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# Homegrown terrorism in the United States and in the EU

#### ABSTRACT

In books and articles focused on the problem of homegrown terrorism authors from different countries mostly describe this kind of terrorism in very different ways. Usually, homegrown terrorism is connected with the promotion of violent radicalization and different forms of ideologically based violence. The Internet especially has aided in facilitating violent radicalization and the process of homegrown terrorism in the United States and in the EU. Understanding the motivational factors that lead to violent radicalization and homegrown terrorism or other forms of ideologically based violence is a vital step toward eradicating these threats. The USA and Europe devote a lot of attention to Islamic terrorism because of the post 9/11 legacy both in terms of the threats and in terms of the anti-terrorist policy.

*Key words*: homegrown terrorism, United States, EU, violent radicalization, Islamist terrorism, "Balkan connection", countermeasures.

#### The Term and Definition

The term homegrown terrorism requires some discussion and must be more precisely defined. In books and the articles focused on the problem of the homegrown terrorism authors from the different countries mostly described this kind of terrorism in very different ways.

It produced the next definitional problems:

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#### 1. The problem of place

The most restrictive view is to apply the term when the act of terrorism was planned and committed in one country. Another view is to apply the term and define homegrown when and where the terrorist conspiracy was planned, regardless of where the terrorist attack took place.<sup>2</sup> The Dutch "apply the label 'home-grown' (sic) when the radicalization process has taken place in the Netherlands, regardless of where the terrorist acts are committed."<sup>3</sup>

# 2. The problem of actors of the homegrown terrorism. Who are the homegrown terrorists?

Mostly, they are identified as the citizen and/or resident who seeks to cause harm to fellow citizens and residents, "whether targeted for a single purpose, as with Theo Van Gogh, or murdered indiscriminately as in Spain and the United Kingdom". This may range from lone wolf individuals who wish to perpetrate an attack, to groups who are a "self recruited, self-trained, and self-executing" "group of guys" with few, if any, connections to an international conspiracy, to those who may be groups living in a particular country who have trained with and maintained connections to the al Qaeda transnational network, and finally to "sleeper cells" planted by al Qaeda in a particular country who are bent on conducting a medium- or long-term terrorist mission.

### 3. "Islamization" of the term

In all books and articles the term homegrown terrorism is only connected with terrorism based on radical interpretation of Islam. The authors eschew to pronounce as homegrown terrorists some groups which are rightly described as terrorists when they use violence, such as animal and environmental rights groups, the terrorist who acts to bring pressure on another nation—for example,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Kimberley L. Thachuk, Marion E. "Spike" Bowman, and Courtney Richardson: *Homegrown Terrorism The Threat Within*, Center for Technology and National Security Policy, National Defense University, May 2008, p. 3.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> "Homegrown Terrorism and Radicalization in the Netherlands: Experiences, Explanations and Approaches," Testimony by Lidewijde Ongering, Dutch Deputy National Coordinator for Counterterrorism to the U.S. Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, June 27, 2007.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Kimberley, p. 1.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> "Protecting America from Terrorist Attack," Speech by FBI Director Robert Mueller at City Club of Cleveland, Friday, June 23, 2006.

the anti-Castro Cuban or the Sikh separatist.<sup>6</sup> They also leave aside the completely terrorist etno-separatistic or ideological spectrum as well.

Practically, homegrown terrorism means Islamist homegrown terrorism or in other words "Homegrown terrorism inspired by violent Islamist extremism". The term homegrown terrorism is used to pronounce Islamist terrorism as a threat within Western societies.

#### 4. "Westernization" of the term homegrown terrorism

The term homegrown terrorism is used only to focus this kind of terrorism in Western countries. Actually, the homegrown terrorism of focus in most of the books and articles is driven by some form of radical Islam and involves citizens and/or residents of Western countries who "have picked up the sword of the idea" and are willing to attack their own countries, even if they are themselves killed in the process.<sup>8</sup> This term covers more or less "autonomous Western based groups who did not have any direct links to other international terrorist organizations, but were inspired by the ideology of militant Islamism".<sup>9</sup>

#### 5. Narrowing of meaning leads to the creation of sub-terms

In the literature of homegrown terrorism *homegrown* means to be associated with one or more of three categories of insiders: a) immigrants and visitors - legal or illegal; b) second- and third-generation members of the Muslim diaspora community; and c) converts to Islam.<sup>10</sup>

That is residents or citizens of countries who are either lone wolves, selforganizing "groups of guys," or groups that have among their members some who have traveled and trained with al Qaeda and returned to their country of residence to commit terrorist attacks. The latter category may maintain close contacts with other transnational radical Islamic terrorist cells as well.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Kimberley, p. 1.

