

**Manama Process
for the Activation of joint Islamic
Action to Counter Extremism,
Sectarianism and Terrorism**



I. Conceptual and referential framework

Among the salient features of these modern times are the widespread chaos and escalating violence, hostility, enmity and warfare. More than any other part of the world, the Islamic world is suffering from this situation which plays havoc with the stability and security of Muslim societies. The Islamic world has in fact become a target of terrorist organizations and pernicious currents that reinforce radical and sectarian ideologies, project a distorted image of Islam, instigate sectarian, ethnic and religious strife and spread the culture of 'heretization', excommunication (takfir) and killing. All of this goes against the grain of the tolerant principles of the Islamic faith; jeopardizes the security, stability and harmony of Muslim societies; and inflicts heavy losses on their economies, thus ruining any chances of achieving the desired economic takeoff.

This culture of extremism, sectarianism and terrorism is in total and utter conflict with the values and purposes of the Islamic religion. For many centuries, Muslim societies have lived in social peace, cohesion and harmony among their ethnic, linguistic and religious components, basking in the shadow of the values of justice, respect of difference and a prevalent culture of tolerance and coexistence.

Objective Western historians of Islamic civilization affirm that Islamic cities have served for centuries as platforms of knowledge, dialogue and fruitful civilizational interaction, and as beacons of a religious tolerance founded on the values of compassion and humanity that are enshrined in the spirit of Islamic law. Historical evidence of this can be found in the biography of Mohammed (PBUH) and the Rightly-Guided Caliphs, as well as in numerous other Islamic lands.

It is indubitable that the lands of Islam shone by their ability to guarantee the safety and coexistence of diverse religious and ethnic communities. They promoted the principle of respect for doctrinal differences and gentle argumentation with the People of the Book, safeguarding their dignity and protecting them against all forms of cultural and religious discrimination: "**O mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female and made you into nations and tribes that ye may know each other (not that ye may despise each other). Verily the most honored of you in the sight of Allah is (he who is) the most righteous of you. And Allah has full knowledge and is well acquainted (with all things).**" (Al-Hujurat, verse 13).

Furthermore, Muslims have always been sternly warned against the pitfalls of accusing other Muslims of heresy and apostasy and of making light of such accusations in view of their grave repercussions. The Muslim's moderate inclination prompted him to be always mindful of the consequences of his words and deeds, to be attentive to verification, caution and virtue, always pursuing the objectives of harmony, mutual affection and counsel. The prevailing culture has thus always been one of respect for the rights of God and those of other creatures.

The rising culture of extremism, terrorism and sectarianism and the spread of its destructive dangers dictate the mobilization of all cultural action stakeholders, in the comprehensive sense of a cultural action that covers all areas of knowledge, culture, education and communication. The aim is to bolster the security approach to this phenomenon and integrate it in a holistic and effective approach to the growing threat of extremism and violence in their various and ever mutating forms.

This is what the Manama Process seeks to achieve as a guiding document whose contents emphasize the Islamic world's need to:

- Raise awareness of the importance of a genuine and participative commitment to the confrontation of all forms of extremism, terrorism and sectarianism, coordinate the efforts of government sectors, legislative, judicial, security and civil society institutions, and coordinate all initiatives undertaken in this regard;
- Refute allegations and claims about the failure of the Islamic world to face up to extremism, terrorism and sectarianism;
- Develop a comprehensive action plan in the short and medium term to counter extremism, sectarianism and terrorism. The plan's educational, cultural and media approaches would be complementary and supportive of the security approach;
- Reclaim the lofty position of the Islamic civilization and its values which are founded on moderation, peace and cultural and civilizational interactions with the Other.

