Plenary Session

12:10	**Nick Fielding** Let me first thank you for coming along here this afternoon for the plenary session on responding to political violence: how should states counter terrorism? On our panel this afternoon we have four very distinguished speakers.
12:28	On my right, first of all, is Mr Daniel Benjamin, who served on the US National Security Council staff from 1994–1999, prior to which he was a foreign policy speechwriter and special assistant to President Clinton. In 2001 he joined the International Security Program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, and at the end of last year he was appointed the Director of the Center on United States and Europe and a Senior Fellow in the Foreign Policy Studies at the Brookings Institution.
13:10	Next to me, on my right, Sadig Al Mahdi began his career in politics at the Ministry of Finance in Sudan, where he worked from 1957–1958. He was elected President of the Ummah Party in 1964 and led a campaign to promote political activity and to develop political Islam and reformed the party by expanding its base and promoting democratic behaviour.
13:38	Following the coup in 1969, he was arrested by the military government, exiled to Egypt and detained in Sudanese prisons repeatedly until 1974. From 1984 onwards he led the opposition from within that drove the revolution of 1985. He won the general election for the Prime Minister of Sudan in 1986, a position retained until the government was overthrown in 1989.
14:05	After being imprisoned he went into exile to lead the opposition in 1996, but returned to Sudan in 2000. And in 2002 he was elected Imam of Al-Ansar, and in 2003 he was re-elected the President of the Ummah.
14:20	On my immediate left is Sir Richard Dearlove. He is presently the Master of Pembroke College at Cambridge University. He served as Chief of the Secret Intelligence Service, usually known as MI6, until 2005.
14:42	To the left of Sir Richard is Frank Gardner, who is the BBC's full-time Security correspondent, reporting for both TV and radio on issues of both domestic and international security. Frank is an Arabist with a degree in Arabic and Islamic Studies from Exeter University. He became the BBC's Middle East correspondent in 1995 and has reported firsthand on terrorism and security from all over the Middle East. In 2004 he was shot six times at close range by an al-Qaeda gunman while filming in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. He was left for dead and his cameraman was killed.

15:21	Frank, after many months in hospital, has returned to the BBC and now works full-time in his job. In 2005 he was awarded an OBE by the Queen for services to journalism and has also been awarded a number of honorary degrees. And he's the author of the book *Blood and Sand*, published in 2006.
15:48	What I intend to do this afternoon is to allow the panellists to make a brief introduction, five minutes or so, on the subject that we're looking at: responding to political violence. And any further discussion that goes on from the panel after those introductory comments we'll take, and then after that we'll open up the floor to discussion. And I'd like to ask Dan Benjamin to start off the process with his introductory comments. Thank you, Dan.
16:17	**Dan Benjamin** Thank you very much. *[starts by checking that the microphone is on]* Ah, how gratifying!
16:32	Well, first of all I want to congratulate ICSR on this tremendous assemblage of expertise. I think it's quite a remarkable achievement and a great launch to a new and welcome institution. I also want to just say how flattered I am to have been asked to speak here. There's an enormous amount of talent in the room, and I'm tempted to say there hasn't been this much smarts together since Jefferson dined alone, or something like that! But you get the idea.
17:03	The question that was posed to us—the balance of repression and engagement in the way that states have conducted the struggle against terrorism—I think begs a very simple question: do we have a strategy? Is there a strategy in the room? And I would have to say that six years out it's highly doubtful that we have a strategy.
17:30	The repression part we certainly have mastered, perhaps too well. And it is, of course, vital to disrupt terrorist violence to prevent attacks from happening and to safeguard citizens. But I view that as really being the tactical part of the game, and tactics are only part of the story: we also need to have a strategy. And that strategy, it seems to me, has to address the central phenomenon of what it is we're dealing with, which is a story, a narrative.
18:11	You've probably all discussed this in your working groups this morning, but there is a narrative out there which is really the thing that connects the different, disparate groups that are taking up arms today in the jihadist cause. And the strategy, increasingly called by experts the `single unified'—*[b/gd bang]* what can you say! *[laughter]* Yeah, they're everywhere!

18:40	You know, the single unified strategy is that the West wishes to occupy Muslim countries, destroy Islam, subjugate its people and steal its wealth, to the extent that we've had an attempt at a strategy —it hasn't undermined that narrative; it's all too often confirmed it. And if the strategy was that by pummelling a Muslim country in the Middle East and the one that had perhaps stood up most frequently and, in many ways, most offensively, Iraq, and to show that as a sign of Western mastery—well, it really failed: it confirmed the terrorist narrative.
19:22	Now, this is got us in a paradoxical situation that al-Qaeda, which is really anathema to most Muslims, is not mobilising as it would like, but it is accreting terrorists by small numbers in a way, so that the security challenge continues to grow.
19:40	At the same time, you can't rule out the possibility that mobilisation will increase in time, particularly given the failures of our strategy. So it seems to me that we need to come up with a way of jamming this narrative. It seems to me, to begin to even talk about it, there are a few things that we need to do, in a sense, to gain admission back to the discussion. One of them is, certainly, to work more effectively to advance the Middle East peace process—I'm not sure that we can bring it to closure that quickly, but at least we have to show that we're interested.
20:15	And we have to show, moreover, that we care deeply about the sufferings of Palestinians, because that has become the touchstone for most of the Muslim world. We—and I speak here about the American `we'—need to get out of Iraq sooner rather than later, so that we're no longer seen as occupiers. We need to revalidate our moral character by making it clear that we don't torture.
20:38	I think then we can talk about engagement. And by engagement I mean an array of different kinds of activities in countries that we would call part of the Muslim world. That involves a deepened humanitarian assistance, economic assistance, educational engagement, institutional reform and, ultimately, I think there has to be some element of democratisation here too. It's got a bad name now, but as long as we are not on the right side of history on this issue, then we will always be liable to the accusation that we are the far enemy.
21:11	Now, there are other things that need to be done in Europe in terms of reducing the factors that are driving alienation and terrorism as well. And I think that's also going to be part of our counter-narrative.

21:25	But it seems to me that until we start having this serious discussion—and I would add that we really do need a new administration in Washington before we can start pursuing these things, since the current one does not have the *bona fides* to do this kind of thing, or the time—we're going to continue swatting flies, as the President once famously said. I think we're going to have a terrorist problem for quite a long time, but the question is whether we're doing our best to prevent radicalisation, prevent recruitment, prevent mobilisation; and then, I think, we'll be in a position to start shrinking the size of the problem and managing it better, and we won't be quite so fearful.
22:04	**Nick Fielding** Thank you very much, Dan. *[applause]* Sir Richard, can I ask you to pick up on those points and then take them on?
22:15	**Sir Richard Dearlove** You know, I think what I've got to say largely ties in with the points that Dan has made. An obvious point about political violence which is often overlooked is that it is a form of mass communication. It's about overwhelming and displacing rational political discussion. And of course, how we respond, I think one of the crucial elements in modulating and constructive our response is that we augment and broadcast our own message, not the message that the terrorists wish to send. It's a banal point to make, but it's actually quite hard to achieve. And one only has to look at aspects on the war on terrorism, i.e. US counter-terrorist policy, I think, to emphasise the point that I'm making.
23:08	Two levels: the tactical and the strategic. But if you bear in mind the aspect about the message that terrorism sends, the tactical preventing terrorism is very, very important. Stopping the message and stifling terrorist activity is more, as it were, than a tactical objective. And I think—and I *would* say this, wouldn't I—that depends on good intelligence in particular; it depends on good *human* intelligence in particular, which is difficult to achieve.
23:46	And counter-terrorist work is extremely fine-grained, it's very detailed, it's very particular. It requires very large resources, and it requires extremely sophisticated domestic coordination of those resources—getting agencies, both intelligence, law enforcement and others, to work together.
24:13	But—and this was touched on in the questions to the Home Secretary—it also requires sophisticated international coordination. Maybe in these four minutes I'm not going to go into detail about that, but that is a very significant challenge. Working on these sensitive issues with countries like Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, which obviously have a very important role to play, does present us with serious challenges. And there's no easy answer.

