

**Forum:** General Assembly 6 - Legal

**Issue:** Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism

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## Introduction

One of the most significant issues often discussed at the United Nations today is terrorism. Terrorism can be described in multiple sense depending on the perspective it is viewed from; the terrorist, the victim or the public's. It can be described as a tactic or strategy used by a specific group or person to attain a goal and this usually involves criminal activity or a crime. Conversely, from the perspective of a terrorist it can be described as a holy duty. Terrorists don't consider themselves evil and thus view it as the fight for their beliefs or freedom (referring to the term, freedom fighters). Acts of terrorism are targeted at a population to instill fear amongst or intimidate the people, the government and entire societies and often provoke violent responses from the state. These acts are committed to attain goals that are based on ideologies or religious views held by the group. They are also planned thoroughly to attain publicity which allows them to symbolize their views and achieve their goals. In its most general sense, terrorism entails the use of violence or criminal acts targeted at a specific audience to further a cause that can be political, religious, social or ideological.

Terrorism has effects in multiple senses including physical, mental, social and financial. Physical impacts of terrorism include impacts on the physical structures leading to impacts on the environment and on people. When acts of terror are committed they often result in effects on physical structures such as buildings or public places as a result of the use of bombs or the likes. This has an impact on the environment as emissions from the use of the weapon and the destruction of the structures can be noted. For example, the attack on the World Trade Center in New York City on September 11, 2001 (largely referred to as '9/11') involved the collapsing of the structure. This led to the emission of a massive cloud of dust and toxins (for example, mercury, dioxins and furans, which are all carcinogenic) that polluted the air in the city. Impacts on people include the loss of lives or injuries which affect the demographics of a population and people physically (as their health is compromised).

Economic impacts of terrorism can be analyzed on a national and global scale as well as on an individual scale. For individuals, financial effects after experiencing acts of terrorism include costs to restore

property that may have been damaged, costs of death and injury (medical costs), and the change in income (individuals may suffer a loss in their earnings). For governments, an act of terror results in a large cost and adjustment of budget. Government emergency funds are spent to restore public property, as compensations (for example, for families who have lost a member), to deploy additional security in vulnerable areas (this will be as a precaution of future attacks), to increase the budget for homeland security, and to increase the (public) healthcare budget.

Although terrorism was highly prevalent before, it is now highly concentrated in certain states. In 2014, attacks were highly concentrated in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Nigeria, Iraq and Syria. Collectively, these nations experienced 78% of deaths and 57% of attacks globally. Since 2000, Western countries (for example, Canada and the United States) only experienced 3% of the deaths. To populations in these countries and to the governments of and governments associated with these countries, terrorism is a highly relevant issue as it threatens their national security and creates tense diplomatic relations.

Because of the high relevance and threat posed to populations and national security by terrorism, a solution to eliminate terrorism is necessary. It is to protect our current and future generations and to establish a safe world that nations must work together to eradicate these unacceptable acts of terror. The UN has been actively working on this issue and has implemented a Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy (first formed in 2006 and is reviewed every 2 years its implementation). The UN also passed the Declaration on Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism in 1994. Overall, the issue of international terrorism is one relevant to most nations as they have been affected by this issue in one way or another. As a result of the vast reach of terrorism it is important for nations to work together, instead of against each other or in support of terrorist groups, to eradicate this issue and protect citizens around the world.

## **Definition of Key Terms**

### **International terrorism**

International terrorism is defined as an act of terrorism/terrorism committed in a foreign country by people who are not native to that country.

### **Counter-terrorism strategies**

Counter-terrorism strategies include principles, tactics or activities that are usually adopted by governments or political/diplomatic bodies to combat and prevent terrorist acts.

### **Terrorist act**

A terrorist act entails the use of violence against civilians or populations to achieve goals of the particular organisation the terrorist belongs to including, but not limited to, political or religious goals that are ideological. These acts instill fear and are done through intimidation.

### **Terrorist group**

A terrorist group is a group or organisation that commits violent acts against civilian populations to attain a goal representing their ideologies (commit an act of terrorism).

### **International Law**

International law consists of a set of legal rules, norms and standards applied in entities and member states that are internationally recognized.

### **State of Emergency**

A state of emergency is usually declared by a government and when this happens, it means that the area that the government has declared a state of emergency in, requires special measures such as a heightened presence of the police or army. This can be because, but is not limited to, of a threat to national security, civil unrest or natural disasters (such as an earthquake).