<sup>7 &</sup>quot;Violent Islamist Extremism, The Internet, and the Homegrown Terrorist Threat", United States Senate, Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, Majority and Minority Staff Report, Joseph Lieberman, Chairman, Susan Collins, Ranking Minority Member, May 8, 2008.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Term used by a senior FBI official cited in Raffi Khatchadourian, "Azzam the American", *The New Yorker*, January 22, 2007.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> "Home grown terrorism and Islamist radicalization in Europe", By Tomas Precht, Research report funded by Danish ministry of Justice (December 2007).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Kimberley, p. 2, Daniel Pipes, "Converts to Terror," The New York Times, December 6, 2005.

#### The Administrative Definition of Homegrown Terrorism

Regarding the Violent Radicalization and Homegrown Terrorism Prevention Act of 2007 referred on October 24, 2007 to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs in the Senate of the United States the term "homegrown terrorism" means the use, planned use, or threatened use of force or violence by a group or individual born, raised, or based and operating primarily within the United States or any possession of the United States to intimidate or coerce the United States government, the civilian population of the United States, or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social objectives.

This structurally very good and very precise definition can be adapted and used in another milieu as well.

### Homegrown Terrorism in the United States and in the EU

Homegrown terrorism is a cause of growing concern both in the United States and the EU.

Homegrown terrorism poses one of the two main threats to homeland security in the United States. In September 2006, FBI Director Robert Mueller stated that he saw a rising threat from homegrown terrorists. Reflecting on numbers, he said, "We have certainly hundreds... But if you're looking at terrorism across the board...we have several thousand cases." Hundreds of domestic extremists were arrested in 2006 and 2007 on charges ranging from hate crimes to weapons and explosives violations, to murder. However, that statistics is somewhat misleading because the greatest numbers of domestic extremist violence in the United States probably comes from extremist environmental and animal rights organizations, which are somewhat removed from the extreme violence related to terrorism. Their violence does not terrorize the general population, in other words it is more targeted than indiscriminate. Homegrown terrorism produces indiscriminate violence.

In the EU, the overall number of terrorist attacks in all member states in 2008 decreased by 24 percent in comparison to 2007. But, homegrown terrorism is the only kind of terrorism increasing in the EU. The number of persons associated with homegrown Islamist terrorist groups is rising in the EU. A majority of the arrested individuals belonged to small autonomous cells rather than to well-known terrorist organizations.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Michael J. Sniffen, "Domestic Terrorism Threat on the Rise, Says FBI Chief," *Associated Press*, available at <a href="http://www.insurancejournal.com/news/national/2006/09/08/72233.htm">http://www.insurancejournal.com/news/national/2006/09/08/72233.htm</a>.

There is a question as to whether the Muslims in Europe differ in their sentiments and attraction to terrorism from the Muslims in North America, and whether there are differing constitutional, legal and even societal traditions that facilitate or hamper their ability to express themselves. 12 European populations are as ethnically diverse as are North America's. However, in Europe there are an estimated 15–20 million Muslims in the diaspora community, with Islam being the fastest growing of the continent's religions. <sup>13</sup> Regarding the Statistics offered by European Commission's Eurostat and Network of European Foundations only France, Germany and the United Kingdom together have more than ten million Muslims and more than 6,000 mosques<sup>14</sup>. Further, it is estimated that approximately one million Muslims immigrate to European Union (EU) countries each year. <sup>15</sup> The growing influx of Muslims immigrants from the Balkans, especially from Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo into the European Union during the 1990s did not face any obstacles. <sup>16</sup> But today in the European Union there are growing concerns about Islam and the US sees the Balkans as a potential breeding ground for European homegrown terrorists.