24:47	It also requires domestically the right legal framework. And of course there's been much discussion about that; there is still legislation to come about that. Personally, I think Napoleonic law is rather better constructed than common law for dealing with terrorism, but we have common law and therefore we have to work within the boundaries of common law. But special courts, investigating magistrates as they have in France, I think have proved more effective in dealing with internal domestic terrorism than common law has.
25:25	However, the bigger agenda actually is the one that much more interests me now, particularly that I've moved on to academia. And isolating, marginalizing, the causes of terrorism I think is the crucial challenge. And I think we heard from the Home Secretary a good strategy for that. I think my question to her would be: How well is this resourced? How *competent* are we actually on a day-to-day basis of implementing that strategy on the ground? We have now got plenty of intelligence officers. What I mean by that is there has been significant growth in our intelligence and security community since 9/11, and that continues. There's been an enormous strengthening.
26:17	I think the question I would ask—I'll put it another way: Do we have enough theologians? No, we almost certainly don't. And I think that's now where the emphasis should come. And getting also the Muslim community to address their problems and participate in implementation of this strategy is probably actually more important even than our own involvement.
26:48	A final point which I think is crucial: al-Qaeda has prospered and, as it were, regrouped largely, I think, because of the energy and the effort that it's put into its propaganda, essentially through the internet. Now, I think as citizens, for all of us, control of the internet raises some serious problems of human rights and basic freedoms, but I think in dealing with this problem there is no alternative to imposing significant controls over the internet. Because this is what, as it were, binds together the strategic aspects of the radical community, and it is, I think, one of the primary means of carrying the message and of influence and, as it were, conversion to radicalism. So maybe I will stop at that point. Thank you.
27:50	**Nick Fielding** Thank you very much. *[applause]* Frank Gardner, would you like to continue? Thank you.
28:00	**Frank Gardner** I just want to… *[checks the microphone first]* Is this working? It is? It's not? Okay. New technology baffles pissed old hack! *[gets another microphone]*

28:22	I just want to welcome, first of all, the speech given by the Home Secretary today. But I would say this: it's very late, all of this. The seeds of global jihadism, or global jihadist activism, were sown in this country, in London, in the mid-1990s. The first al-Qaeda-linked arrest took place in the UK, in Leicester, in 2000. This is not a problem which cropped up two weeks, two months or even two years ago; it's taken a scandalously long time for anything approaching a coherent Government policy to be put together. So I would offer that criticism.
29:03	I'd also say that it's all very well to come out with excellent phrases such as, `We must not allow terrorism to drown out discussion.' But that means in practice making sure that it doesn't actually *do* that. I was at the Beirut Summit, the Arab Summit in 2002, when then Crown Prince Abdullah of Saudi Arabia introduced the Saudi Peace Plan, which was a very widely acclaimed peace plan for a comprehensive peace settlement between not just Israel and the Palestinians but Israel and the whole Arab world. It was immediately blown off course by a bombing in Tel Aviv, and the Israeli Government said, `That's it—all discussion is off.' So if we say this, we have to mean it.
29:48	Now, counter-radicalisation means understanding first of all the true nature of how radicalisation works. And in the immediate aftermath of 9/11, I think, a lot of people came out with a lot of over-simplifications: `Well, these people were people who felt excluded from Saudi society, they were misfits, they went off to live in Afghanistan.' That may be true, but they were not necessarily poor. A lot of people painted them as people who were outcast by their own society, which wasn't actually true.
30:18	I mean, for example, one of the pilots, Ziad Jarrah, was a Lebanese who came from a perfectly well-to-do Lebanese family. There are many different reasons why somebody becomes radicalised to the point of taking extremist, violent action. And that requires a multi-tiered approach, which I think the Home Secretary was hinting at.
30:36	But I think the biggest challenge in counter-radicalisation is countering the charismatic appeal of violent extremism, of violent jihadism. Because if you're 19 and you're young, you're idealised, you are angry at what you see as the oppression and suppression of your people around the world, and you are convinced that there is, to use al-Qaeda's terminology, a Zionist crusader plot or campaign to suppress your people, then you're not going to get interested in taking part in a million-man march against the Iraq invasion— because that happened and it didn't make any difference, Muslims say. You're not going to get interested in writing to your MP, because you know that probably that's not going to make any difference either.

31:26	So you are going to be very tempted to do something or to listen to somebody who says, `You must do something.' And this is the appeal of those who call for violent action, who will say: `Your life is worth nothing unless you do something about it.' And so far no government that I know in the West—they have in some Muslim countries, but in the West they have not yet come up with an effective counter-message to that charismatic appeal. That's what I would say.
31:59	**Nick Fielding** Thank you, Frank. *[applause]* Sadig Al Mahdi.
32:09	**H.E. Sadig Al Mahdi** Thank you, Mr Chairman. Friends, good afternoon. I would like to start by three introductory notes. First, that radicalisation is gaining momentum. Second, that the elitist circles, like ours here, are going in disparate ways between them and the grass roots. In the grass roots, radicalisation is more [moment?], whereas at the elite level there is more [modern?].
32:44	The third point is that I believe that most of the radicalisation in my part of the world is reactive. From the standing front to the Taliban in Afghanistan, from the Arab-Afghans to al-Qaeda, from Amit to Hezbollah, from the PLO to Hamas, from Ba'ath control of Iraq to the Pandora across Iraq—all these, I believe, are reactive elements.
33:21	I want to make five key points after this introduction. First, political violence usually is legitimised by ideology, which has a social appeal. It has an [?]. Therefore the [groups?] have an approach which goes beyond security. It calls for a special approach to the causes beyond the symptoms. What are the causes? I believe five: occupation, colonisation culturally, humiliation, poverty and political exclusion that is articulated by the dictators.
34:11	Since 9/11 the response led by the new conservatives in the United States went beyond the agenda. The word `vigour' consequently in the different places as [seclusion?] has fell to the manipulation by the extremists. The article that I believe best describes what I feel is one that has come as an editorial by the *Herald Tribune* of 12–13th this month. It is titled: *Looking For an America We Can Recognise Again*. Quote: `This sort of lawless behaviour has become standard practice since 9/11. In many Arab countries the war on terror has become a justification for a more robust despotism.'
35:11	And the oil prices: few will buy the different "Wolf! Wolf! Wolf!" cries that have prevailed, has led to this behaviour in oil prices, so that since Mr Bush came to power oil prices have now doubled to 240%. And the oil prices have more than made it available for dictatorial regimes to use the oil to, in fact, establish more and more stringent regimes.

