WEAPONIZATION OF SOCIAL MEDIA AND ISLAMIC EXTREMISM - THE CASE OF KOSOVO

LYRA ÇELA
Faculty of Law
UNIVERSITY OF PRISHTINA "HASAN PRISHTINA"

Abstract

The use of social media as a weapon in contemporary conflicts poses serious threats to global security and peace. The recent wars in the Middle East are the best illustration of how terrorist groups have led a global social media campaign to take their cause to every computer and mobile phone. Social media is being used as a tool to not only radicalizing, but most importantly recruiting youngsters and others online. As such, social media is playing an important role in the battlefields of the world today. The number of followers of radical doctrines, indicate how the expansion of radical Islam in the Western Balkans could pose a threat to the stability of the region. The case of Kosovo represents an illustrative example in this context. It is believed that around 300 Kosovar citizens have joined terrorist organization Islamic State in Syria and Iraq. This concerning number represents one of the largest per capita in Europe. It is precisely social media that has had a central role by serving as a tool towards the radicalization and the recruitment of Kosovar citizens to foreign fights in the Middle East.

Introduction

Media development in recent decades, particularly the developments in social media have brought key shifts in the field of communication and information in general. The advent of social media is considered to have fully revolutionized the way people communicate and interact with others in both public and private sphere. Since social media is considered the first kind of media that almost entirely belongs to the masses, it has given unprecedented space for various individuals and actors to exert their influence through the use of it, without requiring any qualification and credibility. People of every age and background have managed to master the use of social media – despite the fact of it being only recent technology. Interestingly enough, it has progressed from being a mere mean of communication and entertainment, to being somewhat of a weapon in modern warfare.

The use of social media as a weapon in contemporary conflicts poses serious threats to global security and peace. The recent wars in the Middle East are the best illustration of how terrorist groups have led a global social media campaign to take their cause to every computer and mobile phone. They are increasingly adept in using the Internet and social media to propagate their hateful messages and support their recruitment and terrorism activities. Social media is being used as a tool to not only radicalizing but most importantly recruiting especially youngsters and others online. Examples from all around the world show the tremendous effects that social media is increasingly having.

Representing a serious threat to the security of the region and also Europe, the case of Kosovo represents an illustrative example in this context. It is believed that around 300 Kosovar citizens have joined terrorist organization Islamic State in Syria and Iraq. This concerning number represents one of the largest per capita in Europe. The geographic distance is insurmountable – yet it is incredible to believe the manner and intensity of Islamic radicalism penetration in Kosovo in particular.

Given that as of today, social media platforms are not only communication tools but no less than weapons, this paper will focus on an analysis of the role that social media are playing the battlefields of the world today and security in the world. The number of followers of radical doctrines, indicate how the expansion of radical Islam in the Western Balkans could pose a threat to the stability of the region. This paper will provide an overview on Islamic extremism in the world today, and especially in Kosovo and the Western Balkans region and the role that social media has had in its spreading by serving as a tool towards the radicalization and the recruitment of Kosovar citizens to foreign fights in the Middle East.

Social Media as a Weapon in Modern Warfare

While the role played by social media in the information environment is generally considered positive, as it has contributed in the expansion of freedom of expression, social media is now playing a crucial role in conflict situation. Social media has become an integral part of the

conflict environment over the past years. The use of social media as a weapon in contemporary conflicts poses serious threats to global security and peace.[1] This development is clearly demonstrated in several contemporary conflicts such as in Libya, Syria, counter-insurgency operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, and lately the conflict in Ukraine.[2]

The democratization of technology and the Information and Communication Technology revolution are facilitating the effects of disproportionally between the investment and its outcome.[3] Radicalizing and recruiting online has great advantages over the traditional public communications. Terrorist groups can reach out to an incalculably vast audience. With no travel required, cost is minimal, no logistics or transportation support is needed, and the odds of detection are low. And the newly radicalized need not necessarily pack up and head for the Middle East—jihadi groups encourage attacks at home to avoid the risk of infiltration while traveling.

