

Forum: General Assembly First Committee

Issue: The Question of Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism

Student Officer: Mr. Heikki Helppi

Position: Chair of the GA1 Committee

Introduction¹

As the FBI defines it, international terrorism is the “Violent, criminal acts committed by individuals and/or groups who are inspired by, or associated with, designated foreign terrorist organizations or nations (state-sponsored).”²

Terrorism is an issue that concerns nearly every nation in the world, and has done so for the past twenty years. In 2018, 71 countries recorded at least one death caused by terrorism³, with the most deaths caused by terrorism per country being recorded in Afghanistan: a staggering 7 379 deaths.⁴ The fight against international terrorism had begun much earlier, but rose into the limelight after the infamous attack on the United States in 2001, now known as the 9/11 attack, which has been the deadliest attack on American soil ever. The United States of America has been the main driver behind the war on terror for nearly two decades, because of the 9/11 attacks, which caused then president George W. Bush to declare a “War on Terror”⁵

It is important to note that terrorism is split into two different main categories - domestic terrorism and international terrorism. Domestic terrorism is most often caused by only very few actors, typically less than five people. For example school shootings are usually classified as domestic terrorism.⁶ International terrorism, on the other hand, is more organized and deadly, and as the name suggests, on a much larger scale. Most of the terrorist groups that have been fought against in the War on Terror are or were based in the Middle East. Main examples of the most well-known and the deadliest terrorist groups include Al-Qaeda, ISIS (Islamic State of Iraq and Syria) which is also known as ISIL (Islamic

¹ For definition of terms, please see pages 2-3

² <https://www.fbi.gov/investigate/terrorism> accessed 1.12.19

³ <http://visionofhumanity.org/app/uploads/2019/11/GTI-2019web.pdf> page 4, accessed 6.12.19

⁴ Ibid.,

⁵ <https://abcnews.go.com/International/war-afghanistan-started-18-years-ago-fight-terrorism/story?id=65981061> accessed 1.12.19

⁶ <https://eu.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2019/08/04/el-paso-dayton-shootings-domestic-terrorism-hate-crime/1915402001/> accessed 1.12.19

State of Iraq and the Levant), Da'esh, and al-Khawārij (the Outlaws)⁷, Boko Haram, and The Taliban (also known as the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan).

Definition of Key Terms

International Terrorism

As the FBI defines it, international terrorism is the “Violent, criminal acts committed by individuals and/or groups who are inspired by, or associated with, designated foreign terrorist organizations or nations (state-sponsored).”⁸

War on Terror (also known as War on Terrorism)

As the Encyclopedia Britannica defines it in their article on the matter, War on terror is a term used to describe the American-led global counterterrorism campaign launched in response to the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001.⁹

The Mena region

The Mena region (also known as the Greater Middle East) means the Middle East and North Africa.¹⁰ The term is used due to similarities between countries and situations in the region.

World Police or World’s Policeman

The term World Police refers to the foreign policy of powerful countries. It is defined as “A political system or government with a foreign policy that engages in interventionism, intrusiveness or imperialism”¹¹ The only nation constantly being referred to as a World Police is the United States of America, due to the amount of military bases abroad, as well as the amount of interference and overall activity the US has had in for example the Middle East and other regions.

Islamic Caliphate

The Islamic Caliphate was an ancient method of rule, or as the Ancient History Encyclopedia defines it, “Caliphate (“Khilafat” in Arabic) was a semi-religious political system of governance in Islam, in which the territories of the Islamic empire and the people within were ruled by a supreme leader called Caliph (“Khalifa” in Arabic – meaning successor). Caliphs were initially the sole sovereigns of the empire

⁷ <https://theconversation.com/explainer-isis-isil-islamic-state-or-daesh-40838> accessed 9.12.19

⁸ <https://www.fbi.gov/investigate/terrorism> accessed 2.12.19

⁹ <https://www.britannica.com/topic/war-on-terrorism> accessed 2.12.19

¹⁰ <http://istizada.com/mena-region/> accessed 6.12.19

¹¹ <https://www.yourdictionary.com/world-policeman> accessed 6.12.19

left behind by Prophet Muhammad and added vast territories of surrounding rival empires to it.”¹²

Establishing a new Islamic Caliphate is one of the main goals of the Al-Qaeda terrorist organization, as well as ISIS, however these two groups disagree on how and where such a Caliphate should be established.

Power vacuum

A situation where a ruler has been removed from power and no other powerfigure has taken its place. Whenever a power vacuum happens, a power struggle soon follows, sometimes with many casualties.

Sunni and Shi’a

As Azadeh Moaveni, former Middle East correspondent for Time Magazine puts it, “They go back to a schism that emerged in the earliest days of Islam in the 7th century and they represent two different factions that had disputing beliefs about who should lead the Muslim community after the death of Prophet Mohammed.”¹³ These two groups have been at odds with each other for a long time, often living peacefully with each other, but sometimes are at war. Most international terrorist groups from these two are Sunni Muslims.

Sharia law

Sharia law is a religious law of Islam. As Encyclopedia Britannica explains it, “In classical form, the Sharia differs from Western systems of law in two principal respects. In the first place, the scope of the Sharia is much wider, since it regulates the individual’s relationship not only with neighbours and with the state, which is the limit of most other legal systems, but also with God and with the individual’s own conscience. Ritual practices—such as the daily prayers, almsgiving, fasting, and pilgrimage—are an integral part of Sharia law and usually occupy the first chapters in legal manuals. The Sharia is concerned as much with ethical standards as with legal rules, indicating not only what an individual is entitled or bound to do by law but also what one ought, in conscience, to do or to refrain from doing.”¹⁴

Arab spring

As History.com defines it, “The Arab Spring was a series of pro-democracy uprisings that enveloped several largely Muslim countries.” These uprisings resulted in many nations in the Mena-region changing the regime of the nation where it happened. Not all the uprisings were successful, however, and the following time since the Arab spring has been more unstable and oppression has run