Manama Process is founded on the references of joint Islamic and international cultural action on to the fight against extremism, sectarianism and terrorism. These references include **the Cultural Strategy for the Islamic World** as amended by the 10th Islamic Conference of Culture Ministers (Khartoum, 2017), **the Strategy of Islamic Cultural Action Outside the Islamic World**, **the Strategy for Bringing Muslim Madhahib Closer Together**, adopted by the 10th Islamic Summit Conference (Putra Jaya, Malaysia, in October 2003), and **the Islamic Declaration on Cultural Diversity** adopted by the 4th Islamic Conference of Culture Ministers (Algiers, December 2004). It also includes **the Islamic Declaration on Cultural Rights** adopted by the 8th Islamic Conference of Culture Ministers (Al Madinah Al Munawarah, January 2014), **the Action Plan to Renew Cultural Policies in Member States and Adapt them to International Changes**, adopted by the 5th Islamic Conference of Culture Ministers (Tripoli, November 2007), **the Action Plan For the Promotion of the Role of Cultural Mediation in the Islamic World**, adopted by the 9th Islamic Conference of Culture Ministers (Muscat, November 2015), **“the General Framework of the Programme of Action to Refute the Media Smear Campaigns against Islam and the Islamic Civilization”**, adopted by the 4th Islamic Conference of Culture Ministers (Algiers, 2004), **“the Course to Train Journalists and Broadcasters in Addressing Stereotypes about Islam and Muslims in Western Media”**, by the 7th Islamic Conference of Culture Ministers (Algiers, 2011) and the 9th Islamic Conference of Information Ministers, (Libreville, 2012), **“the Study on Western Media Contents on Islam in light of International Law”**, adopted by the 9th Islamic Conference of Culture Ministers (Muscat, 2015) and the 11th Islamic Conference of Information Ministers (Jeddah, 2016), **the OIC Convention on Combating International Terrorism**, **the Arab Convention for the Suppression of Terrorism**, and **Makkah Declaration** issued by the World Conference on Islam and the Fight against Terrorism (Makkah Al Mukarramah, February 2015), as well as the relevant regional and international agreements and conventions.

II. Targeted fields of action

The Manama Process focuses on countering extremism, terrorism and sectarianism by strengthening the culture of moderation in various cultural sectors and related media, on the one hand, and by promoting this culture in areas that support and complement cultural action, on the other hand.

Thus, the Manama Process considers that the areas warranting priority attention include **the legislative sphere**, as the legal framework that should rule on the illegality of radical phenomena, criminalize all terrorist acts and protect society from behavior that fuels violence and sectarianism. **The second area is human rights**, which is founded on a new human rights culture of supporting plans against all forms of abuse of individuals and collective rights. **The third sphere is educational** where it is essential to review educational systems to make them more compatible with the orientation towards protecting society from sliding into violence under its various forms. There is also **the social dimension** which seeks to revitalize the culture of compassion, solidarity, Takaful and mutual assistance. Then it comes **communication** which plays a crucial role in raising awareness within societies of the dangers of terrorism, extremism and sectarianism, and bettering the level of media content to promote peace and social cohesion. There is also **the economic sphere** which dictates a new approach to solidarity-based economic growth that can confront the poverty, social exclusion and vulnerability that serve as catalysts to extremism and sectarianism. Then there is **the religious and intellectual sphere** which speaks to the contributions of Imams, religious preachers, intellectuals and thinkers to the analysis and critique of the discourses of radicals and terrorists and correction of the inaccuracies thereon, and **the artistic field** where attention can be focused on sensitizing social categories to the dangers of terrorism, extremism sectarianism through diverse artistic and cultural media that play a decisive role in shaping collective awareness. Add to this **the security culture** which comes through a consolidation of the culture of peace, laying bridges of trust between citizens and security officials, recognizing the value of security efforts in protecting society from the dangers of extremism, terrorism and sectarianism that threaten social stability and security.

All of these areas share one common denominator which is the sphere of training, undertaken to enable all relevant role-players to acquire the skills and competencies necessary to play their part in countering extremism, terrorism and sectarianism.

III. Breakdown of the fields of action

1. The legislative field:

The act of legislating reflects the legal awareness of society's representatives at the legislative institutions. Enacting laws translates the vigilance of State institutions and their readiness to protect citizens against all forms of aggression that may undermine individual and collective rights, especially when it comes to the fight against extremism, terrorism and sectarianism and the immunization of society and state institutions against any actions or positions that may undermine overall security.