Online platforms have been used extensively as propaganda aimed at engaging and convincing different individuals, especially youngsters, to support different groups fighting in Syria and Iraq. Unable to join the Islamic State on actual battlefields, a considerable number of supporters have instead taken their fight to social networks, using their online profiles to provide support to the Islamic State or Al-Nusra. Research on the social network activities of these various groups unpacks the discourse of online sites that promote the Islamic State, the content of these pages, their attitudes towards democratic processes such as elections and employment in secular state institutions, other religious communities, and state security institutions, as well as sermons on jihad and support for prominent members of various violent extremist groups.[4]

How Social Media Has Revolutionized Communication

In understanding social media as a weapon in modern warfare, it is important to first and foremost explain the concept of social media as such. As social network media continue to evolve, their uses change and expand, so do the characteristics, possible typologies and definition of social network media. In part, this is due to the fact that social network media relate to the technology and platforms that enable connectivity and the interactive web content creation, collaboration and exchange by participants, the public, and the media. As platforms and software change, so do their utility and the practice around them. Nonetheless, some fundamental characteristics can be derived and a definition can be developed. [5]

---

[1] Nissen, Thomas Elkjer .*#TheWeaponization of Social Media*. Copenhagen, Denmark: Royal Danish Defence College, 2015.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Kosovar Center for Security Studies (KCSS). *New Battlegroups: Extremist Groups Activity on Social Networks in Kosovo, Albania and FYROM*. Prishtina, Kosovo: KCSS, 2017.

[5] Richardson, Cara, Katherine M. Berlouis, and Paul A. Cameron. "Radicalisation of Young Adults in the Balkan States: Counter-Measures, Healthcare Provision, and Community Involvement."*Journal for Deradicalization*, 2017

Social network media share some defining characteristics. They are all online technologies and practices that people use to share content, opinions, insights, experiences, perspectives, and media themselves. They are characterized by easy access, global reach, and the rapid (close to real-time) flow of multimedia information. This results in an aggregation of users with common interests that is able to conduct one-to-one and one-to-many two-way conversations. The social network media are virtually unlimited with respect to time and space, providing an effective platform for easily aggregating common interests from a broad demographic spectrum. This includes new aggregate configurations which might not have connected, had it not been for the existence of social network media. This, in turn, also means that new and different types of (target) audiences appear. Social network media are, in other words, media for social interaction, and can therefore be utilized for of influence.[6]

The Use of Social Media as a Weapon in Modern Warfare

The world has seen social media being used more and more strategically by multiple state and non-state actors to create effects in both the virtual and physical domains. Terrorist groups have good reason to use social media, whose popularity suits them in many ways. In 2015, the Internet is fast overtaking conventional forms of media such as books, magazines, and television to become the leading research and entertainment platform.[7] Social media outlets allow them to present themselves as just another part of mainstream news.Most social media platforms are easy to use and cost little or nothing. With them, terrorists can tailor their message to narrow audience niches, enlisting the help of the virtual world to enter the homes of millions of people. [8]

Requiring a high degree of legitimacy and multiple non-state actors to mobilize support and find new ways of fighting asymmetrically, social media seems to have become the weapon of choice.[9] In their efforts at both radicalization and recruitment, terrorists, militias, and other illicit organizations have used social media in a calculated strategy that confounds many in the West. As a CNN article recently concluded, "Violent extremists like the self-proclaimed Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, or ISIS, have become increasingly sophisticated at creating dense, global networks of support online, networks that are helping these groups run virtual circles around governments and communities.

How Islamic Extremism Made it to Kosovo

Since the start of the conflict in Syria, in 2011, 5,000 foreign fighters have travelled from Western Europe to fight in Syria and Iraq. But how has the Islamic State and violent Islamic extremism made it to the geographically other part of the world, to the Western Balkans? The

---

[6] Nissen, Thomas Elkjer .#TheWeaponizationofSocialMedia. Copenhagen, Denmark: Royal Danish Defence College, 2015.

