

Letter from the Executive Board

Respected Delegates,

A very warm welcome to this session of the United Nations General Assembly being simulated at Shiv Nadar University.

The United Nations since its inception has played an instrumental role in maintaining International peace and security along with the additional tasks undertaken by it through various committees and its subsidiary bodies.

Model United Nations allows you to step into the shoes of ambassadors and diplomats of your respective nations and be the bearers of change.

It is with this faith in your capabilities as International diplomats that we provide you with a very basic guide outlining the highlights of your agenda for discussion at this session of the United Nations General Assembly DISEC.

Kindly note that this research study guide is just a basic framework to help you kick start your research and the information provided where in is not exhaustive.

Kindly do not use this as an excuse to skimp on other research matter that is relevant to your understanding of the issue at hand. If you have any further queries, feel free to contact the executive board.

Regards,

Drishtant Chakraborty

President - UNGA

Proof/Evidence accepted in Council

1. News Sources :-

a. REUTERS – Any Reuters article which clearly makes mention of the fact or is in contradiction of the fact being stated by an ambassador in council.

(<http://www.reuters.com/>)

b. State operated News Agencies – These reports can be used in the support of or against the State that owns the News Agency. These reports, if credible or substantial enough, can be used in support of or against any Country as such but in that situation, they can be denied by any other country in the council.

Some examples are, i. RIA Novin (Russia) <http://en.rian.ru/> ii. IRNA (Iran) <http://www.irna.ir/ENIndex.htm> iii. BBC (United Kingdom) <http://www.bbc.co.uk/> iv. Xinhua News Agency and CCTV (P.R. China) <http://cctvnews.cntv.cn/>

2. Government Reports :-

These reports can be used in a similar way as the State Operated News Agencies reports and can, in all circumstances, be denied by another country. However, the nuance is that the Executive Board can deem the information even if the report that is being denied by a certain country.

Examples are,

a. Government Websites like the State Department of the United States of America <http://www.state.gov/index.htm> or the Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation <http://www.eng.mil.ru/en/index.htm>

b. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of various nations like India(<http://www.mea.gov.in/>), People's Republic of China(<http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/>), France(<http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/>), Russian Federation(http://www.mid.ru/brp_4.nsf/main_eng)

c. Permanent Ambassadors to the United Nations Reports

<http://www.un.org/en/members/>(Click on any country to get the website of the Office of its Permanent Ambassador.

d. Multilateral Organizations like the NATO

(<http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/index.htm>), ASEAN

(<http://www.aseansec.org/>), OPEC (http://www.opec.org/opec_web/en/), etc.

3. UN Reports :-

All UN Reports are considered are credible information or evidence for the Executive Board of the Security Council.

a. UN Bodies: Like the SC(<http://www.un.org/Docs/sc/>),

GA(<http://www.un.org/en/ga/>),

HRC(<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/Pages/HRCIndex.aspx>) etc.

b. UN Affiliated bodies like the International Atomic Energy Agency

(<http://www.iaea.org/>), World Bank (<http://www.worldbank.org/>), International

Monetary Fund (<http://www.imf.org/external/index.htm>), International Committee

of the Red Cross (<http://www.icrc.org/eng/index.jsp>), etc.

c. Treaty Based Bodies like the Antarctic Treaty System

(<http://www.ats.aq/e/ats.htm>), the International Criminal Court

(<http://www.icc-cpi.int/Menu/ICC>)

Under no circumstances will sources like Wikipedia (<http://www.wikipedia.org/>),

Amnesty International (<http://www.amnesty.org/>), Human Rights Watch

(<http://www.hrw.org/>) or newspapers like the Guardian

(<http://www.guardian.co.uk/>), Times of India (<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/>),

etc. be accepted.

IMPORTANT LINKS

<http://www.irna.ir/ENIndex.htm> – Iran official news agency.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/>- UK national news agency.

<http://cctvnews.cntv.cn/> People's Republic of China national news agency.

<http://www.state.gov/index.htm> US Department of State.

<http://www.mea.gov.in/> Ministry of external Affairs India.

[http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/Ministry of foreign affairs of the People's Republic of China.](http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/Ministry%20of%20foreign%20affairs%20of%20the%20People's%20Republic%20of%20China)

[http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/Foreign Ministry France.](http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/Foreign%20Ministry%20France)

http://www.mid.ru/brp_4.nsf/main_eng- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs Russian Federation.

