amount of nearly \$12 billion dollars every month was being spent on Iraq & Afghanistan war, where, perhaps half the amount of one month war bill, \$6 billion dollars, if invested in rebuilding these countries and provision of modern education, would eradicate radicalisation in due course and the voices of fanaticism might fade out. He recommended that a wiser, saner and a typical British approach instead of the cowboyish attitude might win more hearts in the international arena in these testing times.

Mr. Qureshi also observed the hostility between India and Pakistan had become a breeding ground for extremism in South Asia. World leadership should focus on this vital aspect as well. He stressed that a fifty years No War Pact should be brokered between India and Pakistan to put an end to the insecurity syndrome. He also warned that Pakistani armed forces might face a backlash within its own quarters if the currently confused ideological situation continues. He asserted that only a clear stance would bring the best out to fight the menace of extremism.

Mr. Toaha B.Z Qureshi's realistic and deep insight into the issue kept the audience engaged throughout. He reiterated that only education could play role in de-radicalisation and extremism. He agreed that it might be slow and challenging but the only viable alternative and giving blood baths would not quickly fix the situation.

Prof. Zafar Iqbal Jadoon

An expert in inter-faith dialogue from the largest university of Pakistan, the University of the Punjab, Lahore, Dr. Jadoon, blamed the government for its reluctance to provide proper education to the nation, which is the root-cause of several social ills. He commented that the policy of eliminating the extremists instead of rehabilitating them was adding fuel to the fire. He applauded SGCS and UK government for being more proactive in this regard. He observed that there was no unified strategy in Pakistan and that the blame game ruled. He stressed that society must reach out to the affected and the vulnerable groups. He emphasised that if madressahs are to be blamed, then looking at their huge social contribution, it must be evaluated what we had done to reform them and upgrade their systems

Alan Weston

The UK case was presented by Alan Weston. He took an



inside out approach and appreciated Mr. Toaha B Z Qureshi for his initiatives. He gave a summary of the UK approach to rehabilitation as part of a unified legal system that incorporated the separation of powers between the state legislature and the judiciary. He described how religious tolerance is enshrined in law so that Imams are employed by the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) to be spiritual advisors and mentors for serving Prisoners. This was an example of religious tolerance within the criminal justice system in the UK. To him also, universal education was a fundamental for rehabilitation and a need on which hinged every social change. He linked rehabilitation and education as key components of offering people hope of better futures free from violence and free from offending. In this way rehabilitation that leads to work are an essential part of protecting the public and reducing offending. He observed that being radical and being violent are two separate things, since radicalisation epitomises change and innovation but it should not be violent.

He commented that the UK model of rehabilitation and resettlement of offenders was quite successful. Violence was just a temporary solution; if change was required then education must supersede all. He highlighted that cultural difference must be kept in view before applying

any policy and that it is essential to focus on the desired outcomes before engaging with ex-offenders or those that have become involved in acts of violent disorder. Mr. Weston observed that the terrorist attack of 7/7 really changed attitudes in the UK in the way that the Madrid bombings had rocked Spain. Victims were drawn from a wide spectrum of cultural, religious and ethnic backgrounds. Suicide bombing is indiscriminate in its victims and designed to emphasize terror as there is little that ordinary people can do to avoid becoming victims. The enemy now was at their doorstep. Such a tendency was well perceived by Mr. Toaha B.Z. Qureshi who was closer to the Muslim community.

This was the time that Alan Weston came closer to him and they both acted in harmony towards the common goal of attaining peace.

Mr. Weston shared that the Muslim prisoners were disproportionately represented in UK prisons as a percentage of total Muslims in the UK. He also said that some of this was also an affect of prisoners "reverting" to Islam during their sentences and how for years this finding of religion and community had been seen as a positive change likely to assist in resettlement and rehabilitation on release.



Despite the numbers being disproportionate there were still only approximately 6136 (NOMS 2004 quoted by Spalex and El-Hassan) Muslims in a total prison population of 85,201 in the UK's prisons. Of these approximate 6,000 fewer than 124 were held under the Terrorism Acts the rest being in prison for general crimes. Of the 124, the majority (but not all) were held in relation to Al-Queda inspired acts and it was wrong to assume that Muslims were imprisoned simply for being Muslim.

Through the London Probation led Reducing Hate Crime in Europe (1 and 2) projects partnerships had been developed with Stockwell Green Community Services (SGCS) and other Muslim led community organisations, to increase awareness about Islam and numerous workshop and seminars were conducted for probation and other law enforcement officers which made a great deal of difference helping demystify Islam for non Islamic practitioners.

Question and Answer Session

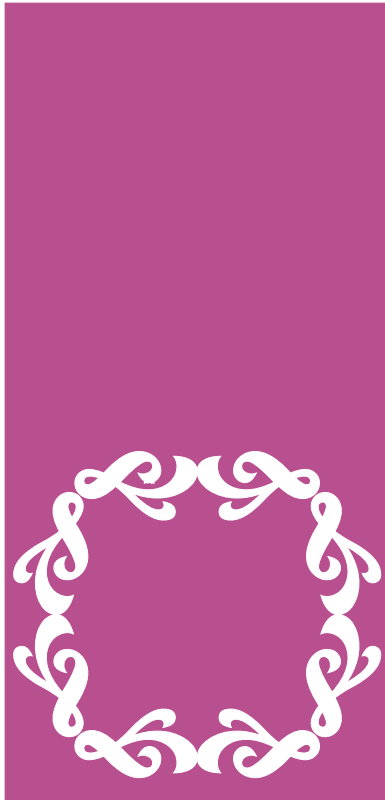
After the in-depth analysis of extremism and rehabilitation, the audience was asked to let its curious mind be satisfied through wide ranging questions. Several pointed questions were raised arguing that Pakistan's sufferings were due to action from the West.