35:59	I believe now this kind of conference is best poised to review all this in a way that is objective and that has no taboos about naming names and indicating factors, so that we arrive at an intelligent international policy to contain radicalisation and to suppress terrorism.
36:35	I myself am a long-time victim of radicalisation. I've been locked up by secularists' radicalisation in Sudan for being Islamicist, and locked up by Islamicists for being secular! And therefore I have been suffering from both kinds of what may be called `fundamentalisms'.
37:02	I believe that so far the factors I have mentioned are not being dealt with sufficiently seriously or robustly. If we take, for instance, the question of Palestine and peace there, the Anapolis meeting is really a non-starter. The organisers are biased and are [party?] selective. In fact, it is more a preparation for another conflict in the area rather than global peace in the area.
37:34	The same about the economy and economic factors. The [good …. million developing?] goals are being followed in a very half-hearted way, only at issues. I have listened very carefully to the Home Secretary. I can see that, yes, there is some talk about extra security matters, but they are being dealt with as public relations exercises for security purposes, rather than in their own right and most important causes.
38:05	For all this I look up to our discussion moving out of this half-hearted approach to the extra security aspects and speaking more robustly and directly about how they should be addressed in order to stem radicalisation and to create better conditions for containing the violence related to it. Thank you. *[applause]*
38:34	**Nick Fielding** Thank you.
00:30	**Nick Fielding** … different departments and even across different countries. Frank Gardner talked about the need to counter the charismatic appeal of violent jihadism, that being a very powerful message which attracts a following amongst a lot of young people and the rapidity with which they can very quickly become radicalised.
01:00	*[clears throat]* Excuse me. And Sadig Al Mahdi talked about the fact that radicalism is gaining in momentum at the present moment and that political violence is always legitimised by an ideology, and that there is a need for an approach which goes beyond security.
01:20	So I think we've seen quite a wide range of ideas and issues raised on the platform here. And first of all I'd like to ask whether any of the members of the panel would like to follow up on the points made by their co-panellists. Yes, Dan.

01:37	**Dan Benjamin** I wanted to say how much I appreciated Frank's point about the glamour of violence and try to smuggle it into my own presentation, in a sense! Because I think that it gives us some hint about how we should go about our own efforts in the future. The Number 1 place where the charisma or the glamour of violence has been on display has been in Iraq and, increasingly, in Afghanistan.
02:11	And the glamour of appearing to be the true warrior, the person who's going to stand up in defence of his people in a military situation or on the battlefield is really an unparalleled opportunity for a holy warrior.
02:34	And I think that the better part of wisdom is going to be to deprive them of the opportunity to appear in that tableau. And when there are fewer tapes of that sort of thing flashing around the internet than there are, perhaps, of people in manacles in courtrooms, we will be headed in the right direction.
03:06	**Frank Gardner** Thank you very much. They're always so generous, aren't they, these people! Thank you. Just to add to that. I mean, I think the narrative, the sort of phraseology used by Western governments and particularly, I'm afraid, the US Government, particularly in the early months and years after 9/11, have played right into the hands of extremists here. The very phrase itself, `war on terror', which of course then morphed into G-what—the global war on terrorism, which then became G-say, the global struggle against violent extremism—I think this week it's called the `long war', I forget. But, oh, it's changed already!
03:45	Anyhow, it keeps changing. But to call it a war, okay, implies opposing armies. And that has elevated people who are, frankly, mass-murderers in the case of, say, the London bombers into a self-image of *muhajidin*: of warriors in a holy cause. But, of course, the wider Muslim world would say, `Well, you were quite happy to call them that when they were fighting the Russians in Afghanistan; you don't like it when they're fighting *you*.' And so they would accuse us, the West, of double standards there.
04:18	But it allowed Mohammad Sidique Khan, the ringleader of the London bombers, to make that posthumous video which was released in September 2005, where he jabbed his biro at the camera and said, `I am a soldier, and we are at war, and until you stop bombing and gassing my people we won't leave you in peace' or something like that.
04:41	And he put himself forward as a hero, as a soldier. And that is the way that he would be viewed by jihadis in just the same way as somebody who'd come back from the Falklands and had led a charge against an Argentinean trench. So it's elevating people who kill civilians in cold blood to the status of war heroes. And a lot has been done to help that image by Western governments against its own interests.

05:11	**Nick Fielding** Yes, and if I could just add to that, I mean, one of the things that really made that message so chilling was that, as Frank was alluding to, it was delivered in a broad Yorkshire accent. And I think that was very significant.
05:26	**H.E. Sadig Al Mahdi** One sentence?
05:27	**Nick Fielding** Yes, please.
05:58	**H.E. Sadig Al Mahdi** Yes, one sentence I want to follow up with, and that is: instead of talking more and more about the tactics that have to be employed, I think we should concentrate on what should be done to *deprive* the activists in this field of the grievances that they are speaking for, that they are advocating. This is the point. Are there causes? If there are, we have to see how to address the causes so that there is no more this type of unacceptable advocacy.
06:03	**Nick Fielding** I'd like to open up the discussion now to the floor. I just want to remind you that the subject is: How should states counter terrorism? So I want you, please, to try and confine your comments to that, and please relate to the comments that have been made from the platform here. And if you'd introduce yourself when you begin to speak. There's a gentleman down here who can be first to speak.
06:25	**Bill ?** Okay, I'm Bill from [Clutton?] House. My question is to Dan, actually. In addressing their narrative, which you described, do we not need to note that a lot of their narrative seems to feed off a *Western* narrative: that the West has become socially decadent—which I hear from members of the Conservative Party!—or that we're all suffering from human hubris—which I hear from all sides of the political spectrum—and hence we see attacks on what they call `slags in nightclubs' or airports. These are not Islamic agendas; these are almost *our internal* agendas.
07:06	And quickly, if I may, to Frank. If we're going to counter the charismatic appeal of violence, as you put it, surely it's time we started promoting what it is that we are *for*, rather than obsessing about what *they* are proposing and how *they* are attracting youth. Surely it's our failure to provide youth with something positive, affirmative and a positive narrative of what being in the West is about that is really at fault here, if we're going to be strategic, as Dan suggests?
07:39	**Nick Fielding** Thank you for two very interesting questions. Would you like to come back on those two?

07:43	**Dan Benjamin**
	Yes. Very briefly, I'm not sure I agree with your premise that their narrative is parasitic on our own. We have that narrative, we have that discussion about decadence. It's been going on since Spengler and maybe before. But I don't think that [Cicuta?] got it from Spengler. You know, he visited Colorado and he saw women in dresses that didn't cover their feet. And it's been going on ever since. So they can have their own narrative of Western decadence.
08:13	And I personally don't really think we need to address that. I think that's a matter of our own internal social order. And we can debate it in the newspapers, but I don't see any added value by saying, `Well, they've told us something about ourselves.' I think they've told us something about ourselves in terms of pointing the finger at us over autocracy and our support for it—something that we should have been paying attention to, perhaps. But I'm not sure that I take the critique of Western society from them as being one that we have to take very seriously.
08:51	**Frank Gardner**
	Thank you. I think it would be a bit tangential to start soul-searching and wondering what kind of a society we live in. I mean, we're talking about counter-terrorism and counter-radicalisation. The vast majority of Muslims who live in this country are quite happy to live in this country. The problem *they* have is with the perceived injustices of our foreign policy. They don't like the way Britain and its allies behave in the Middle East. They have other issues as well, but that is their primary beef. They just want – they have the same central values as the rest of us do: they want to put the bread or the naan or the rice on the table, raise a family, send their kids to good schools, get a job and live in peace. They have the same values as the rest of us. I don't think that needs to be redefined, in my view.
09:36	**Nick Fielding**
	Thank you. The gentleman here.
09:40	**[Gavin Moore?]**
	Gavin Moore from the aforementioned Conservative Party! If there is a thread through Mr Al Mahdi's remarks, I think it may have been the thread of emancipation: individual emancipation from dictators and collective emancipation from a world order with which people susceptible to radicalism disagreed. Does the panel agree with it? And if they do, what do they think the role of the State in promoting alternative agendas for emancipation as part of a counter-terrorism strategy is?
10:19	**Nick Fielding**
	I'll take another question from the gentleman at the front here.