[7] Ibid.

[8] Hughes, Michelle , and Michael Mikalucic.Impunity - Countering Illicit Power in War and Transition. United States, 2012.

[9] Nissen, Thomas Elkjer .#TheWeaponizationofSocialMedia. Copenhagen, Denmark: Royal Danish Defence College, 2015.

Internet has played a significant role in the penetration of Islamic extremism and Kosovo. Social media represents the main tool in the radicalization and recruitment of foreign fighters and continues to do so.

There have been plenty of assumptions about the magnitude of the effects of violent extremism on the Kosovar society. As witnessed from the various articles and reports published internally and internationally on this topic, these assumptions have been triggered mainly by the fact that since the breakup of the civilian war in Syria, many individuals from Kosovo have joined the conflict. However, even though the represented numbers of foreign fighters from Kosovo suggest a concerning situation on ground, there are many opposing arguments to the represented situation of the phenomenon in Kosovo that have too often been underrepresented, suggesting that the number of foreign fighters do not reveal the real extent of the phenomenon's reach within Kosovo. [10]

Official numbers of foreign fighters per capita indicated that the phenomenon's influence in Kosovo have struck at an alarming scale. Kosovo thus resulted in having among the largest number of foreign fighters per capita in Europe and Western Balkans. However, despite the important contributions that the horizontal comparisons between countries have had in early identification of problem patterns, in the case of Kosovo such measurements have been somewhat inadequate. First and foremost, it lacked consideration of the religious element: unlike other European countries, 90 percent of Kosovar population identify as Muslim. Hence, as the following chart show, one cannot provide accurate measurements about the phenomenon if crucial demographic components and other social elements are overlooked. Therefore, in respect to the number of foreign fighters, in 2015 KCSS, a Kosovar based NGO working in the field of security, has rightly spotted that if only Muslim population would be taken into consideration, Kosovo would fall far below most of the European countries and the Western Balkans.[11]

In March 2015, Kosovo's Parliament adopted a draft law on "Prohibition of Joining Armed Conflicts outside State Territory"[12] as a reaction to the relatively high number of Kosovars that have joined the conflict zones in the Middle East. There is a significant number of people who were recruited by violent extremist supporters as foreign fighters who participated at least once in the conflicts in Syria and Iraq, predominantly during 2012 and 2013.

The doctrinal shift from classical anti-terrorism measures into countering violent extremism is gradually being embraced among the policy actors in Kosovo. While there is a broader reference to violent extremism which includes any kind of extremism leading to terrorism, the main societal and security concerns Kosovo faces relate to extremism derived from groups basing their ideology on Islam or misusing religion. The traditional practice of Islam in Kosovo is based

---

[10] Kosovar Centre for Security Studies (KCSS).*Kosovo Security Barometer - Citizens' perceptions on Violent Extremism*. Prishtina, Kosovo: KCSS, 2017.
[11] Ibid.
[12] Official gazette of the Republic of Kosovo. No.7/02. April, 2015. Pristina. Available at: https://www.mpbks.org/repository/docs/LAW_NO._05_L__002_ON_PROHIBITION_OF_JOINING_THE_ARMED_CONFLICTS_OUTSIDE_STATE_TERRITORYEMLJE.pdf

largely on the Hanafi School of Thought. This has been hampered in recent years by a new wave of individuals, some who have come with the practicing conservative Islam in one hand, and others who go beyond the conservatives and use violence as a mean to reach their goals. This has fragmented the Kosovar practitioners of Islam, which despite being nominally Sunni, have never felt any hostility towards other denominations of Islam, namely the Shia and Alawite communities; an experience considered destructive and long lasting among the Muslim communities in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region.[13] Kosovo was no exception in being used as a recruiting zone for rebel groups in Syria, and as a result some of them have finished in the violent extremism groups such as ISIS. [14]

The Background – The Story Behind 300 Kosovars Fighting for the Islamic State

Starting from 2010, there have been reports that Kosovar citizens have been joining the Islamic State. As of 2017, it is believed that around 300 Kosovar citizens have joined the Islamic State's battlefields in Syria and Iraq. This alarming number ranks Kosovo as one of the top countries with the largest number of foreign fighters in the Middle East per capita.

