

RESEARCH NEWSLETTER

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EDITOR'S NOTE

This special issue is prepared in the memory of the innocent people killed at terrorist attacks in Paris, Lebanon, Egypt (Russian aircraft crash) and Ankara. More than five hundred persons were killed in those attacks by IS and its allies. The responsibility of Russian plane crash on 31 October in Egypt has been claimed by IS, as claim confirmed by Russia on 17th of November. It is clear now that terrorist groups are directly targeting the daily life and civilians. They want to show that we are not safe or secure anywhere.

The world is going through a new phase of terrorism unlike any seen before. The battle field is no longer in conflict zones but everywhere. Terrorists have reached a highest number of armed forces worldwide ever. They have financial sources and their number of sympathizers are increasing day by day.

Traditional countering terrorism strategies are insufficient under current circumstances. Therefore, a new balanced approach needed to be developed jointly by UN Member States.



State of Emergency in Paris, 14 November 2015

“Peace cannot be kept by force; it can only be achieved by understanding “.

Albert Einstein

10 October : Terrorist Attack in Turkey, over 100 persons killed.

31 October: Russian aircraft crashed. IS claims responsibility. Russia confirmed the bomb attack. 224 persons killed.

12 November: Bomb explosion in Beirut, 37 persons killed.

13 November: Terrorist attack in Paris. At least 129 persons died.



Bomb Attack in Beirut, Lebanon



IS Sympathizers

Terrorism Era

13 November 2015 will be noted history as one of the most tragic days in European history. European countries will review their positions and strategies with regard not only to countering terrorism but also to irregular migration, refugees and illegally armed organizations.

It is a fact that all counter terrorism policies and strategies followed in recent years have failed so far. The numbers of terrorist organizations and terrorists are highest ever. Terrorist groups are well established in different parts of the world and they are all linked. In addition to this, their sympathizers are growing day by day. Elimination of the leaders of terrorist organizations and dictators in the Middle East has not brought any peace to world so far. Therefore, it is time to understand the roots of terrorism better and structuring the strategies accordingly.

The Afghanistan case should be always remembered and mistakes should not be repeated. The interventions in Afghanistan, have not brought complete peace or security to the country yet. After NATO left, one of the most important cities (Kunduz) of the country was captured by the Taliban for several days. Now, IS is in the country and started a systematic killing on non-Sunni Muslims and non-Muslims. Taliban has not weakened and still controlling sizeable parts of the country. Half of the Taliban groups joined IS in Afghanistan. Finally, Afghans lost their hopes and who ever has an opportunity, leave the country immediately.

The logic of “ the enemy of my enemy is my friend “ has not worked and will never work at all. It is a serious mistake to trust and cooperate with illegally armed groups for any purpose .

We have been witnessing the serious damages caused by such policies in different countries for many years. Unfortunately, It can be easily observed that some countries are still following those policies in Middle East. UN Member States first of all should be agreed on definition of terrorist groups. There should be one and single list of terrorist groups agreed by the UN, the EU, and individual countries. There is no such a definition for “moderate “ terrorist groups at all.

Terrorist organizations are now stronger than ever and they are well connected for their ultimate goal. The groups in the Middle East, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Gulf countries, Africa, Central Asia, Caucasus and Europe are all linked. In addition to this, they have thousands of sympathizers in different countries. It is estimated that there are at least 200,000 illegally armed fighters in Middle East, Africa, Afghanistan, Yemen and Pakistan. These terrorists are well trained and ready to die for their ultimate goal. Additionally, recent attack in France will make the IS more credible and hero in the eyes of other terrorist groups and they will join IS. IS is progressing well about collecting all Sunni Salafist and Jihadist groups under its umbrella worldwide. Furthermore, it is the first time terrorist groups are claiming lands and territories for themselves. We now face well organized and inter-linked terrorist networks. Therefore, it is impossible to fight against these groups in conventional ways.

Not long ago, Al-Qaeda was the only well-known most dangerous terrorist group worldwide. Now, there are other ones and even more dangerous than AQ, such as IS, Al-Shabab, Boko Haram and Al-Nusra. The world is no longer safe and secure. Terrorism can find us everywhere. The attacks in Ankara (10 October) , Bomb explosion at Russian air craft (31 October) , in Beirut (12 November) and the attacks in Paris (13 November 2015) are indicators that terrorist groups will target public places more and more from now on.



Boko Haram, Nigeria

Unfortunately, we are going through a terrorism era. The world will go through a very difficult road in the future. Therefore, it is essential to fight against terrorism without personal worries and agendas. In addition to this, new strategies are needed. It is proven that guns alone are not a solution. Thus, counter terrorism strategies should be based on a balanced combination of law enforcement and social policies. First of all, we all need to know that homeless, jobless and hopeless people can do anything to survive. It is not possible to have sustainable peace while 40% of the world population is living below US\$ 2.5 per day. Therefore, if we want our planet to be safe, fighting against poverty should be the first priority. It is impossible to sustain peace or fight against the terrorism as long as inequality continues. Therefore, developed countries should consider dedicating equal proportions of their budgets to both law enforcement and socio-economic improvements in developing countries. We have to keep in mind that we are all in the same boat and if it sinks, no one will be saved.

In addition to this, intelligence sharing and networking is essential. Unfortunately, most of the Middle East, Gulf and African countries are not linked through intelligence networks. It is essential to establish regional intelligence networks in Africa, Middle East and links with them. It is important to keep in mind that, safety at home starts with peace with your neighbors.



Boko Haram, Nigeria



Al- Shabab, Somalia

The war in Syria is a critical turning point for the UN Member States. It is important to show terrorist groups that we all stand together. Therefore, all countries involved in Syria war, should put aside their differences between each other and remove IS and its allies from Syria and Iraq immediately. Especially, it is essential for UN Security Council Members- who are supposed to establish and sustain peace and security in the world - to move together. The current disagreement of the UN Security Council Members over Syria does not show unity and this encourages terrorist groups. As a matter of urgency, UN Security Council Members and all the other countries involved in Syria (directly or indirectly) should develop an action plan which includes both law enforcement and socio-economical parameters at the same time.

In addition to this, international community should again pay great attention to Afghanistan. It is important to clear Afghanistan of terrorist groups and sustain the peace and economical development, in order to achieve peace more widely in the region.

At the time this article was drafted, Coalition Forces and Russia agreed about a road map for Syria. According to this plan, an election will be organized in the country in 18 months. In addition to this, a cease fire is announced between Free Syrian Army and Syria Regime Forces. Of course, this is an encouraging step giving hope about the future of people of Syria. But there is still a long and difficult road ahead of peace in Middle East.



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