

# RADICALISM, EXTREMISM, AND TERRORISM – THE ENEMIES OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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## Abstract

This article discusses one of the major global challenges faced by the world community today – radicalism, extremism and terrorism. It examines the origins and consequences of these destructive ideologies, their obstruction to human development, and the need for collective efforts to eradicate such malevolent and fanatical movements. It is emphasized that radicalism, extremism and terrorism are among the greatest factors hindering the progress of the New Uzbekistan in the 21st century.

**Keywords:** Extremism, terrorism, fanaticism, democratic.

## Introduction

Since the dawn of human civilization, the world has witnessed millions of wars. These wars have led to countless deaths and inflicted severe economic, cultural and educational damage upon nations. However, there exists a type of war that continues to exert its influence across all countries even today – this is the struggle against individuals driven by destructive ideologies such as radicalism, extremism and terrorism. The earliest manifestations of such ideologies emerged with the advent of Islam. These individuals distorted the true meaning of the words written in the Holy Qur’an, ministerpreting and manipulating them to mislead others. Having thoroughly studied human psychology, they devised ways to persuade and recruit individuals of their cause. Today, more than 1.5 million people around the world adhere to the Islamic faith. Over two-thirds of Muslims reside in Asia, and nearly 30% live in Africa. In more than 120 countries where Muslim communities exist, Muslims from the majority population in over 40 of them. Exploiting people’s faith and devotion, radical groups seek to draw them toward their own misguided path. During this process, individuals experience a period of spiritual and psychological vulnerability, which such extremist ideologues exploit to spread their beliefs. This emptiness can be filled with either goodness or evil. Terrorists, aiming to capture the human psyche, claim that they are a person’s friend, brother and fellow believer. However, their true intention is to overthrow democratic states and establish Islamic emirate – type governments. For them, human rights and freedoms are resticted. They use the religion of Islamic as a disguise to carry out their vile actions. History tells us that on September 11, 2001, airplanes hijacked by terrorists attacked buildings symbolizing the economic, political and



military power of the United States. This act of terrorism caused great damage to the U.S. From that moment on, the United States began its fight against terrorism.

Such cases were also observed in Central Asia and the Arab Emirates. In particular, the events of May 13, 2015, in Andijan administration building with the aim of seizing power. They brutally tortured and killed former state employees. They used women and children as human shields. To suppress this terrorist act and punish its participants, our government leader, the First President Islam Abduganiyevich Karimov, strengthened the military presence in the Andijan region. Their main goal was to destroy the constitutional order and establish an Islamic caliphate. But this malicious goal was not achieved; however, we all know how many people lost their lives and how much economic damage the state suffered due to the attack. Today, the ideology of religious extremism is exerting intense informational and psychological pressure on public consciousness through global information and communication networks, including the Internet and modern electronic software. It is necessary to be cautious when using mass media. There is also the concept of international terrorism. International terrorism refers to political sabotage activities aimed at destabilizing countries, international organizations, political parties, and movements. It involves the elimination of certain individuals or state figures, leading to conflicts between states. Preventing such negative consequences requires states to unite and cooperate in the fight against terrorism. It would not be an exaggeration to say that the Republic of Uzbekistan's sustainable development strategy is also centered on preventing terrorist activities and combating extremism. The fight against terrorism and radicalism requires a comprehensive and long-term approach. This process is not limited only to the use of force or legal measures – it also includes developing society socially and culturally, as well as increasing knowledge and awareness. In this regard, it is essential to develop a social environment based on freedom and mutual dialogue. Every citizen using social networks should be thoroughly educated in ancient fields such as religious studies and history. Among young people, interest in learning about religion is increasing, and they begin to search for information on social networks. Different websites provide different types of information. As a result, a large portion of the youth becomes vulnerable to the influence of religious extremism. Such alarming outcomes have been repeatedly identified during investigations.

### Literature Review

In the book “The Development Strategy of New Uzbekistan” by the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Shavkat Mirziyoyev, it is stated that radicalism, extremism and terrorism – problems faced by Uzbekistan and the entire world – require countries to unite and fight against illegal religious organizations to ensure sustainable development. Additionally, in the UN's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism, it is emphasized that “in combating terrorism, it is necessary not only to strengthen security measures but also to enhance efforts to prevent the conditions that lead to such extremism.” The illegality of providing unauthorized religious education and creating clandestine religious cells, as well as the potential harm these actions may cause not only to the Uzbek people but to humanity as a whole, is also discussed.