One of the greatest concerns remains the understanding of the root of the problem – what has led to the widespread of Islamic extremism in Kosovo, climaxing with youngsters taking their route towards the Middle East. Among the main reasons, unsurprisingly, are the poor living conditions, political instability, poor education as well as the rising of numerous Islamic non-governmental organizations as key players in indoctrinating the masses and promoting a pan-Islamic identity, inspired by the wars in the Middle East. On another hand, there exist various "invisible" circumstantial factors such as the issue of identity, of belonging, social isolation or ultimately the exclusion.[15]

The Islamic State's narrative has played a crucial role in its effort to recruiting new members from Kosovo. Studies view the Islamic State's narrative as an effective catalyst, dramatically accelerating the transition from the stage of simply being exposed to the propaganda, to actually joining the terrorist organization. This narrative was construed on the foundations of the call to join "the holy war", stylized in religious language and Quran verses, by misinterpreting and surpassing the real meaning of the religious scripture's verses. This narrative has made perfect use of the vulnerabilities of Kosovo and its citizens, mainly the struggle of creating a national identity as a post-war society.

Social Media as a Tool in Spreading Islamic Extremism in Kosovo

Whereas light has been shed on the reasons behind the dramatic spreading of Islamic extremism in Kosovo and narrative used by the Islamic State, a key issue remains how this ideology has

---

[13] Kosovar Centre for Security Studies (KCSS).*Deconstructing the Narrative of the Islamic State in Kosovo*. Prishtina, Kosovo: KCSS, 2017.

[14] The Network for Religious and Traditional Peacemakers. *Mapping the state of play of institutional and community involvement in countering violent extremism in Kosovo*. Prishtina, Kosovo: NRTP, 2017

[15] Kosovar Centre for Security Studies (KCSS). *Report Inquiring into Causes and Consequences of Kosovo Citizens Involvement as Foreign Fighters in Syria and Iraq*. Prishtina, Kosovo: KCSS, 2015

made it to Kosovo. Undoubtedly, social media platforms have been used as the main tool to spreading the propaganda, and further on recruiting Kosovar citizens, especially youngsters.

Despite Kosovo's backward economic development, poverty, and rural underdevelopment, the internet penetration rate and the number of internet users are among the highest in the region, and can be comparable to many EU member states.[16] However, as Husna Haq reports, the internet is a double-edge sword in the world of terrorism; while it is useful for state authorities to track violent extremist groups on the one hand, these groups use the internet to recruit fighters from around the world.[17] When it comes to ISIS's internet and online propaganda activities, Erin Marie Saltman & Charlie Winter from Quilliam Foundation, claim that "the efficiency with which IS[IS] is currently using the Internet is something unprecedented and, in many ways, a sign of the times".[18] This is all part of a high-tech propaganda machine that ISIS uses to reach out to potential fighters in Europe and elsewhere in the world.[19]

The three social media communication channels most utilized by imams and radical networks appear to be the ones mostly used by the internet users in Kosovo, such as Facebook, Skype, and YouTube. It is evident by now that ISIS was successful in using the internet with content that would make an emotional appeal to those already radicalized or those that are in the process of radicalisation by showing what they usually claim to be Assad's crimes against children and their "Muslim sisters". For instance, in one of the widely circulated recruitment videos in the Albanian language, Lavdrim Muhaxheri called on all Albanian speaking Muslims to join ISIS on the grounds that "they [Assad army and ISIS enemies] are raping our Muslim sisters, they are beheading our children in their cradles, they are burning our houses, and you are sleeping and listening to imams who are saying that we need only financial aid. No we don't need financial aid, we need man to fight".[20] There are many other videos where Albanian speaking individuals, especially those that are already radicalized or in the process of radicalisation, fall prey to such emotional appeals.