¹² https://www.ancient.eu/Islamic_Caliphates/ accessed 7.12.19

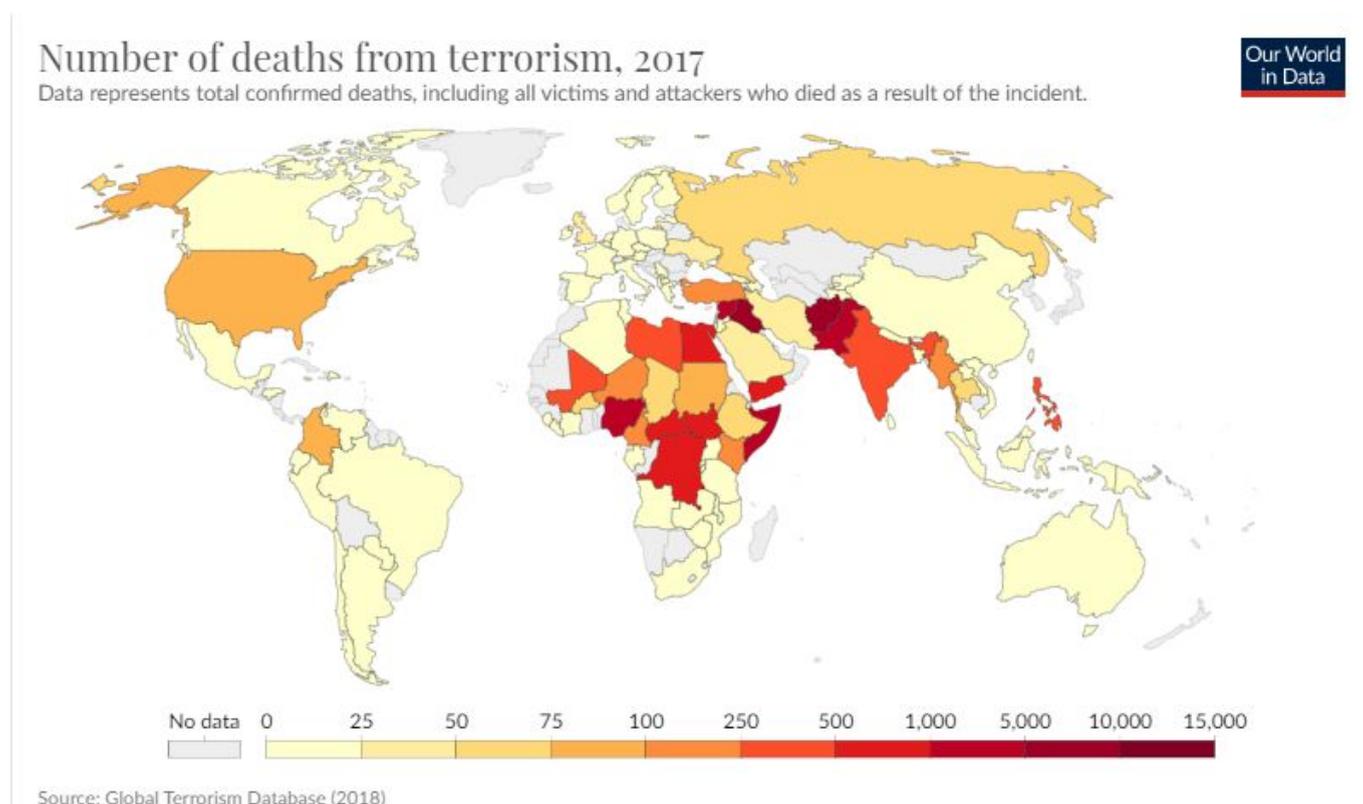
¹³ <https://www.pri.org/stories/2014-06-19/what-does-it-mean-when-someone-says-theyre-shia-or-sunni> accessed 11.12.19

¹⁴ <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Shariah> accessed 11.12.19

wild in some countries. This time also allowed for some terrorist groups to take hold and grow, feeding on the unrest in the area.¹⁵

Explanation of the Question

Terrorism is a topic that everyone has heard about, as it is about as global a phenomenon as one can be. Terrorism is a topic that can almost always be seen in the papers and television, often be heard on the radio, and even sometimes be experienced if one is unlucky enough. There are few countries in the world that have not seen the effects of terrorism first hand, but even then those nations have most likely aided or interacted with a nation that has. Even the areas that were thought to be safe a decade ago have now been proven to also be vulnerable to this penetrating evil that the world has been faced with. Even Nordic countries often thought of as the gold standard for almost anything, like Finland, have experienced terrorism in the past decade.¹⁶ It is truly a difficult and complex topic, which cannot be tackled by any country alone, even though a few have tried. Terrorism affects the Middle-East and Africa the most, as can be seen from the following map.



¹⁷ **Picture: Number of death from terrorism by country, 2017, world map. Source: The Global Terrorism Database (2018)**

¹⁵ <https://www.history.com/topics/middle-east/arab-spring> accessed 12.12.19

¹⁶ <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-40985528> accessed 12.12.19

¹⁷ <https://ourworldindata.org/terrorism> accessed 6.12.19

As is mentioned in the UN (United Nations) charter from 1945 in chapter 1 article 1, one of the purposes of the UN is to

“maintain international peace and security, and to that end: to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace, and for the suppression of acts of aggression or other breaches of the peace, and to bring about by peaceful means, and in conformity with the principles of justice and international law, adjustment or settlement of international disputes or situations which might lead to a breach of the peace.”¹⁸

This text is one of many reasons that makes this issue one for the United Nations to deal with. It's impossible to argue that terrorism wouldn't be a threat to peace or resulting in acts of aggression. This has been followed quite closely by the UN. The UN has acted on this matter more than most other organizations, and has, for example, set up their own Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOTC) in 2017.¹⁹ The UNOTC is meant to make sure that all things that have to do with counter-terrorism and the UN run smoothly, efficiently, and that all actions are rooted in strategy and are based in the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. The strategy is based on four pillars, which are addressing the conditions which make spreading terrorism easier, preventing and combating terrorism, building Member States capacity and strengthening the role of the UN, and ensuring Human rights and the rule of law.

