

Forum: Advisory Panel on International Security in Asia

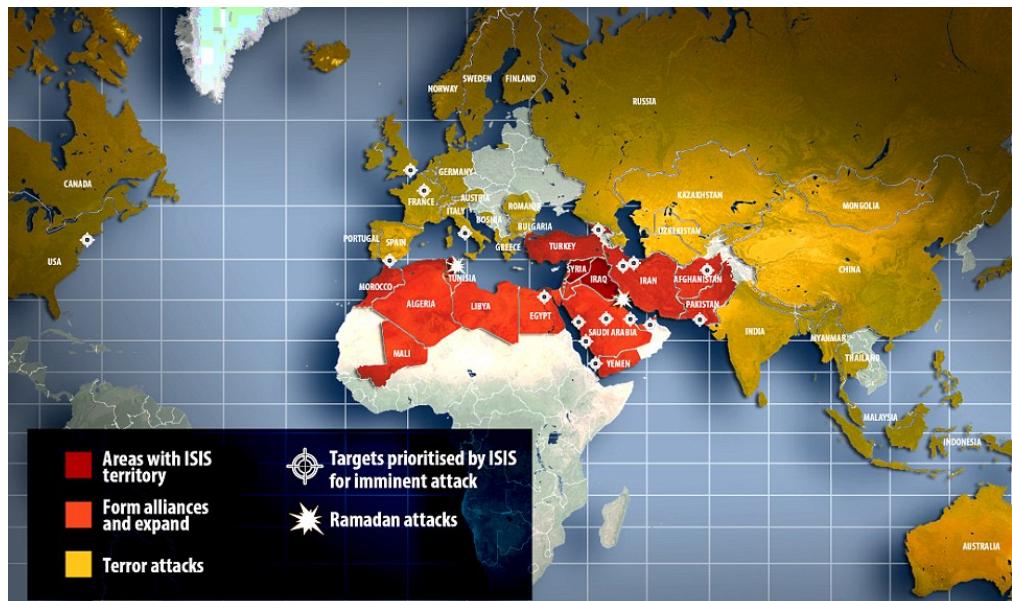
Issue: Combatting International Terrorism

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Introduction

The United Nations defines terrorism as “Criminal acts intended or calculated to provoke a state of terror in the general public, a group of persons or particular persons for political purposes are in any circumstance unjustifiable, whatever the considerations of a political, philosophical, ideological, racial, ethnic, religious or any other nature



Map of West Asia and Areas with Terrorism

that may be invoked to justify them.” Recent tragic terrorist acts have brought the topic of terrorism back into household conversations, and amidst the atmospheric fear there is hope, and there is a fighting spirit within the international community. The discussion of international terrorism within the United Nations has always been open however the direction the UN should take must alter its course. Short term solutions such as sanction and travel bans have been pursued in the past, but it is now up to the UN to provide long term solutions to eliminate the threats to international peace and security that are imposed by terrorism.

Definition of Key Terms

Terrorism

Unauthorized actions and activates involving violence posing danger to human life and are in violation of criminal laws in any state in the pursuit of political, religious or ideological aims which is typically done through intimidation, coercion and instilling fear in a civilian population.

Transnational crimes

Crimes referring, but not limited, to self-perpetuating associations of individuals who illegally operate transnationally to obtain power, influence, or monetary and commercial gains.

Global Terrorist Organizations

Global terrorist organization refers to the internationalization and systematization of terrorism and involving terrorist groups merging into a collaborative network to share information and collaboratively pursue political, religious or ideological aims through acts of terrorism as a military tactic.

Islamic State of Iraq and Levant (ISIL)

The Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) commonly known as the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) is currently the most threatening extremist jihadist group in the world with a military force estimated from tens of thousands to over two hundred thousand. It follows extreme interpretation of Islam its main aim is to overthrow existing governments to establish an Islamic regime. This group has been designated a terrorist organization by the United Nations and many countries

Al-Qaeda

Al-Qaeda translating into ‘The Foundation’ is a militant Sunni Islamist multi-national organization founded by Osama bin Laden and Abdullah Azzam in 1988. It was the first generation of global international network and where ISIL originated. Its aim is also to root out western influence and implement extreme Islam.

Jihadist

Jihadists refer to peoples that believe in extreme Islamic ideology and wishes for Islamic states to govern through acts of terrorism and violence to achieve such a state.

