Promoting Safe and Resilient American Communities

Global Engagement Group
National Counterterrorism Center
Communities are not the problem ...

... they are an essential part of the solution.
Ongoing Community Actions

- **CNN**
  Muslim Storeowner in New York Helps Man Steer Away From Life of Crime

- **VOA**
  Muslim Students Bring Food, Conversation to Florida

- **The Washington Post**
  Muslim Leader Forges Interfaith Accord

- **MSNBC**
  U.S. Muslims Issue Fatwa Against Terrorism

- **Muslim Public Affairs Council**
  MPAC Condemns Radical Imam's Latest Message to U.S. Muslims; Releases Videos Challenging Extremism
We face a wide range of violent extremist threats...

- Right-wing Violent Extremists
- Left-wing Revolutionaries
- Eco-terrorists
- Neo-Nazi and Racist-based Groups
- Christian Violent Extremists
- Other Extremist Groups

This brief focuses on the threat of

*Al-Qa’ida and Allied Groups (AQAG)*
Presentation Goals

Share the Federal Government’s perspective on the threat of terrorist recruitment in the U.S.

Garner the perspectives and insights of community members.

Discuss ways we can work – together and independently – to protect youth and at-risk individuals from extremist radicalization efforts.
The View From the White House...

John Brennan
Assistant to the President and Deputy National Security Adviser for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism

February 13, 2010
Speech before the Islamic Center of NYU
What can we do?

A U.S. Government Perspective

**What can Communities do?**

- ✓ Lead effort to counter violent narratives
- ✓ Ask for support when needed
- ✓ Reach out to vulnerable individuals, especially youth

**What can the Government do?**

- ✓ Do not securitize communities
- ✓ Prevent and prosecute illegal behavior
- ✓ Support communities in countering violent narratives and terrorist recruitment
Recent events in which U.S.-based violent extremists plotted or committed acts of terrorism highlight the importance of preventing AQAG recruitment in the U.S.
In the past year alone, there have been at least 15 disruptions, attempts, or attacks potentially involving “extremists” or “terrorists”...

...all of which had some connection to the United States.
U.S. Persons Inspired to Commit Terrorism Domestically

- U.S. legal permanent resident from Afghanistan
  - Age 24
- U.S. citizen
  - Age 39
- U.S. citizen
  - Age 23

* An indictment is an accusation by a federal grand jury and a defendant is entitled to the presumption of innocence unless proven guilty.
U.S. Persons Inspired to Commit Terrorism Overseas

Shirwa Ahmed
U.S. citizen
Deceased

Five individuals detained in Pakistan
U.S. citizens
Ages 17-24

* An indictment is an accusation by a federal grand jury and a defendant is entitled to the presumption of innocence unless proven guilty.
Failed Times Square Plot...

U.S. Citizen
Age 30

Note: The charges contained in this complaint are merely accusations, and the defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.
Common Steps Toward Violent Extremism

**UPSTREAM FACTORS**
Individual faces alienation, racism, blocked social mobility, humiliation, etc.

**CONTACT WITH RADICALIZING FORCE**
The Critical Step

**RECONSTRUCTING WORLDVIEWS**

**SUPPORT FOR VIOLENCE**
Violent Extremist Narratives: An Example

The radical narrative shapes how violent extremists view the world around them.

- Muslim governments have apostatized as a result of U.S. influence
- The U.S. has brought ruin and disgrace to Islam
- Muslims are the target of U.S. aggression

U.S. is at war with Islam

"Muslims must counter this threat through violence"
Violent Extremists in Their Own Words...

Anwar al-Awlaki: A Call to Jihad
Statement Released March 22, 2010

“How many more body bags are American families willing to receive?”

“... we will fight to the last man against whoever stands in our way.”

“... jihad against America is binding ... on every other able Muslim.”

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZIM6N13_kh0&feature=related

“... standing between you and your duty of jihad.”
The Victims of Terror...