The first and most impactful and well known terrorist attack in the 21st century was the September 11th attacks in 2001, also known as 9/11 or the WTC attacks. These attacks effectively changed the world quite significantly, as they prompted different mechanisms to be put into place, the US to attack nations in the Middle-East, the Arab spring, and many more globally affecting matters, the ramifications of which can still be felt today. Perhaps the most important thing this attack caused, however, was the revitalization of the US' status as the World Police. Seeing as the attack was targeted at the US, it caused it to take terrorism much more seriously than before, since before 9/11 terrorism was mostly contained to the Mena-region. Following the attack, however, it became a matter which made the Western powers worried due to its unpredictable nature and the destructive power it had already showed by killing thousands in the name of an ideology.

Most of the terrorist organizations that made themselves known in the 2010s have been already combated in one way or another, and for example ISIS has lost nearly all of their previously held physical area in the Mena-region. Unfortunately, however, there have been many worrying reports recently of these well-known terrorist organizations gathering troops and rebuilding. One significant event which has allowed for much progress to be lost, was the United States' decision to start pulling troops from Syria, which has left many vital prisons, where ISIS soldiers for example have been held, unguarded.^{20, 21, 22}

¹⁸ <https://www.un.org/en/sections/un-charter/un-charter-full-text/> accessed 12.12.19

¹⁹ <https://www.un.org/en/counterterrorism/> accessed 12.12.19

²⁰ <https://eu.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/2019/11/19/isis-terror-group-rebuilds-after-trump-pulls-us-troops-out-syria/4237528002/> accessed 12.12.19

The US were also allied with Kurdish forces in the area, which have helped in the fight against terrorism, as well as the capturing and securing many terrorist fighters. With the US leaving, however, Turkey decided to attack Kurdish troops in Northern Syria to create a “safe zone” to relocate millions of Syrian refugees back to Syria, which have been living in Turkey for years.^{23, 24} This has caused the prisons to become unguarded and allowed many fighters to escape, which leads many experts to fear a rebuilding of ISIS.

Key Member States and NGOs Involved and Their Views

Al-Qaeda

As Britannica.com states, Al-Qaeda is a “broad-based militant Islamist organization founded by Osama bin Laden in the late 1980s”²⁵, in essence a terrorist group. This isn’t just any terrorist group, however, but in fact one of the deadliest and most well known groups in the world, as the group has killed thousands over the years and over multiple attacks around the world.²⁶ Al-Qaeda is most known for organizing the September 11th attacks²⁷. While they were severely harmed when a US task force managed to kill Osama bin Laden in 2011²⁸, the group has been quietly rebuilding and gathering allies in the Mena region, and South Asia and its branches have organized and followed through on many attacks even in 2019.²⁹

Al-Qaeda’s ideology and aim is centered around getting rid of Western influence and interference in the Muslim world, and to destroy Israel. They also wish to create an Islamic caliphate spanning from Spain to Indonesia, which would impose the Sunni interpretation of Sharia law.³⁰ In 1996, Osama bin Laden declared a holy war, or Jihad, against the United States of America and its allies due to the amount of activity by the US in the Middle East.³¹

²¹ <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/13/us/politics/isis-prisoners-kurds.html> accessed 12.12.19

²² <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2019/10/12/inside-isis-prisons-controlled-by-syrian-kurds/> accessed 12.12.19

²³ https://www.washingtonpost.com/national-security/un-security-council-fails-to-condemn-turkeys-military-action-in-syria/2019/10/10/9bff99d0-eb87-11e9-9306-47cb0324fd44_story.html accessed 12.12.19

²⁴ <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2019/10/11/who-are-kurds-why-is-turkey-attacking-them/> accessed 12.12.19

²⁵ <https://www.britannica.com/topic/al-Qaeda> accessed 7.12.19

²⁶ <https://www.history.com/topics/21st-century/al-qaeda> accessed 7.12.19

²⁷ <https://www.britannica.com/event/September-11-attacks> accessed 7.12.19

²⁸ <http://edition.cnn.com/2011/WORLD/asiapcf/05/02/bin.laden.raid/index.html> accessed 7.12.19

²⁹ <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-48056433> accessed 7.12.19

³⁰ https://cisac.fsi.stanford.edu/mappingmilitants/profiles/al-qaeda#highlight_text_13282 accessed 7.12.19

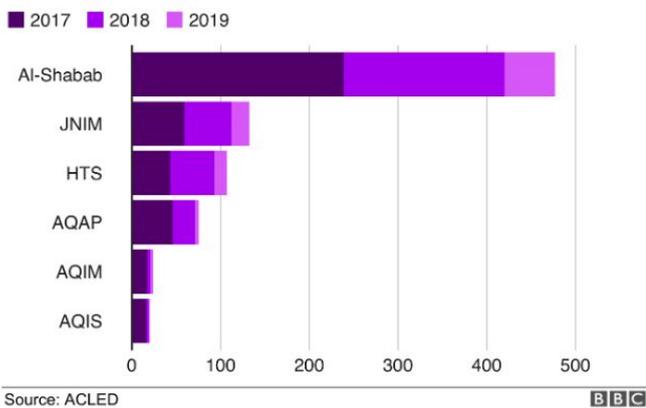
³¹ <https://www.counterextremism.com/threat/al-qaeda> accessed 7.12.19

Something very important to understand about terrorist groups is how they get funding. As the Council of Foreign Affairs Task Force reported, charities were a major part of the funding of Al-Qaeda.³² Reportedly Al-Qaeda also received profit from the Afghan poppy trade before leaving the country.³³ There has also been evidence of significant financial links between the Saudi royal family and Al-Qaeda.