Perhaps one of the most striking and intriguing pieces of the propaganda distributed by IS in the 20-minute feature released by Al-Hayat in 2016. The dynamic video is a sort of historic time lapse, a continuum of the Crusades, of huge leaps and historical inconsistencies, of a skewed perspective that seeks to awaken a more dormant Muslim identity throughout the Balkans. It draws local events – in particular the Balkan wars in the 90s – into a broader global narrative of a religious clash, of an Islam as constantly under attack by Christians and non-believers.

---

[16] Internet World Stats (2014). "Internet Users in Europe". June 30, 2014. *Internet World Stats Usage and Population Statistics*. Online available at: http://www.internetworldstats.com/stats4.htm .

[17] Husna Haq (2014). "ISIS excels at recruiting American teens: Here are four reasons why (+video)". October 22, 2014. *The Christian Science Monitor*. Online available at: http://www.csmonitor.com/USA/USA-Update/ 2014/1022/ISIS-excels-at-recruiting-American-teens-Here-are-four-reasons-why-video

[18] Erin Marie Saltman and Charlie Winter (2014). "Islamic State: The Changing Face of Modern Jihadism". Quillam Foundation. Online available at: http://www.quilliamfoundation.org/wp-wp-content/uploads/publications/free/islamic-state-the-changing-face-of-modern-jihadism.pdf

[19] CBS News (2014). "ISIS recruits fighters through powerful online campaign". August 29, 2014. *CBS News*. Online available at: http://www.cbsnews.com/news/isis-uses-social-media-to-recruit-western-allies/

[20] IndeksOnline.net (2014) "Lufta ne Siri – Indeksonline" *Youtube*. Online available at: https://www.youtube.com/ watch?v=zhbWhgS6svc .

Communism in Albania, coupled with archival footage of the destruction of minarets, is suddenly a local manifestation of these global trends, as is the war in Bosnia with Muslims portrayed as unprotected and weakened by the nationalistic and secular forces, as well as the promise of democracy. But Kosovo, where Serbia ended its crackdown due to Western intervention and it became a state in an internationally guided process is left out largely because it simply does not fit the scapegoat narrative at the hands of the "Christian" world.[21]

Studies show that the most commonly used social media platforms are Facebook and Youtube. Especially on Facebook there are numerous pages with many followers. Even though many of these pages get deleted by Facebook, new ones keep appearing, mobilizing wide masses. One of the main such pages was named "Hilafeti".As of Youtube, one of the most viewed channels with this respect was titled "Al-Muwahhidun Shqip". The channel was deleted by Youtube. [22]

Much of the distributed posts in the radicalized profiles/sites are religiously-oriented teachings in the proclamation of the "call to jihad". In principle, the distribution of such content is not necessarily related to violent extremism, but given the overall activity of the analyzed pages/profiles, their hate speech and the general promotion of their propaganda give a negative connotation to their postings, and indirectly is a motivation for participation in foreign conflicts in Syria and Iraq.[23] The purpose behind the usage of religious content is to justify violence through their version of "legitimate means", as well as to balance and hide behind religious sites.[24]

These YouTube channels and Facebook pages are an outlet for different sermons about the conflicts in Syria and Iraq. One of the most important channels that promotes *jihadis* is the "*Al-Muwahhidun Shqip*" (Al-Muwahhidun Albanian). While this was closed, there is also "Shpata e Mëshiruesit" (Sword of the Most Merciful),[25] "Shpata e Mëshiruesit" and YouTube videos such as "*Shehidat e Ballkanit*"[26] (Balkan Shahids), or "*Ke durim o shpirti im"*[27] (Have patience my soul), amongst others. The "*Thirja ne Tehuid*" (Call to Tawhid) site was used to release content about "holy war" and to denounce democracy. This site was closed, but we have secured images of the site prior to closure. Such posts are more liked and distributed by their audience, making it easier to target potential fighters based on the likes, comments or sharing of those posts.[28]

---

[21] Kosovar Centre for Security Studies (KCSS).*Deconstructing the Narrative of the Islamic State in Kosovo*. Prishtina, Kosovo: KCSS, 2017

[22] Ibid.

