

THE PHENOMENON OF VIOLENT EXTREMISM IN EGYPT

THE CAUSES AND THE MEANS TO COMBAT IT

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Executive summary

There are a number of occasional sectarian incidents in Egyptian society, in addition to the spread of religious hate speech that rejects the other and even incites violence against him. Such acts represent a main source for the exacerbation of the culture of violent religious extremism, which has continued to take a very dangerous turn, sowing seeds of suspicion and mistrust among all components of Egyptian society and threatening its security. This violent extremism is falsely linked to religion or belief and comes in many forms, primarily violence against people because of their religious identity as a manifestation of collective religious hatred. This is in addition to individual coercive acts, which is shown in cases of domestic violence related to forcing the partner to adopt a certain religious viewpoint. Violence related to religious extremism often does not erupt out of nowhere, as it has a number of causes and root factors related to socialization in the Egyptian environment, not to mention the quality of education that children receive from a young age as well as the poor economic conditions of poverty and unemployment, which serve as an incentive for religious extremism on a large scale. Despite the efforts made to combat such phenomenon at all levels, from security, cultural and religious efforts to the efforts of civil society organizations, sectarian hostilities and religious hate speeches are not easy to overcome because this issue is associated with a culture with deep roots within society. Accordingly, **Maat for Peace, Development and Human Rights** presents this study to shed light on the manifestations of widespread violent religious extremism in society as well as its causes and to discuss the efforts made to curb this alarming phenomenon in order to come up with a series of recommendations to crystallize a complete vision that helps eliminate violent religious extremism from Egypt.

Keywords: religious extremism- religious hate speech- Egyptian society

Methodology of the study

The study is based on a complex methodology that initially depends on a desk review of the online posts that dealt with the phenomenon of violent religious extremism through monitoring and analysis, while relying on a survey of sectarian incidents that occurred in Egypt

2011 to January 2022 in order to extract the common causes of the outbreak of such phenomenon. Maat has also made a random monitoring of hate speech and religious incitement, whether on the media or on social media. These speeches ultimately ignite the feelings of violent extremism of a wide segment of citizens. Furthermore, Maat analyzed the processes of individuals' transformation from moderation to violent extremism while studying the reasons for such transformation through a documented collection of information from their families and those close to them. She analyzed the phenomenon of violent religious extremism in order to get a deep understanding of the roots of the phenomenon and how to eradicate it. Finally, Maat examined the statements of many religious institutions and religious leaders as well as literary and artistic works that analyzed the phenomenon of violent religious extremism, with the aim of obtaining a deep understanding of the roots of this phenomenon and how to eliminate it.

Introduction

Violent religious extremism inside Egypt has contributed to the perpetration of acts of violence. The alleged foundations or justifications of this extremism are based on misunderstood religious beliefs that either directly lead to attacks targeting individuals and religious sects or indirectly encourage religious fanaticism and rejection of the other, resulting in a number of grave human rights violations against people of different religions, which include targeting places of worship as well as incidents of sectarian strife, religious hate speech and others. The common denominator among them is the targeting of different religious identities and ideas. This coincides with the exacerbation of family crimes committed due to some individuals forcing certain religious practices on their family members.

However, it is wrong to focus on the manifestations of religious extremism in isolation from other elements that in essence cause individuals to adopt extremist religious beliefs, foremost among which is the process of socialization from childhood. Children are taught vocabulary and practices of religious hatred that ultimately form a religiously extremist individual that tends to commit or incite violence against other religious sects. This in addition to the spread of social grievances, individuals' lack of access to services in some areas and the life crises

experienced by citizens, which make people ready to accept extremism in light of the spread of many educational materials promoting religious extremism on the Internet and the exploitation of technological means, especially social media, by religious extremist groups to attract individuals.

In the midst of this, efforts continue at all levels to combat violent religious extremism. However, religious extremism is still deeply present in the culture of Egyptian society. Accordingly, to address the roots of the problem of violent religious extremism in Egyptian society, this study discusses the phenomenon of violent religious extremism in society. Maat begins the studying by highlighting the concept of violent religious extremism and its criminalization in Egyptian law, then exploring its various manifestations that are prevalent within society, along with the root causes and related factors of such phenomenon. Maat also provides an explanation of the various efforts made by all spectra to eradicate the phenomenon, including the security services and the various religious institutions and leaders as well as the distinctive role of soft power and civil society institution, as all these roles cannot be overlooked. Ultimately, the study provides recommendations for taking coordinated actions by all concerned parties in order to contain, reduce and completely eliminate the scourge resulting from religious extremism.