10:27	**Dr Saad Eddin Ibrahim** Yes, I'm Saad Ibrahim from Cairo. My question to the panellists is really I think they all agree that there are grievances, and the West is not addressing those grievances, which gives a lot of [interest?] for the narrative of the so-called `extremist' or militant. But Mr Sadig Al Mahdi hinted at some sort—I wish the panel will react—when he said that he was squeezed twice: once by Islamic extremists and the other time by secular extremists.
11:16	Here is a dilemma that we feel in the Middle East at the moment: is that our autocrats are in fact using the Islamophobia and the fear of extremism to stay ain power and to refuse to share power or to allow reform. And I think that also feeds into the so-called `Islamicist' [manager?]. So whether you do: all right, you address problems—Palestine, Iraq and what have you—but then you have your allies, your friendly dictators, your `son-of-bitches', so to speak! What are you going to do about them?
12:02	**Nick Fielding** Dan, would you like to come back on some of those points? They relate to some of the points you were making, I think, in your introductory comments.
12:08	**Dan Benjamin** Well, I defer to someone else on emancipation, because I'm not sure I have a fully formed thought on that, and I'm not sure it's all that different from what the rest of us were saying. But first of all, I just want to say it's wonderful to have Saad Ibrahim here, and no one's done more for democracy in the Middle East than he has.
12:30	And he's pointed to exactly the right problem. And we have not found the solution. And I think we are guilty of not trying hard enough, too, because for far too long we've had our top-line desires: we wanted support for the Middle East peace process. We wanted to be able to send our ships through the Suez Canal, whatever. We wanted the cooperation with the Egyptian military and exercise and so on and so forth. And that's what we got for our two billion. And when we went further down the list and said, `How about stopping incitement? How about, you know, letting [Imanoor?] out of prison? How about leaving a little more space for liberal democratic activists?'—you know, those were left off the communiqués at the end of the bilateral meetings.
13:22	And that was a failure. I'd say it's not entirely an incomprehensible failure, because this is unfortunately the way diplomacy is, and you won't often get everything you want. But I think that in the future this is the one place where, at least rhetorically, President Bush really got it right when he said: `We gave the autocrats a pass for too long.'

13:45	And, you know, I think it's an unsustainable policy. The human costs are too high, both for people in Muslim countries and, ultimately, for us, as we found out: because that repression breeds terrorism. And I think that's one thing we really *do* know: that that's where it comes from, and in part not just because of your democracy activism but because of your scholarly work on this.
14:12	And it is going to be an enormous challenge for policymakers in the very near future to figure out how to square that circle: how they can continue to have a serious democracy promotion policy without over-promising and without doing the kind of embarrassing about-faces that we've seen recently.
14:34	**Nick Fielding** Sir Richard, you were going to come back on some of the points about [a greater?] emancipation.
14:36	**Sir Richard Dearlove** I mean, Dan has, I think, covered it to an extent. But just let me emphasise the dilemma that we are faced with now, which is the danger of the policy of emancipation and democracy introduced in certain circumstances. You see the consequences of relatively free elections in Algeria, certainly in the Palestinian territories: the election of Hamas was, I understand, surprisingly fair, although disputed.
15:08	And, of course, those concepts can come back and bite you very hard—witness the performance of the Muslim Brotherhood in the municipal elections in Egypt, which certainly shook the Egyptian leadership and made them step back from reform. So we have a dilemma because of the current, let's say, political atmosphere across the Middle East. And too rapid a step in the direction of democracy is likely in the short term to deliver a contrary result than the one that we want.
15:43	**Nick Fielding** Gentleman at the front here. Thank you.
15:45	**Bassam Tibi** I have a question to Mr Gardner.
15:47	**Nick Fielding** Please introduce yourself.

15:48	**Bassam Tibi** My name is Bassam Tibi. I was born in Damascus. I'm a migrant. I am Professor at the University of Goettingen in Germany, parallel to my position in the United States: I'm an A.D. White Professor at Large, Cornell University. And I am the founder, if I may add this, I'm the founder of the concept of EuroIslam: this is the concept for making Muslims living in Europe citizens of the heart. Not only citizens of the passport, but those are citizens of the heart, yeah?
16:11	Now, to Mr Gardner. I agree with most of what you said, and even I gave you physically endorsement, as you remember! But in particular when you talk about the rhetorics of Western European politicians who state something and don't do it, yeah? And sometimes it's too late. But until one point: when you said it is wrong to address Islamist terrorist—Islamist, not Islamic; there is no Islamic terror: Islamist or jihadism as a warrior, yeah. Let me take only maybe two minutes to discuss it with you.
16:47	You see, I work on jihadism since thirty years, and the birth of jihadism was related to an essay written by the founder of the Muslim Brotherhood—his name Hassan al-Banna: *Risalat al-Jihad*, yeah. And in this *Risalat al-Jihad* he says: `We cannot comply with the old concept of jihad. Jihad means also war,' and says extension of [?] Muslim. But jihad means also qatal. But it is bound to rule. Jihad is not terrorism; jihad is bound to rule and to [emit at?] targets.' So jihad is a kind of Islamic war, and it is like [class of it?]. It's [a regular war / irregular war?], yeah.
17:29	And after 9/11 or during 9/11 I was in Uzbekistan, invited by the Government of Uzbekistan to teach there about political Islam. And I was shown documents after 9/11 by the Uzbeki security that this essay, *Risalat al-Jihad* was used in the camps of al-Qaeda.
17:49	So jihadism is a regular war. I am Professor of International Relations and argue interstate war [??] and terrorism is a kind of irregular war, and it is not part of the rhetoric. But if you really look at them, because jihadism is not organised crime. If you confuse it —this is the last sentence—if you confused jihadism as organised crime, I think we deprive ourselves of a proper understanding of what is going on on the ground.
18:25	**Nick Fielding** Frank, do you want to come back?