The Manama Process aims to support the efforts of Member States in this regard and urge competent authorities to legally formulate the provisions and sanctions related to the fight against all forms of extremism and terrorism, and to keep abreast of relevant developments in procedures and on the ground. These include, for example:

- The constitutional criminalization of terrorist phenomena, of incitement to violence and extremism and of fuelling sectarian strife, drawing inspiration instead from the Madinah Covenant which enshrined the values of coexistence of all customs and religious communities during the Prophet's time, and regarding this covenant as a supreme reference.
- The constant adaptation and amendment of laws to accommodate changes related to terrorism, sectarianism and incitement to violence and extremism, as well as the enactment of sanctions against contents that instigate violence and sectarianism, and the denigration of cultural symbols.
- The regulation of charity and endowment (waqf) activities to ensure that they do not become a source for financing for terrorism, enacting sanctions against radicalism, terrorism and sectarianism in the virtual world, and criminalizing electronic recruitment.
- The establishment of judicial entities dedicated exclusively to terrorism, extremism and sectarianism issues and backing them up with 'legislative vigilance' committees that would monitor the various legislative developments related to this and adapt them to local contexts, engage in conjecture studies on extremism, sectarianism and terrorism phenomena, and promote exchanges and networking on legislation-related regional and international experiences.

2. Human rights field:

It is very common these days to speak about human rights at long length and in their multiple details. The interest is such that a human rights index was adopted, using rights, including cultural ones, as a measure in the classification and categorization of societies as civilized or backward. It has also become common to link the growth of intellectual and sectarian extremism and terrorism to failure so to empower individuals and groups in their civil, economic and cultural rights.

It is clear that the Islamic world, where a number of countries suffer from these phenomena, is deeply preoccupied with the need to emphasize its deeply-rooted human rights culture. This culture speaks to the Islamic values advocating the guarantee of peace and security for individuals and society and rejecting all forms of violence, extremism, sectarianism and terrorism. The Islamic world is determined to guarantee their full rights to all social classes, in line with its own approach that stands out by giving precedence to the rights of the community over those of individuals, and to obligations over rights.

For these considerations, the Manama Process has the ambition to expand the scope of awareness of rights and to establish a culture of duty and obligation through the following:

- Emphasizing the right of citizens to security and highlighting their duty to defend society's security and stability. This necessitates the adoption of an integrated

cultural strategy by Islamic governmental and civil society institutions with the aim of educating young generations about the right of each and every one to safety and stability, and the management of society's affairs through inclusive participation and constructive dialogue. It also entails the inclusion in cultural policies and programmes of human rights-related contents that is protective of society's rights, stability and security, predominantly relying in this regard on new cultural carriers and mediums to guarantee the broad dissemination of the human rights culture and the clarification of every citizen's right to live in a secure society where precedence is given to mutual respect, concord and observance of rules guaranteeing social security;

- Revitalizing the culture of human rights in ways that entrench the principle of education on duty and responsibility. It is the duty of every citizen to recognize the other's right to come into and enjoy the same rights as his or her own. And it is the duty of every citizen to protect the others' rights and take responsibility for their security and defense;
- Emphasizing the importance of implementing the contents of the Islamic Declaration on Cultural Diversity in order to uphold the cultural right to diversity and plurality as governed by the laws and charters in force, and to ensure everyone's awareness of this aspect.

3. Educational field:

One of the most important factors behind the imbalance of educational systems in a number of Islamic countries is the failure of these systems to adjust to the spirit of modern times, their inability to foresee social change processes and the transformation of thinking patterns among the third millennium generation. This generation warrants special attention and a good understanding of its problems and aspirations, as well as the identification of the most effective ways of increasing its interest in knowledge and skill acquisition to meet the new developmental challenges in general, and fend off the serious ramifications of extremism, terrorism and sectarianism and the extent of their spread, in particular;

All Muslim societies recognize that education and schooling have the ability to protect society from slipping into the quagmire of extremism and descend into the abyss of ethnic and religious strife. In contemporary times, education constitutes the mainstay of any economic takeoff, progress and cultural advancement, and any failure to meet the conditions of educational renewal can lead to a degeneration of society and the loss of the sense of identity, and impede this society's path to progress.

