

THE UNITED NATIONS IN THE FIGHT AGAINST TERRORISM



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United Nations

The International Instruments

- Tokyo Convention on Offences and Certain Other Acts Committed On Board Aircraft (1963)
- The Hague Convention for the Suppression of the Unlawful Seizure of Aircraft (1970)
- Montreal Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Civil Aviation (1971)
- Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Crimes against Internationally Protected Persons (1973)



The International Instruments

- Convention against the Taking of Hostages (1979)
- Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material (1980)
- Protocol for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts of Violence at Airports Serving International Civil Aviation (1988)
- Protocol for the Suppression of Unlawful acts against the Safety of Fixed Platforms Located on the Continental Shelf (1988)



The International Instruments

- Convention on the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Maritime Navigation (1988)
- Convention on the Marking of Plastic Explosives for the Purpose of Detection (1991)
- International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings (1997)
- Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Financing (1999)
- International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism (2005)



General Assembly and Terrorism

Debate over definition of terrorism

- Intervention by States' armed forces
- Right by peoples to resist foreign occupation



Human Rights and Terrorism

- Carried out principally by UN human rights organs based in Geneva under coordination of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)
- UN Commission on Human Rights establishes in April 2005 a mandate for UN Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism



Human Rights and Terrorism

- The Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED) has a human rights officer on its staff
- Main responsibility is to advise the Executive Director with respect to all aspects of international human rights, humanitarian and refugee law that are relevant to the CTC's mandate under resolution 1373



The Victims of Terrorism

- UN system increasing attention on human rights of victims of terrorism
- Addressed specifically in Security Council resolution 1566 and again in Security Council resolution 1624
- UN Secretary-General also stresses question of victims' rights as key concern in comprehensive counter-terrorism strategy
- 2005 World Summit Outcome document stresses importance of assisting victims of terrorism and of providing them and their families with support to cope with their loss and their grief

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Security Council and Terrorism

December 1988

Pan-Am flight 103 crashes in Lockerbie, Scotland, killing 259 passengers and 11 persons on the ground.

September 1989

UTA (France) flight 772 crashes in Niger, killing 170 persons.

- Libya alleged to have been involved in both attacks.

June 1995

Terrorists make unsuccessful attempt to assassinate President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt at Organization of African Unity (OAU) meeting in Addis Ababa.

- Three suspects seek refuge in Sudan, whose Government decline Egyptian request for extradition.

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Security Council and Terrorism

Libya

January 1992

Security Council resolution 731 warns Libya about consequences of its acts if it fails to hand over suspects in Pan-Am and UTA attacks.

March 1992

Security Council resolution 748 characterizes Libyan actions as threat to international peace and security; invoking Chapter VII of UN Charter, imposes broad list of severe sanctions, which are reinforced in 1993 by resolution 883 and in 1998 by resolution 1192.

March 1999

France tries, convicts six Libyan nationals for their participation in attack on UTA plane.

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Security Council and Terrorism

Libya

January 1999

The two Libyan citizens suspected of having organized attack on Pan-Am flight handed over to the Netherlands to be tried by Scottish judges and under Scottish law.

January 2001

Court convicts Abdel Basset al-Megrahi of murder in Pam-Am bombing and sentences him to life in Scottish prison.

September 2003

Security Council lifts sanctions after Libya formally accepts responsibility for actions of its officials and agrees to pay billions of dollars to the families of the victims.

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Security Council and Terrorism

Sudan

April and August 1996

Security Council imposes economic sanctions and ban on commercial flights following Sudan's refusal to extradite individuals suspected of carrying out attacks on President Mubarak.

September 2001

Security Council lifts sanctions after Sudanese authorities decide to expel individuals suspected of terrorism, among them Usama bin Laden.

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Security Council and Terrorism

Al-Qaida and Taliban

October 1999

*Security Council **resolution 1267** demands Taliban turn over Usama bin Laden and establishes committee to monitor compliance with sanctions, which include flight ban and freeze on assets*

*Security Council **resolution 1269** calls upon Member States to cooperate with each other, to prevent and suppress terrorism and the financing of terrorism and to deny those who plan, commit or finance terrorism safe havens*

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Security Council and Terrorism Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC)

September 2001

Resolution 1373, adopted under Chapter VII of UN Charter, imposes wide range of legal, financial, police and cooperation requirements.