18:27	**Frank Gardner** Sure. Thanks very much, Bassam Tibi. First of all, I think we should make this very clear: that the word jihad is open to interpretation. Jihadists, violent jihadists, always take it to mean violent jihad. But most Muslims do not. Jihad means `a struggle'. It comes from the Arabic word *jahada* `to struggle'. And that can be a struggle within yourself, a perfectly peaceful struggle to be a better person. It can mean during Ramadan, for example, resisting the temptation to break the fast in the middle of the day. You see a cup of water: `Shall I go for it? Shall I? No, no, I mustn't.' That is jihad: that's a struggle to be a good Muslim. Or it can be a struggle, etc.
19:19	So I often get emails from Muslims who say, `Why does the BBC or why does the media always associate jihad with violence?' Well, the answer is because al-Qaeda and other jihadi groups *themselves* use the word as an all-encompassing term for their struggle against... *[interjection]* Whatever! And that is why.
19:37	And something which many mainstream Muslims find very hard to deal with is the way the Western media often associate Islam with violence. And part of the reason for that is because of the propaganda put out by extremist groups. So when, for example, Hamas or Islamic jihad in the Palestinian territories put out a posthumous video of a suicide bomber, and he's holding in one hand a Qu'ran and in the other a Kalashnikov. No one's really listening to the words amongst the Western audience; they're just making that association, that visual association: he's got the Shahada, the first verse of the Qu'ran, tied in a headband around his head, and he's got the Holy Book in one hand and a Kalashnikov in the other. Ergo, most audiences are going to make that connection. And that is something which mainstream Muslims, it's reflecting badly on them and on their religion: because it's branding unfairly their religion as one of violence.
20:36	**Nick Fielding** Gentleman at the front here.
20:39	**Man** *[unidentified]* Well, thank you very much. Well, I want to concentrate on the question: how should states counter terrorism? We should accept that counter-terrorism is different from Britain to Iraq. So counter-terrorism is different in addressing from Iraq and Middle East and Muslim countries than Europe and Britain.
21:02	When you hear Mr Sadig Al Mahdi addressing the counter-terrorism and all these issues—well, he is from Sudan and he has the experience mainly of Sudan. So counter-terrorism and how to address the issues is different from one country to another. This is one thing.

21:24	The other thing: we should accept now that we should transfer from national security to international security. And in this case, that means we will face problems, because some countries will not allow you to cooperate with their national security. It depends on the country and it depends on the system and regime.
21:52	So we should draw the goals and mechanism of counter-terrorism in each state on the national level, and also on the international level. Well, this is a problem when it would be on an international level.
22:07	The solutions? Well, I just want to concentrate on that. The solution is democracy. Democracy can be a solution in all countries, and in this case so many superpowers should evaluate the history in supporting dictatorship regimes in many parts of the world. And how does terrorist or radical groups react and still reacting according to the history and according to religion, no matter, because terrorism has no religion. It can exist in any religion; it can exist even with the liberals and the orthodox.
22:54	And in that case, also I want to highlight a very important issue: you cannot give solutions to terrorism and react against it by using force only. Education is very, very important. Religion nowadays should play a role in this case. And when I talk about democracy, we should differentiate between the Western democracy and the Islamic democracy and the Arab democracy. The democracy is not a package to be transferred from one country to another.
23:42	And you should also concentrate—and I just want to [tutorise?] and highlight one last issue: globalisation. Globalisation now plays positive roles in some countries and negative roles in others. And this also affects the reacting from many radical groups that will transfer to, sometimes in some countries because of using of force, a terrorist group. Thank you.
24:10	**Nick Fielding** Thank you. I just want to take two members of the panel to come back on some of the points, and then I'll take more questions. First of all, Sadig, do you want to speak?
24:20	**H.E. Sadig Al Mahdi** Yes, two points: one about emancipation. I think there is no controversy now that there is a global acceptance of the need for good governance, economic development whose benefits are shared justly between the people, human dignity and human rights, and international relations based on justice and cooperation. I think there is no longer any controversy about the fact that these are the aspirations of humanity. And there have been many polls in many parts of the Muslim and Arab world which confirm the fact that people are all aspiring towards these goals.

25:07	The second point I want to make is concerning ideology. Nietzsche once said that `ideology is a greater enemy of truth than lies'. And of course this is true, because ideology gives you not only one lie but a blanket lie that tends to change many things. And in this respect, when we speak about Islam or Islamic, we differentiate from Islamicist: because Islamicist is the ideological manipulation of ideas from Islam towards power, and so on. The same: jihad and jihadist, and so on. Like, for instance, you would say `science and scientificist' when science is used as an ideology to explain all the facts of the world.
26:04	Anyway, the point is that we need to distinguish between Islam, jihad as beliefs and ideas, and the ideology of using ideas in a form that would serve a certain political purpose.
26:24	**Nick Fielding** Thank you. Sir Richard.
26:26	**Sir Richard Dearlove** I just want to comment on the previous speaker's assertion that terrorism is different in different countries. Yes, to an extent; and much terrorism of which we have experienced is territorial, it is regional: Irish—you know, you can go round the world—Tamil, and so on. But we have a phenomenon now of a type of terrorism which has a common ideological base whichever country it occurs in and doesn't have a specific territorial agenda. And I think this is one of the reasons why we find Islamist, extremist terrorism, so hard to cope with: because it doesn't have clear political handles. If you're dealing with Irish terrorism, you have the option to negotiate over the political and territorial issues that attach to it. But when you have a virulently ideological blend of terrorism, there isn't a clear political handle to grasp and to turn in trying to find a solution. And I think it's very important to make that point.
27:44	**Nick Fielding** Thank you. The lady here.
27:46	**Anne Speckhard** Hi. Anne Speckhard from Georgetown University. I want to thank you all for your comments, because they were so good, especially about the narrative, Daniel, and the glamour of it, Frank. And it's true that what we're seeing is this narrative confers an identity, and a glamorous identity, a heroic identity, a purpose. And exactly what you said of `Your life doesn't make a difference unless you give it this way.' And I think today we have an example of Sadig showing us: he gave us a list that he was fighting for good governance, human dignity, human rights, and spent a lot of time in jail—and probably in jails not anything like the West—and he didn't give up his fight.

28:27	So we have to start to think about what these things mean and how we can harness the passions of people that want these things. Because right now they're being sold one narrative: `This is the way to fight. Go about it violently.' And I really doubt, when we look at how clever and how dedicated these people are, that we can shut down their fight on the internet or we can stop them from their technological ability to bomb us, poison us and so on.
28:58	And my idea is: why don't we get much more creative? Look how much money our government is spending down. I mean, you're right: is there a strategy? And can we harness these people? Can we get a-hold of their passions and direct them and show them a way that they *can* fight non-violently? And I think in the UK we're starting to see strategies like that, which I'm so glad to see. And I know that if we begin to get hearts and minds like yours that are willing to spend years and years in prison fighting for these things, we can harness some of it, at least. And that's what I'd like to see.
24:32	**Nick Fielding** Thank you for those comments. Gentleman just at the back there in the middle.
29:40	**Dr Howard Barrell** Howard Barrell, Cardiff University. I wouldn't like to be heard to suggest that we are somehow the captives of our use of language when we're trying to understand something, but there is an observation I'd like to make, and it's this: that we're giving to the term `radicalisation' the connotation with which I'm very, very unhappy. Frank used the terms `counter-terrorism' and `counter-radicalisation' as if they were not far off being coterminous. Now, I don't believe we would be here having this discussion had it not been for previous radicalisations in our own islands or in our own worlds. And I think that we have to be very careful to distinguish between radicalisation and that point at which somebody who was being radicalised is actually moving towards or adopting, employing, political violence in the furtherance of his or her objectives.
30:37	The smart policing, smart security, smart intelligence is likely to be concerned with detecting the moment at which somebody might move from radicalisation towards the use of political violence. But I think that we do ourselves a grave political disservice if we in some sense pathologise the notion of radicalisation. And I would just like to make that as an observation and a caution. Thank you.
31:06	**Nick Fielding** Thank you.
31:07	**Frank Gardner** Can I just answer that? *(Sorry. Frank.)* Does this work? No, still doesn't. Thank you! Sack the techie!

