

## BOOK PRESENTATION AND PANEL DISCUSSION

### *"The Globalisation of Countering Violent Extremism policy: undermining human rights, instrumentalising civil society"*

**April 27, 11:00 - 13:30 pm**

12:30-1:00 Panel Discussion and Q&A

1:00 Reception

**Barcelona's Center of Contemporary Culture (CCCB) – Auditorium**

Carrer de Montalegre, 5, 08001 Barcelona

Among the things that characterized the first decade of the **"War on Terror"** was a rhetorical commitment to human rights on the part of European politicians that sought to differentiate themselves and the European Union from the United States of America. Whereas the 'Neocons' had responded to acts of terrorism with Guantanamo, regime change and drone strikes, Europe, we were told, was the 'cradle of human rights', and would frame its response differently. Since 2014, however, with an increase in both the number and impact of terrorist attacks in Europe (France, United Kingdom, Germany, Spain, etc.), the kind of claims that 'old Europe' once represented are now nowhere to be heard.

**Arun Kundnani** and **Ben Hayes** will present their new report *"The Globalisation of Countering Violent Extremism policy: undermining human rights, instrumentalising civil society"*.

With special guest, **Fionnuala Ní Aoláin**, will present her views on the global picture of human rights impact of counter-terrorism policies as **United Nations Special Rapporteur on the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism**.

In the early 2000s, a new form of counterterrorism policy – Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) – emerged, pioneered first in the Netherlands and the UK before spreading to other parts of Europe, the US and eventually the rest of the world. Within a decade, as policies were copied from one state to the next and taken-up by the European Union, United Nations and a host of other international fora, CVE was globalised. From Finland to the Philippines, CVE policies have been presented as a more liberal, more intelligent, more holistic way of dealing with terrorism than the crude and inflammatory "war on terror". This report commissioned by Transnational Institute and Societal Security Network indicates, on the contrary, that the globalisation of CVE means the globalisation of another set of alarming problems: **harm to human rights and the undermining of civil society**. The report analyses the frenzied adoption of CVE by policy-makers within institutions of the European Union, the United Nations and the Global Counterterrorism Forum, while the core issues that were present at the birth of CVE in the Netherlands and the UK remain unresolved.

The event is organized by Open Society Initiative for Europe, the Transnational Institute and the Societal Security Network and co-hosted by the Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona.

**Jordi Vaquer** (moderator), regional director for Europe at the Open Society Foundations

**Arun Kundnani**, author of *The Muslims are Coming! Islamophobia, Extremism, and the Domestic War on Terror* and Professor at New York University

**Fionnuala D. Ní Aoláin**, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism

**Ben Hayes**, Transnational Institute

**Fatiha el Mouali**, civil rights and citizenship official, Granollers City Council and member of Unit against Fascism and Racism (Unitat contra el Feixisme i el Racisme).

Drinks and light refreshments will be served

Kindly confirm your availability no later than April 20 to Tanja Djordjevic at

[tanja.djordjevic@opensocietyfoundations.org](mailto:tanja.djordjevic@opensocietyfoundations.org)

**Speakers bio:**

**Jordi Vaquer**, Regional director of the Open Society Initiative for Europe.

Jordi was director of the Centre d'Estudis i Documentació Internacionals of Barcelona (Barcelona Centre for International Affairs, CIDOB) from 2008 to 2012. He is a political analyst specialising in international affairs, a regular columnist for the newspaper El País and commentator in other branches of the media. He was coordinator of EU4Seas, a research programme financed by the European Commission in which institutions from eight European countries came together to study the effects of European multilateral policies in the Mediterranean, Baltic, Caspian and Black seas. He is a member of the editorial board of the CIDOB Review of International Affairs and teaches at the Institut Barcelona d'Estudis Internacionals (Barcelona Institute of International Studies, IBEI).

**Arun Kundnani**, Visiting Assistant Professor in New York University's Department of Media, Culture, and Communication

Kundnani writes about racial capitalism and Islamophobia, surveillance and political violence, and Black radical movements. He is the author of *The Muslims are Coming! Islamophobia, extremism, and the domestic War on Terror* (Verso, 2014) and *The End of Tolerance: racism in 21st century Britain* (Pluto, 2007), which was selected as a *New Statesman* book of the year. He has written for the *Nation*, the *Guardian*, the *Washington Post*, *Vice*, and *The Intercept*. Born in London, he moved to New York in 2010. A former editor of the journal *Race & Class*, he was miseducated at Cambridge University, and holds a PhD from London Metropolitan University. He has been an Open Society fellow and a scholar-in-residence at the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, New York Public Library. He is currently a [Visiting Assistant Professor](#) in the Department of Media, Culture, and Communication at New York University.

**Fatiha el Mouali**, civil rights and citizenship official, Granollers City Council and member of Unit against Fascism and Racism (Unitat contra el Feixisme i el Racisme).

**Fionnuala D. Ní Aoláin (Ireland)**, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism.

She is a University Regents Professor at the University of Minnesota; holder of the Robina Chair in Law, Public Policy, and Society; and faculty director of the Human Rights Center at the University of Minnesota Law School. She is concurrently a Professor of Law at the University of Ulster's Transitional Justice Institute in Belfast, Northern Ireland, and is co-founder and associate director of the Institute. Ms. Ní Aoláin received her LL.B. and Ph.D. in law at the Queen's University Law Faculty in Belfast and also holds an LL.M. degree from Columbia Law School. Ms. Ní Aoláin is the recipient of numerous academic awards and honours, including a Fulbright scholarship, the Alon Prize, the Robert Schumann scholarship, a European Commission award, and the Lawlor fellowship. She had held multiple research awards including from the British Academy, the US Institute of Peace, DfID (Department for International Development, UK), Research Council UK, and the Economic and Social Research Council.

**Ben Hayes**, Transnational Institute fellow.

Ben Hayes is an activist, researcher and consultant specialising in counter-terrorism, international security, border control, policing, 'big data', human rights and applied ethics. He has produced ground-breaking work on the development of the "security-industrial complex", "Fortress Europe", EU counter-terrorism policy, surveillance



technologies and the “shrinking space” for civil society. He is a Fellow of the Transnational Institute, an Associate of the Human Security Collective, and over the past 20 years has worked for a range of human rights and civil liberties organisations including Statewatch, the European Centre for Constitutional and Human Rights and Open Society Foundations. He has conducted large-scale Data Protection Impact Assessments and developed data protection policies for a range of intergovernmental and humanitarian agencies including the European Commission, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the International Committee of the Red Cross and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. He has a PhD from Magee College (Derry/Londonderry), awarded by the University of Ulster in 2008.