

JOURNALISTS' GUIDE

Violent Extremism: Definition and Terminology



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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AP	Associated Press
ATD	Anti-Terrorism Directorate
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
CNN	Cable News Network
FTF	Foreign Terrorist Fighter
IOM	International Organization for Migration
ISIL	Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant
ISIS	Islamic State of Syria and Iraq
KCSS	Kosovar Center for Security Studies
KIA	Kosovo Intelligence Agency
KP	Kosovo Police
MIA	Ministry of Internal Affairs
USA	United States of America

INTRODUCTION

This guide is an effort by the Kosovo Center for Security Studies (KCSS) to address, in cooperation with Kosovo media, the absence of a compendium of the terminology and practices, in order to properly respond to the need for more accurate and substantive surveys and reporting on the phenomenon of violent extremism in Kosovo. This guide is a product of KCSS's research and of the longstanding experience of its researchers on recognizing and studying violent extremism and its origin in Kosovo, compiled with the support of the US Department of State and the US Embassy in Kosovo and through broad consultations with Kosovo media news desks, editors, journalists and local reporters from municipalities and the capital.

Violent extremism is a relatively new phenomenon in Kosovo and, at its outset, scholars and journalists both around the world and in Kosovo often lacked the theoretical and practical knowledge to report on the phenomenon, in particular about a movement and security challenge they were almost entirely unfamiliar with. Despite a significantly improved situation, unlike world media that have invested in standard procedures and the establishment of legal and ethics departments, Kosovo's media continue to lack a common platform to standardize reporting on violent extremism.

Through this document, the KCSS aims to initiate a process of cooperation, which has already proven to be fruitful, among Kosovo media, researchers and civil society to push forward a progressive agenda that focuses its efforts on the democratization of the public sphere and the promotion of a genuine debate on informing Kosovo citizens as accurately as possible.

Despite being primarily intended for use by the media, this guide is an initial effort to harmonize the knowledge on violent extremism and to clarify a host of issues pertaining to this phenomenon. It is also intended for use by Kosovo insti-

tutions, non-governmental organizations, research institutes, analysts and commentators, and all researchers seeking basic knowledge on violent extremism.

In addition, this guide provides an overview of the background and main established facts on violent extremism in Kosovo, an overview of the legal aspects related to tackling this phenomenon, some international media practices on reporting on specific terrorist groups and terrorist attacks, and a glossary of over 7,000 words employed in the propaganda effort of the Islamic State terrorist organization, which have not been previously used in Kosovo, in order to increase the media's awareness of the usages of these words or terms in their reports.

BACKGROUND OF VIOLENT EXTREMISM IN KOSOVO

- > Since 2012, about 403 Kosovo citizens have traveled to the war theater in Syria and Iraq. Of these, about 255 are foreign fighters, while the rest are women and children;
- > A large number of Kosovo's foreign terrorist fighters have traveled with their families to Syria and Iraq. Over 80% of families that traveled from Kosovo to Syria and Iraq did so after the proclamation of the Islamic Caliphate. There is still no explanation or serious study of the main reasons why a large number of Kosovo families traveled to Syria and Iraq to join ISIS and other organizations;
- > In September 2014, under US leadership was established the International Coalition against Terrorism to defeat the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS). Kosovo is a member of this coalition and has significantly contributed to the fight against terrorism and violent extremism. Kosovo's activities against terrorism and violent extremism have been highly appreciated by the international partners of this coalition;
- > So far, it is reported that about 75 Kosovo citizens have lost their lives in the war in Syria and Iraq. It is also reported that one woman and child from Kosovo have passed away in Syria and Iraq, not due to combat, but for reasons that remain unknown. None of the cases of dead Kosovo combatants and citizens in the wars of Syria and Iraq are officially confirmed;

- Kosovo is known for its harsh response to individuals who have been part of terrorist organizations in Syria and Iraq. In July 2014, in an operation across the country, Kosovo police arrested about 80 individuals suspected of funding and supporting the Islamic State terrorist organization and of recruiting Kosovo citizens to join terrorist organizations such as ISIS, Al Fatah, al-SHAM and others, which were active in Syria and Iraq;
- Most foreign terrorist fighters (FTF) from Kosovo traveled to the theaters of war in Syria and Iraq between 2012 and the first half of 2014. Their departure to these areas preceded the proclamation of the so-called "Islamic State" in Syria and Iraq;
- About 135 Kosovo nationals have returned from Syria and Iraq. Of the returnees, 117 are foreign fighters, while the rest are women and children.
- It is believed that around 140-150 Kosovo citizens are still in the theaters of war in Syria and Iraq, most of whom are women and children. A small number of them are in Turkey. So far, their return to Kosovo has been impossible due to Turkey's refusal to grant them entry and organize their return to Kosovo. Kosovo's institutions have expressed their readiness and made the necessary preparations to grant entry and for the reintegration of its citizens in Kosovo, especially the women and children;
- Most returnees are men who, upon their return, have been prosecuted and arrested for their offense, while only seven women and five children have been registered as returnees over this period. The return of foreign fighters constitutes a security concern, because of their experience with terrorist activities in the battlefield, their combat skills, weapons training, links to international terrorist networks, and their potential to radicalize others if their return to their communities is unsupervised;

