

Strong Cities Network Global Summit 2017

17-19 May – Aarhus, Denmark

476 DELEGATES **170** CITIES **47** COUNTRIES



'In Discussion with Global Mayors': Local leaders discuss their efforts to prevent and counter radicalisation and violent extremism

The SCN Global Summit delivered...

→ A forum for knowledge sharing & learning

Cities need recourse to a global pool of expert practitioners to apply lessons learned to prevent and counter violent extremism (P/CVE) understanding and implementation.¹

Eight out of ten participants (80%) rated opportunities for sharing knowledge and experience as **'excellent'** or **'very good'**.

Approximately **nine out of ten participants (88%)** said the Summit **directly improved their understanding of violent extremism** and P/CVE.

→ Strengthened local capacity

Cities need the knowledge, tools, structures and partners to effectively prevent and counter violent extremism and put learning into practice.

Nine out of ten participants (91%) reported **increased ability** to create P/CVE initiatives, and **better access** to support networks.

→ Innovative, relevant and practical training

Training should not just inform; it should have practical application and make a difference to local security, resilience and cohesion.

Nearly every participant (98%) rated overall event content as **'excellent'** or **'very good'**.

Approximately **nine of ten respondents (88%)** said the knowledge and information gained would be **of direct use in their work**.

¹ Findings based on a survey completed by 200 participants.

Global Summit 2017 Report

*Launched at the United Nations General Assembly in 2015, the Strong Cities Network (SCN) is the first global network of mayors, policymakers and practitioners united in building social cohesion and resilience to prevent and counter violent extremism in all its forms. Led and facilitated by the Institute for Strategic Dialogue (ISD), it comprises more than 100 cities from across every major global region. The first SCN Global Summit was held in **Antalya**, Turkey, and brought together over 200 delegates from 62 cities and 39 countries. The 2017 SCN Global Summit in **Aarhus** brought together over **476 delegates** from **170 cities** across **47 countries**, the largest global convention of local practitioners, political leaders and stakeholders working to prevent and counter violent*

Across three days, delegates attended a total of **17 specialist workshops** on issues ranging from multiagency working and policing to youth engagement and international capacity building, as well as **plenary sessions** bringing together global mayors, online and tech partners, and personal stories of those directly affected by violent extremism. Providing an opportunity to bring together learning from across multiple global regions, form new partnerships and promote innovative local programming, the event also incorporated the **third annual meeting of the SCN International Steering Committee**. Minutes of the International Steering Committee meeting are included as an addendum to this report.



The **City of Aarhus** welcomed delegates on Wednesday 17 May with an **Open House event**, designed to showcase the Aarhus Model, which has garnered international attention at all levels for its approach to locally-led prevention. With leadership from the **Director of Children and Young People**, the **Director of Social Affairs and Employment** and the **Director of East Jutland Police**, day-to-day management is charged to a multi-disciplinary task force for the prevention of radicalisation and discrimination, and is underpinned by the values of the municipality's integration policy, which focuses on active citizenship. Further information on the Aarhus Model can be found [here](#).

Additional Open House events were held specifically for delegates from Jordan and Lebanon, including SCN members leading on the development of Local Prevention Networks at the municipal levels and representatives from the Lebanese Prime Minister's office supporting national P/CVE efforts. This builds on close partnership between the SCN and the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, supporting **bilateral cooperation between Danish municipalities and counterparts in the Middle East**, implementing best practice to support practitioner training and develop local prevention structures across 6 municipalities in Jordan and Lebanon.

Following a welcome from the **Hon. Jacob Bundsgaard** (Mayor, City of Aarhus), **Commissioner Helle Kyndesen** (Commissioner, East Jutland Police) and **Sasha Havlicek** (CEO, Institute for Strategic Dialogue), the conference was formally opened on Thursday 18 May by the Danish Minister of Justice, **Søren Pape**. Setting out Danish national approaches to violent extremism and strategic and operational shifts in terrorism and violent extremism, Minister Pape noted the strong progress made in Aarhus and across other Danish municipalities and the importance of a well-rounded and proactive strategy, informed by international learning and expertise.

Highlighting the leadership and increasing role of mayors around the world on preventing and countering violent extremism, plenary sessions opened with an *'In Conversation with Global Mayors'* panel, featuring **Mayor Bundsgaard** of Aarhus (Denmark), **Mayor Bonte** of Vilvoorde (Belgium), **Mayor Berke** of Chattanooga (USA), **Mayor Tait** of Anaheim

(USA), **Minister Scott** of Victoria State (Australia), and **Commissioner Damakka-Abubakar** of Kano State (Nigeria). Each leader drew on local challenges, outlining current and upcoming local programming and underling important lessons on developing and implementing strategies tailored to specific local contexts.

Other key plenary sessions emphasised the **importance of bringing policy and practice closer together**, informed by academic research and maintaining close cooperation with communities, faith groups and other local and global stakeholders. Powerful **personal stories** were delivered during a ‘*Witnesses of Violent Extremism*’ session, which brought together families from Aarhus and the immediate local area directly affected by extremism, with relatives having travelled to the Syrian conflict. **Dr Magnus Ranstorp, Professor Tore Bjørgo, Rabbi Michael Melchior, philosopher Bart Brandsma, and psychologist Professor Arie Kruglanski**, all brought important perspectives on trends and developments in violent extremism, while a final plenary brought together **tech partners and security specialists** to discuss online prevention.



Running across 18-19 May, parallel workshop sessions covered the following issues:

- *Early Prevention in Schools*
- *Local Prevention Networks in Jordan and Lebanon: What Can Local Actors in Europe and MENA Learn From Each Other?*
- *Interreligious Dialogue*
- *Working with Families*
- *Multiagency Approaches*
- *Tackling Right Wing Extremism*
- *Whole-of-City Approaches: Does Your City Really Need CVE?*
- *Building Resilience: Pre- and Post-Incident Responses*
- *Working with Mentoring Programmes*
- *Children in Radicalised Families*
- *Building Resilience from a Police Perspective*
- *Personal Journeys: Assessing Risk to Radicalisation and Online Violent Extremism*
- *Working with Female Returnees*
- *Public Health and Gang Prevention Approaches for Addressing CVE in Tunisia*
- *Refugees, Integration and Preventing Polarisation*
- *Developing Local Youth Engagement*
- *Offline Prevention of Online Radicalisation*

Focusing on interdisciplinary learning and a breadth of thematic issues, workshops brought together delegates from policy, practice, academic and other backgrounds, drawing on positive cases studies, first-hand experience and opportunities for innovation in P/CVE. Presentations from some of the speakers can be found [here](#).

All workshops, plenary sessions and side events offered a unique opportunity to bring together diverse local stakeholders, challenge existing practice and strategy, and inspire new pioneering approaches.

The Strong Cities Network wishes to thank partners at the **City of Aarhus, East Jutland Police** and **Creative Associates International** for their support and cooperation in delivering a highly successful 2017 Global Summit.

The Strong Cities Network is run by the ISD, a UK registered charity with charity number 1141069. Please visit www.strongcitiesnetwork.org or contact the Strong Cities Network at info@strongcitiesnetwork.org for further information.



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Powering new generations against extremism