For this reason, the Manama Process urges educational authorities to:

- Include in educational policies curricular and extracurricular programmes and activities that have proven their effectiveness in immunizing children and young people against extremist ideologies and hate, starting with the affirmation through curricula that Islam is a religion of love and peace, not one of oppression and fighting, and that the premise of argumentation with the opposing Other is gentle and wise dialogue and compassion and peace in dealing with them. These curricula are then to be purged of all forms of heretization, vilification and excommunication, and invitations to unlawful killing. Instead, they must teach students to condemn the culture of racism, hatred

and ethnic superiority, and that the act of promoting morality and warning against vice obey to certain rules and conditions, including those of knowledge and good character. They must also teach them that the act of judgment is the prerogative of law and order institutions, emphasizing the importance of respecting divine religions and refraining from denigrating them, and of leaving debates on doctrinal divergences to knowledgeable and specialized people;

- Focusing in pre-school phase on fostering the values of love and tolerance in the minds and attitudes of children, adopting stringent criteria when monitoring these institutions to guarantee this, and enabling educators to acquire appropriate skills and methods through training;
- Combating schooling interruption by rehabilitating dropout students to prevent their recruitment by terrorist organizations that offer an alternative extremist education; addressing school violence causes through sensitization programmes and protecting the educational environment from drug traffickers and criminals who destabilize the educational process; creating a surveillance cell in schools to monitor deviant behavior patterns, extremism manifestations and violent and discriminatory tendencies among students;
- Empowering students to acquire life, professional and communicative skills that favor the shaping of a strong but humble personality, self-confidence and respect for others, ability to express oneself without resorting to violence, to manage conflict and to show team spirit. This can be achieved, for example, by organizing sensitization campaigns on the dangers of terrorism and sectarianism, setting up youth camps and summer schools where debates can be held allowing pupils and students to express their opinions about radical thought and violent extremism, establishing student-run broadcasts to spread the culture of rejecting extremism and terrorism, and awarding incentives for creativity around this issue.

4. Religious and Intellectual field:

There is no doubt that the aforementioned approaches are essential to confronting extremism, terrorism and sectarianism, but the religious and intellectual approach remains of fundamental importance. Terrorism finds its justification in the misreading of religious texts and resorts to deviant, ostensibly "religious", concepts to build its propaganda, promote extremism, sectarianism and terrorism and attract youth who often lack the necessary religious knowledge.

The endeavors of Imams, religious preachers and thinkers remain insufficient since the culture of extremism continues to expand. Furthermore, there is a category of educated young people, both in Islamic countries and abroad, who have started to espouse extremist theses, exposing a flaw in the academic practice and in the intellectual system around the understanding and critique of extremist discourses and providing alternative discourses based on moderation, the middle stance and coexistence.

The Manama Process considers that a number of specific conditions must be met to achieve a religious and intellectual awakening in the study of terrorism, extremism and

sectarianism. These conditions include the moral prerequisite which dictates that Imams, religious preachers and researchers show seriousness, objectivity and academic integrity and freedom from intellectual intolerance. The cognitive prerequisite entails a continuous renewal of knowledge, acquisition of new thinking and learning modes, and knowledge in multi-disciplinary fields. As for the methodological prerequisite, it presupposes mastery of all the approaches and methods that can be put to contribution in reaching the desired results.

The Manama Process affirms that the success of the religious intellectual approach in countering extremism, terrorism and sectarianism is contingent upon the activation of a number of means, including:

- Guaranteeing the intellectual freedom of researchers in a consistent manner with the civilizational constants, involving them in developing plans and programmes to combat terrorism, and creating bridges between the various fields of knowledge, particularly between Islamic Sharia scholars, Imams, religious preachers and researchers in humanities to guarantee the adoption of a comprehensive and integrated action plan for correcting misconceptions about the alleged legitimacy of extremist ideologies, and urging scholars to formulate simplified responses to the claims of terrorists, for the benefit of students and the general public;
- Introducing postgraduate programmes in university institutions on the study of the phenomenon terrorism, extremism, sectarianism and responses thereto, hosting research centers specialized in this field, commissioning researchers in specialized scientific journals to study ways of fighting terrorism and extremism, encouraging translation and doctoral dissertations on this subject, awarding prizes to outstanding ones, including programmes of religious sensitization and respect for intellectual difference and religious and doctrinal pluralism in university curricula, to introduce students to a culture of intellectual and religious moderation;
- Creating a database of specialized studies on radical thought, extremism and terrorism, and launching interactive digital sites dedicated to refuting this thought and responding to the allegations of terrorists and extremists, establishing observatories for religious and intellectual vigilance and presenting the religious and intellectual reviews carried out in response to the prominent figures of extremist formations;
- Renewing religious knowledge by opening up religious institutions to new knowledge, directing scholars and intellectuals to engage in sensitization campaigns and in the intellectual and religious rehabilitation of terrorism-related prisoners. Of equal relevance is attention to the issues of Muslims living abroad and new converts, enabling them to acquire true knowledge of Islam and its love and peace advocating values and immunity against violence, radicalism, sectarianism and terrorism. Encouraging Muslim scholars and thinkers to hold intellectual debates between moderate religious thinkers and the advocates of intellectual extremism, and debates with Western scholars and thinkers on Islam, terrorism and extremism.