<http://www.un.org/en/members/> (Click on any country to get the website of the Office of its Permanent Ambassador.)

About the Committee

In the era after World War II, which led to the employment of new conventional weapons and weapons of mass destruction, the United Nations needed a committee that would be able to resolve many of the political tensions and security issues leftover from the war.

Previously, there were two separate committees; the Atomic Energy Commission, created in 1946 by the General Assembly in reaction to the destructive use of the two atomic bombs on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and the Commission for Conventional Armaments, established in 1947 by the Security Council to resolve issues regarding the use of conventional weapons.

These two committees did not work due to a number of reasons featuring conflicts of interests between nations like the United States of America, People's Republic of China (after 1949) and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR).

Therefore, the General Assembly created a Disarmament Commission in 1952 to resolve all issues. Before 1970, the committee was focused on political issues and was called the Political and Security Committee (POLISEC).

Later, the DISEC began focusing on the reduction and eradication of conventional, nuclear, chemical and biological weapons that threatened and continue to threaten international security and peace. More recently, DISEC has also begun to focus on

issues in outer space, threats of unfriendly entities' potential access to weapons of mass destruction and the use of technology to breach security.

DISEC is open for all 193 members of the United Nations to attend. The committee can discuss issues raised by a member of the United Nations, the Security Council or a state that is not a member of the UN, as detailed in Article 35 of the Charter of the United Nations. While DISEC cannot make any recommendations to the Security Council unless requested, it can raise awareness of international security issues to the Security Council. It is important to note that DISEC cannot adopt resolutions that implement change, but can only debate and issue resolutions that recommend actions on specific topics to the Security Council.

Introduction

Terrorism continues to pose a major threat to international peace and security and undermines the core values of the United Nations. In addition to the devastating human cost of terrorism, in terms of lives lost or permanently altered, terrorist acts aim to destabilize governments and undermine economic and social development. .

“The purpose of terrorism is to terrorize. And terror is, above all, a response on the part of people. This definitional truth, however, is only partial. The effects of terrorist activities, like the individual and collective motives for such activities, can be multiple: political, economic, military and symbolic” . . Terrorism is now universally recognized as a threat to international peace and security, and its evolution in the past 20 years has contributed to raise concern about its capability to gain access to weapons and to control territories. In 2014, speaking at the UN General Assembly, the Secretary General Ban Ki-moon stated that “the world is witnessing a dramatic evolution in the nature of the terrorist threat”, referring to extremist groups and widespread attacks on civilians all over the world and to the UN itself in Iraq, Nigeria, etc. Of particular concern is the link between organized crime and terrorism, since the latter profits from antiquities trafficking, weapons, drug smuggling but also from kidnapping – criminal activities having a disastrous

impact on local societies and economics. Addressing this threat is that much more difficult given the complex and constantly evolving nature of terrorist activity. Its motivations, financing, methods of attack and choice of target are constantly changing.

The definition of terrorism

However, despite the awareness of the threat posed by terrorism, the international community still fails to agree on a definition of “terrorism” and it has serious implications when it comes to address this problem at global level.

According to the international law, talking about the fight against terror there are at least two vital principles to be considered:

- The protection of a society and its members from terrorist attacks, including the prevention of terrorism and decreasing terrorist behavior
- Respecting and providing human rights and rules of law.

In light of these principles, a legal definition of terrorism is more than important. Which conducts and activities should be considered as terrorism? What a terrorist act is? Terrorism has often been defined as the illegal use of force against innocent people for the achievement of political ends (W. Laqueur), or as a form of criminal violence aiming to change citizens’ behavior by means of fear and to cause political disorders. The problem seems to be “how to formulate the term without criminalizing all armed resistance to oppressive regimes how to distinguish legitimate armed struggle from terrorism and how much emphasis to place on identifying root causes of grievances that lead individuals and groups to adopt terrorist methods”. In 2004, the Security Council, in its resolution 1566 (2004), identified elements of a definition, referring to “criminal acts, including against civilians, committed with the intent to cause death or serious bodily injury, or taking of hostages, with the purpose to provoke a state of terror in the general public or in a group of persons or particular persons, intimidate a population or

compel a government or an international organization to do or abstain from doing any act”

Terrorism and the international law

Currently, Member States are negotiating a draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism. The convention would complement the existing framework of universal instruments against terrorism and would build on key guiding principles already present in that regime. Those principles include the following: the importance of the criminalization of terrorist offences, making them punishable by law and calling for the prosecution or extradition of the perpetrators; a strong call for Member States to take action to prevent terrorist acts; and an emphasis on the need for Member States to cooperate, exchange information and provide each other with the greatest measure of assistance in the prevention, investigation and prosecution of terrorist acts.