An overview of the concept of violent extremism based on religion and its criminalization in Egyptian law

There is no universally agreed upon definition of the phenomenon of violent religious extremism, but there are a large number of definitions, each of which focuses on one or more aspects of such phenomenon. One of the proposed definitions links religious extremism to the deviation from religious rules by religious institutions and the public and private religious heritage in the state, with a focus on other misconceptions promoted by other currents and groups¹. On the other hand, another definition refers to the essential connection between perceptions based on religious exclusion, non-acceptance of the other and incitement to violence

¹ صناعة التطرف في العالم العربي، العربي الجديد ، يونيو 2016 ، <https://bit.ly/33yPc72>

against him/her at a later stage and violent religious extremism. This definition focuses on the idea that extremism is a reflection of the non-acceptance of the other and incitement to violence. Some other studies have focused on the bilateral relationship between terrorism and violence based on religion, pointing out that terrorism and violent extremism are two sides of the same coin². Moreover, other studies suggested that the use of violence to achieve various religious goals is the essence of violent religious extremism³. In the same regard, one of the intellectuals studying religious violence movements in Pakistan defines this phenomenon as the use of religion to achieve political goals by relying on armed violence as a basic tool, with the complete rejection of all aspects of human and human rights progress that societies have made in an attempt to isolate themselves from other people and relive ancient times⁴.

Having examined a large number of definitions of the phenomenon of violent religious extremism, observed the current situation and reading texts and literature that directly or indirectly call for the adoption of violence to impose religious views of limited horizons regardless of their validity, the researcher defined religious extremism as **‘individuals clinging to certain religious viewpoints without regard to the prevailing religious interpretations in society and religious institutions, while refusing to tolerate and accept other religions as well as rejecting religious pluralism’**. Those individuals tend to use violence to impose religious views on society or individuals, incite hatred against members of other religions and transform any personal and societal differences into contexts that serve the goals of religious extremism. Based on this definition, the researcher sets the following indicators to infer the concept of violent religious extremism:

- Stagnation and rejection of other religious opinions and ideas contrary to what is prevalent in the mentality of this person.
- Transforming any personal disputes between people of different religions into sectarian events in which violence is practiced on a large scale.

² الإرهاب والتطرف هل هما وجهان لعملة واحدة، الجامعة الأمريكية بالقاهرة، <https://bit.ly/3lIGdPB>

³ Preventing violent extremism through education. Unesco. <https://bit.ly/35dP90N>

⁴ أيديولوجية العنف المسلح في تصوّرات الأصولية الإسلامية المعاصرة دراسة نماذج، دار الأكاديميون للنشر والتوزيع، ديسمبر 2021، <https://bit.ly/3FSYbwC>

- Denying the right of official religious institutions to issue religious interpretations, and even considering what is issued by them complete nonsense, while monopolizing the interpretations of different religious positions according to narrow religious fatwas issued throughout history, and the matter is not related to a particular religion or belief.
- Politicizing religion at times to achieve political goals by relying on violence, but this is not achieved in all contexts related to violence based on religion, but in some of them, it is a strategy for many radical groups.

Although the phenomenon of violence based on religion in Egyptian society has not alarmingly exacerbated, a small number of local Egyptian legislation and laws criminalize the phenomenon. In this context, **Article 64** of the Egyptian Constitution stipulates the need for the Egyptian government to protect the right to practice religious rites and establish places of worship for the adherents of other monotheistic religions. This includes protecting places of worship from various attacks or harm, but indirectly⁵. At the same level, according to **Article 98** of the Egyptian Penal Code, the use of religion to promote extremist ideas to incite sedition, contempt or distortion of Islam, Christianity or Judaism, and harming national unity is punishable by imprisonment for periods ranging from 6 months to 5 years, these acts include incitement to violence based on violent extremism on a large scale⁶.