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Number of attacks by al-Qaeda affiliates

January 2017 to April 2019



Picture: Number of attacks by Al-Qaeda affiliates³⁵

Al-Qaeda branches

- **Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM)** formed in 2006 when an Algeria-based group affiliated with al-Qaeda, and then moved into the Sahel and West Africa.
- **Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP)** was formed in 2009 in a merger of two offshoots of the international Islamic militant network in Yemen and Saudi Arabia.
- **Al-Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent (AQIS)** operates in Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, Myanmar and Bangladesh, and was established in September 2014.
- **Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin (JNIM)** is an al-Qaeda-affiliated organisation formed by the merger of several militant groups in Mali and West Africa.
- **Al-Shabab** is active in Somalia and East Africa and swore allegiance to al-Qaeda in 2012.
- **Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS)** is a merger of several Syrian militant groups which controls Idlib province in northern Syria. It insists it is independent, but the UN and the US both regard it as associated with al-Qaeda.
- **Al-Qaeda in Egypt** consists of al-Qaeda-aligned groups operating in Egypt's Sinai Peninsula, and embedded in local communities.

Picture: Some of the Al-Qaeda branches listed³⁶

ISIS/ISIL (Islamic State of Iraq and Syria / Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant)

ISIS started off from a branch of Al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI), was started in 2004 and is one of the most well known terrorist groups out there today. It gained attention quite quickly, as it was a “major player” in the fight against the US-forces that toppled the government of Saddam Hussein in Iraq in 2003. In 2011, the removal of US troops from Iraq and the Syrian civil war left a power vacuum which ISIS then filled. The group then seized territories from Iraq and Syria, posing a major threat in the area. One of the major goals of ISIS is to create an Islamic Caliphate across Iraq, Syria and elsewhere.

ISIS has always been very tech-savvy, often posting propaganda and recruitment videos online, as well as public executions. They have also attempted to recruit new fighters from all over the world via

³² <https://www.cfr.org/background/tracking-down-terrorist-financing> accessed 9.12.19

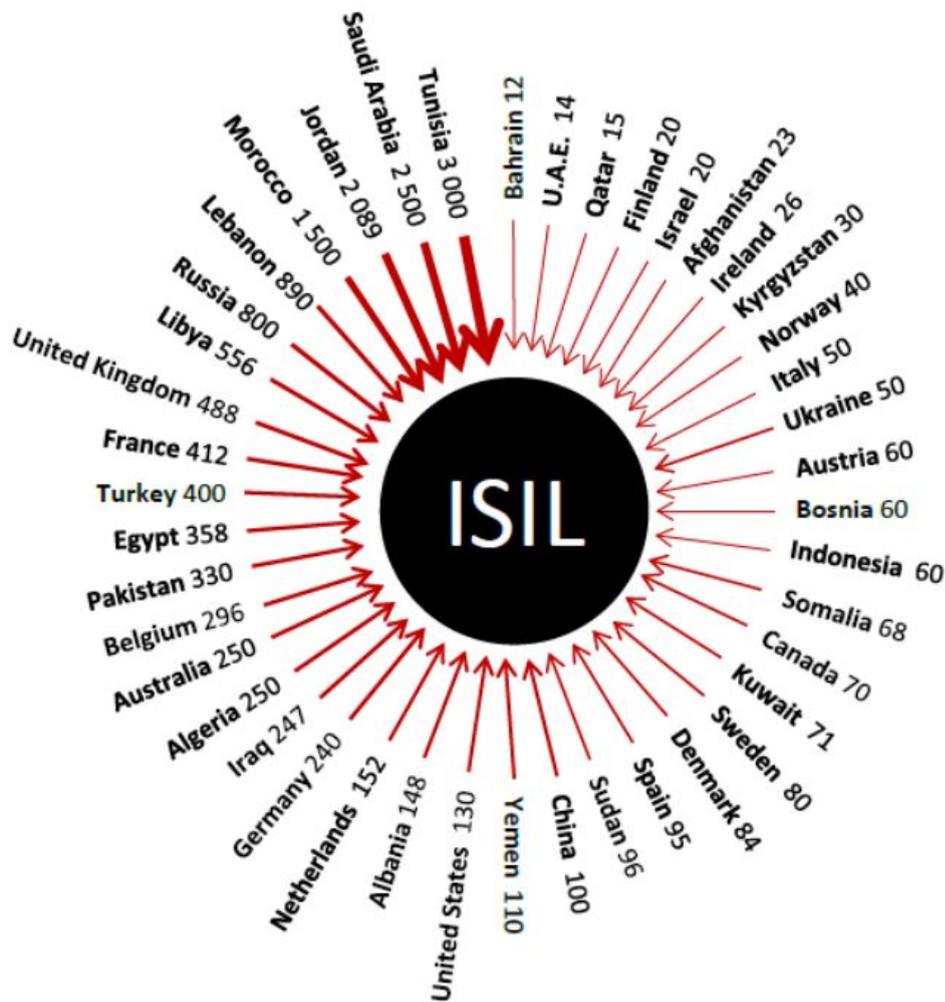
³³ Ibid.,

³⁴ <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/projects/documents/evidence-of-financial-links-between-saudi-royal-family-and-al-qaeda> accessed 9.12.19

³⁵ <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-48056433> accessed 7.12.19

³⁶ Ibid.,

the internet. For example young women have been lured to fly to the Mena-region with many promises for the future if they marry the ISIS fighters they have been messaging.³⁷



Picture³⁸: Where most foreign terrorist fighters have joined ISIS from

The ISIS organisation was at its most powerful around 2014 in terms of area owned as well as manpower achieved. In 2014 ISIS had around 34 000 square miles (around 88 000 square kilometers) across Syria and Iraq, when now its area in Syria has been nearly eliminated after their de facto capital Raqqa City was lost to United States -backed SDF (Syrian Democratic Forces) and the overall area of ISIS has also been reduced significantly, with the United States saying in 2016 that over 40% of the land had been taken back from ISIS.^{39, 40, 41}