While differences in terms of constitutional and legal traditions are few amongst the EU countries, there are gradations of social tolerance that make for a rather marked contrast when, for example, the United States and the Netherlands or the United Kingdom are compared. In countries such as Canada, the UK, and the Netherlands, multi-ethnic societies have evolved in such a way that young Muslims often have distinct identities that diverge from those of the states in which they currently reside — a divergence that, in the case of Canada, is even guaranteed by the Constitution. In fact, in many countries, there are distinct cultural enclaves where people apparently choose not to integrate into their adopted countries; rather, they live their lives within ethnic enclaves that have the linguistic, cultural, and social norms of their states of origin. <sup>17</sup>

In the United States, patriotism overwhelms most feelings of ethnic loyalty. Displaying a divergent identity in the United States is less accepted simply because that is not the norm; while tolerated, it is neither embraced nor

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Kimberley, p. 5.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Kristin Archick, John Rollins, and Steven Woehrel, *Islamist Extremism in Europe* (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, July 29, 2005), 1.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> Branislav Radeljić, "Growing Concerns about Islam in the European Union", *The Review of International Affairs*, Vol. LXI, No. 1140, October-December 2010, p. 16.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> Esther Pan, "Europe: Integrating Islam", *Council on Foreign Relations*, July 13, 2005, available at <a href="http://www.cfr.org/publication/8252/europe.html?breadcrumb=%2Fregion%2">http://www.cfr.org/publication/8252/europe.html?breadcrumb=%2Fregion%2</a> Fpublication list%3Fgroupby%3D0%26id%3D0%26filter%3D323%26page%3D3>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> Branislav Radeljić, op.cit., p. 16.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> Kimberley, p. 5.

guaranteed. Further, pluralism in the United States means that while religious and cultural diversity is respected, equality under the law is guaranteed. Arguably, it is this guarantee, which extends across the civic culture to include opportunities for education, housing, and economic prosperity, which has led to less social alienation of legal immigrants in the United States as compared to Europe.

Moreover, in Europe rifts have developed in society as a result of, on the one hand, states attempting to accommodate and assimilate all manners of cultures, and, on the other hand, sub-cultures attempting to assert their increasingly devolved powers. In terms of overall integration of the Muslims into society, the record is poor in all European countries. A disproportionate number of the Muslims in EU countries are unemployed, economically disadvantaged, lacking opportunities for advancement, or incarcerated.

The specific situation is mostly in Germany. That country seems to be relatively immune from terrorist attacks. In fact, Germany has the largest Muslim population in Western Europe after France with 3.2-3.4 million Muslims out of the total German population of 82.4 million.

The Germans believe that they will not be targeted by radical Islamic groups because Germany did not participate in the invasion of Iraq. Also, approximately three-quarters (2.5 - 2.6 million) of Germany's Muslims are from Turkey (or are their descendants). Turkish immigrants have shown little interest in political or radical Islam.

But the reality is not so simple. Several serious attempts of Islamist terrorist attacks occurred in Germany in the last ten years. Thanks to the prevention and to the good fortune without any success, but only until 3 March 2011.

On this date 21-year-old Kosovo Albanian Arid Uka gunned down two US airmen at the Frankfurt airport. Two others were injured, one critically. According to the sources, when he opened fire, the gunman shouted "Allah Akbar". The airmen were on their way to serve in Afghanistan. Arid Uka later told police: "I did it for Allah!"

The German officials said Uka acted alone and might have become radicalized in the past few weeks before the shooting. The FBI considers that there may have been more people involved.

The facts are the following: Arid Uka was born in Kosovska Mitrovica. His father had moved from Kosovo to Germany 40 years ago and his mother moved with all of the children to Germany 17 years ago. Uka grew up in Germany. He went to high school but did not finish it. The reason may be that he did the last year in social service at the Green Crescent, a Frankfurt group that cares for elderly Muslim immigrants with no family. He apparently worked at the airport.

His family confirmed that he was a devout Muslim who prayed five times a day. His grandfather was an imam in their native Kosovo. Arid Uka even gave his mother half of his salary for the pilgrimage to Mecca.