In this internal legislative context, President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi issued a decision in December 2018 to form the Supreme Committee to confront sectarian events, headed by the Presidential Adviser for Security and Combating Terrorism, with the membership of a representative from the Armed Forces Operations Authority, Military Intelligence, General Intelligence, and the Administrative Control and National Security Authority, in order to confront the worsening sectarian events⁷.

⁵ الدستور المصري المعدل 2019، منشورات قانونية، <https://bit.ly/3nWoLNY>

⁶ قانون العقوبات المصري، منشورات قانونية، <http://bit.ly/33PTqI6>

⁷ اختصاصات قرار جمهوري بتشكيل اللجنة العليا لمواجهة الأحداث الطائفية، مصراوي ، ديسمبر 2018 ، <https://bit.ly/3rFV9XD>

On the other hand, the Egyptian government is committed to implementing the articles of the international conventions it has signed, and therefore it is committed to the text of Article 18 of the International Covenant on Political and Civil Rights, which emphasizes the protection of the religious rights of individuals, in addition to Article 20 of the same covenant, which prohibits explicit advocacy of religious hatred⁸. In this regard, Maat confirms that the absence of a stand-alone law to protect places of worship from vandalism with confronting sectarian criminal acts in society that contributes to the exacerbation and increase of the phenomenon. Although the idea of a draft law was presented to blur the assault on places of worship on more than one occasion and from various religious authorities, this law will not come to light or be discussed so far. A good example of this is what was proposed by the Egyptian Ministry of Awqaf in April 2019⁹, then Maat calls for quickly discussing a law regulating dealing with all kinds of sectarian crimes.

Reflective indicators: the escalation of manifestations and features of violent extremism within Egyptian society

Many different manifestations indicate violent religious extremism in Egyptian society, topped by the assaults on places of worship with acts of sabotage, as well as sectarian violence resulting from the transformation of societal or personal differences into religious ones followed by violent attacks. At the same level, citizens are subjected to killing and targeting by armed groups because of their religious identities, and at a stage no less dangerous than these acts, religious hate speeches rejecting the other spread, and even working to incite against him, whether directly or indirectly, these speeches, although they do not directly call for hatred, it contributes to the outbreak of religious violence in the future and feeds from it mechanically, it is no longer limited to these practices only, but there are crimes of domestic violence related to the contexts of religious extremism and the imposition of a certain religious culture on a family member by brute force. The common denominator between all these practices is the refusal to

⁸ العهد الدولي الخاص بالحقوق المدنية والسياسية، جامعة منيسوتا، <http://bit.ly/31BW3p0>

⁹ طوارئ داخل الأوقاف مشروع قانون لتعليق عقوبة الاعتداء على دور العبادة، الوطن، أبريل 2019، <https://bit.ly/3fPEMCe>

tolerate different religious ideas, even if they are of the same religion, while considering violence as the best way to deal with them under any circumstances.

In the midst of this, the statistics of Maat for Peace, Development and Human Rights indicate that more than 88 places of worship were assaulted with acts of sabotage from July 2013 to June 2021, which mostly targeted Christian places of worship. Perhaps the most prominent of these assaults was in December 2016 with the bombing of the Church of Saints Paul and Peter attached to the Cathedral of St. Mark in El Abbasia district in Cairo, which resulted in the killing of 26 persons and the injury of others¹⁰. In October 2017, 30 armed persons, who embrace extremist beliefs, attacked Al-Rawda Mosque in North Sinai and opened fire indiscriminately on worshipers during Friday prayers, which resulted in the death of 305 persons, including 27 children. Human rights estimates indicate that this incident is considered one of the worst incidents of violence based on violent religious extremism in modern Egyptian history¹¹.

On the other hand, there have been many incidents of sectarian violence within the Egyptian society recently, as personal differences are transformed into sectarian problems with a religious dimension, or citizens object to building houses of worship for other religions. Minya governorate is considered the most governorates in which incidents of sectarian and religious violence are spread. This is according to the analysis of Maat team, and among the most frequent of these incidents was the one that occurred in May 2016 after 300 persons assaulted 7 Copts' homes in Al-Karm village in Minya governorate, in addition to stripping an elderly woman of her clothes in front of the crowds of citizens in an attempt to humiliate her. This comes against a background of news stating that there was a relationship between a Christian young man and a Muslim woman, and soon the matter took a sectarian curve and religious hatred. The targeting of Coptic homes in the village was arbitrary and indiscriminate, in a procedure representing collective punishment for them. Not only that, but in December 2020, the accused who stripped the lady of Al-Karm village were acquitted in an approach that indicates the continuation of impunity and confirms the continuation of these sectarian crimes¹². In September 2018, a group