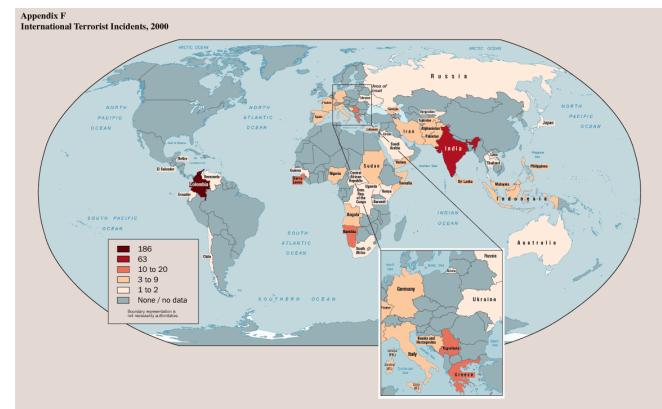
General Overview

History

Sub-sub heading International terrorism

In early 1968 the hijacking of an El Al airline international flight signaled the beginning of the modern terrorist era. This hijacking incident is known as the first type of international terrorism highlighting the major techniques of terrorism going forward: skyjacking and hostage taking. Since 1968, international terrorism has been on the rise and techniques and advanced resourced and personnel has evolved international

terrorism to a stage of potential mass destruction. The most tragic example being the attack on September 11, 2001 in the United States and the recent attacks in Madrid, London, Bali, Amsterdam and Paris. The international community has already adopted 13 conventions as means to prevent terrorism and stop terrorist funding and the United Nations' Security Council has also adopted Resolution 1373 calling for all states to criminalize assistance for terrorist groups and activities, deny financial support and safe haven to terrorist and to share intelligence on terrorist network and activities in the global community. The global community has been extremely supportive of anti-terrorism actions and there has been significant progress made in the past decade but there is much more that needs to be done. With the advancement of international terrorism networks and the viral spread of extremist ideology in the world through social media. Terrorism is a critical issue in the twenty-first century as a threat to civilization as we know it and it has become global responsibility of nations to eliminate international terrorism.



Map of International Terrorist Incidents 2001

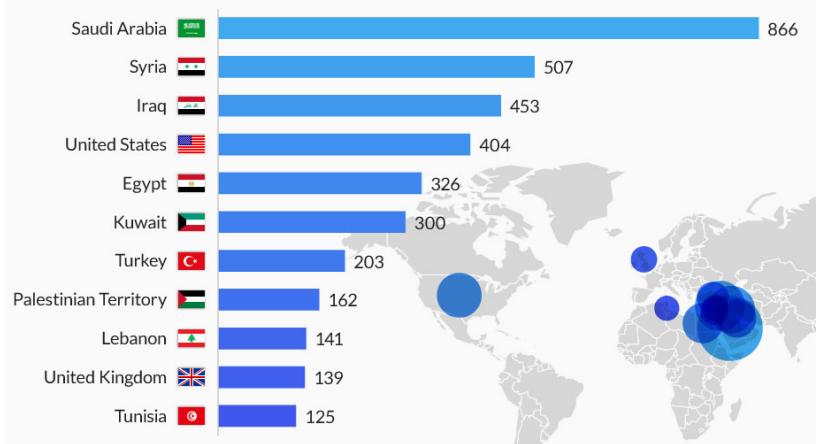
Problems Raised

Exploitation of Social Media

As technological advancement furthers civilization, terrorist groups have been able to exploit it to expand their reach. The most notable example being ISIL spreading propaganda and advertising their political and religious aim to young foreign adults online and teaching methods of terrorism and funding terrorist activities to new recruits online. This has allowed ISIL to substantially increase their number of young fighters and supporters not just domestically but internationally. Furthermore, ISIL has also managed used social media as a platform to carry out acts of terrorism. The frequent and public caging, torturing and beheading videos released by the terrorist group has insinuated fear and terror in civilian population through intimidation.

Where are ISIS supporters tweeting from?

Top locations claimed by Twitter users supporting ISIS in 2015 *



Statistics on ISIL social media usage

Humanitarian Issues

The atrocious acts of terrorist groups do not only occur in western developed countries. The areas under terrorist controls are usually those who suffer the most. On 30 August 2016, Associated Press discovered 72 mass graves in areas liberated from ISIL control with an estimation of 15,000 bodies. These graves are evidence of the genocides committed by ISIL most notably the genocide of Yazidis. In towns such as Tal Abyad in Syria which was recently released from ISIL control it would be found that the people under ISIL dominance lived in devastating conditions and there were many identified acts of resident caging, beheadings, shooting and public lashings. The United Nations currently hold ISIL responsible for human rights abuses and war crimes, and Amnesty International has charged ISIL with ethnic cleansing on a 'historic scale' in northern Iraq.

UN Involvement, Relevant Resolutions, Treaties and Events

International Actions

There are many examples of real action that has been taken by the international community to effectively combat international terrorism. The most notable example being the killing of the founder and head of the Islamist group Al-Qaeda Osama Bin Laden which was code-named Operation Neptune Spear which was a CIA-led operation which went on for 10-years. This was supported by the United Nations, NATO, the European Union and the majority of the international community.