## **Background Information**

### **The Emergence of Terrorism**

Contrary to what is portrayed and/or may be believed, terrorism on its own, is not a new feat. The emergence of terrorism was noticed when the word ‘terrorism’ made a feature into European language after the French Revolution in 1789. Early in the revolution, this word came into existence as a result of the actions of the French government in which they tried to inflict their views, which were rather radical, on the citizens. As stated by the Académie Française it was the ‘system or rule of terror’ indicating that in that context, it was an act relevant to the government of that time which has a dictatorial nature. The emergence of the use of the words ‘terrorist’ and ‘terrorism’ gave a name and were also an example to further acts committed that would be similar (of a ‘terrorist’ or oppressive nature).

### **20th Century Terrorism**

The 20th century saw a rise of nationalism, which was a means of power for many colonial empires. As nationalism became closer to nations and nations began to support and connect with concepts such as race and ethnicity, developments in politics took place along the same lines. People were placed into various groups based on their ethnicity (ethnic groups) and faced many struggles. The way out that they

saw with this was to use terror to display their struggles and bring them to the attention of authoritative bodies, while also establishing a sense of power.

The World Wars lead to a significant rise in violence and signified the difference in ideologies that people had. The development of brutal weapons meant for the destruction of the enemy created an aura of terrorism and fear. In particular regards to the Cold War, in the postwar period terrorism was used as a tactic or means for campaigns to conduct movements against colonial rule and for independence; It was used as a tactic.

### **Modern-day terrorism**

The idea of modern-day terrorism has been set off monumentally by the act of international terrorism that took place on September 11, 2001 (largely known as 9/11) which was a set of coordinated attacks in the US on the World Trade Center (WTC) towers in New York City and the Pentagon in Washington DC. This act of international had lasting impacts on the world and is remembered by many people. It led to a significant change in American policies, and foreign policies for that matter, in addition to the mindset of the people. Since, there have been several international acts of terrorism including, but not limited to, those in India (New Delhi and Mumbai), London (subway bombings), Paris, Pakistan, and Spain. Since 2001, there have been over 72,000 terrorist acts resulting in almost 170,000 deaths). The center however of most terrorist organisations and most terrorist activities are parts of the Middle East include Syria and Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan.

### **Social Effects**

Terrorism impacts the social structure of a state. It affects the rate of unemployment as it decreases employment opportunities and thus affects the lives and households of people, creating a social issue. It also has effects on education as in states where an act of terror takes place, situations may arise in which schools have to be closed. This results in students missing school days and thus impacting their education. In certain cases, attacks are targeted on schools directly. For example in 2011, Girls' schools in Pakistan experienced 62 attacks and Boys' schools experienced 51 attacks. Another highly important impact of terrorism is displacement. As a result of terrorist activity and feeling vulnerable, people are prompted to leave their homes and flee for safety. An example of this is the Syrian Refugee crisis which arose as a result of conflict and terrorist activity in Syria.

### **Political Effects**

One political effect of terrorism is that it complicates international politics and diplomacy severely. The presence of non-state entities or groups who are committing these acts in certain states put those states in a difficult position in terms of international relations. States are monitored regarding their reactions

to these acts and their measures of precaution. It can lead to tense diplomatic relations within states, even though states are not directly involved. The same can be said for states who are involved with and support these terror groups as in terms of diplomatic relations, it can lead to the state being excluded and being at war with other nations.

### **Psychological Effects**

People living in areas regularly impacted by acts of terror are forced to develop mental mechanisms to adapt to and cope with the trauma presented by these situations. People also often display feelings that may have never been raised before for example fear, shock, helplessness/loss of control, anger, regret/guilt, and grief (over the loss of victims). The build-up of these unresolved emotions can often affect the work ethic of the victims and often limit their chances of attaining employment in their later years. This can negatively impact the economy of the country as more and more parts of its labour force will be unable to work, or even be unproductive should they get the chance. These acts can also lead to the feeling of vulnerability amongst populations and to people experiencing Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Symptoms of this disorder include nightmares or flashbacks of the event and unusual anxiety and can lead to people avoiding situations that trigger these symptoms. For example, a study conducted on the victims of the 1995 and 1996 bombings in France that injured over 200 and killed 12, displayed that 31% of the victims experienced PTSD.

### **Relation to illegal activity**

The issue of terrorism is one of concern to the United Nations Office on Drug and Crime (UNODC). The financing of acts of terrorism and terrorist groups is of great importance as they are financed by illegal activity. Drug trafficking plays an important role in this and example of this is Afghanistan. According to the World Drug Report produced in 2007 by the UNODC, Afghanistan's estimated revenue from the harvest of opium was estimated at \$3.1 billion. Even a percentage of this amount would be enough to fund terrorist activity. Drugs have even been used as a commission for acts of terror, as exemplified by the Madrid Bombings.