85% of Al-Qa’ida Victims are from Muslim-majority Countries*

2004-2008

Violent Extremist Use of the Internet

Recent events demonstrate how violent extremists increasingly prefer the Internet, not only for communication, but also for recruitment.
Colleen R. LaRose
aka “Fatima LaRose,” aka “Jihad Jane”

LaRose used the Internet to establish relationships and communicate with violent extremists.
(www.justice.gov)

* An indictment is an accusation by a federal grand jury and a defendant is entitled to the presumption of innocence unless proven guilty.
Violent Extremists in Their Own Words...

Adam Gadahn: A Call to Arms
Statement Released March 6, 2010

Insert Video

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1qidkV3KYJg&feature=related

Note: An indictment is an accusation by a federal grand jury and a defendant is entitled to the presumption of innocence unless proven guilty.
Violent Extremists in Their Own Words...

Omar Hammami: Ambush at Bardale
aka “Abu Mansour al-Amriki”
Statement Released February 2009

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2CB8IzZrngE&feature=related
The Reality of Al-Shabaab

Between September 2007 and October 2009, approximately 20 young men left the Minneapolis area to fight for Al-Shabaab, an Al-Qa’ida affiliated group in Somalia.

Burhan Hassan
Age 17
Killed

Jamal Bana
Age 19
Killed

(b)(6)
Violent Extremist Use of Popular Social Networking Sites

On 21 April 2009 an item posted to an online dissemination platform detailed "the third phase in the Facebook Campaign."
Violent Extremist Use of YouTube

On average, extremist videos posted to YouTube receive five times as many viewings as they do on official Al-Qa’ida dissemination sites.
# Violent Extremists on YouTube...

## Anwar al-Awlaki

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Al-Awlaki Videos Posted</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
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<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>436</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>207 (as of 3-31-2010)</td>
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Anwar al-Awlaki: "The Enemies of Allah" (YouTube, February 2010)

Anwar al-Awlaki: "The Time is Now" (YouTube, March 2010)

Anwar al-Awlaki: "Umar ibn Al-Khattal" (YouTube, August 2009)

Anwar al-Awlaki: "The Dust Will Never Settle Down" (YouTube, May 2008)

Anwar al-Awlaki: "They Only Wish to Deceive Us" (YouTube, December 2009)
Violent Extremists in Their Own Words...

Anwar al-Awlaki on al-Malahim

Released May 23, 2010

"Those who were on the verge of being killed on board an aircraft are only a small drop in the bucket ..."

“We will see new Nidal Hasans.”

“Our unsettled account with America includes at the very least one million women and children.”

“...no one should ask us about targeting a bunch of Americans.”

“... the entire American people, they are accomplices ...”
Violent Extremist Use of Music

Insert Video

"Dirty Kuffar"

http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=4283987610134255997&ei=Tf2fs4fjA9GAlgfhsdjrDQ&q=dirty+kuffar&hl=en#
Responding to the Challenge:
How do we build safe and resilient communities?
What is at Stake?

Mohammed Sidiq Khan
London Transit Bomber
July 7, 2005

Martyrdom Video Released September 1, 2005

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oc8izvJWKwg
Summary

- We cannot “securitize” communities; Muslims should not be defined by violent extremism.

- Violent extremists share few physical characteristics and come from a range of ethnic backgrounds.

- Families and Communities must lead the effort to counter radical narratives.

  - Internet is key.

- Government must prevent and prosecute illegal behavior.

- Communities are the solution ... not the problem.
Possible Community Actions

➢ Remain active members of American civil society.

➢ Channel energy resulting from frustrations and grievances into positive action.

➢ Create a curriculum highlighting the dangers of violent extremism and terrorist recruitment.

➢ Talk to your children frankly about the positive and negative influences on the internet.

➢ Go on-line and challenge violent narratives.

However, the best ideas will come from communities ...
The Way Forward...

Incorporating Community Perspectives

- What do you think about this information?
- Ideas for initiatives or collaboration?
- What should the government do?
- What should communities do?
- What should parents do?