³⁷ <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/jun/24/isis-brides-secret-world-jihad-western-women-syria> accessed 9.12.19

³⁸ <https://www.fatf-gafi.org/media/fatf/documents/reports/Financing-of-the-terrorist-organisation-ISIL.pdf> accessed 9.12.19

³⁹ https://cisac.fsi.stanford.edu/mappingmilitants/profiles/islamic-state#text_block_18356 accessed 7.12.19

⁴⁰ <https://edition.cnn.com/2014/08/08/world/isis-fast-facts/index.html> accessed 7.12.19

⁴¹ https://www.cartercenter.org/resources/pdfs/peace/conflict_resolution/syria-conflict/isis-review-2016-2019.pdf accessed 9.12.19

ISIS has, as an organization, committed horrific acts. Some of these acts are committed because of propaganda, to show the world or to prove to others that ISIS needs to be taken seriously. A part of these horrific acts, however, are committed due to the need for money that such a large organization constantly at war has. The sources of funding for ISIS have been quite diverse, as that makes international interference much more difficult. Some of these sources include or have included extortion or theft, human trafficking, their control of oil and gas reservoirs, smuggling and selling cultural artifacts, illicit taxation of goods and cash in areas which they operate, kidnapping people for ransoms, and donations, some of which happens through or by non-profit organizations.⁴²