## **Major Countries and Organizations Involved**

### **Pakistan**

In recent years, terrorism in Pakistan has become highly catastrophic. The birth of terrorism in Pakistan was as a result of Pakistan's support and involvement in the Soviet war Afghanistan in addition to the decade-long civil war that followed. For the cause of jihad, fighters from South Asia were recruited to get involved in the conflict and the Mujahideen fighters were trained to fight in Afghanistan by the CIA, Western intelligence and by Pakistan's military. Although a decrease in terrorist attacks has been observed, the

attacks are now more deadly with an increase in the number of deaths per attack. According to statistics provided by the US State Department, Pakistan experienced 1823 attacks and 1761 deaths in 2014 as opposed to the 1009 attacks and 1081 deaths in 2015. This shows a decrease in the number of attacks (by 45%) and the number of deaths (by 39 people). However, the ratio of death per attack increased suggesting the attacks have become more catastrophic as in 2014 there were 0.99 deaths per attack and in 2015 there were 1.1 deaths per attack. One notable effort made by Pakistan to reach a solution regarding the issue of terrorism was in 2012 when leadership authorities in Pakistan met to seek solutions and on Monday 9 September 2013 passed a resolution stating that the first step in the process of counter-terrorism was to negotiate with the militants.

## **France**

There is a long history behind terrorism in France. It first appeared as a result of the revolution in 1789 and describe the campaign of the government. Since then, it has developed through the centuries to reach the stage it is at now. France has recently become a prominent target of terrorist attacks to the extent that the nation declared a state of emergency. Notable acts of terror in France include the Charlie Hebdo attack on January 7, 2015, the series attacks carried out in Paris (on various locations including a concert hall, stadium, restaurants and bars) on November 13 2015 and the attack on the 14th of July 2016, celebrated as Bastille Day, in which a lorry slammed through a crowd killing 84. To combat terrorism France has increased their security by deploying more personnel in cities and by increasing the security on public transport as transport is considered a target for terrorists. They also allowed police officers to carry guns as police officer are actively partaking in the fight against terrorism, and thus it is valid for them to be armed. They also enhanced diplomatic relations by cooperating with other nations to combat this issue. An example of this is the cooperation between France and Belgium, especially following the November 2015 Paris attacks. France has also improved their legal capacity and one important advancement in terms of this is the freezing of assets of people and/or entities involved in acts of terrorism as a result of the Anti-Terrorism Act of 2006.

## **United States**

The involvement of the US in actions relating to terrorism is prominent. As a nation, it has been victim to catastrophic terrorist attacks and it also one of the key nations fighting to counter and eliminate terrorism. With the exception of the September 11, 2001 attack on the WTC, the US has seen a reduction in the frequency of terrorist attacks since 1970 with 2608 attacks, of which 226 were lethal, within the time frame of 1970-2011. Law enforcement authorities have also statistically become better at deterring terrorist activity/attacks. Currently, to eliminate terrorism, the US is implementing certain strategies. One of these strategies includes the sharing of intelligence information which is vital when considering that data must be

shared with the police in foreign countries to be able to foil attacks that are planned. Also included in these strategies is an increase in international financial cooperation to fund counter-terrorism efforts in various states as well as the increased usage of drones. Another notable strategy is raiding terrorist bases and camps in foreign countries, particularly those where terrorist activity is concentrated.

### **United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO)**

UNESCO is a branch of the UN based in Paris with the aim of making contributions to peace and security by promoting collaboration on an international scale through reforms in regards to education, science and culture. As an organisation, UNESCO focuses both on countering and preventing violent extremism. It is their belief that this process begins with human rights and the rule of law and by educating and empowering men and women, starting at a grassroots level; in schools. UNESCO has adopted the UN Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism which consists of areas with a direct link to the work of UNESCO. These areas include empowering the youth and women and gender equality, communication with regards to the Internet and social media, and education, the development of skills and employment. One of the most important points is that the organisation has the aim of using education as a method of preventing extremism and terrorism as it can potentially make the people who have been educated strong and resilient.