In the work “High Spirituality is an Invincible Force” by the First President of Uzbekistan, Islam Karimov, it is emphasized that religious ideologies used for destructive purposes can



become the most powerful weapon aimed at overthrowing a democratic state. In Azamova Setora Ayonovna's book "The History and Directions of Religious Radicalism, Extremism, and Terrorism" "We can see that the roots of religious extremism go back far into history. Although the illegal directions of each movement differ, their destructive intention remains the same. Any state imposes strict punishments and legal responsibilities on religious organizations whose activities lead to chaos and destabilization." "The Sociology of Terrorism" by Andrew Silke. This book, aimed at exploring the sociological aspects of terrorism, provides information about the social, psychological and political consequences of extremism and terrorism.

### Research Methodology

In this article, historical, analytical, synthesis, and comparative methods are used to further reveal the essence and content of the topic. It should be emphasized that once a problem arises, a solution is also required. To prevent such a global issue as religious extremism, it is necessary to establish legal religious schools that ensure the correct interpretation of religion within the education system and social relations. Respecting human rights and freedoms and avoiding the inculcation of incorrect religious concepts in children are essential. Strategies must be developed to prevent religious extremism.

**Education and upbringing:** An important stage before radicalization is education. To protect young people from extremist ideas, it is necessary to provide quality education and develop critical thinking skills. Ensuring the correct understanding of religion and culture helps protect them from radical and misinterpreted beliefs.

**Social equality:** Inequality in society, as well as social and economic marginalization, can lead to the development of radicalism. Social systems, families and communities must identify early stages of radicalization and provide necessary support. Strengthening control over the internet and social networks plays a major role in combating radical ideas and materials linked to terrorist organizations, as well as in protecting young people and the population from radicalization. Among the countries of the world, all democratic states are considered to have strong laws against religious radicalism. The increase in illegal religious organizations leads to the violation of human rights and freedoms. Around the world, states promote the principle of uniting in the fight against religious extremism. In particular, in the United States, the spread of terrorism and extremist ideas is subject to the most severe punishment. Looking back at history, misinterpreting religious concepts has always been considered a grave sin. Religion is a sanctuary that reflects a person's faith and emotions, and individuals are strongly attached to the religion they believe in. No matter how much one may try to divert such people, they do not go astray. However, those who do not yet have sufficient understanding of religion may believe anything others tell them. Article 35 of the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan states: "Freedom of conscience is guaranteed for everyone. Every person has the right to profess any religion or not to profess any religion. Imposing religious beliefs by force is not allowed." It is emphasized in our Constitution that religious view must never be imposed by force.



## Analysis and Results

In order to eliminate illegal religious organizations, it is first necessary to determine the extent of the role of religious organizations in the country. Religious organizations must be protected by law and their activities should be kept under supervision. Providing lawful religious education is essential to properly convey the concept of religion to the younger generation. In this regard, the science of religious studies plays a significant role. Its purpose is to equip students not only with religious interpretations of religion and religious doctrines, but also with scientific concepts, teachings, theories, and philosophical conclusions. To achieve this, it is intended to provide knowledge based on modern scientific achievements about the origin of religion, its evolution, its current state and its role in the social, economic, political, and spiritual life of humanity. A secular state's basic principles expressing its attitude toward religion are reflected in specific rules. These include respecting the religious feelings of believers; recognizing religious beliefs as a private matter for citizens or their associations; guaranteeing equal rights for citizens who follow religious beliefs and those who do not and preventing any form of persecution and acknowledging that religion must not be used for destructive purposes. Such principles ensure consistency in the state's relationship with religious organizations.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, practical measures and actions are being taken in Uzbekistan to prevent the spread of extremist and radical ideas. Protecting the younger generation from destructive ideologies is crucial for the peace of our country. It is necessary to prevent the widespread public dissemination of harmful religious ideologies and to take measures in this regard. The future of New Uzbekistan lies in the hands of its developing youth. Therefore, it is important to ensure that schools, universities and other educational institutions do not allow the promotion of religious view or other destructive ideas. Educating sincere and responsible citizens is our collective duty for the stable of New Uzbekistan.

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