The panel were aware of the strength of feeling and the long history of Western governments but that these were not questions that the panel could answer.

The panel reiterated that violence was never the answer and that universal education, political will and the development of more opportunities to work and see better futures would help promote peace and prosperity in Pakistan. It was universally accepted that most people in Pakistan wanted to live in a peaceful nation.

A. R. Tanko spoke about the ramifications of terrorism on business. He considered the economic effects to be the most painful and crucial. He also showed his resentment about the role of the media which had mostly tried to use extremism as a tool to engage audiences, instead of playing its positive role. He acknowledged that the media could help victims of extremism by giving them hope and a reason to live and move on. He strongly emphasized economic development as a means of engaging people in healthy activities and making them socially responsible.

He underlined that those who oppose such systems must be taken into the loop through dialogue and negotiation.



Catriona Robertson believed in the social engagement of different ideologies through dialogue, reasoning and common action. She had long experience of communities working together, not in spite of their differences, but because of them.

She appreciated how the UK had nurtured a multicultural and multifaith society. Her slides showed examples in the UK of this: state-funded Muslim schools, multifaith youth football and cricket, Christian-Muslim women's groups, halal food on sale in London supermarkets, multifaith discussions on hot topics such as the Danish cartoon controversy, training of police officers by the Muslim community, and citizens from Muslim, Christian and other religious traditions contributing to government policy-making.

Mrs Robertson shared her experience of working with multifaith networks, police chiefs, government officials and journalists in London to diffuse the wave of mistrust and uncertainty amongst Muslims and others which enveloped London after the extremists' attacks in 2005.

In her experience, peace came not from people being the same, but from people working well together while retaining their religious, cultural and racial differences.

She welcomed the substantial proportion of women at the conference and emphasized the role that women play within the family and community, over and above any professional position, of upholding important values such as education and reconciliation.

Mrs Robertson concluded by reading from the Holy Qu'ran and from the Hebrew scriptures to illustrate the shared theological basis amongst the Abrahamic faiths of working together for justice, for peace and for the common good.

Dr. Harald Weirnböck, a psychologist, social and media researcher who in this context has worked in European Union projects (RHCE 2) for the 'Violence Prevention Network' and 'Cultures Interactive', based in Berlin, Germany (he also lectures at the University of Zurich) shared the insight that rehabilitation of those labelled antisocial, radicalized and at most terrorist could be possible, if society aimed at bringing these people back to society as normal humans and if efforts of prevention and intervention are undertaken in education and social work.



He shared his experience of working with right wing extremist and religiously fundamentalist prison inmates and vulnerable young people in Germany and how various psychological methods of group therapy, self reflexive work, relationship building, and civic education were used to normalise the participants. He considered that the way Germany had dealt with extremists, and the psychological barriers which were crossed, could be a true case study of rehabilitation and a model to follow.

Dr. Qibla Ayyaz, a microscopic and precise analysis of Pakistani culture, history and geo-political challenges was carried out by Dr. Qibla Ayyaz, a Professor from University of Peshawar, the capital of North Western Frontier Province and a stronghold against the extremists in the on-going war.

He was quite outspoken in declaring the root-cause of all Pakistani turmoil to be western countries. In his view the Pakistani establishment had been in cahoots with the USA and brought the proxy war against the USSR to its borders.

He mentioned that hardly anyone in Pakistan had heard of heroin, Kalashnikovs, suicide bombing and Jihadis, words which were only added to the dictionary after Zia's alliance with the USA against the Soviet Union. The USA ditched Pakistan after its triumphant victory and Pakistanis were left there to eat the grapes of wrath.

He criticized the American policy of exploiting the people for its vested interests and then leaving them in the lurch, high and dry. He concluded that matters were so much interwoven now that Pakistan could never have peace unless there was stability in Kabul.

Workshop on Extremism and Education

After the first phase and having had refreshments, the participants were invited to join the allotted four small discussion groups, where the experts listened and discussed in more depth points of view and each group tried to reach a unanimous resolution. The approach included: "Education a solution to extremism"

The Rehabilitation workshop was attended by a large number of participants which included members of academia, members of civil society and a huge number of university students from different disciplines.

The questions put forward for discussion among the participants during the workshop were:

- Is there a need for rehabilitation of extremists?
- If yes, then how should it be carried out and what can be done in this regards?



For the young students the concept of rehabilitation of extremists was quite new. They were familiar with things like the rehabilitation of drug addicts but since no rehabilitation programme for the extremists has ever been launched in Pakistan, this concept had to be explained to them. After that a lively discussion ensued.

It was suggested that in order to combat extremism a two pronged approach should be adopted. First, we should pin point the causes which are responsible for extremism.

And second, we need to take effective steps for the rehabilitation of the extremists. The participants felt that the identification of these causes for taking effective steps for the rehabilitation of the extremists was not enough.

Their removal and eradication was also of crucial importance so that the rehabilitated extremists do not fall into this trap again along with other impressionable youngsters.