30:17	Thank you very much. It's a very, very good point, that. If I gave that impression, then I apologise. I probably did it for the sake of brevity. What I would say, though, that radicalisation is an essential prerequisite to violent, extremist action. You don't do one without first going through the other phase. And the worrying thing for law enforcement and counter-terrorism intelligence is the very short speed with which somebody can go from being just a hacked-off citizen who sees something on TV that he doesn't like, to actually getting drawn into a circle and within literally months or, in some extreme cases, even weeks turn to violent action. Because that is not a long enough period for counter-terrorism and intelligence agencies to intercept that individual.
32:04	But it's a very good point. I mean, there is no crime in being radicalised or in having radicalised thought. That shouldn't be a crime; it only should become a crime when you actually translate that or plan to translate that into violent action that's going to hurt innocent people.
32:20	**Nick Fielding** Thank you. Euan there.
32:24	**Euan ?** I'm Euan {?] from Aberystwyth University. And just to kind of continue on that point, I think we often forget that democracy once was a radical thought, human rights once was a radical thought. So I think radical in itself should not be pathologised. And this, I think, leads back to the passion thing: that youth are often interested in radical ideas because they *are* radical. And so if we can capture that radicalism without the violence, I think that is one way to do it.
32:48	This is kind of the main thing about my question: the title of the panel also focuses on engagement, and I haven't heard very much about engagement, so I wanted to ask the panel about that. What role engagement and how far? And I think Dan Benjamin wrote an article about narrative entrepreneurs—I don't know whether that was you or Steve Simon? But the idea that in this struggle of the narrative, and how to persuade people, you need local allies, local entrepreneurs, narrative entrepreneurs, who can sell that narrative.
33:26	I think in that article the focus was on secular liberalists. And secular liberalists in the Middle East don't have a large following, and so I don't think that's going to be very useful. Whereas Islamists—and Islamism is, of course, is a very wide family of different ideas—do have a following. And what role does the panel think should be for engagement with the more pragmatic or moderate side of Islamism?

33:49	And I would even push it further and say those groups that are engaged in violence were not for kind of nihilistic reasons but for very kind of tactical reasons—like Hamas, for example, or the Moro Islam Liberation Front in the Philippines. What role is there for engaging the pragmatic wings of these organisations? And I'm not saying this is easy, because these wings aren't well defined. But if we're talking about just sort of shutting out a whole narrative because it is negative or it's radical and different from ours, we're not actually changing it. Whereas if we are engaging with people who are making that narrative, is there a chance that we could change that through different incentive structures?
34:30	**Nick Fielding** Sadig, would you like to come back on this point?
34:32	**H.E. Sadig Al Mahdi** Yes. I think engagement is very necessary. There are some who cannot be engaged because they have already declared total, categorical, irrational war. But there are others who have accepted the democratic process or have accepted the fact that you need to engage in the world. And therefore they should be engaged and should be part of the very meaningful dialogue.
35:02	I think Taliban, I think Hamas and Hezbollah, all of these need to be engaged, because they have already accepted certain tenets. Of course, Taliban has evolved from its isolated position to become now a liberation movement, and has got to be talked with, because it has now a wide representation of the people of Afghanistan. And I think even people like Karazi now speak in terms of the need for speaking to Taliban.
35:42	I think that many of the radical movements after power have been ameliorated and made more pragmatic by the experience of power. And instead of this being so with people like Hamas, they are beating into isolation. And if Hamas ultimately fails completely, it will not be towards a basist position; it will be to a more radical position: a position that is anti-democratic and that is incapable of being talked with.
36:23	I think that in the Muslim world today, post-Muslim Brotherhood ideology, Muslim Brotherhood ideology has concentrated on what we may call `sloganeering': `Islam is the answer;. But now, everywhere people have to be more specific. To be more specific, there are those who are leaping backwards—al-Qaeda and company—and those who are leaping forwards: those who speak in terms of Islam, accepting human rights and democracy and so on.

37:00	I think the ones who are talking in terms of leaping forward must be engaged, and those who are leaping backwards are in two minds. Some have gone beyond the pale, cannot be spoken with because they are too rreactionary and violent. But there are many who have to be engaged. I think ultimately this position of ruling out any kind of dialogue with forces that have accepted democracy, like Hamas and others, means that they can say this position is anti-Islam and therefore this only confirms the position of the reactionaries.
37:48	I think there must be a different attitude that would in every possible way say that those who are prepared to accept certain universal values have got to be engaged in a very serious way, because otherwise they will simply be lost to reaction and extremism.
38:15	**Nick Fielding** Sir Richard, do you just want to come in briefly?
37:17	**Sir Richard Dearlove** And can I just follow up your comment? I mean, counting the single narrative, which is a crucial part of what we're talking about, I think is best done by moderate Islamist forces or groups. And there are, in fact, a number of countries which practise this already at a very sophisticated level. I mean, the Algerians, you may be surprised, have done that; the Egyptians have a significant programme in that direction; the Singaporeans, who have a significant Islamist community, have a centre and a series of prison visitors who actually go around, who are essentially theologians, and that's why I made the comment earlier about theologians.
39:00	It's not something which isn't being done. I mean, I think it isn't being done in enough places with enough enthusiasm and enough unity. And it's no good countering the single narrative with a secular argument; it doesn't work and it won't work.
39:16	**Nick Fielding** The lady here.
00:28	**Woman** As well as the Judaism, you know, the three of them are fuelling one another. Although we are seeing violent actions coming clear from Muslims, but again there are violent actions coming in Judaism in the form of a settler going from Brooklyn comfortable to go and settle in Palestine.
00:49	So perhaps this approach will sort of damn the feelings of radicals in the Middle East, or Muslims. That's Number 1. Number 2 is that it really saddens me not to see any woman on the panel! But again, I look at it that it's been a man's world for a long time, and it's about time for a woman to come up and to clear up a little bit of this mess you have created! *[laughter, applause]* Because I think we are more capable and able of sort of containing this kind of negative things, because the damage will reach all of us.

01:30	The point is: empowering women in the diaspora to be the bridges of peace with all these countries. I believe that as women we carry this message much clearer, out of concern and care and love, and we can deliver it perhaps a bit better because we don't have the ego system.
01:49	But on the other hand, *[laughter]*—which men have! On the other hand as well, I'd like to emphasise that democracy *is* democracy. Democracy is acceptance and acknowledging the universality of rights, which mean universality of rights for women, equality, all kind of equality. So there isn't a Western democracy or a Muslim democracy, okay. Democracy is one. And this tone should not be encouraged *at all*. Democracy is one and would support each and every woman in any part of the world who is suffering.
02:27	The other point is that I grew up in an area where I looked so much up to the Americans and American democracy, and I was fascinated, honestly. But we cannot deny that in the past five, six years Americans have portrayed a really sad image. Don't you think that it might be again a better way to approach the Middle East and acknowledge the fact that we are living in a new world where we are interdependent on our resources and we are going to be fairer. So, yes, we are here to protect our interest in the oil in particular, but at the same time we are going to use a different policy to reach the people much more than cooperating with corrupted regimes, which we all know they are, you know.
03:20	So, yes, I know the alternative is very bad from this corrupted issue, but if you try to reach the grass roots and just try to come to an *honesty*, a more honest approach, and try to address the real issues in these countries, which is an ideology which, yes, all of us, we need to reform, you know, in religions, in our attitude; as well as address poverty—maybe we can have better results! Thank you.
03:53	**Nick Fielding** Thank you. Did you want to come back on that point later?
03:56	**Dan Benjamin** Yes! *[laughter]*
04:01	**Nick Fielding** Gentleman at the back there.

