

ICTR Conference

Highlights of the Second Day- 25 February, 2009

By the second day, the conference entered achieved remarkable milestones in the study of rehabilitation and deradicalisation programme.

According to Prof. Gunaratna, the Head of the Organizing Committee of the conference, the participants were fortunate for having the opportunity to listen to the two presentations on Uzbekistan's rehabilitation and deradicalisation programme as this was the first time that the Government of Uzbekistan agreed to share its experiences outside the country in an open conference. Two representatives of the Government of Uzbekistan presented the participants with first hand accounts of the programme. The Dr. Tolibjon A. Umarov, Head of Research at the Office of the Prosecutor General spoke on *Detainee Rehabilitation: Uzbekistan's Experience*, and Lieutenant Colonel D. Babajanov, Deputy Head of Anti-terrorism Department at the Ministry of Internal Affairs presented his experiences on *Countering Extremism in Uzbekistan*.

Another milestone was achieved when Prof. Arie Kruglanski and Prof. Michele Gefland of University of Maryland, United States of America, presented on *The Radicalisation and Deradicalisation Index*. Researchers who affirmed the importance of rehabilitation, deradicalisation and counter-ideology programme within counter-terrorism strategy agreed that one setback in the current on-going initiatives in various countries was the lack of a reliable tool to gauge objectively when radicalisation and deradicalisation has taken place. Both professors attempted to address this deficit by joining efforts to develop an index and a matrix that can gauge radicalisation and deradicalisation of an individual detainee or an individual in society by tapping into established works in psychology, and extensive interviews of detainee in various countries. Although the status of this research can currently be labeled a "work in progress", it gives a lot of hope to practitioners and proponents of counter-ideology work due to its potential to significantly improve the existing methodology.

On the third day, the conference is expected to witness another milestone when a representative of the Islamic Development Department of Malaysia makes a presentation on Malaysian terrorist rehabilitation programme. The Malaysian government is widely regarded by researchers as a success story of counter-terrorism work after the discovery of JI mantiqi and KMM and the subsequent arrest of members of both organizations. Since then, although rehabilitation programme for detainees has been underway, not many details on it can be found. The presentation is a milestone because it is for the first time that these details will be shared publicly and this will provide previously unavailable insights to the programme.