[23] "Minberi i Teuhidit" (Tawhid Minber) Page, https://www.facebook.com/minbermedia/

[24] Kosovar Center for Security Studies (KCSS). *New Battlegroups: Extremist Groups Activity on Social Networks in Kosovo, Albania and FYROM*. Prishtina, Kosovo: KCSS, 2017.

[25] See on YouTube: "Shpata e Mëshiruesit" (Sword of the Most Merciful) https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCOJWUls7vtq7uzkzqNsjtFw

[26] See on YouTube: "Shehidat e Ballkanit" (Balkan Shahids) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GfE6fGxY65E

[27] See on YouTube: "Ke durim o shpirti im" (Have patience my soul) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qamyNkbxOMM&t=97s

[28] Kosovar Center for Security Studies (KCSS). *New Battlegroups: Extremist Groups Activity on Social Networks in Kosovo, Albania and FYROM*. Prishtina, Kosovo: KCSS, 2017.

Through social networks, these groups and individuals have created their own community, which seems to be quite isolated. Within this community, they use various nicknames which consistently begin with prepositions such as Abu, Ibn, AL, EL, Isa, which are placed before adjectives or the names of their countries of origin, such as "Abu Al-Kosovi", "Ibn Isa Islami", "Ibn Al Arnaut" and others. Through this established community, they recognize each other on the basis of the activities they display in their posts on social networks and their reports on the situation created in the conflict in Syria and Iraq.[29]

Alike Kosovo, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia shares more or less the same story. Some of the profiles affiliated with the Islamic State, report directly from the battlefields. A thorough analysis of social media pages and profiles, revealed the wide distribution of pictures promoting threatening content for Skopje. Moreover, compared to other countries in the region, in Macedonia the supporters of convicted ethnic Albanians share pictures through which they support the so-called "Islamic State". Such content has been especially frequent during the holy month of Ramadan. They promote the idea that they are "devoted Muslims" as they seek to undermine further the impact of Islamic Community in Macedonia. In Macedonia, there are three categories of online content: (i) extremist groups that advocate violence; (ii) propaganda material, such as calls for jihad or for support for imprisoned imams; and (iii) trends and attitudes towards the state, institutions and society in general.[30]

Conclusions

From the analysis above, it can be concluded that social media is indeed more than a mere mean of communication and entertainment; in the battlefields of today, social media is no less than a weapon. An example that best illustrates this phenomenon is the case of Kosovo and the spreading of Islamic extremism ideologies and support for the Islamic State. Online platforms are being utilized extensively as propaganda aimed at engaging and convincing different individuals, especially youngsters, to support different groups fighting in Syria and Iraq. Unable to join the Islamic State on actual battlefields, a considerable number of supporters have instead taken their fight to social networks, using their online profiles to provide support to the Islamic State or Al-Nusra. The purpose behind the usage of religious content is to justify violence through their version of "legitimate means", as well as to balance and hide behind religious sites.

It is precisely throughout social media that the Islamic State's propaganda has made it to Kosovo – resulting in around 314 Kosovars joining the terrorist organization's battlefields in Syria and Iraq. The Islamic State's narrative has played a crucial role in its effort to recruiting new members from Kosovo. Studies view the Islamic State's narrative as an effective catalyst, dramatically accelerating the transition from the stage of simply being exposed to the propaganda, to actually joining the terrorist organization. This narrative was construed on the foundations of the call to join "the holy war", stylized in religious language and Quran verses, by

[29] Ibid.
[30] Kosovar Centre for Security Studies (KCSS). *The Unexplored Nexus: Issues of Radicalization and Violent Extremism in Macedonia*. Prishtina, Kosovo: KCSS, 2018.

misinterpreting and surpassing the real meaning of the religious scripture's verses. This narrative has made perfect use of the vulnerabilities of Kosovo and its citizens, mainly the struggle of creating a national identity as a post-war society.