5. Social field:

A fully integrated approach to countering terrorism, extremism and sectarianism must take into account the pivotal role of the social aspect. Terrorist behavior feeds on belligerence

towards and resentment of society and its members and thrives easily within a social incubator that legitimizes it, protects it and helps it burrow deeply into the social fabric. Social incubators consist of the family, relative networks, tribal and religious affiliations and relations born out of alliances of interests. These incubators transmit values, experiences and perceptions of oneself, the other and the rest of the world to all others belonging to them. Social incubators become a breeding ground for terrorism when young people are raised hating and resenting society, condition individuals culturally, psychologically and intellectually to accept the ideologies of terrorists and extremists, and foster support for and allegiance to them.

These social extremes also feed on the lack of social justice, the favoring of loyalty over merit, racial and religious discrimination, cultural contempt towards a particular social group, and the economic exclusion of certain social categories.

In view of this, Manama Process calls for restoring the culture of compassion, social solidarity and human understanding, a culture that is firmly rooted in Islam and in the behavior of Muslims.

The following may help to achieve this:

- Training families to play educational and preventive roles in order to immunize children and young generations against extremism, sectarianism and terrorism. This includes raising children in the respect of justice and equity, rejecting injustice and discrimination against people on grounds of their religious, ethnic or social affiliation, respecting the right to difference, empowering legal institutions to intervene when diverging parties exceed the limits of their freedom as guaranteed by the law, and raising children on a culture of rational dialogue favoring the acquisition of the ability to listen and not rush to judgments. This dictates that the family acquires a religious culture on Islam's moderation and middle stance and is sensitized through parenting programmes, proximity activities and media programmes to the multiple threats that could affect their children, most important of which is the danger of the digital world and its radical thought propaganda contents;
- Revitalizing social mediation institutions to reclaim their role in resolving disputes between individuals and groups and proposing suitable solutions, urging community leaders known for their upright morals and wisdom to participate in and promote these mediation efforts in order to counter the culture of ethnic, tribal and sectarian intolerance and help spread the values of respect and brotherhood among society's various components. The aim is to also promote a culture of giving and values of humility and compassion, and encourage charity, endowments and donations through the creation of social funds to support the needy, far from any sectarian, ethnic or religious bias;
- Rehabilitating young people and training them in voluntary and charitable work, and sensitizing them to the danger of engaging in certain charities that use charity as a subterfuge to attract young people and recruit them among the ranks of terrorists;
- Formulating a consensus-based social charter to combat terrorism, extremism and sectarianism under the aegis of a national civil society council that would be established

and in turn serve within a regional body that would be created under the name of “Islamic World Forum for Civil Society Organizations against Terrorism, Extremism and Sectarianism”.

6. Media field:

The digital revolution and the development of social media have created an immense gap between these new media and the traditional ones and their discourse. Terrorist organizations have heavily invested in the interactive audiovisual and digital field, creating a platform for radical indoctrination and communication bridges with young people and children to better recruit them to serve their dubious designs. Making matters worse are the increasingly biased and sectarian talk shows and their satellite channels specialized in fatwas, the growing spread of the culture of heretization and excommunication, and declaring others as immoral, the digital world's immunity to control or censorship, and the inability of the authorities to create new discourses that can divert the attention of youth away from these trends that inspire awe in them before the means and methods deployed by terrorist organizations to promote and propagate their ideas.