It was further suggested that both external and internal forces are responsible for generating and promoting extremism in Pakistan. The outer factors include the perceived victimisation of Muslims all over the world.

Social deprivation, inequality and injustice were listed as the internal causes of extremism.

A large majority of the workshop participants agreed that the future of fighting extremism around the world may not just lie in terrorism rehabilitation but also preventing terrorism against the Muslims which is often state sponsored.

It was suggested that the Iraq conflict, while not a cause of extremism, has become a cause for extremists.

It was unanimously agreed that if the basic necessities of Pakistanis are met and poverty is alleviated, only then can we look forward to having responsible citizens free of terrorism and terrorist activity.

Quality education for all Pakistani citizens was also listed as a very important requirement for balanced peaceful communities. The participants agreed that one of the root causes of extremism was the leaving of an educational vacuum to be filled by extremists who went to families who had no other option and offered meals, housing, money and some form of education.



If we are going to combat extremism then we must educate those very same children and offer them better futures. It was agreed that quality education to the masses would lead to both development and growth necessary ingredients for a normal society.

The participants of the workshop suggested that before giving equal opportunities for education, we need to bring about drastic changes in our system of education because we need to tackle extremism on an ideological level.

These steps would take Pakistan towards a more democratic and pluralistic society.

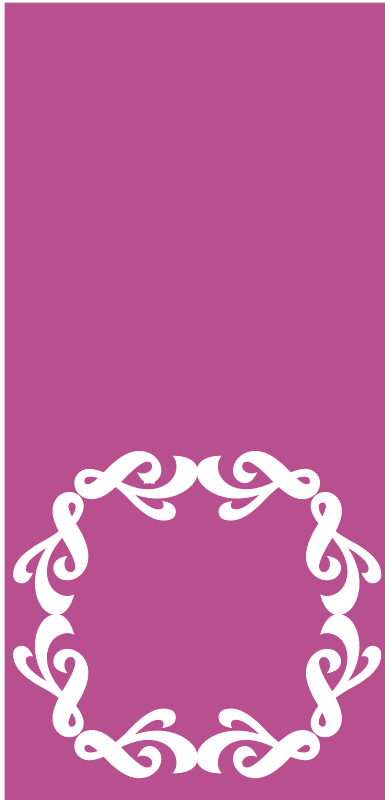
The participants said that although currently in Pakistan only force was being used against the extremists they recognized the fact that at best, the use of force only temporarily cripples the terrorists' capabilities. With the ideology intact, capabilities will be replenished and dangerously reinvented.

Hence, they recommended that the only way to stem the current global wave of terrorism is to effectively dismantle the terrorists' ideological beliefs.

The other steps included greater civil society engagement, popularising counter-extremism narratives through the media, and the promotion of secular spaces within society and the state. The participants also pointed out that there should be a counselling program through the media and other sources to re-educate and rehabilitate terrorist sympathizers as well. Extremist sympathizers should be de-radicalized by engaging them in intensive religious debates and psychological counselling.

Coming to the rehabilitation of extremists, the participants suggested that we should go for 'glocal' solutions i.e. Any imported programme which has been successful in any other country may not be as successful in Pakistan. We would have to deeply analyse our local situation and realities. We can, of course, learn lessons from other countries where such programmes are under way but we cannot totally depend on imported solutions. Hence a combination of global and local (glocal) approach would be ideal.

It was suggested that any rehabilitation programme should treat terrorists in much the same way as drug addicts: seeing radicalism as an anomalous behavioural pattern and treating it with a mix of psychotherapy, counselling and religious re-education, coupled with economic incentives to slowly steer them back into society.



It was pointed out that while it was true that such measures rarely have quantifiable results and require great resources in terms of time and effort, we could ill afford not to implement them, for without this vision it is unlikely that Pakistan would be able to overcome the current moral dilemma and political crisis it found itself in.

Conclusion

Mr. Toaha B.Z Qureshi concluded on a positive note and predicted that that a positive change was around the corner. The enthusiasm of the participants and charged emotions were a ray of hope for him. He pointed out that in these dark and brooding times, when it was a norm to talk 'kill them all', 'hang them all'; it took lots of nerves to think of negotiations, dialogue, peace and rehabilitation.

However, sword could not conquer the human will so it would be saner to talk peace and rebuilding. He also expressed his gratitude to the organizers for managing to discuss such a sensitive topics in such troubled times.

He thanked them for their continuous support and he trusted that such dialogues could bring back the sanity to the world, and let the message reach out where it must.

All distinguished guests were awarded shields amongst loud applause.

The conference concluded at 5pm.



Deradicalisation & Rehabilitation; Perspectives

Defence &
Strategic Studies
Department
Quaid-e-Azam
University,
Islamabad

Quaid-e-Azam University Islamabad is considered to be the most prestigious public university in Pakistan. Its Department of Defence & Strategic Studies is highly reputable to train middle and senior level officers from top military and bureaucracy establishments of Pakistan.