Official numbers of foreign fighters per capita indicated that the phenomenon's influence in Kosovo have struck at an alarming scale. Kosovo thus resulted in having among the largest number of foreign fighters per capita in Europe and Western Balkans. The three social media communication channels most utilized by imams and radical networks appear to be the ones mostly used by the internet users in Kosovo, such as Facebook, Skype, and YouTube.

References

Legislation
1. Law No. 05/L002 on Prohibition of Joining the Armed Conflicts Outsite State Territory Official Gazette of the Republic of Kosovo
Available at:
https://www.mpbks.org/repository/docs/LAW_NO._05_L__002_ON_PROHIBITION_OF_JOINING_THE_ARMED_CONFLICTS_OUTSIDE_STATE_TERRITORYEMLJE.pdf

Books and Reports
1. Cara Richardson, Katherine M. Berlouis, and Paul A. Cameron - "Radicalisation of Young Adults in the Balkan States: Counter-Measures, Healthcare Provision, and Community Involvement" , Journal for Deradicalization, 2017
2. Thomas Elkjer Nissen - "#TheWeaponizationofSocialMedia", Royal Danish Defence College, 2015
3. Erin Marie Saltman and Charlie Winter – "Islamic State: The Changing Face of Modern Jihadism", Quillam Foundation, 2014
4. Michelle Hughes and Michael Mikalucic – "Impunity - Countering Illicit Power in War and Transition", United States, 2012
5. Kosovar Center for Security Studies – "The Unexplored Nexus: Issues of Radicalization and Violent Extremism in Macedonia", Prishtina, Kosovo (2018)
6. Kosovar Center for Security Studies – "Kosovo Security Barometer - Citizens' perceptions on Violent Extremism", Prishtina, Kosovo (2017)
7. Kosovar Center for Security Studies – "Deconstructing the Narrative of the Islamic State in Kosovo", Prishtina, Kosovo (2017)
8. The Network for Religious and Traditional Peacemakers – "Mapping the state of play of institutional and community involvement in countering violent extremism in Kosovo", Prishtina, Kosovo (2017)
9. Kosovar Center for Security Studies – "New Battlegroups: Extremist Groups Activity on Social Networks in Kosovo, Albania and FYROM", Prishtina, Kosovo (2017)
10. Kosovar Center for Security Studies – "Report Inquiring into Causes and Consequences of Kosovo Citizens Involvement as Foreign Fighters in Syria and Iraq", Prishtina, Kosovo (2015)

Media Sources
1. Internet World Stats (2014). "Internet Users in Europe". June 30, 2014. Internet World

Stats Usage and Population Statistics. Online available at: http://www.internetworldstats.com/stats4.htm

2. Husna Haq (2014). "ISIS excels at recruiting American teens: Here are four reasons why (+video)". October 22, 2014. The Christian Science Monitor. Online available at: http://www.csmonitor.com/USA/USA-Update/2014/1022/ISIS-excels-at-recruiting-American-teens-Here-are-four-reasons-why-video

3. CBS News (2014). "ISIS recruits fighters through powerful online campaign". August 29, 2014. CBS News. Online available at: http://www.cbsnews.com/news/isis-uses-social-media-to-recruit-western-allies/

4. IndeksOnline.net (2014) "Lufta ne Siri – Indeksonline" Youtube. Online available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zhbWhgS6svc

5. "Minberi i Teuhidit" (Tawhid Minber) Page, https://www.facebook.com/minbermedia/

6. See on YouTube: "Shpata e Mëshiruesit" (Sword of the Most Merciful). Online available at: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCOJWUls7vtq7uzkzqNsjtFw

7. See on YouTube: "Shehidat e Ballkanit" (Balkan Shahids). Online available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GfE6fGxY65EE

8. See on YouTube: "Ke durim o shpirti im" (Have patience my soul). Online available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qamyNkbxOMM&t=97s