The Manama Process seeks to boost the role of modern media and social networks as part of an all-inclusive project to confront extremism, fanaticism and hatred, dismantle terrorism modes through media and involve citizens in denouncing and expressing rejection for violent behavior and extremist ideologies. This may be achieved through the following:

- Renewing the media system in form and substance by adopting new approaches and working methods, formulating a meaningful and well-crafted discourse that is more persuasive and capable of refuting the extremist rhetoric, strengthening the resistance of individuals and groups to these ideologies and defending their psychological, religious, intellectual and cultural security;
- Producing media programmes that respect Islamic values and moral codes are attentive to the sanctity of Muslims and their symbols and determined to avoid badmouthing through slander and accusations and the denigration of certain social, ethnic or religious groups as this contributes significantly to fuelling extremism and sectarianism;
- Supporting audio-visual and print media that observe objectivity, integrity and intelligence in addressing terrorist events and dedicating awards to encourage them to intensify their efforts to educate citizens, especially children and young people about the illegality of joining terrorist organizations or praising their work. Instead, these media must foster in their minds and behavior the Islamic values of love and tolerance, and alert them to the illegality of excommunication, labeling someone as immoral or heretic, and unlawful killing in the name of religion;
- Building the capacity of media professionals and training them to fully understand the phenomenon of terrorism, extremist ideologies and sectarianism, and preparing a generation of young media professionals to contribute to countering terrorist attacks over the network and social media by producing documentaries, talk shows and simplified video segments that expose extremist ideology, as well as establishing interactive sites specialized in refuting terrorist allegations;

- Developing the religious institutions' media discourse by adopting new policies regarding the issuance of correct fatwas, harnessing social media to disseminate them, and addressing, at the same time, the fatwas of extremist parties, exposing their contradiction with the fundamentals and principles of Islamic law.

7. Economic field:

Endemic poverty, economic inequalities and exclusion are some of the reasons favoring the emergence of social breeding grounds of terrorism, enabling terrorist organizations to attract disgruntled people, luring them sometimes with money, others with false promises of changing their economic situation for the better.

The terrorist discourse uses, inter alia, economic arguments. For example, it accuses existing regimes of economic corruption, inequitable distribution of national wealth, submissiveness to unfair conditions imposed by international powers, peddles theses that the people under these regimes live under the weight of economic colonialism, and calls for ceasing all allegiance to these regimes and joining the terrorists' ranks which, allegedly, would guarantee the desired social and economic justice.

Poverty does not necessarily lead to joining terrorist organizations but it is a catalyst for a number of poor categories where the psychological and doctrinal conditions for embracing extremist and terrorist ideas are met. Failure to achieve comprehensive human development gives terrorist organizations a strong opportunity and motive to secure the necessary social support and acquire the legitimacy to defend marginalized people by promises to bring about a utopic society that tickle their feelings and dreams.

To contribute to eliminating the exploitation of poverty and economic vulnerability exploitation to attract poor and unemployed youth into the world of extremism, violence and terrorism, Manama Process calls upon the competent authorities to identify economic alternatives, especially for young people, to facilitate their integration into the economic fabric. Such alternatives would include:

- Creating a new development model that is based on solidary economy and would be given priority in public policies, a model where all productive public and private institutions are put to contribution in achieving economic justice. Economic disparities between cities and villages would thus be reduced and youth would be motivated to work thanks to financial, technical and legal assistance and advice in the establishment and coaching of small and medium-sized enterprises, the promotion of economic cooperatives and the granting of legal privileges and tax exemptions;
- Encouraging benefactors and waqf institutions to direct donations and endowment funds towards economically supporting disadvantaged groups, young people wishing to start economic projects and establish small and medium enterprises, and to redeemed extremists and terrorists to enable them to have a source of income and a decent living, as well as to the families of terrorism victims, as part of the greater social solidarity framework;

- Involving civil society associations in raising awareness of the culture of economic solidarity, in protecting the national economy and its institutions from direct and indirect terrorist attacks and from financial operations and transactions associated with economic terrorism, and monitoring such activities through the establishment of an observatory of economic risks lined to terrorism.

8. Artistic field:

Artistic expressions and media, whether traditional or modern, such as music, folklore, cinema, theater, plastic arts, etc., have been and continue to be manifestations of the creativity and innovative spirit of artists, bringing to the fore the aesthetics of these arts and their ability to interact with the feelings and sentiments of the public either to entertain them, tackle their daily life issues or enhance collective awareness of other aspects that have regional and international implications.

