

**RELIGIOUS EXTREMISM  
AND TERRORISM IN THE  
INTERNET – SPACE: THE  
CURRENT CHALLENGES  
AND KAZAKHSTAN  
EXPERIENCE OF  
COUNTERACTION**

**Introduction**

In a view of recent events, which took place in the Middle East, that affect the Central – Asian region and, in particular, Kazakhstan, the State regulation of the Internet space becomes very urgent measure to protect the national security, especially on the promotion of the spread of extremism and terrorism.

The essence of religious extremism – is that it means inciting hostility or discord, in relation to human life, health and spiritual security of the society and national security of the State and its foundations under religious slogans, which contains appeals to violence.

To implement their criminal intentions the followers of extremist organizations use various methods of recruitment of people, including the media communication. One of the main ways of disseminating information containing ideas of religious extremism is the Internet.

**Extremism in the Internet – space**

Unfortunately, the Internet attracts terrorist groups by such its features as ease of access, censorship or even the complete absence of any government control, the availability of a huge potential audience of users, primarily young people, the anonymity of communication, as well as the fastest and relatively cheap way to spread information.

Frequently, recruitment in terrorist activities is carried out by means of Internet resources, which, in fact, began recruiting point and propaganda of international terrorist organizations.

According to foreign experts, the World Wide Web has an increase of a current accounts and a plurality of communities of extremist and terrorist organizations, especially the particular concern of the activity in popular social networks «Facebook», «Twitter», «VKontakte» and «Odnoklassniki». Analysis of the content of social networks shows that these sites have an active current and propaganda activities of international terrorist organizations [1].

In this regard, the materials which are placed in social networks or video sharing, contain scenes of cruelty, murder and violence. The followers of extremist movements ‘poured’ into a network the information, containing a radical orientation, with an important goal,

to arouse interest among the young generation, who have no experience of life. Every day are created a thousands of sites with a destructive direction which may have an impact on society as a whole.

In particular, young people, who trying to get religious education, or to make up religious knowledge, often turning to Internet sites of dubious nature, where they are brainwashed by false preachers, with the purpose of distortion of consciousness of personality, the formation of certain values and eventual inclusion in the ranks terrorists.

The threat of extremism under the cover of religion becomes a problem №1 internationally. In this regard, of particular concern is the fact that the well-known terrorist entity as «ISIL» (Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant) engages in the numbers of participants from all over the world. This trend is one of the main threats to the national security of the Central – Asian states.

It is known that ISIL – is the jihadist terrorist group, which is active in Iraq, Syria, Jordan and Lebanon. ISIL seeks to expand on the controlled territory the elements of theocratic governance and building an Islamic State, and it acts ruthlessly, by means of armed attacks and immediately execution of Sharia Law. Unfortunately, the distribution area of ISIL activity is still increasing. There is a concern that ISIL is determined to expand its activities in Russia, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan. Of particular concern is the participation of citizens of those states in terrorist operations of «Islamic state». According to the ICSR (International Centre for the study of radicalism and political violence), the number of foreigners who joined the Sunni militants in the conflicts in Syria and Iraq continues to grow, according to estimates for 2014, it amounts to 20730 people. Also according to information ICSR, among the foreign participants of the events in Iraq and Syria, people from Kazakhstan – 400, Kyrgyzstan – 100, Russia – 800-1500, Tajikistan – 190, Turkmenistan – 360, Ukraine – 50, Uzbekistan – 500 [2].

Unfortunately, it is very hard to resist to such radical groups as the ISIL, whereas the flow of information takes more of our citizens outside their native land.

Of course, the competent authorities carried out extensive work on information security on the Internet, but the Internet sites with radical content are appealed and created daily, actively carrying out propaganda activities, especially among young people. Extremists based on the religious feelings of believers, posting videos on the network with calls to create a «global, fair, Islamic order», quickly gaining the trust of people, who often are religious illiterate.

As can be seen, pursued by a terrorist organization ISIL goals are not connected with religion and spirituality. This is a huge mechanism established for the seizure of power, causing terror and chaos in civilized countries, the demonstration of violence and cruelty as a method of intimidation and subjugation of the conquered territories. Pay off all of this are the lives of thousands of civilians, so we all have to stand together against the forces of the threat.