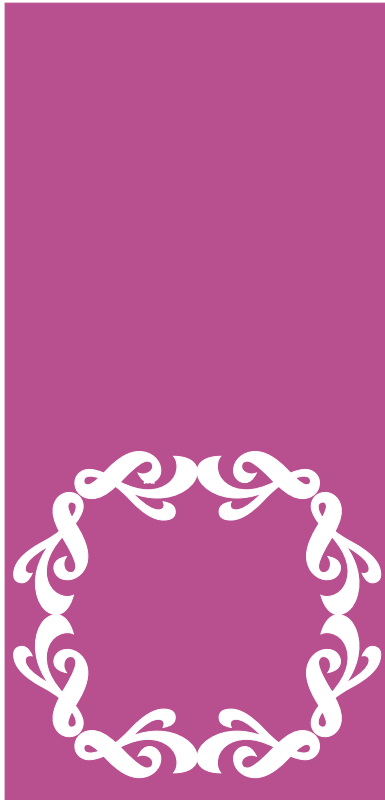
The six member delegation of Stockwell Green Community Service (SGCS), UK, and Violence Prevention Network, Germany (VPN), attended a symposium with the faculty and students of the DSS Department, on May 25, 2010.

The topic of the discussion was De-Radicalisation: Perception & Responses of Pakistani Civil Society & Youth. The theme of the symposium was to share SGCS' and VPN' best practices in running various de-radicalisation, repatriation and rehabilitative programmes in the UK. These activities centred on terror suspects, terrorist & extremist elements, who, on completion of their sentences, needed to be reintegrated into the social fabric.

The delegation was headed by Mr. Toaha Z. Qureshi, MBE. Approximately 22 different researchers and faculty members from DSS participated in the activity led by Dr. Salma Awan. The visiting delegates apprised the audience of the deradicalisation and rehabilitative activities undertaken by the SGSC.

Mr. Alan Weston, with his vast experience with probation services, talked about the various means and approaches attached to the successful reintegration of hate crime offenders and terrorists back into the society, the reactions and perceptions of the respective families and social responses.

Arif Malik added to the debate talked about the critical need to tackle terrorism as well as extremist / violent radicalised groups and individuals by seeking and addressing the root cause which acted as the strongest stimulus, as irrespective of social development, economic conditions and religious beliefs, violent extremists and terrorists were present in every society.



Mr. Toaha Qureshi dwelt on the various proactive approaches and strategies applied by SGCS through its various programmes, the critical importance for early prevention of the problem and how important it was for both local authorities as well as the community to accept ownership and participate equally to seek a lasting solution.

Mr. Qureshi shared that given the preeminent role of schools and other educational establishments in the development of a resilient community that upheld values of nonviolence, peaceful coexistence and tolerance, education also featured strongly in the counter-radicalisation programmes developed by different first world countries.

In the United Kingdom, for example, authorities worked closely with providers of education at all levels to make schools and universities, better equipped to resist the influence and ideology of violent extremism.

This had resulted in the teaching in schools of subjects that promoted intercultural understanding and citizenship. It had also been reflected in other actions, such as the recently introduced “Children’s Plan”, through which state officials engaged directly with head teachers in order to ensure their access to all forms of support needed, as well as ensuring support for young, vulnerable people who might be exposed to violent extremist influences.

Dr. Harald Weilnböck discussed and evaluated the various approaches to tackle violent extremism which are applied in Germany and the UK and the critical need to take responsibility by the community in seeking a lasting solution to these issues.

The discussion that followed the two presentations focused on the negligible role played by Pakistani civil society in building a comprehension of and seeking a solution to the problem.



Also that it would be a big anomaly to equate hate crime offenders and terrorists, and such stereotyping further exacerbates violence and terrorism.

As the SGCS has been working since 1999, questions were raised regarding how organisation achieved foresight into the perceived terrorism prior to September 11th & July 7th London bombings. Further questions were asked with regards to measuring the rate of success in such rehabilitative processes.

The researchers currently working at DSS also stressed that a wide gap existed between handling radicalised individuals or affected societies, and this could only be bridged through better governance and top down problem solving approaches.

*De-radicalisation
in Society
and Education:
A Seminar*

University of Lahore



University of Lahore is one of the leading private universities in suburbs of Lahore which has carved out a reputable name in research and innovation in a short time. The delegation visited the University of Lahore to hold a dialogue with selected students in front of assorted audience. The delegates were received by the senior students of the English Department at the doorsteps of the LBS Auditorium, New Campus, University of Lahore. The delegation was headed by Mr. Toaha Z. Qureshi, MBE.

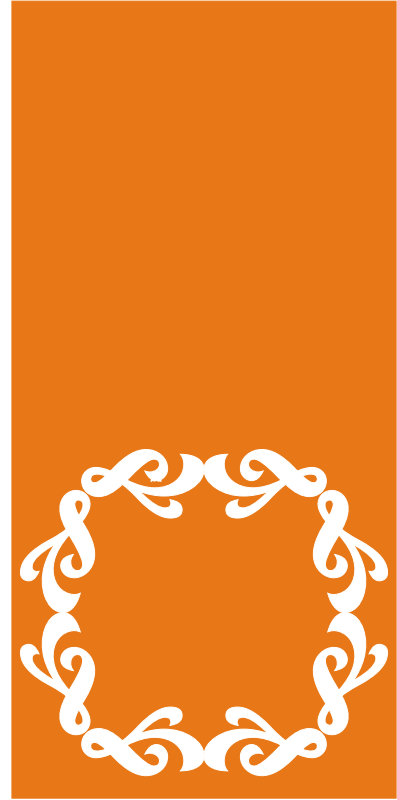
The topic of discussion was 'De-radicalisation in Society and Education'. The dialogue was opened up by Mr. Raees Abbas Zaidi, Pro-Rector along with Dr. Harold Weilnbock. They emphasized the desperate need of a streamlined and progressive society regarding education in future. They agreed that education was imperative to de-radicalise society from the virus of extremism. They concluded that the virus of any kind of extremism, be it religious, racial or ideological, grows and snowballs in the dark fields of ignorance.

