

ITS2K1

International Terrorism Summit 2001



Greetings Delegates,

Welcome to the NYC iSchools second Model UN conference. This background guide is meant to serve as a reference for delegates, as they research and prepare for this committee.

Delegates will be gathering to discuss terrorism, its effects, and solutions. If you have any questions, you can contact me Lily Krug at liliannak@nycischool.org. Also, feel free to contact our secretariat via our FA, Amy Strassler at astrassler@nycischool.org, Secretary General Ava Whitney at avaw4@nycischool.org, or Undersecretary General, Ivy Trocco at ivyt7@nycischool.org. We hope that you'll enjoy the committee and our conference!

Sincerely,

Lily Krug, Chair

Introduction:

Greetings fellow delegates, the delegates of many different nations are gathered here today at 7:45 A.M. (Eastern Time) September 11, 2001 to discuss a pressing issue within society that must be combated: terrorism. Although the twin towers haven't fallen yet, terrorism is still a problem and we must attempt to eradicate any signs of terror in order to ensure global prosperity and wellbeing. In this committee, the delegates shall work together to craft a plan and to further prevent the global spread of terrorism.

Background:

These unlawful acts of violence are called terrorism. Terrorism involves hurting civilians by the masses to achieve a very specific goal: in order to implement fear and terror within the society and/or culture. Terrorism has been used for decades as a means of enticing and making civilians fearful of the actions that may prevail.

The first account of terrorism recorded was the Zealots of Judea from 1st Century AD. A group of terrorists were scared that they wouldn't be able to be faithful to the teachings of Judaism if they were living as Roman subjects. Because of this motive a group of terrorist had an underground system of killings where people who worked in Rome or that this group thought were Jews collaborating with the Romans could be killed.

This committee session will focus specifically on terrorism in the late months of 2000 through the early months of 2001. Although a lot of time has passed since the first account of terrorism in the 1st Century AD, not a lot has changed in the reasons and tactics that are used.

The major difference between the origins of terrorism and terrorism now is new technology that has brought about access to new materials. When the idea of this mass, unjust killing started, one would have to figure out for themselves how to kill so many people because they didn't have the advanced technologies they have today or have created over the past one-hundred years even. People now have access to so many new materials and technologies — including bombs, airplanes, and weapons of mass destruction — that it has become easier to perform these killings.

The 20th Century is full of examples of use of these materials. Within this time there were two world wars and although these aren't necessarily acts of terrorism, they are times when many victims were killed. In the first half of the 20th Century, there were two world wars that both have mass killings. During WWII innocent people were actually targets and to some these acts under Hitler were considered acts of terrorism.

But war isn't the only time that could be considered an act of terrorism. The difference between acts from terrorist groups and war is that innocent victims die because of terrorist groups with no warning, whereas in war people knew there was a chance that they would be killed. In terrorism victims are just living their lives and don't know that there is a chance that they could die at any moment. Five terrorist groups that were active in the 19th century were the Irish Republican Army, the Basque Separatists, the Weather Underground, the Red Brigade in Italy, and Puerto Rican Nationalists.

The Irish Republican Army (IRA) believed that Northern Ireland should not be controlled by the UK. They carried out a series of attacks between 1968 and 1998, a period known as "The

Troubles”. During this time over 3,600 victims were killed and about 50,000 were injured due to attacks and bombings done by the IRA.

Like the IRA and Puerto Rican radicals, Basque Separatists worked towards independence from a larger nation. They are another European terrorist group located in Spain. Known specifically as Euskadi Ta Askatasuna (ETA), they also advocated for independence. Basque Country where most of this takes place is a part of northern Spain that has a lot of cultural traditions and a distinct language. This terrorist group wanted Basque Country to be its own thing, and not part of Spain. They used terrorism to try to achieve their goal and at one point started killing 100 victims per year, around the late 1970s.

Similarly, the Puerto Rican Nationalist movement engaged in terrorist attacks in order to achieve independence from the United States. This occurred on March 1st, 1954 when four victims fired thirty shots into the US House of Representatives. The point of these attacks was to make sure people were aware that the US government was repressing Puerto Rico’s independence movement. No one died but five victims were injured.

Another major terrorist group of the 20th Century was the Weather Underground. Unlike the other groups above they weren’t advocating for independence or a particular area. Instead they wanted what most protesters wanted in America in the 1960s, for the Vietnam War to end, for older ideas of racism and sexism to go away, etc. Some just believed they were extreme protesters. For this reason not everyone considered them to be a terrorist group. But they also believed that to get what they wanted and to get the attention of the government, peaceful protest wouldn’t work. They thought that only violence would get them what they wanted. There were

different factions of the Weather Underground and some of these factions would be considered terrorists because they used violence against innocent victims with a political aim.

Another famous terrorist group were the Red Brigades, located in Italy and formed in 1970. They felt that a dictator would be a better fit to run the country than the democratic Italian state that was running the country. They used violence to convey their message which is why they would be considered terrorist group. One famous thing this group did was kidnap Italian prosecutor Mario Sossi in 1974. This act was the first one of many to follow in the next ten years including more kidnappings, robberies and assassinations.