- > The first Kosovar killed in Syria as a foreign fighter is Naman Demolli, in December 2012. His death was the signal and the first piece of evidence that Kosovo citizens were actively participating in combat operations in Syria and Iraq alongside various terrorist organizations active in Syria and later in Iraq;

- > One of the most notorious terrorist fighters from Kosovo, killed by US forces in Syria, is Lavdrim Muhaxheri from Kaçanik. He was an integral part of "Islamic State" recruiting efforts in Kosovo, propagating the narrative of this terrorist organization in Kosovo and Albanian speaking territories. He often posted photos and videos of executions of Syrian and Iraqi civilians, as well as propaganda videos of the Islamic State of Syria and Iraq;

- > In November 2015, Kosovo's Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) revoked the work permits of 16 non-governmental organizations active in Kosovo, on suspicions that they were working against the Kosovo legal order. These organizations, which primarily operated under the disguise of religious humanitarian organizations, were closed down and their activities in Kosovo have since ceased;

- > A significant number of children with at least one parent from Kosovo are born in Syria. Identifying and integrating them in Kosovo upon their return will be a challenge for state institutions, which still have no strategy on how to tackle this problem.

> In November 2016, 19 Kosovo citizens and 4 from Albania were arrested by the Anti-Terrorism Directorate (ATD) in cooperation with the Kosovo Intelligence Agency (KIA), under the supervision and leadership of the Kosovo Police (KP), as suspects of an attempted attack on the Israeli national football team. According to various reports, this attack was ordered by Lavdrim Muhaxheri (ISIS) and the target of the attack were the players and fans of the Israeli football national team and the institutions of the Republic of Kosovo. Kosovo Police and KIA, in cooperation with partner institutions, successfully prevented this attempted attack. This attempted attack stirred special concern, because most of the suspects were not foreign terrorist fighters, and the activation of such a cell in Kosovo to commit terrorist attacks fueled doubts about the possible rise of terrorism with domestic roots.

> 2015, and especially 2016, have marked a decline in the trend of Kosovo citizens travels to join terrorist organizations in Syria and Iraq. It is estimated that this has occurred due to many reasons, ranging from the actions of Kosovo law enforcement agencies in combating terrorism and violent extremism, the adoption of the law prohibiting Kosovo citizens from participating in foreign conflicts outside Kosovo's territory, the numerous arrests by Kosovo Police and enhanced border control, to the air strikes against ISIS of the international coalition, ISIS's loss of territory, and a change in the strategy of the terrorist organization, which no longer recruits foreign fighters, but commissions and encourages terrorist attacks in countries where its sympathizers live;

> In 2017 and 2018 there have been no reports of any Kosovo citizens traveling to Syria, Iraq or other countries, to join terrorist organizations;

- In addition to combating terrorism and violent extremism through arrests and judicial proceedings, Kosovo has also begun implementing a reintegration and de-radicalization programs for convicts who joined the Syrian and Iraqi war. The program for the rehabilitation of foreign terrorist fighters incarcerated in Kosovo is currently under way. This program is implemented in coordination and with the support of the US ICITAP Mission in Kosovo;
- Kosovo authorities have no strategy and have taken no concrete actions for the reintegration or rehabilitation of returned women and children and of family members of FTFs and former FTFs, who have been affected by violent extremism and radicalization. Apart from some packages distributed by the Ministry of Internal Affairs at the end of last year, with the support of IOM Mission in Kosovo, no other visit or reintegration or rehabilitation program has been undertaken in the communities where they live. According to KCSS research in communities affected by violent extremism, the provision of assistance and care for the wellbeing of family members of former FTFs and returned FTFs should be the competence and mandate of local authorities, in cooperation with the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare, not the Ministry of Internal Affairs, as it has been the case so far;
- Currently, activities in Kosovo (undertaken by the government, international donors or NGOs) remain at the level of meetings, conferences, workshops and debates. In essence, these activities take place amongst the actors involved in the field and are failing to reach the communities vulnerable to violent extremism and radicalization, such as the family members of former FTFs and current FTFs in the theater of war, as well as other communities, including ethnic minority communities in Kosovo.