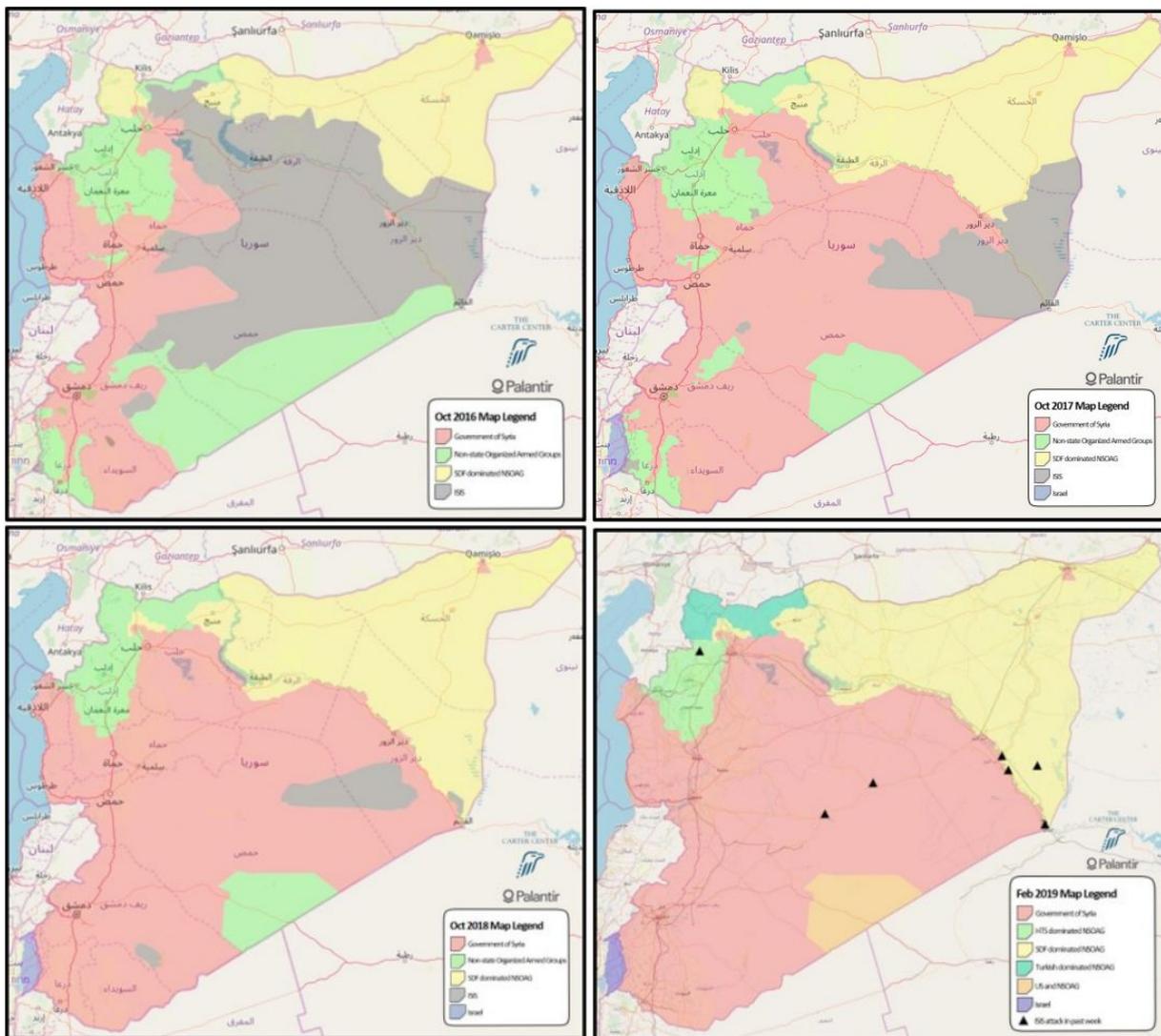


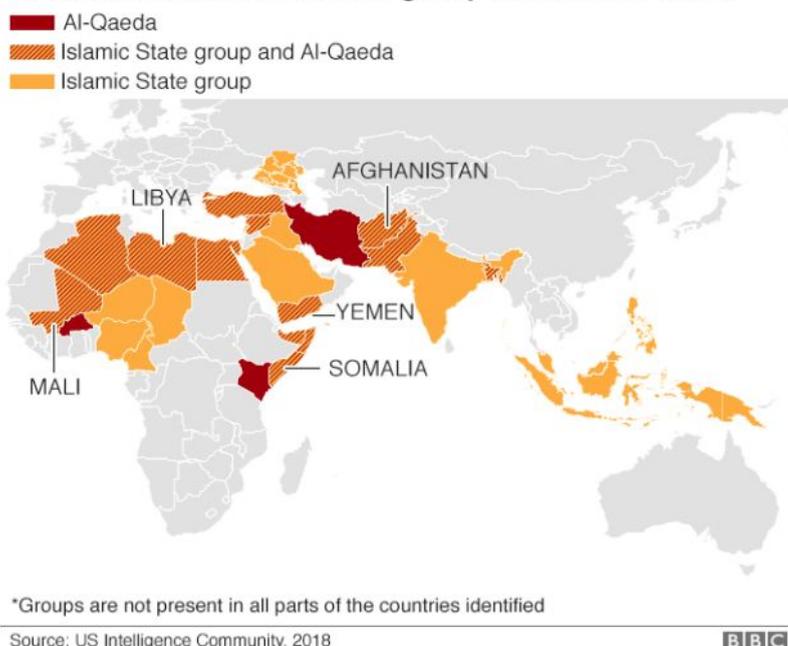
Figure 1. ISIS Areas of Control and Influence: October 2016 (top left), October 2017 (top right), October 2018 (bottom left) and February 2019 (bottom right). The most recent map reflects updated designations of armed actors by The Carter Center.

Picture⁴³: ISIS areas of control and influence in Syria Oct 2016 - Feb 2019

⁴² <https://www.fatf-gafi.org/media/fatf/documents/reports/Financing-of-the-terrorist-organisation-ISIL.pdf> accessed 9.12.19

⁴³ https://www.cartercenter.org/resources/pdfs/peace/conflict_resolution/syria-conflict/isis-review-2016-2019.pdf accessed 9.12.19

Al-Qaeda and Islamic State group around the world



⁴⁴ *Picture: the map shows the countries where Al-Qaeda and ISIS have territory.*

The Taliban

The Taliban are a militant, extremely conservative political and religious group which formed in Afghanistan in the mid '90s after the withdrawal of the troops of the Soviet Union and the collapse of the communist regime that ruled Afghanistan in the '90s. By 2001, the Taliban controlled almost every part of Afghanistan, the exception being a small part in the north.

Taliban wasn't popular as a regime due to their social policies, including the exclusion of women from nearly all public life, as well as the "systematic destruction" of artistic relics which weren't Islamic, and the implementation of incredibly harsh punishments for crimes. The Taliban was only recognized as legitimate by Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates. One of the most important reasons for the international disliking of the Taliban regime was the fact that under their rule, Afghanistan became a safe haven for Islamic terrorists and militants, such as Al-Qaeda's bin Laden, who was accused of planning and organizing multiple terrorist attacks.^{45, 46}

After 9/11, the United States went to war in Afghanistan against the Taliban.⁴⁷ So far, the US' war efforts in Afghanistan have cost an astounding 2 trillion USD, after which the Taliban still control much of

⁴⁴ <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-48056433> accessed 7.12.19

⁴⁵ <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Taliban> accessed 9.12.19

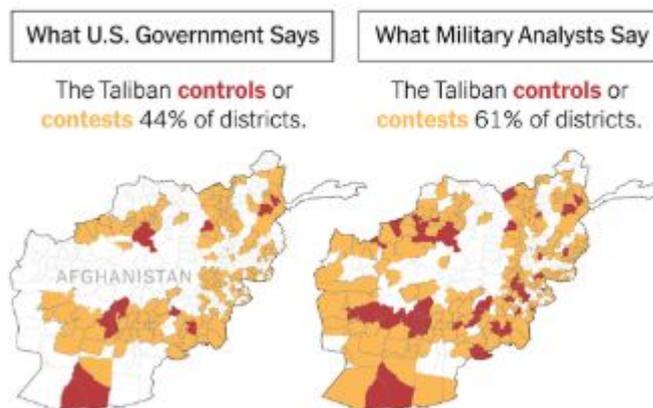
⁴⁶ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fuC6flun5iQ> accessed 9.12.19

⁴⁷ Ibid.,

the country, and total casualties lie around 40 thousand and growing.⁴⁸ The Taliban are slowly getting stronger once again, and kill hundreds of Afghan security forces a week. The government forces are defeated in almost every engagement, except when American air support is used in significant quantities.⁴⁹

How the U.S. Government Misleads the Public on Afghanistan

After 17 years of war in Afghanistan, military and social progress are worse than American officials have admitted.



Picture:⁵⁰ *The difference in information given about contested areas between different parties*

United States of America

The United States of America has acted the role of a World Police for decades in almost every aspect, but this became especially apparent in the fight against terror. The United States was the first country to declare a War on Terror after 9/11, and to gather support from other nations. They have been at war in Afghanistan since 2001, hunted down terrorists and terrorist groups in the area, toppled governments and regimes, and have overall been a massive part of the actual wars going on in the Mena region, and has between 70 000 and 80 000 troops on the ground in the Middle East.⁵¹

United Kingdom

The United Kingdom has been a major player in dealing with international terrorism and has unfortunately also been the target of multiple attacks.⁵² The UK (United Kingdom) also has an extensive anti-terrorism plan, called the CONTEST plan.⁵³ The UK has been known as a close ally of the US and

⁴⁸ <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/12/09/world/middleeast/afghanistan-war-cost.html> accessed 9.12.19

⁴⁹ <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/09/21/world/asia/afghanistan-security-casualties-taliban.html> accessed 9.12.19

⁵⁰ Ibid.,

⁵¹ <https://www.axios.com/where-us-troops-deployed-middle-east-5e96fdb2-c7ba-4f26-90b4-7bf452f83847.html> accessed 6.12.19