Such practices of promotion of propaganda activities has set new challenges for countries in the form of uncontrolled information flow, wider audience coverage and distribution of extremist activity.

### **Measures to counter Internet propaganda of extremism in Kazakhstan**

The Republic of Kazakhstan and state authorities take into account all the threats that may affect society. Among the most important works, carried out by relevant authorities, are activities aimed at monitoring materials containing ideas of extremism in the Internet space.

It is necessary to develop the Kazakh Islamic Internet space, with no access to the sites of destructive sects, which must be closed. The proposal was made in Almaty during the «round table» on the topic of combating terrorism and religious extremism. The fight against extremism and terrorism will be truly effective when it will be identified and localized the source distribution.

In particular, in September, by a court decision was blocked free video hosting vimeo.com for the promotion of the ideology of ISIL, the ideas of extremism and terrorism, and access will be restored if the host will remove the materials that promotes the ideology of ISIL. Within the forum «The interaction of Central Asian countries to counter violent extremism,» according to the head of the Monitoring Information Space Committee of communication, informatization and information of the Ministry of Investment and Development of Kazakhstan, on this web – resource was identified a number of materials for the promotion of extremism and terrorism, namely, commercials promoting the ideology of ISIL. The Committee of communication, informatization and information as the competent authority has submitted a petition to the court, and on the 7th of September the court ruled to suspend the activities of that Internet – resource in Kazakhstan [3].

Today, Kazakhstan has banned 19 terrorist groups, including al-Qaida, the Taliban and the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) [4].

Also today one of the most effective ways of countering the propaganda of terrorism and extremism in the Internet space is not only filtering requests, blocking websites and timely removal of illegal information, but also increase religious literacy of today's youth through the promotion of Internet resources of the Spiritual Administration of Muslims of Kazakhstan and spiritual and educational sites, namely «E-islam.kz» and «Islam.kz».

It is also important the constant improvement of the professionalism of the representatives of the mass media in covering issues of religious subjects in order to minimize the spread in society of xenophobia and religious extremism, provocative actions. Due to the active work of the media is much easier to convey to the reader or the viewer about the spiritual values of the traditional religions of the state policy in the sphere of religion, religious culture and ritual traditions [5].

It is worth noting that one of the important developments in this area was held in the Kazakh capital of the IV Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions, which was held on the theme «Peace and harmony as the choice of mankind.»

One of the important initiatives of the IV Congress was the creation of an Internet resource as part of the e-portal G-Global, dedicated to the formation and strengthening of the global tolerance and trust.

More detail, the G-Global – is a communicative Internet platform that enables Internet users all over the world to take part in these electronic systems of Astana Economic Forum (AEF): books, publications, debates, projects, polls and forums (active from 2009)

Communication platform G-Global is directed for citizens of all social strata and countries interested in developing their own economies and the world economy. This project is supported by

Nobel laureates, the authoritative international organizations, businesses and scientists [6].

An important point is the project «The legal regulation of the activities in social networks as a factor of national security and the implementation of the priorities of state policy», under the leadership of Ph.D Yerjanov T.K., which was started in March, 2015. The main objective of the study is to create a draft law, regulating the activities in social networks.

In order to achieve this purpose a list of suggestions for concrete changes in the current legislation of the country, which is aimed at the regulation of the relationships among the users of global information and communication networks, will be developed. The main way to achieve this goal is to organize the empirical studies of judicial and administrative practice of the Republic of Kazakhstan, as well as a comparative analysis of the legal position of foreign and international authorities and law enforcement practice of the Republic of Kazakhstan with the identification of existing conflicts of law.

### Conclusion

According to the concept of national and information security of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the risk of terrorism, extremism and information warfare is increasing dramatically. The countries, where the regulation of the Internet is at the proper level, have a significant advantage in the information warfare. This problem has not been widely discussed in the Republic of Kazakhstan before. But the growth of the popularity of social and other networks requires legislative innovations. The main goal is to turn the networks into the instrument of the implementation of state priorities. The main requirement is to intensify the monitoring of the Internet space, identifying and blocking destructive religious sites.

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