LEGAL ASPECTS

Kosovo has drafted and adopted documents aimed at addressing violent extremism and terrorism in Kosovo. State security policies and related legislation have defined the steps and activities that need to be undertaken to combat and prevent violent extremism and terrorism. They constitute a reference point for the media and civil society organizations that monitor, survey and report on the actions of Kosovo institutions in relation to this phenomenon and the challenges that arise in combating violent extremism.

Brief descriptions of the main documents dealing with terrorism and violent extremism are presented below.

Criminal Code - Terrorism, radicalization and violent extremism issues are primarily addressed within the Criminal Code of the Republic of Kosovo. The Criminal Code is extremely detailed when it comes to sanctioning terrorism-related offenses, including recruiting, financing, assisting and promoting religious and ethnic hatred.

The Law on “Prohibition of joining armed conflicts outside state territory”

In 2015 Kosovo adopted Law **No. 05/L-002** on “*Prohibition of joining armed conflicts outside state territory*” for the citizens of the Republic of Kosovo. The adoption of this law is an important step in the efforts to prevent Kosovo’s citizens from joining extremist groups and foreign wars. The law aims to fill the loophole in the existing Criminal Code, which did not sanction the traveling of Kosovo citizens and joining of foreign conflicts as a criminal offense. The absence of such a legal provision was problematic, since as the principles of the Criminal Code clearly state, no citizen can be punished unless there is a clear provision that the individual in question has committed a certain illegal act. Meanwhile, this law allowed to

eliminate the dilemma of the nature of the offense, by establishing penalties up to 15 years in prison for Kosovo citizens who join armed conflicts abroad.¹

Law on “Prevention of Money Laundering and Terrorism Financing”

In 2010, the Assembly of Kosovo adopted Law **No.03/L-196** on “*Prevention of Money Laundering and Terrorism Financing*,” another legal aspect that addresses issues related to terrorism. This law went through a revision process in 2016, when it was repealed and replaced by Law **No. 05/L-096**, with the same scope, but supplemented by new provisions. This law deals with money laundering detection and prevention procedures, aiming at combating the financing of terrorism.²

In 2015, the Government of Kosovo adopted the “2015-2020 Strategy on Prevention of Violent Extremism and Radicalization leading to Terrorism” (hereinafter: the Strategy), a new document defining the goals and clarifying the inter-institutional activities to be undertaken to respond to the new security needs and challenges in the country. The strategy serves as the foundation and strategic planning required to implement a host of activities in various economic, social, political and educational fields.³⁴

Among other things, in harmony with the **“Strategy on Prevention of Violent Extremism and Radicalization leading to Terrorism,”** Kosovo has also adopted the National Strategy against Terrorism and related Action Plan. This strategy establishes concrete steps required to prevent and combat terrorism in the Republic of Kosovo.

1 Perteshi, S., Qehaja, F. and Vrajolli, M. (2017). *Mapping the state of play of institutional and community involvement in countering violent extremism in Kosovo*. [online] Accessible at: http://www.qkss.org/repository/docs/KCSS_Needs_Assesment_final_42754.pdf

2 For more see: Law No. 03/L-196 on the Prevention of Money Laundering and Terrorism Financing, Assembly of Kosovo, 30th September 2010

3 ibid

4 For more see: http://www.kryeministri-ks.net/repository/docs/STRATEGJIA_parandalim_-_SHQIP.pdf

TERMINOLOGY RELATED TO VIOLENT EXTREMISM AND TERRORISM EMPLOYED IN THE PROPAGANDA OF TERRORIST GROUPS

Jihad - As described in the Quran and other religious sources, the word “Jihad” may acquire multiple meanings. With jihad we can refer to the efforts of Muslims to be devout believers and inform other people about Islam. The word “jihad” also refers to protecting Islam. One of the interpretations stipulates that if Islam cannot be defended by peaceful methods, then the use of violence is allowed, however, within predefined strict rules. Violence against innocents, women, children and disabled is strictly prohibited in the execution of “Military Jihad”, and any attempt at peace by the enemy must be accepted. However, the military aspect of jihad is only one of its meanings, which cannot be limited to this aspect. The Arabic word referring to war is “Al-Harb”, so the interpretation of the word “Jihad” as “Holy War” is also wrong in the linguistic aspect.

Jihad according to ISIS - Terrorist organizations such as Al-Qaida and ISIS have repeatedly misused the word “Jihad.” They have interpreted it only in the narrow sense of warfare and use of violence by Muslims towards non-believers and others who do not share the same ideology with those groups. Terrorist groups have employed the word “Jihad” in the attempt to legitimize the killing of civilians who do not submit to the orders of terrorist groups. Such groups have attempted to legitimize their use of war and violence under the guise of “Jihad”, as a struggle for Allah. Employing the concept of sacred war to justify the terror propagated by terrorist organizations is central to the propaganda of these groups.