### **Timeline of Events**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Description of Event</b>
December 18, 1972	First resolution addressing International Terrorism made by GA
March 12, 1993	Bombay Bombings
April 19, 1995	Oklahoma City Bombings
September 22-23, 1997	Bentalha Massacre
August 7, 1998	US Embassy Bombings
September 11, 2001	9/11. Two hijacked planes crashed into the World Trade Center (WTC) towers, resulting in around 8700 injuries and 2759 deaths. The pilots sacrificed their lives to successfully carry out this act of terrorism.
October 12, 2002	Bali Bombings
March 11, 2004	Madrid Train Bombings
July 7, 2005	London Transport Bombings

July 11, 2006	Mumbai Train Bombings
November 23, 2006	Sadr City Bombings
April 18, 2007	Baghdad Bombings
October 18, 2007	Karachi Bombing
November 13, 2015	Paris Attacks
March 22, 2016	Brussels Bombing
July 14, 2016	Nice Terror Attack
July 2016	Attacks in Germany
March 22, 2017	Westminster Attack
April 20, 2017	Paris Shooting
May 22, 2017	Manchester Terror Attack
June 3, 2017	London Bridge Terror Attack
August 17, 2017	Spanish Terror Attacks

## Relevant UN Treaties and Events

- Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism, 16 January 1997, (**A/RES/51/210**)
- Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism, 16 December 2013, (**A/RES/68/119**)
- Measures to Prevent International Terrorism, 18 December 1972, (**A/8993**)
- Resolutions 2178 Adopted by the Security Council at its 7272nd meeting, 24 September 2014, (**S/RES/2178 (2014)**)
- Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism, 7 November 2016, (**A/C.6/71/L.24**)
- Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism, 18 December 2015, (**A/RES/70/120**)
- Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism, 24 December 2015, (**A/70/674**)
- UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy

## Previous Attempts to solve the Issue

There have been multiple attempts to solve the issue of international terrorism in regards to nations individually. Nations have developed policies regarding counter-terrorism and have implemented them. These can be seen through the likes of various security measures implemented. The UN has made notable

efforts to counter international terrorism of which one is the passing of the Declaration on Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism in 1994. Another effort made by the UN to make progress regarding this issue was the adoption by the General Assembly of Resolution 52164 in 1997 titled "The International Convention for the suppression of Terrorist Bombings". These efforts advocated for strong action by member states while still giving importance to the sovereignty of the member states. The Security Council also passed Resolution 1269 which condemned terrorism in all forms and declared it as an unjustifiable criminal act regardless of the motivation behind it.

The financing of terror groups is of large concern and is derived from illegal activity including, but not limited to, drug trafficking. Currently there are multiple UN Security Council Resolutions including those that impose sanctions on members of the Taliban, Al-Qaeda and those associated with them. These sanctions include the freezing of their assets and ban on their travel. These resolutions are targeted at 124 entities and 226 individuals.

## Possible Solutions

Increased awareness - raising awareness about terrorist activities is a viable solution as it can affect the involvement of people in terrorist activities. Making people aware of the negative effects of terrorist activity in general and the involvement in terrorist activity can deter people from getting involved. In addition, the means organisations use on the internet (for example, social media) can be heavily monitored by international organisations and states. This is important because terrorist groups rely on their followers and recruits (their manpower) and have recently turned to social media to broaden their follower base. Raising awareness can stop people from getting swayed and involving themselves in these activities, thus capping their follower base and straining their manpower. As a result, the (magnitude of the) attacks and influence of the group will decrease. Awareness campaigns can also lead to people feeling differently about terrorism and situations that they may face. Teaching people, especially those vulnerable, about how to deal with such situations (both at the time of the situation and after) has the potential to make people more confident (have less fear) and decrease the effects of a terrorist attack after it has happened (for example, PTSD).

States who are supporters of terrorist groups should be exposed. The exposure of those who support such groups or fund them should be followed by a motion to boycott them. The boycotting of these states will affect their economy and income and thus result in a decrease of funding of these terrorist groups. This solution could work positively and result in the struggle of the terrorist groups and a decrease in terrorist activity, but could also work counterproductively by making the state that supported the terrorist group vulnerable to attacks from the same group. Upon a decrease in funding, the terrorists may decide to

retaliate out of vengeance and attack that state resulting in another state in which terrorist attacks will be concentrated.

The use of torture should be eliminated - torture used, especially as a means of interrogation, should be halted as it can prove to be counterproductive. Other more effective methods should be explored. The use of torture leads to a heightened feeling of vengeance amongst terrorists and terrorist groups leading to increased targeted terrorist activity.

Improved border control - a more advanced system of border security will lead to the prevention of terrorist movement within nations. Strict visa regulations must be applied to individuals with a justified reason. This solution has its advantage of being able to detect terrorist movement more but also has the disadvantage of increased discrimination and racial profiling, in situations where strict control is exercised on individuals with an unjustified reason (i.e. regulations may be applied to an individual because of preconceived notions held by the authority applying them).

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