Convinced of the crucial role of artistic expressions and media in shaping and influencing attitude and behavior, Manama Process believes that these can significantly contribute, as a soft power, to countering the phenomena of violence, extremism, sectarianism and terrorism, and that this should feature among the priorities of the works of artists and creative people in these times. Actions that may help achieve this are:

- Reinstating artistic education and culture and raising awareness of the role of arts, including folklore in the consolidation of common human values and addressing social issues, especially violent extremism, sectarianism and terrorism, general development issues, and promoting their teaching in a manner that does not contradict the religious and cultural values of Muslim societies;
- Increasing anti-terrorism artistic productions prepared with the necessary objectivity and professional quality, far from material and profit pursuits and the gratuitous provocation of religious sentiments, suitable for the cultural specificities of the recipient, contributing to his enhanced awareness of the respect of cultural diversity and helping dismantle radical discourses through sound and persuasive dialogue;
- Compiling a database on works of art that condemn extremism, sectarianism and terrorism, sharing technical expertise in combating it, and producing joint cinematographic, dramatic, musical or artistic works that showcase the tolerance of Islam and its peace and compassion values and its rejection of violence, and that expose the dangers of extremism and terrorism;
- Supporting works of art that combat terrorism, extremism and sectarianism and promote the culture of peace and moderation, allocating prizes, and training workers in art academies and institutes in artistic production that seeks to raise awareness of the dangers of violent extremism, as well as encouraging playwrights, particularly of films and plays destined for children and young people, to formulate contents and artistic elements that have the ability to dismantle and refute the extremist rhetoric.

9. Security culture field:

The security approach, tangible in the intervention of security forces through pre-emptive operations or during terrorist attacks is crucial for security and stability. However, specialized studies urge for expanding the scope of the security approach to cover other forms of security, such as intellectual, religious, economic, cultural and environmental security, as well as food, health, political, and community security. This requires reviewing this security policy to accommodate all these areas, and involving all relevant role-players in the formulation and implementation of this security policy, with special focus on social security. The latter targets the efficiency of society and its ability to confront all dangers threatening it, presently and in the future, and undermining its identity, religion, language, culture, customs, lifestyle, cohesion and survival.

Some of the key measures proposed by the Manama Process to achieve society's security are the following:

- Establishing a new security culture in the Islamic world, based first on a better sensitization of all social categories to the legitimacy of the security approach in confronting extremism and its threats to security and stability, and how protecting citizens from these dangers and enforcing laws is entrusted to the relevant legal authorities. The other element in this culture is the involvement of all components of society in confronting these dangers and leveling the ground for this by rebuilding trust between citizens and security institutions and fostering the culture of cooperation between them on bases of transparency, credibility and legal awareness;
- Abstaining, under this new security culture, from violating the rights of citizens with the pretext of combating terrorism, raising awareness of the primacy of social security over individual rights while ensuring the fair treatment of those who are in breach of the law and guaranteeing a fair trial for them, providing counseling and adopting a conciliatory approach towards reformed offenders, and providing prisoners with educational and training services in penitentiaries;
- Ensuring the adoption, by security institutions, of a communication policy targeting all components of society, especially schools, religious and university institutions to call attention to the relevance and nature of their role in containing terrorist and extremist threats, encouraging young people, intellectuals, thinkers and religious leaderships to participate in addressing the challenges of terrorism, examining and evaluating security policies and broadening the scope of consultations around them;
- Adopting a policy of continuous training of security elements and building their knowledge and ability to understand the types of extremist discourses and the ways of their prevention. Introducing Masters and doctorate degrees in contemporary security studies to specialize in combating extremism and terrorism, and developing curricula and specialized approaches to conflict management and security-related challenges;
- Enhancing security coordination among Member States, endeavoring to operationalize relevant bilateral and multilateral agreements and treaties, seeking to improve them and enhance their outcomes, and developing an Islamic strategy for social security and for combating extremism and terrorism.

10. Field of training:

Training and capacity-building in the fight against extremism, terrorism and sectarianism are essential in monitoring and responding to the extremist rhetoric. The training of teachers, parents, religious, cultural, artistic and educational leaderships, security elements, elected officials and holders of waqf projects, and coaching them to better understand the dangers and challenges of terrorism is essential to achieving the desired goals and participating in exposing all forms of terrorism and the culture of extremism, hatred and sectarianism. Manama Process calls for focusing on the training of the following categories:

a. Teachers:

To succeed in the fight against extremism and terrorism, the teaching staff must be involved in understanding and assessing the dangers of terrorism, and acquire the ability to critique and refute the arguments of extremism. It is thus necessary to develop training programmes tailored for teachers to acquaint them with the nature of terrorist organizations, their intellectual and religious fundamentals and the reference that shapes their discourses, and enable them to correct misconceptions about them in the minds of pupils and students.

b. Religious leaderships:

Extremist networks make every effort to influence imams, preachers, and the leaders of certain daa'wa organizations into adopting their theses and pledging allegiance to them. Therefore, training programmes targeting imams and preachers are necessary and urgent to immunize them against this extremist ideology and enable them to benefit from adequate training in this regard and from relevant and successful experiences. This would help them acquire good debate and argumentation skills and the ability to understand reality and predict the course of its future progression, and would also ensure that the religious counseling and guidance dispensed to counter extremism, sectarianism and terrorism can be fruitful and supportive of spiritual and social security.

c. Media:

The development of training programmes in media and how to formulate the required journalistic response to extremist thought is important to prevent the deviation of the media discourse or its ineffectiveness in serving the general objectives of countering extremist, terrorist and sectarian policies. Advances in communication technologies, the emergence of new forms of social communication, the domination of the image and instant text, audio and visual messages, all of these developments render imperative training to acquire new communication skills with young people and children in order to convey constructive messages around the condemnation of extremism, terrorism and immunize society against them.

d. Philanthropists and holders of waqf projects:

Training programmes are essential for this category in help dry up one of the main sources of terrorism financing. Terrorist organizations exploit religion and charity to collect funds from

benefactors and Waqf funds in order to finance their terrorist operations. Training sessions must therefore be organized for this category of philanthropists, to familiarize them with the fraudulent methods of terrorist organizations and provide them with religious and legal evidence of the prohibition of terrorist acts and of their financing.

The assistance of experts in terrorism financing can be sought to explain the various means and ways used to finance terrorism, and scholars can be put to contribution in clarifying the legitimate and constructive ways of spending money and dedicating Waqfs to benefit society and guarantee safety from fraud and fabrications.

e. Civil society activists:

Civil society organizations are a key contributor to social development as they help alleviate and prevent social imbalances. Thus, training the workers and leaders of these NGOs to understand extremism, terrorism and sectarianism and the effective ways of dismantling the social fabric of extremism will greatly contribute to the rationalization of voluntary and social actions and improve their quality. It will also enhance the awareness of all citizens of the dangers lurking behind extremism, terrorism and sectarianism.

f. Artists:

Artists and creative people have an important role to play in confronting extremism and terrorism, hence the importance of their participation in raising the public's awareness through artistic forms and media that combine the aesthetical aspect and the loftiness of message, to protect society from terrorism, extremism and sectarianism.

g. Family counseling:

An important instrument aiding in countering extremism, terrorism and sectarianism is training social workers specialized in family orientation to sensitize families to these plagues, and adopt a comprehensive family guidance plan in this regard. This would enable families to understand violent behavior and help them with the early detection of its signs in children and young people. It would ensure the prevention of terrorism, extremism and sectarianism and contribute to purging the social breeding grounds of extremism.

h. Category in charge of penitentiary and prison institutions:

It is indispensable to develop training programmes for this category which can play a pivotal role to change the thinking and behaviour of detainees and prisoners due to committing crimes in the name of religion, faith, or culture of extremism, zealotry and rejection of the other, so as to help them behave in a consistent manner with applicable laws and regulations and respect the cultural and religious pluralism and diversity.

Stages and mechanisms of implementing Manama Process

The Manama Process aspires to keep abreast of national, regional and international strategies and plans to confront extremism, sectarianism and terrorism through the relevant

institutions and government sectors, and through the new bodies, mechanisms and partnerships proposed for creation in the Process' fields of action according to the following implementation phases:

- Formulating the executive conception of the Manama Process at the national level through the creation of an enlarged multidisciplinary committee made up of the public and private sectors, legislative, religious and security bodies, and civil society associations;
- Including activities and projects aimed at activating the Manama Process in the policies and programmes of supporting and sponsoring sectors;
- Implementing these activities and projects through government sectors and civil society organizations;
- Evaluating the results of the activities and projects implemented with a view to improving and adapting them to the relevant variables;
- Drafting national reports on accomplishments made within the framework of the Manama Process and presenting them to the sessions of the Islamic Conference of Culture Ministers.