Jihadist - In religious literature, the term “jihadi” denotes individuals who are strongly engaged in pursuing and spreading Islam by peaceful means,

without ever harming their neighbor, and constantly striving to become more devout believers.

Jihadist according to ISIS - Same as with the word “jihad”, terrorist organizations have restricted the usage of the term “jihadi” only in terms of offensive war, to employ and justify violence and terror. According to these organizations, any individual who fights non-believers, Western countries and secular states, and embraces the ideologies of terrorist organizations, is a “Jihadist”. Members of terrorist organizations call themselves “jihadists,” a completely inappropriate label.

Recommendation - It is recommended to employ the words “Jihad” and “Jihadist” as little as possible, or not at all, when reporting on terrorist organizations and their members. By using the word “jihad” in reporting on terrorist organizations, the media unintentionally legitimize their cause. If used, this word should at least be contextualized, along with mentioning the massacres, murders, ethnic cleansing and other crimes committed by terrorist organizations in the name of religion or “Jihad”. Also, when referring to the cause of terrorist organizations, it is best to put

in between quotation marks or refer to it as “the so-called Jihad according to terrorist organization”, and in addition to the news in question an additional information/argument on the concept of “Jihad” and its misinterpretation and appropriation by terrorists to legitimize their violence must be provided.

In recent years, the most prestigious national and international media have referred to members of terrorist organizations as “jihadists”. Referring to them as a “jihadist” is considered an honor for them, and it indirectly serves their terrorist cause. It is recommended that the word “jihadist” be used as little as possible by the media, and members of extremist groups should be referred to as terrorists, members of a terrorist organization or a terrorist fighters, when reporting on them.

Caliphate - The Caliphate is the notion of an Islamic state led by the Caliph, who is the political and religious leader of the state and represents all believers of Islam. The last Caliphate ended with the collapse of the Ottoman Empire.⁵

5 Center for Middle Eastern Studies “2012 <https://cmes.uchicago.edu/sites/cmes.uchicago.edu/files/uploads/Glossary%20of%20Terms.pdf>

Caliphate according to ISIS - Through its propaganda, ISIS has convinced individuals and groups from all over the world that they have created the utopian caliphate known as the “Islamic State of Syria and Iraq”. According to ISIS, the “New State” is the place where all Muslims can live free, unlimited in the exercise of their religion, and it encouraged everyone to join this concept and to recognize its leader as the de-facto “Caliph” of all Muslims.

How should it be used - It recommended to always use quotation marks when reporting on the “Islamic State”, or refer to it to as “the so-called Islamic State”, and in all cases contextualize that the fact that the word refers to the purposes of a terrorist organization, rather than to the building of a real state.

Hadith - For almost 200 years after the Prophet Muhammad’s death, his messages and works were verbally passed from generation to generation. In the ninth century, the collection and recording of the words, deeds or messages of the Prophet resulted into what today are known as Hadiths.

Kafir - Arabic words that refers to the ungrateful or unbelievers. As a monotheistic religion, Islam and the Quran command the belief in a single God and promise punishment for those who reject God (Allah as the only ruler of the worlds) and are not loyal believers. In Kosovo, a version of this word, spelled “qafir” and pronounced *tchaffer*, is used in vernacular language to describe a wicked person, and it is not closely related to being or not a strict practitioner of religion, which has changed in recent years.

Use by ISIS - ISIS and other terrorist groups employ the word “kafir” to refer to all those who have not embraced their terrorist ideology. ISIS and other terrorist groups also employ “kafir” to refer to all other Muslims who have not joined them and don’t abide to the same agenda as these groups.

Daesh (Da’ish) - Daesh is a widely used word in the Middle East, and not just to refer to the terrorist group “ISIS.” The word Daesh is mainly used to challenge the legitimacy of the group, due to the negative connotation of the word. In principle, Daesh is the acronym of the first letters of the group’s old name, “al-Dawla al-Islamiya fil Iraq

wa al-Sham". Although the word has no meaning in Arabic, it has acquired an unpleasant sound and supporters of the ISIS terrorist group refuse to use it.

Sharia - Sharia constitutes the framework of Islamic law, and it is considered a regulating system of Islamic life, state and religious organization. Sharia includes comprehensive legal instructions, which are justifiable and acceptable to Islam, for all areas of life.⁶ The fundamental principles of the Sharia determine the path an individual of the Islamic faith should pursue in devotion to God: prayers, humanism, fasting and pilgrimage. In essence, Sharia is the entirety of God's commandments as set forth in the Holy Quran and other legal documents.⁷

Mujaheed - Description of Muslims who participate in the defense of Islamic territories, or engage in various efforts to protect the oppressed, the poor or the exploited, or resist against the oppression of the state or foreign invaders. Mujaheed is employed to re-

fer to those who die being loyal to the truth and the holy war.

