



**Homeland
Security**

September 28, 2015

MEMORANDUM FOR DHS SENIOR LEADERSHIP

FROM: Jeh Charles Johnson
Secretary

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeh Charles Johnson", written over the printed name.

SUBJECT: **Building Community Partnerships to Counter Violent Extremism**

In my time and experience as Secretary, I have concluded that countering violent extremism in this country is as important as any of our other key missions. I say this given the nature of the evolving global terrorist threat, which now includes the ongoing threat of foreign terrorist-*inspired* attacks by those who live in the homeland. There is also the ever-present threat of acts of violence rooted in a wide range of domestic-based radical ideologies.

This Department's efforts to counter violent extremism (CVE) are scattered across a number of components, lack specific goals, and tangible measures of success in the pursuit of those goals. It is time to change that. It is also time to take our efforts to the next level. As I see it, we've built some bridges and generated conversations in communities across the country, but there is more that can and should be done.

Principally, my intent is to: (i) create a consolidated program to support community-based efforts to counter violent extremism that resides within an Office for Community Partnerships (OCP), (ii) foster greater involvement of the technology sector in promoting private efforts to counter violent extremism in this country, (iii) foster greater philanthropic support for private CVE efforts in this country, and (iv) enhance this Department's own grant-making in the area of CVE. Finally, I'd like our Office for Community Partnerships to be in a position to coordinate domestic efforts to counter violent extremism across the entire federal government should DHS be asked to assume this role.

Office for Community Partnerships

I hereby direct that all personnel supporting the existing Office of the Countering Violent Extremism Coordinator, together with other personnel in the National Protection and Programs

Directorate (NPPD) and the Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (CRCL) who are principally engaged in countering violent extremism activities, will be detailed to the Office for Community Partnerships (OCP). OCP will be led by a Director for Community Partnerships who will report directly to the Secretary. I am appointing Mr. George Selim to this position. George has been the Director for Community Partnerships for the National Security Council since 2012. The current DHS Coordinator of Countering Violent Extremism, Mr. David Gersten, is appointed to Deputy Director of the Office. Prior to their current roles, both had extensive experience in DHS's Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties.

By October 30, 2015, the Under Secretary for Management will complete a management directive for OCP to set forth its authorities and responsibilities. In addition, the Under Secretary for Management shall:

- Secure a budget line for OCP beginning in the Fiscal Year 2017 budget as well as engage the Congress to transfer necessary resources in Fiscal Year 2016.
- Establish resource and staffing plans for OCP, to include the detail of full-time employees from NPPD and CRCL to support OCP.
- Require OCP to provide an annual report to the Secretary on DHS efforts to counter violent extremism and build community resilience. The report should include an assessment of progress in meeting milestones and targets set for the year and recommendations for the following year's activities, milestones, and targets.

I also direct that Director for Community Partnerships, in partnership with our Component leadership, improve and expand the Department's existing field-based community engagement efforts to support community-based efforts to counter violent extremism. By December 1, 2015, the Director for Community Partnerships will develop a plan to build on the Department's robust field presence to support community resilience. The plan should include a training pipeline for field-based community engagement officers.

Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties

As I see it, the mission of CRCL is an indispensable companion effort to help counter violent extremism. By receiving, investigating, and addressing grievances, promoting an understanding of DHS policies and practices, and assisting the Department in considering civil rights- and civil liberties-related concerns, CRCL lays the foundation for the Department's efforts to support and empower local communities in their own efforts to counter violent extremism. CRCL should, in consultation with OCP, continue to lead, improve and expand Community Engagement Roundtables, Town Hall Meetings, Community Awareness Briefings, and Community Resilience Exercises in cities across the country. By November 1, 2015, CRCL should also develop a Fiscal Year 2016 engagement plan that identifies the following for each engagement: recommended DHS senior leader participants; regionally-specific goals and objectives; community-based programs we want to highlight; organizations and institutions who could be helpful partners, including U.S. Attorneys' Offices in those

cities where the U.S. Attorney has engaged in community outreach to counter violent extremism; and recommended post-engagement actions. The plan should also specify what we hope to accomplish through the roundtables, briefs and exercises, and how to capture and build on what we have learned from these efforts.

Digital Engagement

As we all agree, the technology sector is in a position to promote community-based efforts to counter violent extremism. The federal government should have a “lead from behind” role in this, but is in a position to both convene and catalyze critical actors from both community-based organizations and the technology sector. To this end, by December 1, 2015, the Director for Community Partnerships should develop a digital engagement strategy to both help expand our outreach efforts online and incorporate emerging technologies and trends in social media, data analytics, and user experience design. This should include a digital engagement strategy to identify and support innovative technology sector efforts to counter radicalization to violence and recruitment online, engage directly with technology companies to raise awareness of the violent extremist threat, ask them to identify ways to help counter violent extremism, and to make critical information for individuals targeted by violent extremist organizations and their family and friends easily accessible online.

Philanthropic Support

Philanthropies and foundations are also in a position to support domestic efforts to counter violent extremism and enhance community resilience efforts. The Director for Community Partnerships should coordinate engagements with foundations and other philanthropies to expand the availability of community-based resources to stem radicalization to violence and recruitment efforts. Eventually, the OCP should be in a position to foster discussions between foundations and philanthropies on the one hand, and those engaged in countering violent extremism in their communities on the other. By November 1, 2015, the Director should develop a philanthropic engagement plan and Fiscal Year 2016 calendar that identifies the following for each engagement: recommended DHS senior leader participants; regionally-specific goals and objectives; and community-based programs we want to highlight.

Grant-making

Likewise, our own grant-making can support our efforts to counter violent extremism. The Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency should improve DHS funding mechanisms to support these efforts. By October 5, 2015, the Administrator should provide a plan to enhance DHS mechanisms for providing financial assistance to community-based programs to counter violent extremism and build community resilience, and to strengthen our ability to support effective actions to counter violent extremism by expanding funding opportunities for these community-based programs.

Research and Development

The Under Secretary for Science and Technology will establish an Integrated Product Team to identify capability, research and development gaps relating to our efforts to counter violent extremism, and to coordinate research and development in support of these efforts. The team will be led by the Director for Community Partnerships with support from a senior executive from the Science and Technology Directorate, and shall be established by November 1, 2015.

Law Enforcement Training

The Director of the Federal Law Enforcement Training Centers (FLETC) and the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) should enhance training for federal, state, local, tribal, and territorial law enforcement on efforts to counter violent extremism. By November 1, 2015, the Director and Administrator should provide a plan to update relevant components of training programs, in consultation with FLETC's impacted federal partner organizations and FEMA's whole community partners, to ensure that they reflect current assessments of the violent extremist threat, and to provide train-the-trainer programs, cultural competency, and violent extremism awareness training to additional state, local, tribal, and territorial law enforcement partners.

Other Directives

For each of the areas above, the responsible senior leaders should provide quarterly updates detailing progress in meeting the goals set forth here and an evaluation of the impact and effectiveness of these efforts.

By October 9, 2015, the Director should evaluate and report to me the Department's progress in meeting requirements set forth in the 2011 White House Strategic Implementation Plan for Empowering Local Partners to Prevent Violent Extremism in the United States.

The Executive Director of the Homeland Security Advisory Council should establish a subcommittee of the Homeland Security Advisory Council that is focused on efforts to counter violent extremism. The subcommittee shall convene its first meeting by December 1, 2015.

I have instructed the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Policy, in coordination with the Director, to meet with each of you to ensure that these efforts stay on track, and to gather your feedback on how to make this a successful initiative. I ask that you give them your full support in this process.