Operation Neptune Spear

Conventions and Resolutions

The United Nations has passed multiple resolutions on combatting international terrorism and condemning the terrorist activities and financial support for terrorist groups. The United Nations has also assisted member states by ratifying and implementing conventions on countering the threat of nuclear terrorism and strengthening nuclear security. The international community has also signed many conventions on the topic of eliminating international terrorism. The following resolutions and conventions are notable examples.

- S/RES/2368 (2017) Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts
- S/RES/2347 (2017) Maintenance of international peace and security
- S/RES/1504 (2004) Combatting the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their methods of transfer
- S/RES/1373 (2001) Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts (In response to 9/11)

- Convention on Offences and Certain Other Acts Committed ON Board Aircraft (1963)
- International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism (1999)
- International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism (2005)

Key Players

Islamic State of Iraq and Levant (ISIL)

Since the decline of Al-Qaeda and ISIL's detachment from the international terrorist group, ISIL has reached a notoriety on the universal scale. The organization resides in 13 countries and has recruited over 6,000 in 2015 July alone including 1,000 foreign fighters. Their main medium of communication, recruit and spreading of ideology is through social media internationally. In recent events, ISIL has proved to be able to recruit members originating and residing in the Western region. They have been able spread the fact that their recruitment is not limited in nationality and stimulate those who used to be hesitant to join. The current infamy being 'jihadi John', Western Muslims being raised through videos of hostage beheading.

United States of America

Research concludes over 90% of civilians in the United States are in favor of having the United Nations play a greater role in the fight against terrorism and support the United Nations Security Council having the right to authorize military force to stop a country from supporting terrorist groups. The United States of America, being the victim of the largest terrorist attack in history (9/11), has played one of the largest roles in the global community in combatting international terrorism including their controversial use of drone attack on ISIL and various international terrorist groups and the most memorable being the killing of Osama bin Laden which weakened Al-Qaeda and the group has not recovered from its loss till this day. The United States has worked closely with member states to provide the legal framework of eliminating international terrorism and domestically their stance towards international terrorism has been unwavering for the past decade. Notable methods of preventing terrorism domestically include the no-fly list and a controversial use of enhanced interrogation in the early 2000s.

Timeline of Events

<i>Date</i>	<i>Event</i>
25 July 1995	A gas and nail bombing at the Saint-Michel subway station in Paris killed eight people and injured more than 150. The attack was financed and coordinated by the Armed Islamic Group targeting France for its support of the regime in Algiers.
1988	Al-Qaeda is founded by Osama bin Laden

- 11 September 2001** Al-Qaeda terrorists hijacked four passenger planes on the east coast of the US and flew two into the World Trade Center in Manhattan and another hit the Pentagon in Virginia killing 3,000 people.
- 11 March 2004** Bombs exploded on commuter trains in Madrid killing 192 and wounding 1,800 in a coordinated attack linked with Al-Qaeda with 21 people convicted of involvement.
- 7 July 2005** Four suicide bombers attacked trains and buses in London killing 52 and injuring hundreds. Al-Qaeda sympathizers were identified as bombers.
- 8 September 2006** Resolution Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy adopted by the UN. Noting the first time all member states agreed upon a strategic approach towards the war against terrorism.
- 2 May 2011** Founder and head of Al-Qaeda, Osama bin Laden, is killed in Pakistan by the United States of America
- 2014** ISIL drives Iraqi government forces out of key cities and captures Mosul and conducts the Sinjar massacre
- 14 November 2015** A wave of coordinated gun attacks and suicide bombings killed 127 and wounded hundreds across Paris. ISIL claims responsibility and the President Hollande declares a state of emergency across France.
- 3 June 2017** Seven are killed and dozens injured in terrorist attacks in London when a van drove into pedestrians on the London Bridge and attackers emerged and stabbed civilians in pubs and restaurants.



Photos of aftermaths of terrorist attacks in London, Paris and New York (respectively from left to right)

Possible Solutions

Legal Framework

Strengthening the role of international law and enhancing intelligence cooperation can help combat terrorism. Also, empowering the United Nations Security Council to require United Nations member states to allow UN-sponsored police forces to enter and conduct investigations in addition to freezing the assets of or arresting suspected terrorist groups. The United Nations Security Council

can also be empowered by being given the right to send an international military force to capture suspected terrorists if their host country refuses to take action. Such empowerment of the United Nation Security Council can help combat terrorism even in the circumstance of having corrupt and politically unstable governments.

Education

The deep-rooted political and religious ideology held by those in international terrorist groups are almost impossible to eradicate. The only solution to eliminate international terrorism once and for all is to ensure that the education system for child around the world provide insightful education on how to become global citizens and it is also important for children around the world, western and middle eastern countries alike, to understand the detrimental effects of terrorism and the inhumane violence it insinuates. Only through education can the deep-rooted differences driving and motivating international terrorist acts to be events of the past.

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