Despite being regarded by the Security Council as a threat to international peace and security, for the most part acts of international terrorism do not fall into the category of “core international” crimes such as genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity. There are therefore no international criminal courts or tribunals with jurisdiction over these crimes. Terrorist crimes (as defined in the universal instruments against terrorism) fall in the category of national criminal law of international concern. The duty to bring perpetrators of terrorism to justice therefore rests solely with national criminal justice systems. Without adequate domestic capacity to discharge that duty, international counterterrorism efforts will almost certainly fail. Terror can be countered when people assume the proper mindset and then take basic security measures and practice relaxed awareness. “These elements work together to dispel paranoia and to prevent the fear of terrorism from robbing people of the joy of life”. Before any measures can be taken, one must first recognize that threats exist. Ignorance or denial of a threat and paying no attention to one's surroundings make a person's chances of quickly recognizing a threat and then reacting in time to avoid it quite remote. Apathy,

denial and complacency, therefore, can be, and often are, deadly. A second important element is recognizing the need to take responsibility for one's own security. The resources of any government are finite and the authorities simply cannot be everywhere and stop every terrorist act. "Terrorist attacks do not magically materialize. They are part of a deliberate process consisting of several distinct steps. And there are many points in that process where the plotters are vulnerable to detection".

The role of the United Nations in fighting terrorism

In 1996, the General Assembly drafted the Comprehensive International Convention on Terrorism, but once again differences in the definition of the term terrorism have hampered the ratification process. In 2004, the High Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, called by the Secretary General, proposed a definition and called the General Assembly to conclude the Convention. Despite progresses, in particular with reference to the 2005 World Summit, where terrorism was condemned in all its forms and manifestations, committed by whomever, wherever and for whatever purposes as it constitutes one of the most serious threats to international peace and security, the Convention was not concluded. Nevertheless, in 2006, the General Assembly adopted the UN Global Counterterrorism Strategy (A/RES/60/288), trying to provide a global framework for addressing the issue of terrorism.

Eighteen universal instruments (fourteen instruments and four amendments) against international terrorism have been elaborated within the framework of the United Nations system relating to specific terrorist activities. Member States, through the General Assembly, have been increasingly coordinating their counter-terrorism efforts and continuing their legal norm-setting work. The Security Council has also been active in countering terrorism through resolutions and by establishing several subsidiary bodies. At the same time a number of programs, offices and agencies of the United Nations system have been engaged in specific activities against terrorism, further assisting Member States in their

counter-terrorism efforts. To consolidate and enhance these activities, Member States in September 2006 embarked upon a new phase in their counter-terrorism efforts by agreeing on a global strategy to counter terrorism. The Strategy marks the first time that all Member States of the United Nations have agreed to a common strategic and operational framework to fight terrorism. The Strategy forms a basis for a concrete plan of action: to address the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism; to prevent and combat terrorism; to take measures to build state capacity to fight terrorism; to strengthen the role of the United Nations in combating terrorism; and to ensure the respect of human rights while countering terrorism. The Strategy builds on the unique consensus achieved by world leaders at their 2005 September Summit to condemn terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

The current situation

At present, over 100 countries are cooperating in the global war on terrorism, and are trying to close down sources of terrorist funding. To replace this revenue and the financial support from states that are now unable or unwilling to back them, terrorist groups look elsewhere for financing. This crackdown on terrorist financing has led some terrorists to transform their organizations by creating “in-house” criminal capabilities in order to generate revenue; these units then engage organized crime groups to meet financial and operational needs.