⁵² <https://news.sky.com/story/terror-in-the-uk-timeline-of-attacks-11833061> accessed 6.12.19

⁵³ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/716907/140618_CCS207_CCS0218929798-1_CONTEST_3.0_WEB.pdf accessed 6.12.19

have helped them in the many wars battled in the Mena-region, but the UK has especially been vital in peacekeeping and securing certain areas with their navy, as well as air support.^{54 55 56}

Afghanistan

After the 9/11 attacks, the United States went to war in Afghanistan, trying to hunt down the people responsible. Afghanistan has lost area to many different terrorist groups, especially ISIS, the Taliban, and Al-Qaeda has been very impactful in the area, unfortunately very negatively. The country has been savaged by conflict for decades, with currently no end in sight. Afghanistan has not only acted as the battlegrounds between nations and terrorist groups, within its borders terrorist groups have also fought amongst themselves for power and area control, which has only made the situation more complicated for civilians and counterterrorism plans in the area. Large scale attacks are common, with one of the most recent ones being a suicide bombing at a wedding, killing 63 people and injuring over 200 more. Civilians have an extremely hard time living normal lives with their homes and communities becoming a part of a war they have no part in, their houses destroyed and themselves being extorted and illicitly taxed as terrorist groups attempt to fund their organizations. It has been estimated that as of August of 2016, more than 31 000 civilians have died as a direct consequence of war. The country is in rubble.^{57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62}

Iraq

Iraq is another country famously ravaged by terrorism and its effects. The second Persian Gulf War, also known as the Iraq War made the country go into chaos after the US and UK invaded and defeated Iraqi forces swiftly. The occupation was soon opposed by an insurgency and violence followed, which made the US and UK gradually reduce military presence in the nation, with the withdrawal being completed in 2007. This all made for a fantastic breeding ground for trouble, and terrorist groups soon emerged. It was the alleged support of terrorist groups even before the war which acted as a catalyst in the situation, or in other words, the red cloth in front of the bull that was the United States. Especially ISIS was one of the major groups to take advantage of the broken situation. Iraq has also had issues with terrorist groups claiming many areas, attempting to reach their goal of creating a Caliphate, which

⁵⁴ <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/08/05/world/middleeast/britain-iran-strait-of-hormuz.html> accessed 12.12.19

⁵⁵ <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2019/aug/05/uk-joins-us-in-mission-to-protect-oil-tankers-in-gulf> accessed 12.12.19

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<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-shipping-britain/middle-east-shipping-stabilized-by-uk-navy-says-fleet-commander-idUSKCN1VX26H> accessed 12.12.19

⁵⁷ <https://www.foxnews.com/world/us-taliban-awkward-alliance-isis-afghanistan> accessed 11.12.19

⁵⁸ <https://www.ft.com/content/ae7cd2c2-ce26-11e9-99a4-b5ded7a7fe3f> accessed 11.12.19

⁵⁹ <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/02/world/asia/ISIS-afghanistan-baghdadi.html> accessed 11.12.19

⁶⁰ <https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/11/05/isis-terrorism-killing-islamic-state-outlive-baghdadi-afghanistan/> accessed 11.12.19

⁶¹ <https://www.indiatoday.in/world/story/airstrikes-kill-9-taliban-is-terrorists-in-afghanistan-1609186-2019-10-14> accessed 11.12.19

⁶² <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/afghanistan/terrorism> accessed 11.12.19

causes many of the same issues as with Afghanistan. What needs to be kept in mind, is that these nations are not isolated and they cannot be thought of as such.^{63, 64, 65}

Timeline of Events

Date	Description of event
1988	Al-Qaeda is formed
1999	ISIS is formed
October 10, 1994	The Taliban is formed
September 11, 2001	19 terrorists hijacked planes and crashed them intentionally in the United States of America. Nearly 3000 people died. The attack is also known as the 9/11 attack, and is the deadliest attack on American soil ever. ⁶⁶
September 20, 2001	US President George W. Bush announced the War on Terror ⁶⁷
October 7, 2001	Airstrikes by the United States and Great Britain are launched in Afghanistan at terrorist training camps and targets ⁶⁸
March 1, 2003	Khalid Shaykh Muhammad is arrested, planned 9/11 ⁶⁹
March 19, 2003	Invasion of Iraq started by the US and UK
April 9, 2003	Saddam Hussein's regime lost control of Baghdad and his reign ended ⁷⁰
2011	Arab Spring
May 2, 2011	Osama bin Laden, leader of Al-Qaeda killed by US forces.
2014	ISIS takes many key areas of Iraq from Iraqi government forces
October 13, 2019	Donald Trump announces that US troops are leaving Northern Syria
October 2019	Turkey advances into Syria and attacks the Kurdish forces ^{71, 72}

⁶³ <https://www.britannica.com/event/Iraq-War> accessed 11.12.19

⁶⁴ <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/iraq-still-suffers-from-terrorism-despite-daesh-victory/1334765> accessed 11.12.19

⁶⁵ <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/08/19/us/politics/isis-iraq-syria.html> accessed 11.12.19

⁶⁶ <https://www.history.com/topics/21st-century/war-on-terror-timeline> accessed 1.12.19

⁶⁷ Ibid.,

⁶⁸ Ibid.,

⁶⁹ <https://www.dni.gov/nctc/timeline.html> accessed 12.12.19

⁷⁰ https://web.archive.org/web/20101201163438/http://www.pbs.org/newshour/updates/baghdad_04-09-03.html accessed 12.12.19

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<https://www.nbcnews.com/news/world/turkey-claims-capture-key-syrian-border-town-offensive-continues-n1065381> accessed 12.12.19

⁷² <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/world/trump-orders-u-s-forces-withdraw-further-syria-esper-says-n1065516> accessed 12.12.19