Holy War - Holy War is a concept that encompasses all efforts to defend Islam. The Holy War, unlike Jihad, is limited to the classic meaning of the war. However, the waging of holy war is defined by its own strict rules, and it starts only if proclaimed by a legitimate religious authority. In Islam, "Holy War" can be waged in self-defense, when a state attacks an Islamic state, or when a state, secular or not, attacks its Muslim citizens. According to Islam, the "Holy War" should be waged with great care, without harming the civilian population, with minimal use of force, without anger and wrath, and prisoners should be treated humanely and in dignified manner.

Terrorist organizations such as ISIS have, among other things, distorted the principles of "Holy War." They have employed only the elements that fit their respective groups and agendas. The "Holy War" proclaimed by ISIS contains no element of the "Holy War" argued through the Quran and other religious documents. ISIS has committed serious crimes against civilians, mistreated prisoners of war, and pro-

6 Ibid:

7 Christine Schirmmacher The Sharia – Law and Order in Islam https://www.iirf.eu/site/assets/files/92914/ëea_gis_10_-_christine_schirmmacher_-_sharia.pdf

claimed holy war without being a legitimate religious authority. Moreover, their fight has not been supported by the Muslim world.

Islamic State - Any state system governed by Islamic religious rules and employing Sharia Law as the pillar of the functioning of the state, is considered an Islamic State. The terrorist group **Islamic State of Syria and Iraq (ISIS)** - is a terrorist organization that took center-stage in 2014, after taking control of large parts of Syria and Iraq. This denomination is manipulative, aiming at attracting the support of Muslim believers to supposedly establish such a state governed by religious principles. The so-called "Islamic State of Syria and Iraq" cannot be considered an Islamic state, for reasons that can be found in other parts of this text. The Islamic State of Syria and Iraq has been referred to with different names in various national and international media, ranging from the Islamic State (IS) and the Islamic State of Syria and Iraq (ISIS), to the Islamic State of Syria and the Levant (ISIL) and DAESH. The Associated Press refers to this group as the "Islamic State Group" in their reports, to make it clear that it is the case of an organiza-

tion and not a state, and to avoid establishing unintentional links of this group with the religion of Islam as a whole.

Sunni - The largest sect in Islam, accounting for 85% of Muslims all over the world. Sunnis are primarily found in countries and areas like: Egypt, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Afghanistan, North Africa, Jordan, Palestine; and make up most of the Islamic population in the Balkan countries, including Albanian speaking countries. Most terrorist groups in the world, like ISIS and Al-Qaida, claim to belong to the Sunni sect.⁸

Shia - The second largest sect in Islam after the Sunni sect. The Shia sect is primarily centered in Iran. A large number of Shia population is also found in Iraq, Lebanon and Bahrain.⁹ The divisions between the Sunni and the Shia sect date from the earliest times of Islam, and relate to the heirs of Prophet Muhammad, who had different views on who should be the heir and what path should the Muslims follow in the world.¹⁰

8 Associated Press, *Stylebook 2006*. P 128.

9 Ibid;

10 Ibid;

Chief Imam - The highest religious authority in the interpretation of the Quranic law and religious regulation in a country with an Islamic community. This title is usually used by the Sunni sect. In the case of Kosovo, this title is linked to the Kosovo Mufti, leader of the Islamic Community of Kosovo (ICK).¹¹

Imam - Denotes who leads the prayer in the mosque or the religious leaders of the country or community.

Quran - The bedrock of Islam, known as the Holy Book. According to Muslim believers, the Quran is the word of God, and what is said therein has to be applied and respected by every Muslim in the world.

Sahab(s) - Denotes the friends or companions of Prophet Muhammad. Different Islamic scholars have expressed different views about the definition of "sahab" (companion). The renowned Islamic scholar of Tunisian origin, Hafiz Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani, in his book called "al-Isabah" defines the "Companions" as "persons who believed in the Prophet,

walked along the Prophet and died as a Muslim."¹²

Salafism - is an Islamic doctrine that derives from a hadith (Prophet Muhammad's quotes and actions) which states: "The best people are those who live in my generation, and then those who will follow them, and then those who will follow the latter." This is a call to Muslims to follow the example of those first three generations starting with the Prophet, as the most reliable references to the interpretation of Islam¹³. In general, Salafis are less inclined towards active political engagement, preferring instead a "quiet" approach to the fundamentalist preaching of Islam and religious education, while avoiding confrontation with state authorities. A few Salafis may even be called Jihadist Salafis, or violent, who may have been the source of motivation of terrorist organizations and groups.¹⁴ This religious

12 Hafiz Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani in his book al-Isabah

13 http://www.qkss.org/repository/docs/Sh-kaqet_dhe_pasojat_e_perfshirjes_se_qytet-areve_te_Kosoves_si_luftetare_te_huaj_ne_Siri_dhe_Irak_820753.pdf

14 Islamism Salafism and Jihadism; 2016 <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/markaz/2016/07/15/islamism-salafism-and-jihadism-a-primer/>

11 Ibid;

ideology is rooted and grew out of Saudi Arabia.