Also calls on all Member States to ratify and observe provisions of international conventions and protocols related to terrorism.

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Security Council and Terrorism

Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC)

- Countries obliged to criminalize terrorism, its perpetrators, accomplices and financiers.
- Resolution 1373 does not impose penalties on countries responsible for acts considered reprehensible by the Security Council or on those that collaborate with such countries; rather, decides on the conduct that all Member States should observe in the fight against terrorism.
- *Establishes Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC) to monitor implementation of resolution.*

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Security Council and Terrorism

Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED)

March 2004

Resolution 1535 establishes Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED).

May 2004

Secretary-General appoints Javier Rupérez Assistant Secretary-General and Executive Director of CTED; assumes post in June.



September 2005

CTED becomes fully staffed.

December 2005

CTC declares CTED fully operational.

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Executive Directorate (CTED)**



Security Council and Terrorism

Weapons of Mass Destruction

April 2004

Resolution 1540 notes with concern the possibility that terrorists might use chemical, biological and nuclear weapons of mass destruction (WMD).

Imposes detailed set of obligations on Member States to ensure that “non-State agents” do not come into possession of such weapons.

Also establishes a Committee to monitor compliance with resolution’s requirements.

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Security Council and Terrorism

Working Group on Terrorism

October 2004

Resolution 1566 contains outline of a definition of terrorism, together with an unambiguous condemnation of terrorism and any attempt to justify it.

Establishes working group “to consider and submit recommendations to the [Security] Council on practical measures to be imposed on individuals, groups or entities involved in or associated with terrorist activities, other than those designated by the Al-Qaida/Taliban Sanctions Committee.”

Also asks Working Group to consider the possibility of an international fund to compensate victims of terrorist acts and their families.

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Security Council and Terrorism

July 2005

Resolution 1617 strongly urges Member States to implement the comprehensive international standards embodied in the financial action task force's (FATF) Forty Recommendations on Money Laundering and the FATF Nine Special Recommendations on Terrorist Financing.

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Security Council and Terrorism

Incitement to Commit Terrorist Acts

September 2005

Resolution 1624 condemns “in the strongest terms all acts of terrorism irrespective of their motivation, whenever and by whomsoever committed, as one of the most serious threats to peace and security.”

Calls upon countries to adopt measures to prohibit by law incitement to commit terrorist act or acts, to prevent such conduct, and to deny safe haven to any persons with respect to whom there is credible and relevant information giving serious reasons for considering that they have been guilty of such conduct.

Identifies link between incitement to terrorism, attempts at the justification or glorification (apologie) of terrorist acts, and the furthering of terrorist acts themselves.

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RHETORIC AND TERRORISM



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United Nations

RHETORIC AND TERRORISM

- Extremist rhetoric is a fundamental problem in the overall fight against terrorism.
- Religious and political extremist rhetoric is the poison that attempts to justify and condone terrorism and other forms of violence against innocent civilians.



RHETORIC AND TERRORISM

- Extremist rhetoric emphasizes differences between races, nations and civilizations, and promote the use of hate and violence for achieving elusive global visions.
- Countering extremist rhetoric requires conviction, patience and consistency in nullifying extremist propaganda and effectively projecting the positive values of democracy, human rights and moderation.



RHETORIC AND TERRORISM

Terrorists commonly employ three rhetorical structures to justify their reliance on violence:

1. *They have no choice but to turn to violence*
2. *Demonizing and de-legitimizing the “enemy”*
3. *Using the language of non-violence*



RHETORIC AND TERRORISM

No choice but violence

- Violence is presented as a necessity foisted upon the weak and as the only means with which to respond to an oppressive enemy.
- While avoid mentioning how they victimize others, terrorists heavily emphasize the forceful actions of the governments and regimes that combat them, using terms such as “slaughter,” “murder” and “genocide.”