04:12	**Jacob O'Mahony**
	Jacob O'Mahony. Frank, I'm a wee bit disappointed, if I open like that. I think Sir Richard has probably said the most important thing today and echoed Christopher Anthony at a recent Intelligence and Security conference when he said where are the theologians? The reason, Frank, I'm a little disappointed is because you seem to kind of brush off Bassam Tibi when he pulled you up on what might be seen as a matter of semantics. But that's where my fear is. You are today kind of the mouthpiece of British media. You're the people who educate the masses. And are we relying on good old `al', al-Qaeda, to do our educating? Are we giving up on trying to actually get the truth out there, or are we doing something about it, and how should we do something about it?

05:15	**Frank G**	Can I answer that?

05:16	**Nick Fielding**	Yeah, please do.

05:19	**Frank Gardner**
	I can only assume you don't watch many of my TV reports! I'm sorry you're disappointed, but just to make absolutely clear where I stand on what Bassam Tibi said: the reason that I condemn the use of the expression `war on terror' is because it has played right into the hands of jihadists, who have depicted it as a war on Islam. They've allowed it to elevate themselves to a status higher than that of what they are, which is mass-murderers.

05:46	We all want to stop terrorism, and the things that I say, I'm just telling it how it *is*. I'm objective in whatever personal thoughts I may have. I'm a victim of terrorism, but I don't let that cover how I report on it. I am completely objective in it, and I'm telling you that objectively the West calling it a `war on terror', or particularly President Bush and the US administration calling it a `war on terror', has played right into the hands of the West's enemies, who have called it a `war on Islam'.

06:18	And go to the Middle East today and you just pull out a microphone and go to the back streets of Cairo, [Sinai?], Jeddah or wherever, and you ask people what do they think of the war on terror, and they'll all tell you it is a war on Muslims. Nine out of ten will.

06:32	**Jacob O'Mahony**
	Just to clarify: it wasn't referring to war on terror; I was actually referring to a [?] being slightly more direct about that. It was actually the definition of the word *jihad, jihadist, jihadi*, that was the brush that I was referring to. But thank you.

06:50	**Bassam Tibi**	And also, briefly…

06:52	**Nick Fielding**	Very briefly, please. I don't want to get into...
06:54	**Frank G**	....want me to follow this outside?
06:56	**Nick Fielding**	Yes, I would prefer that.
06:57	**Frank G**	It's like a pub. Let's take this outside! *[laughter]*

| 07:02 | **Bassam Tibi**
I am against... If I were an American citizen, I would never vote for President Bush, yeah. And I think the notion `war on terror' has been damaging. And I was not talking about that; I was just talking about the fact there has been a change in the character of war in international politics from interstate war to irregular war waged by non-state actors. And we need theologians because in the proper theology of Islam we say the use of jihad as jihad*ism* does damage to Islam as much as Mr Bush is damaging countering terrorism. So I disassociate myself from President Bush, and also I'm sorry that you did not answer my question. My question was to irregular was as war waged by non-state actors. And this has nothing to do with Mr Bush. |

| 07:54 | **Nick Fielding**
Thank you. I won't ask Frank to come back on that straight away, but we will have some final comments at the end. There's a lady in the middle there. Can somebody find a microphone, please, for this lady? |

| 08:10 | **Jane Sharp**
Oh, I've got it, so I'm going to ask a question! *[laughter]* I'm Jane Sharp from King's College and I want to refer to Richard Dearlove's comment that we do need very sophisticated international cooperation on this terrorism business. And in that context I would like the panel to comment on George Bush's effort to demonise Iran. I mean, I can't think of anybody who would be more useful to have on board in dealing with terrorism than the Iranians, and I'd like to have your comments on that. Thank you. |

| 08:42 | **Nick Fielding**
Thank you. Can we get the microphone to this lady here, now, please? |

08:56	**Clara O'Donnell** Thank you. I'm Clara O'Donnell, Centre for European Reform. On the issue of kind of counterproductive use sometimes of rhetoric by the West or sometimes US, I was wondering if also this could affect *another* issue of rhetoric. I mean, it's already been highlighted today the distinction between groups with global jihadism tensions and those with more territorial claims, yet often we see the US has referred to both groups very much under the same terms. And I was wondering if using such sometimes blanket views of the world in some ways limit the potential for analysing the different local circumstances etc, and in some ways has limited possibly the US or others from taking the most optimal policy outcomes; but also mainly has encouraged links between groups which do not automatically need to have any.
09:42	**Nick Fielding** Thank you. I can take a couple more questions, and then I'm going to ask the panel membres to summarise the discussion. I feel there's quite a lot left in this discussion, but we are drawing to an end now. So if I can take the gentleman there and then the gentleman here.
09:58	**Sudipac?** Sudipac, working for a European Parliamentarian. I would like to ask the panel and also comment on the thoughts of the panellists. First of all, I think that the concept of war on terror is, as many said here in the room, wrong: because it actually does what the jihadists or whatever you want to call them do to the Muslim world. By saying `war on terror' it elevates the concept to a mixture of religiopolitical, ideological creature which does not really have an impact on the people on the ground or on policymakers in general; it's rather an attractive concept for maybe being re-elected and maybe express things rather simplistic. The war on terror becomes therefore a jihad on terror.
10:54	On the other hand, the jihad concept does to the Islamic world what the war on terror does to the Western world by reducing the concept of jihad to the war on the West. So both these concepts set as one theoretical problem on the one hand, leading me to the distinction between countering radicalisation in European contexts within a European sphere, with the Muslim minorities in Europe and the concept of treating or of countering radicalisation and terrorism in the Middle East and in the Islamic world.
11:35	There is one point that connects both spheres, which is former policy which is media, which are the foremost elements that kind of interfere in this by bringing people in the Middle East to a position to counter Western countries or Western culture. And that is a concept that we also have to think about. Thank you.

12:02	**Nick Fielding** Thank you. Final comment, sir, please.
12:08	**Bassam Tibi** Thank you, Mr Chairman. I just want to remind you of the Cold War period where the West versus Communism. Now unfortunately it looks like the West versus Islam, which is a very bad slogan, which most of the people of the Muslim areas think now there is a war between the West and Islam that's a matter of new civilisation attempt.
12:45	Violence: I think there is two types. There is individual violence, which is like we see these people who bomb themselves and they kill innocents; and there is mass destruction violence, which is done by governments and leaders and people behind their desks. No one will condemn them. And not only that. When people lose their feelings towards the truth. If a leader comes and tells you, `I'm telling you now the truth,' and you find later on this is not the truth, it means, in other words, to justify his policy to reach their aims, which is that mass destruction policy.
13:40	Which has to be addressed. And that's why I'm saying the first out of this conference, we are to address the leaders of the world, especially the Western countries, whom people look forward to them and their democracy, to be truthful. When they say something, people need to think this is the truth. And if people lose that side, then no one is going to believe anything! And therefore you have the freedom to go for what you want. Now, lastly –
14:12	**Nick Fielding**	Can you …, please. Very briefly.
13:14	**Bassam Tibi** Yes, last point is that, as someone said they defined violence: now, for instance, the example of Kenya, as we can see recently—mass destruction. And it is a very big civillian war. What is behind it? That because it's [wrong?] democracy and still the West will accept the leaders who are there. Therefore I feel, at the end of my talk, which is I have the privilege to be the last speaker, that we have to come out from this beside all what my colleagues have said regarding, and also our leaders in the desks, they said also to address the political side that the Western countries' leaders have to be truthful in what they say.
15:10	**Nick Fielding** Thank you very much. I'll now ask—I'm sorry, I can't take any more—I'll ask the panellists now just to summarise the discussion, in the reverse order. So Sadig Al Mahdi, would you start, please.