Manner of employment - Often, the media and various scholars refer to terrorist organizations as “terrorist salafis”, which is erroneous, since this denomination serves to legitimize those organizations and affects a wider Islamic community, not necessarily linked to terrorism. In these cases, when using the word Salafi, it is preferable to follow to precede with violent or nonviolent.

UMMA/Islamic Ummah - Arabic word that refers to “community”, “group” or “nation”. This word assumes a religious connotation in the Quran, which states that God has sent his prophet to each Ummah, Moses to the Jews, Jesus to the Christians, and Muhammad to the Muslims. In principle, the Ummah can be described as the modern concept of the civic body, however, in Islam the “civic body” is established on the basis of devotion and mobilization on religious grounds, regardless of ethnicity. The “Ummah” represents a universal world order, led by an Islamic government based on Sharia law.¹⁵

15 Ibid;

Extremism - Nowadays, extremism refers primarily to political and religious ideologies that oppose the social consensus. However, the word extremism cannot be limited to different ideologies, as it is also used to show something beyond the normal, or a strong opposition to a certain something. “Extreme” cannot be employed to refer to a certain community or ideology, as the extremes acquire different forms of manifestation depending on the community/ideology.¹⁶

Violent extremism - Type of extremism poised at using violence to achieve political goals. This concept includes, but is not limited to, terrorism. For example, violent extremists attacking police officers or the army, or participating in combat, are usually not considered terrorists.¹⁷

Terrorism - Employing violence and causing fear among the civilian population to achieve the political goals of a terrorist organization. Terrorism is a special kind of violent extremism.

16 2017 Strategy on Prevention of Violent Extremism. http://www.kryeministri-ks.net/repository/docs/STRATEGJIA_parandalim_-_SHQIP.pdf

17 Ibid:

Jihadist bride or female jihadist - Refers to women who strive to spread Islam and to become devout believers, while committing themselves to enforcing religious norms and to spreading religion in a peaceful manner, without ever harming their neighbor.

Jihadist bride or female jihadist according to ISIS - New term, frequently used recently as a result of the large number of married and single women who have traveled to live with and marry fighters of terrorist organizations like ISIS (DAESH) and the AL NUSRA FRONT. Even this concept has been distorted by terrorist organizations, to legitimize themselves as worthy representatives of Islam.

Namaz - Namaz (prayer) is one of the five main pillars that every believer of Islam has an obligation to adhere to. According to Islam, the Namaz is a form of spiritual relationship between people and God, the practice of prayer and thanksgiving to God.

Hak Hodjas - Supporters of extremist groups, namely ISIS, actively quote and promote on social networks a number of imams from Kosovo, Macedonia and Albania, convicted of terrorist

acts, such as recruiting or promoting hate speech. These hodjas, according to their claims, are called "Hak Hodjas", which supposedly means the true hodjas. They are the country's most controversial imams, who display refusing attitudes towards democratic processes and undermine the constitutional order. These imams are distinguished for hate speech against the Shia community, Christians and Jews. Usually, the so-called "Hak Hodjas" preach a different line of religion from what is officially practiced by the religious community, and most of them publicly oppose the Islamic communities in the respective countries.¹⁸

State Hodjas - Denomination used by Balkan ISIS sympathizers to describe imams associated with Islamic communities in Islamic countries, who practice Islam based on the rules established by religious institutions in their respective countries. These imams are commissioned by religious communities as official Islamic institutions. Terrorist orga-

18 KCSS "NEW BATTLEFIELDS EXTREMIST GROUPS' ACTIVITY ON SOCIAL NETWORKS IN KOSOVO, ALBANIA AND FYROM" 2017 http://www.qkss.org/repository/docs/New_Batelgrounds_Extremist_Groups_in_Social_Media_738865.pdf

nizations and their supporters do not recognize these imams as legitimate, because they have not upheld their violent ideologies and strongly opposed the recruitment of Albanians to become part of terrorist organizations. Terrorist groups and their supporters consider these imams as traitors, because they coexist in harmony with the secular state.