UN Involvement, Relevant Resolutions, Treaties and Events

- The United Nations General Assembly adopted the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy on 08.09.06⁷³ and adopted a resolution to review the strategy and its progress every two years with resolution **A/RES/60/288**⁷⁴
- The UN (United Nations) adopted resolution **A/71/L66** in 2015, which established the UNOCT (United Nations Office for Counter-Terrorism)
- Establishment of the UNOCT (United Nations Office on Counter Terrorism) 21.6.17⁷⁵
- Adoption of resolution **S/RES/2396** 21.12.17, resolution addresses the threat of foreign terrorist fighters ⁷⁶
- Adoption of resolution **S/RES/2462** 28.3.19, resolution combats the financing of terrorism⁷⁷
- Adoption of resolution **S/RES/2482** 19.7.19, resolution is on the nexus between terrorism and international organized crime⁷⁸

Possible Solutions

International terrorism has affected the world immensely in the past few decades, and because of that many different solutions have been implemented but none have been the definite answer to these issues, and most likely none will be. As the ways to fight terrorism change, so do the terrorists, as they see themselves as if they are fighting for a just cause using the methods needed. This makes fighting terrorism incredibly difficult.

Combating Funding

One of the most important things to crack down on is funding, seeing as terrorists are using their funds to buy items of war to keep trying to battle the international community's forces and causing immeasurable harm around the world. Targeting funding may be very difficult, however, as the terrorist organizations have many diverse ways of attaining it, which include through and by illegitimate charity foundations, extortion and illicit taxation of the area they control, kidnapping and ransom, and through

⁷³ <https://www.un.org/counterterrorism/ctitf/en/un-global-counter-terrorism-strategy> accessed 8.12.19

⁷⁴ https://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/60/288 accessed 8.12.19

⁷⁵ <https://www.un.org/en/counterterrorism/> accessed 12.12.19

⁷⁶ Ibid.,

⁷⁷ <https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/un-documents/terrorism/> accessed 8.12.19

⁷⁸ Ibid.,

private donations made by, for example, the Saudi royal family. ISIS even controls a few oil reservoirs, which they can use to sell oil and profit, as well as refine the oil that they need instead of buying it elsewhere. Drugs and other related activities such as smuggling are also very common^{79, 80, 81 82}

Fortunately, nearly all of these methods can be combated in some way. Illegitimate charity foundations can be cracked down upon by legislation, oversight, and required transparency. Extortion, illicit taxation and the oil reservoirs can be combated by the international community working together to take back these areas, so the terrorist groups will have less area and resources to work with, as well as increasing security and peacekeeping in areas which are contested and where there are many civilians. It will not be easy, but it will be necessary. This is an area where significant improvement can be seen, as for example ISIS has lost nearly all of its previously held area. It needs to be kept in mind, however, that there is still a significant way to go in nearly every aspect before the current largest threats in terms of terrorist groups can be considered defeated. The hardest operation to fight is the private donations made by anyone, as especially groups like ISIS have started to use untrackable methods, such as cryptocurrencies. Fortunately, however, these sorts of funding methods are also the ones that produce the least funds for the groups to use. One more method is freezing assets, as has already happened with over 1400 bank accounts already.⁸³ This method does not stop the money being gathered, but it does stop it from being used which is the most important thing.

Combating propaganda and recruitment

Another great threat to nations has been the constant propaganda made by terrorists, whether it be video, blogs or other media. This has also aided them in for example causing terror in the areas in which they preside, as well as recruitment efforts. Especially more technologically capable groups, such as ISIS have had terrifying amounts of success in this area with for example recruitment videos. It has also been a common theme to show Westerners or allies of the West executed on video, which has traumatized members of the youth as well as driven ISIS's recruitment efforts. A possible solution for this may include for example enacting legislation in each member country making it illegal to upload, host, and view videos and other forms of media made by terrorist groups for intentions including propaganda and recruitment.

⁷⁹ <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/tracking-down-terrorist-financing> accessed 11.12.19

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<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/projects/documents/evidence-of-financial-links-between-saudi-royal-family-and-al-qaeda> accessed 11.12.19

⁸¹ https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research_reports/RR3000/RR3026/RAND_RR3026.pdf accessed 11.12.19

⁸² <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/tracking-down-terrorist-financing> accessed 11.12.19

⁸³ Ibid.,

Dealing with weapons and other items of war

Weapons and other items of war are what really cause these groups to be dangerous, as the group becomes much more effective at driving their agenda with weapons. As terrorists have more and more encounters with organized crime because of their efforts to fund their operation via drug trafficking and smuggling, one method of the organized crime group to pay for the drugs by using weapons as a currency. As a rule of thumb, terrorist organizations exploit networks that are already established, as well as previous connections. This includes pre-existing links to organized crime, since they are an easy and quick way to procure weapons.⁸⁴

Another way terrorist organizations especially in the Middle East find and get weapons are old weapons left behind from previous wars. For example soviet era tanks have been popular amongst ISIS and others in the region, which groups like ISIS can then fix up and use for their own purposes. ISIS especially has also been known for stealing weapons from other militias that may be supplied by Russia or the United States, or stealing one piece of ammunition, studying it, and creating their own version with a certain amount of modifications applied if necessary. Especially missiles that were made elsewhere have been found in makeshift weapons production facilities in Iraq and elsewhere, modified to be able to be dropped from drones for example.^{85, 86, 87}

This is in fact one of the most difficult things to combat in terrorism. Of course nations like the United States can try to target potential weapons manufacturing and production sites, but the amount of intel and resources needed for that is incredibly high, and so is the risk for civilian casualties, which are already astronomical. It also doesn't help, that most of these sites are only found after they have been used and abandoned, so prevention and interruption rarely happens. Deeper study into the relations between organized crime and terrorism can definitely help with this. Armies and militias in the area also need to make sure somehow that their old, unused or even currently in use weaponry does not end up in the hands of terrorists, as has happened countless times before.

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