¹⁰ حقائق عن الكنيسة البطرسية والكاتدرائية المرقسية في القاهرة، بي بي سي ، ديسمبر 2016 ،

¹¹ حداد و غضب وإدانات إثر الهجوم الدموي على مسجد بسيناء، تي ديبيلو نيوز، أكتوبر 2017 ، <https://bit.ly/3AI9AUW> ،

¹² براءة المتهمين الثلاثة بتعريفة سيدة الكرم في المنيا، المصري اليوم ، ديسمبر 2020 ، <https://bit.ly/3tJBxEK> ،

of Muslim citizens objected to the construction a church in the village of Damshaw Hashem in Minya governorate, which resulted in a widespread sectarian attack on the homes of Christians in the village, causing a lot of damage¹³.

In this regard, Egyptian citizens were repeatedly killed on the basis of their religious identity. In February 2017, seven Christians were killed in Al-Arish, after armed extremists targeted them, with a large number of them fleeing their homes for fear of persecution¹⁴. In May of the same year, about 30 Christians were killed. They were heading towards a monastery inside Minya Governorate, after they refused to change their beliefs. The Islamic State (ISIS) group adopted the attack, a group that believes in changing religious beliefs through brute force and rejects it¹⁵. In April 2021, Christian citizen Nabil Habashi Salama was targeted with death by members of the armed forces. Religious extremist from the terrorist organization ISIS¹⁶. Maat for peace's analysis on several facts indicates that most crimes of targeting citizens based on religious identity occur in Sinai due to the spread of religious extremist currents in those areas.

In the meantime, Maat for Peace has monitored a series of religious hate speech that has fueled sectarian violence in the community, whether on social media or in the media. In April 2017, the Grand Mufti Shawky Allam stated that there were 3,000 widespread fatwas inciting the demolition of churches in Egypt, a speech that motivated religious violence¹⁷. In November 2021, a series of offensive statements against the Islamic religion were republished by former priest Zakaria Boutros, creating wide disputes on social media. It should be noted that such statements could eventually lead to future sectarian feuds.¹⁸ In the same context, messages of incitement and

¹³ مصر شرطة المنيا تلقي القبض على 38 متهمًا بالاعتداء على أقباط لمنع بناء كنيسة، الجريدة ، سبتمبر 2018 <https://bit.ly/3rMAAt0m>

¹⁴ <https://bbc.in/33XEeb0> تسلمت زمني لأبرز أحداث العنف ضد المسيحيين في مصر، بي بي سي العربية ، أغسطس 2018 ،

¹⁵ <https://bit.ly/3tQALpC> أبرز الاعتداءات ضد الأقباط في مصر، مونت كارلو الدولية ، ديسمبر 2017 ،

¹⁶ <https://bit.ly/3IrTgVb> مطران القدس يدين جريمة داعش بحق نبيل حبشي تضاف لسجل الجرائم بحق الإنسانية، المصر اليوم، أبريل 2021 ،

¹⁷ <https://bit.ly/3FVafxs> أشهر 10 فتاوى لهدم الكنائس من بين 3 آلاف فتوى ترصدها دار الإفتاء، بوابة الحركات الإسلامية ، أبريل 2017 ،

¹⁸ <https://bbc.in/3GTBEBrn> زكريا بطرس جدل وتساؤلات في مصر بعد إعادة نشر فيديو هات مسيئة للإسلام، بي بي سي العربية ، نوفمبر 2021 ،

hatred associated with religious events are still very prevalent in Egyptian popular circles and essentially constitute a bomb that could explode in the future.¹⁹



Figure 1(Latest examples of religious hate speech witnessed by Maat for peace in the society)