In addition to global political pressures and realities, there are numerous other reasons and opportunities that lead terrorist groups to embrace organized criminal activity as a source of revenue, or to seek alliances with organized crime groups. The expanding forces of globalization are enabling transformation and convergence through rapid communication, travel, surveillance, and information access. The growth of weak or failing states exacerbates this tendency. The absence of the rule of law in places such as Somalia and Afghanistan provides ideal conditions for the blending of criminal and terrorist activities. Economic hardship in many of these nations leads to corruption and trafficking of illicit

goods, and there is little incentive to fight organized crime. Terrorist groups who otherwise might rely on charitable contributions or even “legitimate” businesses have little or no access to either in a failed state, leaving trafficking and other forms of crime as the obvious and easier alternatives. An organic criminal capability becomes paramount and the sole method by which to sustain the organization.

The nexus between terrorism and organized crime is further enabled through the widespread availability of small and light arms that can be both trafficked for money or used in operations. After the Berlin Wall fell in 1989, the Warsaw Pact nations found themselves flush with weapons, a great many of which found their way to the illegal arms market. Conflicts in the former Yugoslavia, West Africa, East Timor, and Central, South, and Southwest Asia have only invigorated this arms trade. Porous international borders and corrupt or ill-trained law enforcement in a multitude of countries have also played a role in enabling the arms trade, to the benefit of terrorist and organized crime groups. Maritime piracy represents an area where the mixing of militant Islamic terrorism and crime can converge with potentially severe consequences for global military and economic security. Given heavy concentrations of al Qaeda cells and radical Islamic sympathizers, shipping lanes and preexisting criminality, it comes as no surprise that Indonesia, Bangladesh, Malaysia, India and Nigeria experience most of the world’s maritime piracy attacks. Particularly alarming is the fact that criminals and terrorists not only steal lucrative cargoes, but also have the resources to commandeer lethal cargoes such as chemicals, gas or arms. The narcotics industry remains the most common and lucrative source of revenue to terrorists groups, leading many to legitimize this criminal activity by emphasizing the financial needs of the organization and the role of narcotics in undermining Western society. As an example, the dramatic spike in opium cultivation in Afghanistan over the past few years provides yet more evidence of the terrorism narcotics nexus. The United Nations’ International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) and International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) said that after zero opium production in the last year of Taliban rule in 2001, Afghanistan met about 76 per cent of the global demand of heroin and opium

by harvesting poppy on 225,000 acres that yielded a record produce of 3,500 metric tons of opium. In 2003, the harvest is expected to yield 5,000 tons of opium.

Terrorism in the middle east and north african region

The crisis developments in Iraq, Yemen, Libya and Syria are destabilizing countries in the Middle East. The growing turbulence and unpredictability threaten the very model of the nation state, which is struggling to react to the challenges posed by non-state actors in international relations – primarily by extremist groups. The inability of the state to counter the terrorist threat leads to an increase in the activities of radical elements, whose actions take on a regional character, aggravating long-standing problems, including the Arab–Israeli confrontation.

The region has historically had a lot of instability since the time of the Israel-Palestine conflict and then with certain other situations like the Iran-Iraq war, Saudi-Iran proxy war, the Arab spring etc. Another important aspect about this region is that it is strategically and economically of great significance to a lot of countries, which causes the interests of various countries to stand against each other and hence unduly prolonging conflicts due to the start of proxy wars.

Owing to the long term instability in the region, the region now constitutes the highest concentration of different terrorist groups, which have been growing in their reach and has required coordinated action on behalf of the international community to solve. In the status quo, there are organisations like the ISIS operating out of countries such as Syria and Iraq. Various factions of the ISIS have emerged in certain other countries as well, such as the existence of Boko Haram in Nigeria and also operating in the countries which are referred to as the horn of Africa.

There are certain groups who have well established linkages to state Government's such as Hezbollah, which operates majorly out of Lebanon. All these terrorist groups operating in this region have well established modes of sourcing weapons,

finances and means of spreading their propaganda which is what allows them to continue functioning in the way that they do.

As members of the UN our task at hand should be understanding these sources and then creating effective strategies to counter them.

Questions to consider :-

- 1) Should there be a universally accepted definition of terrorism, if yes what are the key aspects which this definition should cover?
- 2) What were the root causes for the uprising of terrorist organisations in the MENA region, and do they still continue to exist in the status quo?
- 3) What kind of an approach should be adopted by the UN to deal with this situation in the MENA region? A more hands on approach like being actively involved in the situation with various active missions, or a passive approach in the form of making recommendations to nation states?