“Islam is endangered” - ISIS and other terrorist groups have used this argument to recruit foreign fighters. According to them, “Islam is endangered” by “crusaders and non-believers” (America and the West). According to them, the Middle East and Islam are in danger of being destroyed by the “imperialists of the West, America and the Crusaders,” and that Muslims around the world must fight and overcome this danger. Furthermore, terrorist groups such as ISIS employ this message to address secular governments governing in Muslim majority countries. According to them, these authorities must be fought against.¹⁹

Shaitan - In its root, the word “shaitan” essentially means “impure” and “low/worthless.” Shaitan refers to a rebellious entity, whether it is in the form of man, animal, or genie. According to Islam, a “shaitan” can be considered “an abominable ghost detached from Allah and the truth.”²⁰

Dabiq - Dabiq is a town in Northern Syria. According to Islam, Dabiq is the place where the final battle between Islamic forces and their enemies, the “crusaders”, will take place, which ISIS interprets as Christian forces and/or the United States. The Dabiq prophecy is similar to Christian traditions about a final battle between Christians and the anti-Christ, leading to the glory of the Second Coming.²¹

Jahhnet - Heaven in the Islamic Faith. Jahhnet is derived from an Arabic word meaning “covering or hiding something.” According to the Quran, the Jahhnet is “the eternal life of peace and happiness after death, where believers

19 Brookings Institute “The Ideology of Islamic State” 2016 : <https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/The-ideology-of-the-Islamic-State.pdf>

20 For more see: <https://www.al-islam.org/180-questions-about-islam-vol-2-various-issues-makarim-shirazi/7-what-meant-shaytan-noble-quran>

21 For more see the BBC article: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-30083303>

and the righteous will be rewarded".²² This religious concept was used by ISIS and terrorist organizations to lure warriors with the supposed rewards of Heaven for their sacrifice.

Al Qaeda - Al Qaeda is derived from the Arabic word that means "Base" or "Foundation". Al Qaeda is a terrorist organization whose aim is to put an end to the international presence in Arab countries that have militarily opposed western foreign policies. Al Qaeda was founded by Osama bin Laden in 1988.²³

Taghut - Taghut is derived from the word "Tugyan" which means "overstepping boundaries/limits". According to Islam, Taghut is "whoever exceeds the limits by claiming the rights that belong to Allah alone, and makes himself a partner with Allaah." Taghut also implies any worship of anyone other than Allah, an act prohibited by Islam.²⁴ Secular states and those that do not function based on Islamic religious principles are considered as "taghut"

by terrorist organizations. Terrorist organizations have called on all Muslims to use all means to fight the "taghut" state, and to apply Islamic religious principles to the functioning and governance of the state.

Resilient Communities - Implies active community engagement and a variety of actors equipped with basic knowledge and mechanisms to prevent and combat violent extremism. This concept also includes the community's attitude towards such a phenomenon and their response to the occurrence of violent activity, or events that lead to such activities.

Sham - Arabic word referring to the ancient region of Syria (today's Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Israel, Palestine and parts of southern Turkey) after the invasion of this area by the Arabs. Until the 7th century, this geographic area belonged to the Byzantine Empire.

Crusader - The propaganda of the Islamic State (ISIS) terrorist organization and their supporters continually refer to the Western world as "Crusaders". According to them, the crusaders are those who throughout history have aimed at the extinction of Islam and

22 For more see: <https://www.thoughtco.com/definition-of-jannah-2004340>

23 For more see: <https://www.counterextremism.com/threat/al-qaeda>

24 For more see: <http://from.the.depths.of.darkness.into.light.over-blog.com/article-71795909.html>

continue to repress Muslims around the world. The narrative of “crusaders” does not really have any solid historical basis, yet it is a strong propaganda element, because using this term in a negative connotation is aimed at mobilizing the masses to “counter the oppression” of Muslims in the world.

Munafik - Arabic name by which Muslims refer to the deniers of their religion and Allah, and to describe them as hypocrites and dangerous to Islam.

Takfir -Theological statement referring to one who denies his religion, a non-believer, or an act or idea that constitutes mistrust in Islam. Being takfir is a very serious matter in Islam, as it is considered the greatest sin that will bear consequences in this life and after death.²⁵

Suicide attacks -Frequently employed by ISIS and other terrorist groups to launch attacks against institutions and civilians in the Middle East, the West and other countries. This infamous tactic has been used by ISIS recently after

the major losses it suffered during the offensive of state security forces in Iraq and Syria, as well as at the hands of the US-led coalition launching strikes against ISIS and other terrorist groups active in Syria and Iraq. Before being used by terrorist groups in the Middle East, suicide attacks were employed by Japanese suicide pilots during World War II, and have also been a tactics used by Tamil insurgents in Sri Lanka.