In the midst of the widespread manifestations of violent religious extremism in Egyptian society, the Egyptian family will not survive this matter. In many cases, domestic violence is associated with contexts related to violent religious extremism. Women are forced to accept specific religious instructions in contravention of what is prevalent in society and violence becomes the main way to achieve this. In December 2021, a Khul' divorce case by an Egyptian woman against her husband revealed the framework of religious extremism associated with violence within the family. His husband forced her to quit her job as well as beat her and accused her of infidelity and forced her to dress in a certain way, all under the guise of religion from his point of view, which forced her finally to request Khul'. This incident illustrates the danger of

¹⁹ <https://bit.ly/3FRlhmc> متصدياً للكراهية" التي غدت تيارات متطرفة الأزهر يهتئ المسيحيين بالأعياد، النهار العربي ، يناير 2022 ، 19

violent religious extremism which is deeply rooted in the family, and may create a generation of religious extremists who would pose an imminent threat to all members of society.²⁰

Multiple connotations: Why would some people turning to religious violent extremism

The analysis carried out by Maat for Peace for most of the incidents of religious-based violence in Egypt, as well as the contexts of people's radicalization, leads to a combination of factors and causes that lead to the phenomenon and are often associated with the social upbringing of individuals, as well as the education they receive since childhood, not to mention compelling social conditions such as poverty and unemployment, particularly in the provinces and remote areas of Cairo. However, religious views with a narrow horizon often receive attention from some sectors, leading to their eventual shift towards violent extremism. This comes in conjunction with the life crises of individuals, which significantly affect their thinking. Finally, the methods by which terrorist groups are drawn by represent one of the reasons for individuals to join them because of their particular ways of addressing the extreme need of individuals for religious affiliation can be explained in some detail as follows:

1. **Socialization:** It is an ongoing process with people from childhood. A set of values are cultivated within the individual by his/her family in order to shape his/her future behavior when he/she grows up, and thus plays a major role in increasing the processes of violent religious extremism in Egyptian society. Children are brought up in hatred of children of different religions, and some families prevent their children from playing with children of other religions. These children are fed with a range of vocabulary and sentences that establish a false and radical understanding of how to deal with each other. All of this is packaged with religious practices by adults who are radical in themselves, so that from a young age the child learns and develops religious extremism and it becomes difficult to change in the future.²¹
2. **Education:** The fact that radical educational materials are received from a young age is equally dangerous. It ultimately creates an extremist person with religious extremist ideas

²⁰ <https://bit.ly/3FRJb24> زوجة في دعوى خلع متطرف دينيا وضربني علاقة لرفضني ارتداء النقاب، الوطن ، ديسمبر 2021 ،

²¹ <https://bit.ly/341YOad> لا تلعبوا مع النصاري لتطرف كشبح تتمدد ظلاله فوق مصر، درج ، أكتوبر 2021 ،

with conviction. Some expert opinions suggest that there are some educational materials in Egypt, particularly in Al-Azhar education, that create a fertile environment for the spread of extremist ideas. Others also assert that this is not only related to extremist educational materials, but also to those involved in the educational process. If a teacher were to adopt radical ideas, he could influence his student in such a way as to create a generation of religious fanatics who might dream of the radical thought of society for the future.²²

3. **Harsh economic conditions:** Affirming the statements made by official institutions in Egypt that poverty, unemployment and poor economic conditions are driving citizens towards violent religious extremism. In September 2014, President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi stated that poverty was one of the main causes of violent extremism in Egyptian society, a problem that the State must move forward to solve.²³ In August, the Egyptian Grand Mufti stated that poverty and unemployment were key factors in increasing extremism within Egyptian society.²⁴
4. **Prevalence of extremist religious interpretations:** Extremist religious interpretations, as well as narrow views that do not accept the other, play a role in joining youth to religious extremist currents, those that carry out operations to target houses of worship and those that target citizens based on religious identity.²⁵
5. **Psychological and life crises:** As people go through a number of circumstances that may have caused them to join religious extremist organizations, the analysis of Maat for peace, based on information posted online on the transformation of young man converted to Islam to join ISIS, based on difficult life experiences and psychological crises that began with his fear of death and ended with his joining the extremist group ISIS²⁶. In this context,

²² هل يعد التعليم الديني مسؤولاً بالفعل عن التطرف، بي بي سي العربية ، ديسمبر 2016 ، <https://bbc.in/3tLLZvr>