One of the specific characteristics of homegrown terrorism is a strong link with the world of Islamic extremism through video tapes and the Internet. According to the German security officials and prosecutors, the Internet may have played a major role in Uka's radicalization. Uka's Facebook page contained hate-filled rants against the Jews. He had been listed on the social networking site under his real name, but changed it to Abu Reyan, his "warrior" title. Uka calls German Chancellor Angela Merkel an unbeliever, claiming she has sided with Israel, which he described as "a declaration of war". He posted a link to a jihadist battle hymn: "I can no longer stand this life of humiliation among you. My weapon is ready at all times." Understanding the motivational factors that lead to the violent radicalization and homegrown terrorism or other forms of ideologically based violence is a very important. Uka decided to carry out the attack after seeing a video on You Tube that apparently showed American soldiers raping a girl in Afghanistan. There is indeed a video that was posted recently on several jihadist forums and is still available showing men in United States uniforms appearing to rape a young woman. The Pentagon spokesman called the You Tube video the work of extremists and part of propaganda.

Uka's contacts with extremist preachers, including German Muslim Pierre Vogel, are confirmed as well. An official also confirmed that Rami M, who was picked up in Pakistan last year and extradited to Germany where he faces charges of membership in a terrorist organization, also lived in Uka's building. The neighbors said Uka and Rami had known one another. Rami M left Germany in 2009 for Pakistan.

It was the first terrorist attack on German soil in the decade since September 11. Regarding the German prosecutors the act was motivated by Islamism. Homegrown terrorism has begun to be a reality in Germany as well.

## The Key Factors of Homegrown Terrorism

Usually, homegrown terrorism is connected with the promotion of violent radicalization and different forms of ideologically based violence.

The term "violent radicalization" means the process of adopting or promoting an extremist belief system for the purpose of facilitating ideologically based violence to advance political, religious, or social change.

The Internet has especially aided in facilitating violent radicalization and homegrown terrorism process in the United States by providing access to broad and constant streams of terrorist-related propaganda to United States citizens.

Individuals prone to violent radicalization, homegrown terrorism, and ideologically based violence span all races, ethnicities, and religious beliefs.

While overall, al Qaeda no longer exists in its original form, it continues to inspire a growing revolutionary movement. Since January 2005, as many as 40 grassroots groups have formed (and continue to evolve) in such a way that al Qaeda seldom exercises command and control. As a coordinator and source of inspiration, al Qaeda still has a role to play.

A special variety of jihadism is offered by Muslim extremists from Europe and the USA, carriers of the so- called "homegrown" terrorism. They use bin Laden's fatwas as well as speeches of other Islamic extremists, most commonly those of Ayman Al-Zawahiri, Abu Yahya Al Libi and Sheikh Abu Musab and Al Wudud, but their extremism is mainly reactive in its nature. Namely, they react to the "Judeo-Christian" environment in which they are situated, and that, in their opinion, undervalues them as humans and believers, and never accepts them completely. Hence, there are a number of Islamic terrorists who became what they are not in their homeland, but after coming to Europe or the USA. A good example for this was a New Jersey terrorist group consisting of the Albanians from Macedonia and Kosovo, as well as of one Turk and one Jordanian — who came to hate their new homeland even after it provided them hospitality, life standards and jobs, and decided to even the score using weapons in the name of Allah.

Understanding the motivational factors that lead to violent radicalization and homegrown terrorism or other forms of ideologically based violence is a vital step toward eradicating these threats. But, sometimes it is not easy. For example, in May 2008, a bomb exploded in a restaurant located in a shopping mall in Exeter, South-West England. The device, which consisted of caustic soda, drains cleaner, kerosene and nails, went off prematurely. In this event, only the attacker himself was injured. The suspect was an apparently vulnerable 22-year-old UK national who had converted to Islam. Acting alone, he was apparently "self-radicalized" and "encouraged" by literature and other material on the Internet. In October 2008, the suspect pleaded guilty to the attempted murder and preparing an act of terrorism. In January 2009, he was jailed for life with a recommendation that he should serve a minimum of 18 years. But, the motive seems to be not sufficiently identified.

In general, it appears that the Western foreign policy provides a major motivational factor for entering the radicalization path.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> Kimberley, p. 7.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> "Home grown terrorism and Islamist radicalization in Europe", By Tomas Precht, Research report funded by Danish ministry of Justice (December 2007).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> Ibid, p. 79.