The spirit of a healthy debate was shown by the UOL student-speakers who turn by turn took the stage and shared insight from their respective point of view.

They peeled the layers of extremism in Pakistan over the last few years. They drew a picture of a tolerant environment so as to take the world toward mutual progress and respect. The student-speakers were Mr. Abdullah Khalid, Mr. Akif Javed, Ms. Asieh Khan and Ms. Rubeeba Ahmed.

The seriousness and insight of the UOL students and the interest of its authorities were greatly appreciated by the delegates.

The leader of the delegation, Mr. Toaha B.Z. Qureshi explored the topic to its very hilt. He commented that intuitively, the link between education and extremism might not be that obvious.



He reminded that the first reactions to the 7th July 2005 attacks on the London underground was the registration of surprise that anyone 'British born, and British educated' might be capable of such an act; but intellectually, conceptualising a relationship between education and national or international security was a more demanding exercise.

In particular, questions of whether schools and tertiary educational institutions might unwittingly (or knowingly in some country contexts) act as a factor of radicalisation, and alternatively, whether education could be employed as a strategy to combat radicalisation, extremist ideas and terrorism, are more complex.

Mr. Qureshi admitted that while research remained underdeveloped in this area, there was now a wide range of 'educational' responses to combat threats to national and international security.

This included the increase of international educational aid to countries such as Pakistan in an attempt to bolster state education and minimize the influence of Madrassas, or in the United Kingdom, government-led strategies for the prevention of radicalisation. He acknowledged that many of these strategies were contested as limited, unworkable, or insensitive and of particular interest was the view of some, including in the academic community, that higher education institutions do more to police students in an effort to combat radicalisation.

Mr. Qureshi accentuated the philosophical underpinnings of education and the extent to which this might explain radical thought or shape values; review political thought and the nature of educational institutions; and examined the 'narratives' that compelled young people towards acts towards radicalism. He pointed out that how dissatisfaction with the status quo might translate into extremist ideas, and further, how such ideas might be transformed into acts of violence or destabilisation.



He questioned the audience whether it was sufficient to explain radicalisation as a reaction to UK or USA foreign policy, or as an outcome of deprivation and low educational achievement in certain communities.

He conceded that the starting point was to consider what we understood the connotation of radicalisation to be as the most basic connotation of radicalisation was the process whereby attitudes, beliefs and behaviours became re-orientated. But re-orientated towards what? He shared that the problem of definition had become more acute over the past fifty years. Previously, at least in the West, 'radical' change had implied political change towards the 'left' of the political spectrum.

But with the near-universal triumph of market forces, the connotation of 'radical' had come to embrace fundamental change across the political spectrum. He declared that a further complicating factor was the fact that radicalisation no longer operated in an exclusively political domain.

The term is now applied to change in culture and in religion and, of course, in the domain in which politics, culture and religion interacted.

Mr. Weillböck strongly supported Mr. Qureshi's emphasis on the "need for further academic research" on issues of deradicalisation since, indeed, the question is still open how an educational process might work "whereby attitudes, beliefs and behaviours became re-orientated" and how it is best implemented without violating the civil liberties of the person. While it seems evident that intensive religious debates and psychological counseling would be part of such an educational process the method as such needs to be developed, tested and refined in order to have good results.



Therefore, Mr. Weillnböck opted for conducting a pilot project (drawing from EU and UN financial sources) which explore the question how to best arrange for a coaching method and pedagogical training module which strengthens the 'soft skills' of today's students and tomorrow's leaders, as emotional intelligence, self-reflexive thought, a sense of humanistic responsibility, geo-political and cultural self-awareness, strategic foresight, inter-cultural competencies, ethical and value-based judgment.

The Uns Globally Responsible Leadership Program might be one possible anchor.

Mr. Qureshi claimed that there always had been radical components of the major religions and there was a substantial literature on chiliastic and millenarian movements in Christianity. However in the wake of 9/11, Islamic radicalism was declared a global factor.

He shared SGCS experience with the audience how education positively helped to de-radicalise the ex-offenders.

However, he stressed the need for further academic research how these 'small' experiences could be executed in large societies.

In the end, Mr. M. A. Rauf, Chairman UOL and Mr. M. H. Qazi, Vice Chancellor UOL, addressed the audience and highlighted the issues in favour of peace and De-radicalisation. Mr. M. H. Qazi concluded the discussion encompassing almost every aspect of it while recalling enriching experiences and the pressing need for the de-radicalization in society and education around the world.

*Psychology of
Radicalisation:
A Symposium*

Superior University
Lahore



Superior Group of Colleges, Lahore was recognised as a degree awarding institute in 2004. Since then it has been transformed from the fastest growing institute of Pakistan to "First International Standard Institute of Pakistan".

Superior University has taken another initiative by exploring new horizons and joining hands with the top universities of the world by offering Split Degree Program at undergraduate, postgraduate and PhD level.

