



**Countering Violent Extremism Working Group
Prison Deradicalization and Reintegration Plenary Meeting**
3-5 June 2013
Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates

Summary

This meeting, hosted by Hedayah in partnership with the UN Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI) and the International Centre for Counter-Terrorism—the Hague (ICCT), brought together prison and counterterrorism experts from different regions, in addition to national representatives in charge of prison management. One of the key foci of the meeting was to delve deeper into the psychology-related good practices outlined in the GCTF *Rome Memorandum on Good Practices for Rehabilitation and Reintegration of Violent Extremist Offenders (Rome Memorandum)*. Hedayah and ICCT had organized a small, closed-door workshop of psychologists in Abu Dhabi several weeks prior and developed more detailed non-binding good practices in this specialized area (see attached); this workshop and these good practices were a major subject of discussion at this early June GCTF CVE Working Group meeting.

Other key topics discussed in the workshop included sharing challenges and successes integrating the *Rome Memorandum* principles into national programs; balancing security needs in the reintegration process; the differences in handling various categories of detainees including women, “lone wolves”, secular/religious; and how rehabilitation programs should be managed in war zones vs. peaceful environments. Participating states included GCTF members Australia, China, Indonesia, Morocco, Qatar, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Spain, the United Kingdom, and the United States, plus non-members Bangladesh, Malaysia, Mauritania, the Philippines, and Yemen. Key findings of the meeting included:

- The potential for prisons to become a breeding ground for extremist views and a locus for terrorism recruitment, especially when prison conditions are poor—though it is important not to exaggerate the extent of the threat;
- The need going forward to focus on implementation of the *Rome Memorandum* principles and good practices;

- The need to tailor the *Rome Memorandum* principles and good practices to each particular prison context because there is no one-size-fits-all approach to programming;
- The importance of political will and leadership buy-in for successful programs;
- The importance of involving community members, families (women in particular), and victims in rehabilitation programs;
- The value of continued training of and communication between prison staff and other deradicalization and reintegration program actors in easing tensions that may arise;
- The importance of assessing prisoners when they enter and throughout the rehabilitation programs, and assessing the effects of the programs themselves; and
- The need to strike the appropriate balance between prison security and deradicalization and reintegration programs; the two are not mutually exclusive.