15:23	**H.E. Sadig Al Mahdi** Thank you, Mr Chairman. I kick off with a comment on the question the lady has posed about Iran. I think between 2003, when Iran was called part of `the axis of evil' and now Iran has greater clout in the Middle East than ever before—compared to what happened to its position in 2003 and its position in 2008. So in fact Iran has *benefitted* from this characterisation. And ironically, it is United States policy in the area which has become demonised. So in fact the attempt to demonise Iran in the area because it went in the wrong way has led to a greater clout for Iran in the area and demonisation of US policies in the area. This is an ironic achievement of the opposite of your targets.
16:25	The final point is that no doubt whatsoever the five causes of extremism and violence need to be addressed in a robust and global way in order to stem out this menace. So far the robust approach is on security, but whatever extra security measures there are, are no more than public relations. For the security operations there is no attempt to address the causes in their own right and stem them out. And I think that is why we witness how extremism and fanaticism, all of these `isms', are gaining ground at the cost of moderation and balance.
17:18	**Nick Fielding** Thank you. Frank Gardner.
17:51	**Frank Gardner** Thanks. I'd like to respond to the excellent question from the lady over there, who suggested that US, or the West generally, has sometimes overlinked various jihadi movements from what were the territorial agenda with others, and that that could have possibly made the problem bigger. I think it possibly has. And I think the most obvious and glaring example of this is the 2003 invasion of Iraq, which was painted in Washington as part of the global war on terror, which it very patently was not.
18:00	Apart from paying rewards of $25,000 to families of Palestinian suicide bombers who bombed Israeli targets, Saddam was not active on the international terror front in 2003. Sir Richard may disagree; he may know something that I don't. But I don't think that Iraq was really an active state sponsor of international terrorism at the time it was invaded in 2003. It had certainly had form: it had invaded its neighbours, it had gassed its own people, and Saddam's regime was an odious one. But painting it in such a way that most of the American public, certainly, believed that there was some connection between Saddam's regime and 9/11 was an appalling deception, aided and abetted by parts of the media—I hope not my own, but certainly on the other side of the Atlantic it was.
18:53	And interviews done with US troops going into Iraq: often, when they were asked, `Why do you think you're here?'—`We're here to avenge 9/11!' It's absolutely nothing to do with 9/11. Saddam was perhaps not clever in being the only Arab leader who refused to condemn 9/11—that may well have helped seal his fate; but it was not clever. So I agree with you on that.

19:14	**Nick Fielding**
	Very briefly, Frank.

19:15	**Frank Gardner**
	Very briefly. If the West is serious about stopping itself from being a target for global jihadism violence, then it needs to be accountable. It's got to be accountable at all times and not have double standards. When it gets things wrong, it's got to admit that it's got things wrong. When it carries out atrocities such as Abu Ghraib, it's got to hold those accountable, and they've got to be punished. Thank you.

19:41	**Nick Fielding**
	Thank you. Sir Richard Dearlove.

19:43	**Sir Richard Dearlove**
	Iraq wasn't a state sponsor of terrorism, I agree with you entirely! There's really no doubt about that. More resources for the ideological religious debate. I think on the tactical operational side of counter-terrorism, things are, I would say, not going badly; not going particularly well, but they're not going badly. But at least, I think, states generally understand what needs to be done. But I think where we're falling down is in our intellectual approach to the aspects of the problem, and I think this is where universities, think-tanks, have a much, much more significant role to play in contributing to this debate.

20:35	There was a reference earlier to the Cold War. I think one of the reasons why we came out at the end of the Cold War more or less in the right place was that we actually *won*, I think I would use that word, the ideological debate between communism and the alternatives. And I think there is a lesson there for the medium and the long term.

21:01	The other issue just to touch on is the important one of international cooperation. It's an essential element in counter-terrorism. Yes, it would be better if Iran were in the same camp. The question is how we get from where we are to where we want to be. And I think the only comment I would make is that the Iranian regime are not helping themselves and don't make it any easier, however much they might have been demonised. And I think it's an important point to make at the moment that Iran is a sponsor of state terrorism, and it is very good at its policy being pursued in a completely ambiguous fashion. It will pursue two conflicting alternatives at the same time. And until, I think, there is more *political* clarity in iran—which there may well be in 2008—I don't think Ahmadinejad's position is particularly secure politically. But then if Iran, as it were, were no longer the sponsor of Hezbollah and Hamas, the Middle East might begin to look rather different.

22:17	**Nick Fielding** Thank you. And finally, Dan Benjamin.
22:20	**Dan Benjamin** Well, I think Sir Richard got it on the head regarding Iran. It'd be great if they were aboard—doesn't look like it's going to happen today or tomorrow. Yes, we should disaggregate our different terrorist threats. It's very important to figure out what the different groups want, what makes them tick and how you pull them apart.
22:42	On a personal and slightly glib note, I cannot wait for a change of administration in the hope (I hope it is in vain) that the debate over the phrase `the war on terror' will go away, because I just can't listen to it any more!
23:00	We've flogged this one to death, folks. We all agree war's a bad word in this context. I would like to just see us have counter-terrorism policies. And that actually leads to the last, larger, point, which is actually about going from a war to just having counter-terrorism policies. Even if all the very good suggestions that were made here today could be put into practice beginning on January 20ᵗʰ 2009 or a week thereafter, the ease with which we make these phrases about how it is suggests that we can do this easily. It's can't be done easily; it's going to take an *enormously* long time.
23:44	Just if we take the issue that [Saad Adim?] brought up about democratisation in the Middle East, this is a generational problem. And that suggests to me that one of the things we need to do in dealing with terrorism—because there will probably be a link between those two things—is get better at understanding that this is going to be part of our lives for a long time. And the less seriously we take, shall we say, the lower-end attacks, the better equipped we will be for dealing with all of the sort of higher order challenges that we have to undertake to deal with the phenomenon.
24:25	And I would add: when jihadism has gone, you know, we may have something else to deal with. Because, quite frankly, the means of production are increasingly available. Violence is cheaper and easier than it used to be. So that's on a hopeful note! But I think it speaks to our own state of mind in dealing with this issue and suggests that we need to have a much more calmer, pragmatic approach towards dealing with something that is, I think, now a fact of life.
24:53	**Nick Fielding** Thank you very much. That brings to an end this plenary session, and I think you'll all agree with me that it's been a very interesting, very engaging debate. And I would like to thank all the speakers—I'm sure you would too. *[applause]*

END OF PLENARY SESSION