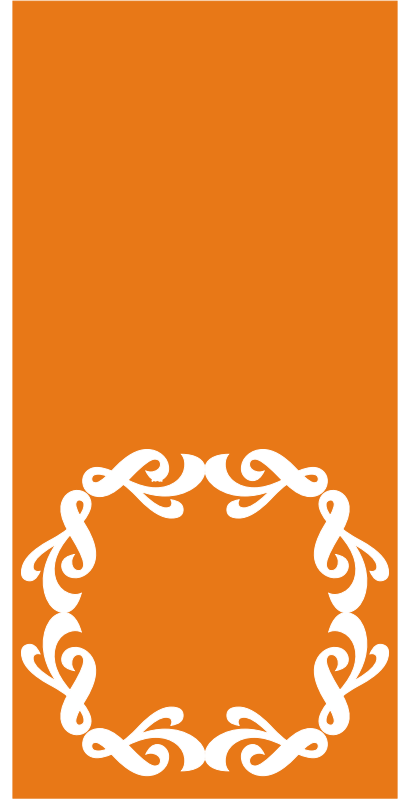
Superior University is collaborating with the University of Newcastle, Australia & Binary University, Malaysia.

The delegation visited the Superior University of Lahore to attend the seminar on the intriguing topic of 'Psychology of Radicalisation' to share their insight into the journey to conversion.

The seminar was organised in the University's auditorium full of students with different backgrounds and qualifications. The delegates were received by Sikander Khan, Pro Rector and Dr. Abdul Rehman, Rector of the University. The delegation was headed by Dr. Harald Weilnböck.

Dr. Harald Weilnböck opened the discussion quoting the findings from the recent researches into the psychology of radicalisation.

He observed that radicalisation had increasingly been identified as a fundamentally social act. He observed that descriptions of the gradual socialisation of individuals into violent extremist networks, combined with isolation, ritual and ideology, resulted in a willingness to commit acts previously unthinkable to that individual - suicide bombing being the prototypical example.



He remarked that on this account, an entire community perceived itself to be suffering unjustly to the extent that suicide terrorism was seen as a valid response, and was normalised within the community's value system.

If a community reached such a stage, it remained only for a violent extremist group to select willing and vulnerable candidates as recruits who could act with minimal training and psychological preparation.

He cited different models of this socio-cultural framework and evaluated its application to contemporary conflicts, exploring its implications for the social psychology of radicalisation.

Students asked questions to all members of delegation including Mr. Alan Weston, Mrs. Catriona Robertson, Mr. A.R. Tanko, Mr. Arif Malik and Mr. Toaha Qureshi, MBE.

They were quite excited to learn about the achievement of British Government in restraining the monster of radicalisation with the help of dialogue and understanding.

They applauded SGCS' efforts in rehabilitating and restoring the radicalised individuals who could have proved a huge threat to society otherwise.

Youth & Rehabilitation

A meeting with Chairman Youth Parliament, Pakistan



Enlightening was the meeting with the most recognized pop star of Pakistan, Abrar-ul-Haq, who also inaugurated large projects of social work, education of a new kind, and thus deradicalisation. The Youth Parliament of Pakistan (YPP) is one of the non-profit, non-political, non-religious programs initiated by Mr. Abrar-ul-Haq to foster and translate talent and excellence of adolescents and youths of Pakistan into tangible action and community service and thus combat extremism.

The Youth Parliament also is designed to "provide a nursery for scientifically trained leaders and citizens of character and substance" in other words: pose as free experimenting space in which methods of education, prevention and intervention in terms of extremist sentiments and actions a target which the British-German delegation felt very akin to since its representatives were involved in various European Union and national projects which are designed to come up with such methods.

A particular aspect evolved in the discussion between Mr. Abrar-ul-Haq and Mr. WeInböck since the importance of creative and artistic skills also of popular culture for the social and educational work of the pop star Mr. Abrar-ul-Haq is evident and corresponds with a project which WeInböck collaborates on in Germany: Cultures Interactive (CI) as method of prevention against right wing extremism among German adolescents.

Cultures Interactive is a registered non-profit association in Berlin, Germany, which works mostly in regions of ex-Communist East-German communities (but also in Poland and the Czech Republic) serves communities, students of different types of the public school system and social worker.



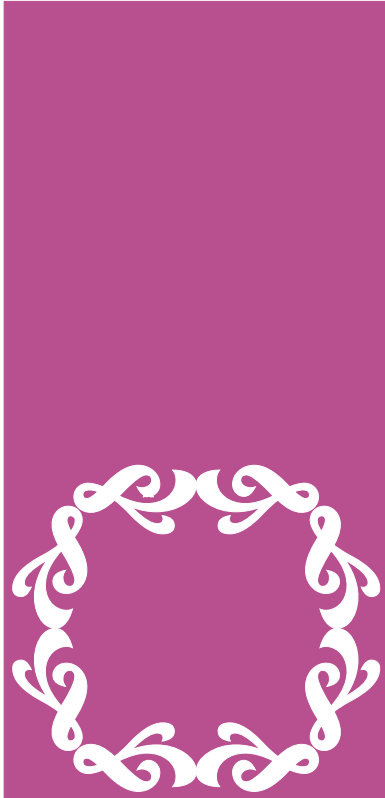
CI has developed an approach of youth-cultural social work which proved effective in preventing violence, political extremism/especially right-wing-extremism and religious fundamentalism among adolescents of disadvantaged backgrounds.