# The Specific Characteristic of Homegrown Terrorism in the United States and in EU

One specific characteristic of homegrown terrorism in the United States and in the EU is the organization of small groups, consisting of only a few members. They are linked with the world of Islamic extremism only virtually, through video tapes and the Internet. They are religiously influenced towards jihadism mainly through their radical friends and traveling imams. They gather in apartments or on picnics, and not in mosques as did former groups of Islamic terrorists, what makes surveillance and capture difficult. The vengeful note in proclamations of al Qaeda and other radical Islamic groups "heals the soul" of frustrated young Muslims from Europe and the USA who are resentful of their environment for the "injustice" it has done to the Islamic world, in the first place to Afghanistan and Iraq. The appeal of jihadists for amending all the injustice they see is a chance to punish their environment, but also a chance to amend some personal injustice they experience. While, for example, left-wing terrorists fight for social justice, Islamic extremists fight for justice for Muslims.

Approximately 80 percent of the people who become radical Islamic militants join in the diaspora community via friends in soccer clubs, social groups, and local mosques. Recruitment is self-starting; groups of about eight persons are formed who become very close knit and who associate like a family, eating together, and even marrying each others' sisters. Most are between the ages of 15 and 30 and have no particular racial or criminal profile to distinguish them — although once in the group they tend to wear the same clothes, display the same facial hair, and eat the same food. Many are married and have post-secondary education, with computer science, science, and medical degrees topping the list. Few have any formal religious education; they only encounter religion when they become "born again" in their militant group.<sup>21</sup>

This is a strategy in which small groups (cells) and individuals fight an entrenched power through independent acts of violence. The cells do not require any central coordination or communication with each other. Often they do not even have a leader. The train bombings in Madrid and London, for example, demonstrated that those responsible did not have strong ties to al Qaeda's leadership. Rather, there were ties at some level between the bombers and clerics that did have a relationship to bin Laden, al- Zawahiri, or camps in Afghanistan.

#### The Countermeasures

The USA and Europe give a lot of attention to Islamic terrorism because of everything that has happened. After 9/11 attacks thousands of persons were

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> Kimberley, p. 8.

arrested in the USA and Europe as suspected for having connections to terrorists. Regarding the prevention, the following four components are suggested: societal measures, counter-ideology, public diplomacy and policing and community involvement. Prevention has become a way of everyday life in the USA and Western Europe to the extent where all surprises are theoretically impossible. Even so, new discoveries are present almost every day when it comes to homegrown terrorism. Some of them are rather bizarre, such as the exposure of British doctors as al Qaeda terrorists, or finding in July 2007 that eight officers of Scotland Yard, all of them Muslims, had contacts with Islamic radicals, visited al Qaeda websites and websites of other Islamic terrorist organizations. Three of them even managed to secretly get to terrorist training camps in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

A fact to be added is that in 2007, Muslim Albanians in the USA were key actors of a large Islamic conspiracy and a drastic example of homegrown terrorism, with the goal to kill American soldiers in military bases on the USA soil, primarily Fort Dix, and they were two thirds of all the members of the arrested terrorist group.

This group of radical Islamist from South Jersey consisted of Albanians Agron Abdulahu from Kosovo, brothers Driton, Elvir and Shain Duka from Macedonia, Serdar Tatar from Turkey, a legal resident of the USA and Mohammad Shnever, an American citizen born in Jordan. During 2006 and 2007, they prepared terrorist attacks on American military bases in order to kill as many American soldiers as they could. They were ready, as they said, to "sacrifice themselves to God in the name of jihad". Therefore, they had target practice with firearms in the deserted area of the Pocono Mountains in Pennsylvania. In the serious police surveillance action, which lasted seventeen months, the FBI managed to infiltrate two of their associates in the group, one of whom (called Besnik) was a former member of the KLA. After hard evidence was gathered, this group was arrested in the beginning of May 2007. At the time they were arrested, they were trying to obtain bazookas in order to blow up Fort Dix military base posing as pizza delivery. Tapes in the possession of FBI confirm without any doubt that they were Islamic radicals inspired by al Oaeda propaganda and that they perceived themselves as warriors of jihad. A vast amount of Islamic materials was found in their computers; especially bin Laden's fatwa's calling for Holy War. They were mobilized for an action over the Internet. They were trained for the attack yelling "Allah ackbar" and cheering jihad.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> "Home grown terrorism and Islamist radicalization in Europe", By Tomas Precht, Research report funded by Danish ministry of Justice (December 2007), p. 73.