Secular State - When a state is neutral in terms of religion, does not oppose or support any religion, their practice or activity, but at the same time guarantees and secures the rights of its citizens to practice their faith. A secular state treats all its citizens equally, regardless of believing or not in a particular religion.

25 For more see: <http://www.css.ethz.ch/en/services/digital-library/articles/article.html/316b8048-d26a-44cb-b4ce-48d8167f1c7c/pdf>

INTERNATIONAL MEDIA PRACTICES ON REPORTING ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE “ISLAMIC STATE”

In the absence of an international media benchmarks on reporting on the activities of terrorist organizations and their actions, the KCSS has summarized a number of international media practices that could be borrowed and applied by the media in Kosovo. The adaptation of these practices to reporting needs in Kosovo will answer some of the ethical issues faced by domestic media, and will help them solve dilemmas regarding professional ethics. The KCSS is fully aware that these decisions are made independently in newsrooms and news desks across Kosovo, therefore this is just an attempt to succinctly present the experiences of international media in solving some of the dilemmas related to reporting on this phenomenon. It is worth pointing out that the process of reporting on the activities of terrorist organizations, in particular on ISIS, has evolved over time, with the expansion of the level of knowledge about terrorist groups, their ideologies and communication strategies. The judgment to report on these events is made on a case by case basis, so any attempt to generalize or create a single standard would be problematic. However, a number of consensual points have already been put in place when it comes to reporting on ISIS.

ISIS as a name - BBC's Editorial Guidelines prescribe that the “Islamic State” qualifies as “the Islamic State Group” or “the so-called Islamic State” or “the organization that calls itself the Islamic State.” The members of the organization are described as “ISIS fighters, militants or extremists.” The “Islamist” denomination is used as an adjective to describe the extremism related to such groups, but not “Islamic” or “Islam”.²⁶ Other global media have acted in similar manner “in order not to create the im-

26 For more, see BBC Editorial Guidelines <http://www.bbc.co.uk/editorialguidelines/>

pression of a functional state, but of a single militant group that controls a patch of territory.”²⁷

Broadcasting ISIS propaganda videos - The brutal videos of executions of Western hostages were an essential part of the Islamic State organization’s propaganda, and have been used as a tool to generate insecurity and fear, but also to encourage their sympathizers. International media have approached these videos in different ways. For example, initially CNN aired photographs of the US journalist executed by ISIS, while describing the content of the video that the terrorist organization had distributed to international media. Later on, after the execution of an American humanitarian worker, CNN described the video, but did not air any of the images, but photos of the humanitarian worker while doing voluntary work in Syria²⁸ CNN “began to air less images or footage... because it became clear that ISIS wanted us to publish those images.”²⁹ Al-Jazeera, which has been operating extensively in the Arab world and the Middle East, has chosen a similar path. This media had decided not to publish any footage of the execution videos, in order not to “reward extremism.”³⁰ “The video was produced for the media, not for their own purposes,” and therefore Al-Jazeera decided not to air any part of it. Meanwhile, the Associated Press, which uses thousands of prepaid media services around the world, judges each case according to its reporting standards, but a basic principle is that if a message or story can be aired effectively through a less bloody image, priority is given to the less gory image.

27 “Why AP Style doesn’t use ISIL or ISIS Anymore,” <https://www.poynter.org/news/why-ap-style-doesnt-use-isil-or-isis-anymore>

28 CNN Executive Vice President and Managing Director, Tony Maddox, has explained this practice to a News Xchange Panel with other Western media. For more , see “ISIS: Lessons for coverage from CNN, Al-Jazeera and France 24”, <https://www.journalism.co.uk/news/isis-in-the-news-lessons-for-coverage-from-cnn-al-jazeera- and-france-24 / s2 / a563156 />

29 *ibid*

30 According to al-Jazeera Arabic News Director Ibrahim Helal in the News Xchange Panel. For more see <https://www.journalism.co.uk/news/isis-in-the-news-lessons-for-coverage-from-cnn-al-jazeera-and-france-24/s2/a563156>

Usage of the word “terrorist” - According to BBC Editorial Guidelines, “there is no consensus on what constitutes a terrorist act or who is a terrorist. Using this word is often a matter of judgment.” Therefore, the BBC has put in place a practice through which it allows the characterization or use of the word terrorist when it is used by their interlocutors, but its reporters avoid using it. “This does not mean avoiding to present the reality or the horror of a particular case, but we must consider how the use of our language will affect our reputation and objective journalism.”³¹

31 For more see: BBC - Terrorism: Language when Reporting Terrorism, at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/editorialguidelines/guidance/terrorism-language>