The CI approach combines elements of civic education and pedagogical exercises, psychologically based group-dynamics and a peer-learning and informal-learning modus of teaching youth-cultural activities, as for instance Breakdance, Skateboarding, Slam Poetry, Techno-DJ-ing and Digital Music Production as well as Comic and Graffiti Visual Design and others. Adolescents from mostly deprived backgrounds thus may gain physical/ acrobatic, aesthetic and technological competences while they at the same time learn about the anti-violence and anti-racist stance. Which emerged f.e. among US urban ghetto adolescents when they turned towards performing HipHop instead of gang warfare.

The participants also learn how to express themselves more freely in a group and reflect on their every-day social and peer interaction and biographical experiences, thus beginning to think about how to realize a life free of resentment, violence and extremism.

Hence it seems that just like Mr.Abrar-ul-Haq with the Youth Parliament, Cultures Interactive in Germany is one of those "nurseries for scientifically trained leaders and citizens of character and substance" which as free experimenting space for the development of methods of education, prevention and intervention against radicalization.

More international cooperation on such projects this seems worthwhile. Especially since these projects are about the youth cohort of a nation which is most vulnerable to extremism.



Mr. Abrar-ul-Haq underlined that "Pakistan currently has the largest cohort of young people in its history and subsequent cohorts are projected to be even larger.

More than half of Pakistan's population comprises of individuals less than twenty years and 25 million aged 15-24.

This huge populace includes young adolescents and youth full of energy, enthusiasm and patriotism with a brain full of ideas, a heart filled with sensitivity and a mind full of concepts of a brighter tomorrow for self, the community and the country."

And just like in Germany albeit in still much safer and comfortable societal circumstances there is need for a coherent and practical concept of education focusing also on creative and soft skills.

For, if these "robust bodies and able minds of today's Pakistani youth remain unbridled, unguided and without a clear vision for life and opportunities for the application of their energies for a greater cause or community service", the danger arises that "the agitated, frustrated soul" get entangled in "the unstructured and chaotic environment where morals and values are fast getting diluted and find solace in negative pursuits in the absence of leadership".



Interfaith Harmony & Deradicalisation

Meeting with Rt. Rev. Alexander John Malik Bishop of Lahore

The visit to the Bishop of Lahore, the Rt. Revd. Dr. Alexander John Malik, was most significant in the sense that it posed a unique opportunity to discuss problems of extremism with a high ranking representative of a Pakistani minority.

The Bishop underlined the necessity to extend the benefits of education to the Muslim religious elite themselves since this elite apparently to this day was not disposed to unequivocally condemn acts of (Jihadist/ Taliban) terrorism.

Most significantly, this was the case right at the time of the visit of the European delegation since the meeting with the Bishop of Lahore took place the day after the internationally widely reported terror siege on two worship places of the minority Ahmadi sect in Lahore, carried out by heavily-armed terrorists wearing suicide vests and guns, killing at least 80 Friday worshippers and injuring many more.

The Bishop emphasized how significant and detrimental it was that Muslim religious authorities did not come out and publically condemn this act of terrorism just as they did not condemn acts in which high-ranking representatives of the Catholic minority were killed in the past.

The discussion then began to shed some new light on the significance of the Blasphemy Laws since the Pakistani and British discussants offered their personal knowledge about the fact that evidently in the Pakistan of today it suffices to call one's neighbour or political adversary of "having been blasphemous" in order to get him out of the way or else get into the possession of the neighbour's goods.



Such circumstances do not of course lend themselves to combating extremism in the long run on a societal level and the need and tremendous challenge became clear to 'educate' and/or consult the political and religious elite of the country in order to get a functional education program on how to prevent extremism started which brings the country back to its leading position in a global world.

Such kinds of educational endeavour might coincide with the "soul-searching at all levels of the state and society", which the columnist Mr. Huma Yusuf calls for in the wake of the Lahore killings ('Dawn', May 30th, 2010), in order to avoid that "intolerance and hatred" gets hold of the "national character" on the whole.

Working with the young and educated future elite of Pakistan in systematic and innovative ways will be crucial for this challenge which includes focusing on 'soft skills' such as emotional intelligence, self-reflexive thought, a sense of humanistic responsibility, geo-political and cultural self-awareness, and strategic foresight, ethical and value-based judgment.

This also resonates the concept of Globally Responsible Leadership, a United Nations Education Program, which is pursued by University of Management & Technology at Lahore.

Cultural and aesthetic awareness, artistic skills, and inter-cultural competencies will certainly play an unexpected role.

Delegate Biographies

Toaha Qureshi, MBE, a British Pakistani, is Chairman of Stockwell Green Community Services and Forum for International Relations Development (FIRD), a UK based think tank. He specialises in community relations, conflict management and counter-radicalisation. He has designed and delivered numerous capacity building, preventative and diversionary programmes to address trend of extremism and its root causes before 9/11 and 7/7 with partners such as Metropolitan Police, London Probation, European Union (EU), local authorities, multifaith organisations, parliamentarians and universities etc. He has been working in collaboration with British think-tanks and European and international statutory and voluntary bodies as an advisor. In particular, he advises British, German, Dutch and Spanish policy making institutions on counter-extremism, conflict resolution, peace building, rehabilitation and de-radicalization. He is a Member of the Order of The British Empire after being awarded an MBE by Her Majesty the Queen, Elizabeth II for his services rendered for community relations. Toaha advises various government bodies and delivers lectures at British universities on community relations and counter radicalisation. He is a speaker at international conferences worldwide and travels extensively. He played pivotal role in projecting Muslim community's in general and Pakistani British community's positive role in the wake of 7/7 bombings. He lobbied massively to make Muslim community a part of solution instead of a part of the problem. His proposed 'triangular model of containment of radicalisation' became massively popular and had been adopted by several public and statutory organisations in the UK and across the EU. He is also credited of conceiving 'Rehabilitation Paradigms for Violent Extremists' which has been working with a tremendous success with zero percent relapse in terms of reoffending. Toaha contributes to International Centre of Counterterrorism (Hague) and South Asian Free Media Association (SAFMA SAARC)'s journal and publications. Toaha is considered a strong advocate for British Muslims in media, academics and parliamentary forums and is widely respected in the Muslim World for his contributions.