²³ <https://bit.ly/3rz5uog> خبر السيسى الفقر من أسباب التطرف وحقوق الإنسان ليست سياسية ومدنية فقط، سما الأخبارية ، سبتمبر 2014 ،

²⁴ <https://cnn.it/3tQh5BV> مفتي مصر التطرف يتشكل في ظل الفقر والبطالة والفتوى مهنة وصناعة، سي أن أن، أغسطس 2014 ،

²⁵ <https://bit.ly/3KvuZPY> لماذا يكره الإخوان مفهوم الدولة الوطنية؟ خبراء يجيبون، أسكاي نيوز، يناير 2022،

²⁶ <https://bit.ly/3ItcwSh> إسلام يكن شاب مصري انتقل من كمال الأجسام للتطرف، العربية، نوفمبر 2014،

Maat for Peace stresses that we need to study all cases that have turned to violent extremism in order to gain a deep understanding of the phenomenon.

6. **Tools used by terrorist groups:** The discourses of encouragement based on persuasion and emotion used by religious extremist terrorist groups, as well as the discourses of victimhood, represent a glamor for a group of people, especially the young and young, in order to join these currents with a desire to please God and follow the correct approach, which contradicts the truth in a big way, and in this context Studies have proven that religious extremist currents use social media to recruit a large number of Egyptians into their ranks, based on narrow religious views that in essence represent the real danger of continuing violent extremism in Egyptian society.²⁷

Ongoing Attempts: Efforts to Contain Violent Religious Extremism in Egypt

Egyptian state institutions, religious bodies, civil society organizations, leaders, intellectuals, as well as soft powers represented by art, and sports combat violent religious extremism. The security services play a role in eliminating extremist religious currents that use violence to impose their views on society and intimidate citizens. In February 2018, the military operation launched by the Egyptian security services in North and Central Sinai to eliminate think-tank groups that use violence ostensibly based on religious considerations to intimidate citizens is the best evidence of the security response to extremist religious ideology²⁸. While on the legal side, the judiciary is still punishing the perpetrators of crimes of religious violence with deterrent consequences, especially in crimes related to terrorism²⁹.

On another level, religious leaders and religious institutions play a role in combating violent religious extremism. In June 2016, the Al-Azhar Foundation launched a new strategy to confront extremist religious thought³⁰. There is also the role of the Al-Azhar Observatory in confronting religious extremist thought through a series of studies it issues to correct the

²⁷ <https://bit.ly/3KCd75S> مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي أداة خصبة لبروباغندا الإرهاب، قناة تي ديبلو الألمانية،

²⁸ الجيش المصري يطلق عملية عسكرية شاملة ضد الإرهاب، العربية، مايو 2020، <https://bit.ly/3tUUpU6>

²⁹ التقرير الدولي بشأن الحرية الدينية في مصر لعام 2019، سفارة الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية في القاهرة، <https://bit.ly/3Kzi7ww>

³⁰ الأزهر يطلق إستراتيجية لمواجهة التطرف، المشرق، يونيو 2016، <https://bit.ly/3AkIVrr>

erroneous religious concepts held by Muslims in general and not only in Egypt. Al-Azhar issued 13 studies in 2020 focusing on combating violent religious extremism only³¹. Al-Azhar also exerts efforts to deepen the understanding of the other's different religions and their acceptance through the activities on the sidelines of the Human Fraternity Document³².

In this context; dramatic and cinematic works are no longer limited to entertainment only but have become an important means of combating religious extremist ideas³³. Perhaps the series "The Choice" in the first and second parts is the most prominent example. Despite the role of the Ministry of Youth and Sports in combating violent extremism in cooperation with the Al-Azhar Foundation, specifically through a program towards a youth vision to confront extremism and terrorism, it still needs to activate the role of sport in combating extremism³⁴. Maat stresses the need to use the technical training manual on preventing violent extremism through sport issued by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to more effectively combat violent religious extremism. Therefore, it calls on the Ministry of Youth and Sports and the Football Association and Sports Clubs to activate this matter.

The role of intellectuals in society is critical to countering violent extremism. Dr. Youssef Al-Wardani sheds light on the phenomenon of religious extremism and combating it in his book "International and Regional Experiences in Combating Extremism issued by the Arab Research Institute. The importance of this book lies in shedding light on successful international experiences in combating extremism, which the Egyptian government needs to study in the coming period³⁵.

