

Policy Notes

## Defeating Ideologically Inspired Violent Extremism A Strategy to Build Strong Communities and Protect the U.S. Homeland

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*Transition 2017: Policy Notes for the Trump Administration*

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"This bipartisan Washington Institute report on preventing and countering violent extremism represents a balanced, sensible, and comprehensive strategy for reducing terrorist recruitment. The report does not shrink from identifying the dangerous role played by the political ideology of extremist Islamism, as distinct from Islam itself. At the same time, it correctly notes the rising threats posed by other forms of political extremism, as typified by the recent wave of threats and attacks against Jews and other minorities. As the study makes clear, we need a strategic effort to blunt and, if necessary, reverse violent radicalization."

—MICHAEL CHERTOFF

Secretary of Homeland Security  
George W. Bush Administration

The United States should adopt a strategy to prevent and counter violent extremism (P/CVE) within the United States that empowers communities on the frontlines of defense against homegrown violent extremism and builds trusting partnerships with and within local communities to reduce terrorist recruitment. In this transition paper for the new administration, a bipartisan Washington Institute study group details a P/CVE policy centered on countering the full range of Islamist and other extremist ideologies that pose security threats to the homeland.

Preventing and countering violent extremism is not a soft alternative to counterterrorism, but an essential toolkit to complement law enforcement's ongoing efforts to prevent violence. Communities are our first line of defense against violent extremism, so empowering and incentivizing them to become more active in the P/CVE space is in the local and national interest. This bipartisan study group report offers a set of guiding principles for the Donald J. Trump administration to achieve these goals.

### THE BIPARTISAN STUDY GROUP

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### THE TRANSITION 2017 SERIES

Founded in 1985, The Washington Institute is a nonpartisan organization dedicated to scholarly research and informed debate on U.S. policy in the Middle East. Following in the tradition of seven previous presidential election cycles, the Institute's Transition 2017 papers are designed to provide the new administration with sound analysis, creative ideas, and useful recommendations to advance U.S. interests in the Middle East.