It is a paradox that these people, to whom the USA gave not only a new home, but also jobs and security, and even political support for their people, showed such ultimate ungratefulness and hatred towards the USA by choosing Fort Dix military base for their first target — the same place where Hillary Clinton in 1999 met thousands of Albanian refugees, many of whom had temporary accommodation there. Besides, they were plotting to assassinate US president George Bush, and Elvir Duka had made plans for a sniper assassination. Among the materials that the prosecutor gathered are also statements of the participants that show serious commitment to terrorist activity. For example, Dritan Duka wanted to join the American Army, only to get a chance to kill as many soldiers as possible "from the inside". Guns were provided by Abdulahu, an emigrant from Kosovo, who also trained them to shoot. The FBI materials show not only the degree of hatred that interlocked the group with warriors of jihad, but also the degree of their excitement with bin Laden, al Qaeda and the Taliban. The recordings of their conversations show that they considered themselves as part of the Islamic terrorist network. For example, Dritan Duka told his brother: "The Taliban are advancing gloriously and I am joyfully bringing you the news — we are winning the war."

The extent of their fanaticism can be also seen from the information from the prosecutors that the Albanian from Kosovo, Agron Abdulahu, after being arrested kept drawing Kalashnikovs firing at the FBI in his cell, which can be seen as the ideological extension of his combat. Even in prison they never stopped waging jihad.

Being a big challenge for homeland security, homegrown terrorism needs an adequate response. The US Congress finds that the development and implementation of methods and processes that can be utilized to prevent violent radicalization, homegrown terrorism, and ideologically based violence in the United States is critical to combating domestic terrorism. While the United States must continue its vigilant efforts to combat international terrorism, it should also strengthen efforts to combat the threat posed by homegrown terrorists that are based and operate within the United States. Preventing the potential rise of self-radicalized, unaffiliated terrorists domestically cannot be easily accomplished solely through the traditional Federal intelligence or law enforcement efforts, and can benefit from the incorporation of State and local efforts. As we pronounced, individuals prone to violent radicalization, homegrown terrorism, and ideologically based violence span all races, ethnicities, and religious beliefs, and for this reason in the fight on homegrown terrorism, individuals should not be targeted based solely on race, ethnicity, or religion.

Despite the fact that homegrown terrorism poses serious threats to homeland security in the United States any measure taken to prevent violent radicalization, homegrown terrorism, and ideologically based violence in the United States should not violate the constitutional rights, civil rights, or civil liberties of the United States citizens or lawful permanent residents.

Certain governments, including the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, and Australia have significant experience with homegrown terrorism and every country can benefit from lessons learned by those nations.

In the US, the National Commission on the Prevention of Violent Radicalization and Homegrown Terrorism is established within the legislative branch of the Government.

The purposes of this Commission are to examine and report upon the facts and causes of violent radicalization, homegrown terrorism, and ideologically based violence in the United States, including the United States connections to non-United States persons and networks, violent radicalization, homegrown terrorism, and ideologically based violence in prison, individual or "lone wolf" violent radicalization, homegrown terrorism, and ideologically based violence, and other faces of the phenomena of violent radicalization, homegrown terrorism, and ideologically based violence that the Commission considers important.

The important measure of the Secretary of Homeland Security is establishing or designating a university-based Center of Excellence for the Study of Violent Radicalization and Homegrown Terrorism in the United States following the merit-review processes and procedures and other limitations that have been previously established for selecting and supporting the University Programs Centers of Excellence. The Center shall assist Federal, State, local and tribal homeland security officials through training, education, and research in preventing violent radicalization and homegrown terrorism in the United States. In carrying out this section, the Secretary may choose to either create a new Center designed exclusively for the purpose stated herein or identify and expand the existing Department of Homeland Security Center of Excellence, so that a working group is exclusively designated within the existing Center of Excellence to achieve the purpose.

It shall be the purpose of the Center to study the social, criminal, political, psychological, and economic roots of violent radicalization and homegrown terrorism in the United States and methods that can be utilized by Federal, State, local, and tribal homeland security officials to mitigate violent radicalization and homegrown terrorism.

In carrying out this section, the Center shall develop the following activities:

(1) Contribute to the establishment of training, written materials, information, analytical assistance and professional resources to aid in combating violent radicalization and homegrown terrorism;