Civil society plays a role in combating violent religious extremism. Partners for Transparency, as head of the Egyptian Network of the Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean

³¹ جهود الدولة المصرية ومقاربتها الشاملة لمكافحة الإرهاب والفكر المتطرف المؤدي إلى الإرهاب، مدونة الخارجية المصرية ، أغسطس 2021 ، <https://bit.ly/3lrKo22>

³² جهود مرصد الأزهر فيما يتعلق بوثيقة الأخوة الإنسانية، الأزهر الشريف ، فبراير 2021 ، <https://bit.ly/3GTsmFs>

³³ أداة فعالة دور الدراما في مكافحة خطابات الكراهية والتطرف العنيف، مؤسسة ماعت للسلام والتنمية وحقوق الإنسان ، <https://bit.ly/3tQKTyC>

³⁴ تفاصيل خطة التعاون بين الشباب ومرصد الأزهر لمواجهة التطرف والإرهاب، الوطن ، ديسمبر 2021 ، <https://bit.ly/3GRH7IY>

³⁵ الخبرات الدولية والإقليمية في مكافحة التطرف، المركز العربي للأبحاث والدراسات ، ديسمبر 2016 ، <https://bit.ly/3FTf1M7>

Foundation for Intercultural Dialogue, launched a campaign to combat hate speech from March to May 2021, entitled Electronic Awareness Campaign against Hate Speech and Extremism. One of the campaign's goals was to focus on violent religious hate speech³⁶. Ultimately, all stakeholders need more efforts to combat violent religious extremism in Egypt.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Acts of violence associated with violent extremism are spread in Egyptian society, the most important of which is the attack on places of worship and other manifestations of sectarian strife. The reasons for this violence are adopting religious interpretations that deviate from the prevailing general behavior within society and lead to the dissemination of religious hatred and violence. Despite the various strenuous efforts made by all parties to reduce the phenomenon, they need further correction to proceed properly. For this reason, Maat for Peace, Development and Human Rights recommends the following:

- To the legislative institutions: It should discuss a law to regulate dealing with various sectarian crimes, intensify the penalties for perpetrators, address the legal loopholes in the current laws, and overcome the culture of impunity that arises from the lack of evidence and criminal procedures.
- To the Ministry of Youth and Sports and the Football Association: It should activate the role of sport in combating violent religious extremism, and a proposal to use the technical training manual for the prevention of violent extremism through sport issued by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to combat the phenomenon more effectively.
- To the Presidency of the Council of Ministers: All ministries in the government should cooperate to issue a study that explains detailed data on the perpetrated acts of religious violence and their motives while working to solve them and benefiting from the experiences of other countries that have struggled with the phenomenon.

³⁶ شركاء من أجل الشفافية تطلق حملة دولية للتصدي لخطاب الكراهية والتطرف، الدستور ، مايو 2021 ، <https://bit.ly/3lsfFSh>

- To the Ministry of Education and Higher Education: It should review the school curricula and materials that refer to hatred, religious stereotyping, or inflame hostile feelings towards any religious group.
- To the security services: It should combat crimes of religious violence using security methods, caution when dealing with civilians, benefit from police evidence such as the Guide to Preventing Terrorism, Countering Violent Extremism and Radicalization that leads to it issued by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.
- To service ministries: It should access remote areas that do not have services and a hotbed of activity for violent and extremist currents.
- To the Ministry of Culture: A long-term plan should change the patterns of religious thinking linked to extremism through various cultural and artistic works.
- To the Al-Azhar Foundation: It should continue its strenuous efforts to combat violent extremism and issue pamphlets to respond to the false religious ideas spread on the Internet.
- To the Egyptian Church: It should activate its role in raising awareness of religious hate crimes based on violence and the preacher used by some malicious parties to sow discord within society.
- To the drama's producers: should produce dramas that focus on the danger of violent religious extremism on society and correct misconceptions.
- To think tanks, research, and intellectuals: It should develop studies that discuss violent religious extremism in Egypt and research cases of community members' transformation towards extremism and write research and studies on how to overcome them.
- To civil society institutions: It should formulate programs that combat violent religious extremism through various activities, especially in Minya Governorate, in cooperation with religious bodies and local religious leaders.