Dr. Harald Weillnböck's areas of scientific expertise are culture and media studies, qualitative-empirical social research, and interdisciplinary narratology. He practices as psychotherapist, institutional councillor and team/ case supervisor. HW studied and worked in New Haven, Los Angeles, Paris, Zurich and Berlin and received his Ph.D. in social and culture studies at UCLA where he also completed training as research psychoanalyst at the Southern California Psychoanalytic Institute. Harald Weillnböck undertook further psychotherapy training at the Heidelberg GA-Institute and joined a German Research Foundation project studying media-interaction and biographical development. His tenure qualification ("Habilitation?") He gained at Leipzig University writing on culture, media, psychotherapy and culture teaching (www.weillnböck.net). Harald Weillnböck currently finishes the EU research project 'trauma therapy' in the Dept. for Clinical Psychology of Zurich University, employing methods of biographical psychology (Marie Curie Grant of the EU). At 'Cultures Interactive', Berlin Harald Weillnböck participates in a project about community work of preventing extremism and conducts the EU research project 'Cultural and media interaction as means of preventing adolescent violence and extremism' (Marie Curie Grant of the EU, ERG No. 203487, DG Research), as well as a German Government project: 'Youth cultures and self-awareness groups for juveniles at risk of right-wing extremism'. Since 2009 Harald Weillnböck also works in the EU-projects (DG Justice): 'Towards Preventing Violent Radicalisation', investigating the effects of the 'Violence Prevention Network? method of intervention, and since 2010 Harald Weillnböck works in the EU project 'Challenge Hate Crime' of 'Niagra' and the Northern Ireland Prison Services, Belfast, (EU-DG Justice) aiming at finding methods of intervention on societal, educational and prison work levels which lend themselves to sectarian hate crime occurring in Northern Ireland.



Alan Weston is an associate with the European Institute of Social Services. He also is a visiting lecture and consultant Middlesex University on issues relevant to community cohesion and research projects, based on his decades long experience with Probation Services. Currently he is Deputy Principal Investigator on a Home Office sponsored research project in 6 London boroughs and Essex for MU Ventures. He has been a founder member and later chair of the Refugee, Asylum Seeker and Foreign National Offenders group. He joined the London Probation Diversity Directorate in 2003 and developed a range of community partnerships and externally funded projects. In 2006 following the successful management of the Reducing Hate Crime in Europe (an European funded trans national project, involving representative organisations from 4 countries) he took the role of European Projects Manager and went on to steer London Probation to become the only Probation service in Europe with Frame work partner status with the DG Justice, Security, Freedom. Whilst in Probation he lead on the Reducing Influences that Radicalise Prisoners (RIRP), Towards Preventing Violent Radicalisation (TPVR) trans-national projects. In London Probation he developed work on targeted crime especially "Hate" motivated and Violent Extremism. focused on effective risk management and rehabilitation of prisoners being supervised on licence in the community. He holds both professional practice, teaching and management qualifications including two post graduate qualifications from the University of East London and Middlesex University.



Catriona Robertson graduated in Psychology from St Andrew's University and has worked with grassroots communities in India, Papua New Guinea and the UK. She convenes the London Boroughs Faiths Network, which brings local multi faith networks together with the public sector to share experience and expertise on public policy. In the summer of 2001, she co-founded Clapham and Stockwell Faith Forum (CSFF), an active network of people from different faith traditions in London working for the benefit of the local community. CSFF was particularly active following the bombing of London in 2005 when Mrs Robertson played key role in reducing tensions among Muslims and other faiths. More recently, she was part of an interfaith visit to Bosnia. She has contributed chapters to two books published by Canterbury Press: Regeneration and Renewal, the church in new and changing communities, ed. M Torry (2007) and Together and Different, Christians engaging with people of other faiths (2008), ed M Torry & S Thorley. Mrs Robertson started the Wandsworth Multi-Faith Network, sits on the Anglican Diocese of Southwark's Mission Group and is a trustee of Lambeth Mediation Service. She keeps in touch with a wide network of people through her blog www.multifaith.wordpress.com.



Arif Anis Malik is a writer, blogger, personal development coach, a motivational public speaker and a rehabilitation consultant. Due to a diverse background in literature, Psychology and business management, he has developed assorted interests ranging from spirituality, NLP (Neurolinguistic Programming), leadership, political economy and crisis and conflict management. His work ranges from the broad spectrum of consultancy, civil services, political activism, civil society organisations, entrepreneurship and academics. He has written intensively on time management, self, motivation, communication and purpose in life. He co-authored his first book on time management titled 'Tick Tick Dollar' in 2000. His second book 'Bravo-You Can Do It' was published in 2002 and became a bestseller. Later he compiled and edited 'Follow Your Dream' in 2007, which is mainly a collection of inspiring tales and uplifting stories.



Study Tour
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