Current Situation:

This committee focuses on the time between January 2000-August 2001. At this point in time, Bush's team was given slight warnings about such possible attacks but the U.S. quickly brushed off these threats and they were seen as not "serious." Similarly, Al Qaeda, arguably the most powerful terrorist group, was seen as a threat to the United States, but the reality of how powerful they were hadn't entered the minds of many citizens of different countries.

On August 6th 2001, the United States which was the main target in the terrorism conflict famously received a top secret brief titled, "Bin Laden Determined to Strike in U.S." This document stated how Osama Bin Laden, the leader of Al Qaeda, was planning a possible strike against the U.S. and how a very possible target was New York City. This should be addressed during the caucuses (moderated) and the delegates should find a way to agree upon a possible solution to learning this information.

Simply put, the spread of terrorism is a problem right now, but only a slight one. This summit will focus on how we should react towards the current attacks of terror and how to better prevent a spread of terrorism.

Effects on Society:

Terrorism is not only very frightening but can also have a very large impact on a person's mental health and physiological development especially if a young child grows up in a place that is usually a target for terrorism, that person is more likely to develop a mental illness. These mental illnesses include but aren't limited to anxiety—possibly about another attack—depression—maybe from losing someone during an attack—PTSD (Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder) from anything witnessed during an attack, etc. People with a mental disorder like PTSD may avoid certain things in their lives and could negatively impact their lives in the long run. These mental illnesses can play a large role in affecting someone's life and can ultimately control their lives.

Similarly, an attack of terrorism violates the “human rights” of all people. Victims around the world are affected in different ways but regardless they're ability to live a life with peace and security is highly affected. Attacks of terrorism destabilize the government and therefore also attack the basic rights of people globally.

Lastly, terrorism can affect how certain races and groups feel in society. Just because one person of a certain race, group, or community committed an act of terrorism, doesn't mean that all people of that race, group, or community are terrorists. This can lead to people being targeted even when they haven't done anything wrong. Because of this, certain groups of people would

avoid certain situations as well, which could have a similar outcome to those suffering from PTSD, it would negatively impact their lives for as long as people were discriminatory.

Effects on the Environment:

In addition to affecting people's emotional health, terrorism also affects the health of the environment. Terrorism can not only destroy land if, for example, a bomb is dropped, but it can also cause pollution. If buildings are knocked down, pollutants are released into the air causing both immediate and long term pollution. In other cases if a bomb is dropped, for example, it will create a large dust cloud that will suffocate any living thing because of the lack of oxygen. This could be people, but it could also include animals and plants - the environment.

Some things that are immediate effects of terrorism are that the surrounding areas go up in flames, cause air pollution and immediately affecting those around the area because they have to breathe in those toxins and that can create lung diseases.

Effects on Economy:

Like everything else, terrorism also has long and short term effects on the economy. From the immediate cost of an event to the overall impact the event has on that country's economy and the economy of those around them; what could be seen as one small act against one small place, could put a huge strain on the economy of the world.

The immediate effect could be drop in tourism. For some countries, especially some developing countries, tourism is there many way of supporting the economy. If this place gets attacked, they could suddenly have a drop in tourism because people would fear going there.

This could then lead to a long term effect because this country and the surrounding region (which might appear more unstable), lose a way to support themselves.

Another long term impact on the economy is that if, for example, a place that supports a great amount of the world's economy is destroyed, then the whole world could be affected. This would not only affect the countries around it, but also any country that has invested in this or has trade with the targeted country. Overall, no matter what kind of terrorist attack happens, it will affect all surrounding countries and others around the world.

One last effect that could be long term or short term is that when an act of terrorism occurs, it will most likely scare people. When citizens are scared, they become less likely to invest in the stock market and the economy and more likely to hold on to their money. This hesitance to spend and invest can hurt both the local and global economy.

International Action:

After the end of the Cold War, three major developments have shaped the world's approach to combating terrorism, Globalization, the Technology Revolution, and an increase in "ungoverned space." With Globalization comes the spread of traveling, communication, and the ability to exchange ideas, including ideas that might incite violence, on a scale that wasn't available before. New technological advances have caused people to have the ability to have massive destruction with just the touch of a button. Lastly, the increase in "ungoverned space" has caused terrorists to have the ability to plan, recruit, and train without objection from the government.

The United Nations published two resolutions against terrorism, the first being in 1997 and the second being in 1999. The one written in 1997 is in the committee International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings. It first defines terrorism, then says that State Parties are allowed to use any punishment they deem necessary under the United Nation's laws. It also says that State Parties may decide how they want to enforce laws against terrorism as long as these tactics are, again under the laws of the United Nations. Lastly it states that State Parties have an obligation to prosecute acts of terrorism and cooperate with the United Nations to fight terrorism.

The one written in 1999 is in the committee International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism. It says that State Parties can not fund terrorism in any way. Also that they have to cooperate to fight the funding of terrorism.

Questions/Points to Consider:

1. What effect will terror have on the world if it becomes more widespread?
2. What does it mean to be in a position in which people's lives are in danger?
3. How should we react if someone is held for ransom by a terrorist organization?
4. Should we consider an international quota?
5. If there suddenly was a major act of terrorism how would your country react?
6. Should there be better ways to prevent the spread of terrorism? If so, how?

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