RHETORIC AND TERRORISM

No choice but violence

- Terrorist organizations depict themselves as constantly persecuted, their leaders subject to assassination attempts and their supporters massacred, their freedom of expression curtailed and their adherents arrested.
- This portrays the organization as small, weak and hunted down by a stronger power or a strong state, and turns the terrorist into the underdog.



RHETORIC AND TERRORISM

Demonize and de-legitimize the enemy

- Members of the movement or organization are presented as freedom fighters, forced against their will to use violence because a ruthless enemy is crushing the rights and dignity of their people or group.



RHETORIC AND TERRORISM

Demonize and de-legitimize the enemy

- The enemy of the movement or the organization is the real terrorist. A common argument is that *“our violence is tiny in comparison to his aggression.”*
- Terrorist rhetoric tries to shift the responsibility for violence from the terrorist to the adversary, which is accused of displaying its brutality, inhumanity and immorality.



RHETORIC AND TERRORISM

The language of nonviolence

- Although these are violent organizations, many of their declarations claim that they seek peaceful solutions, that their ultimate aim is a diplomatic settlement achieved through negotiation and international pressure on a repressive government.



METHODS OF COUNTERING EXTREMIST RHETORIC

There are three important methods of countering extremist rhetoric.

1. *Promotion of democratic values and human rights.*
2. *Reforming the education system, especially madrassas in both Muslim and Western countries.*
3. *Increasing cross-cultural engagement and public diplomacy.*



PROMOTION OF DEMOCRATIC VALUES AND HUMAN RIGHTS

- Extremists often cite the absence of freedoms and state victimization to forward their anti-democratic agenda.
- A free press, guaranteed freedoms of speech, assembly and religious practice and the rule of law form the basis of a strategy to prevent extremist rhetoric to find space in civil society.



PROMOTION OF DEMOCRATIC VALUES AND HUMAN RIGHTS

- The rooting out of corruption and nepotism from government bureaucracies and state machinery, as well as the promotion of independent judiciaries, help in this cause of countering extremist rhetoric.
- These virtues prevent social frustrations and ensure a check on extremism.



PROMOTION OF DEMOCRATIC VALUES AND HUMAN RIGHTS

- With few exceptions, political orientation of the masses is mostly moderate. Free and fair elections allow the largely moderate middle to vote on welfare issues, and provide them with less of an incentive to resort to extremist values and violent solutions.



PROMOTION OF DEMOCRATIC VALUES AND HUMAN RIGHTS

- In nascent democratic systems, there are possibilities for extremist groups to gain significant political power through elections.
- However, through constitutional protections for a free press and the rule of law, extremist groups that rise to power are often forced to moderate their stance and become more accommodating to other political groups.
- Once part of the political process, extremists are more likely to realize that their extremist visions are not conducive to the growth and prosperity of their country's citizens.



EXTREMIST GROUPS IN DEMOCRACIES

- The rise of the extremist Hindu nationalist BJP in India is a good example.
- There were many points in the BJP's election manifesto that were hostile to free market economics and communal harmony in India, but the BJP was forced to moderate its stance for political expediency after it rose to power.



REFORM OF MADRASSAS

- Although most madrassas are benign and merely teach religion, many indulge in hate-preaching and militarism.
- Madrassas that teach hate and violence are not just a threat in terms of churning out potential terrorists; they are also a threat to the national political and social fabric.



REFORM OF MADRASSAS

- Their graduates consider their political orientation not by considering national issues or party manifestos, but rather on the basis of religious edicts and orthodox visions.



REFORM OF MADRASSAS

- Important to undertake a complete overhaul of the education system. There is a strong need to closely monitor and regulate the curriculum of private Islamic education that may engage in brainwashing.
- In the absence of a government licensing system, there is no awareness about the number of madrassas existing and what they are teaching.



REFORM OF MADRASSAS

- Secular subjects, such as English, mathematics and science, must be taught at madrassas to wean madrassa students away from religious zealotry and to impart some measure of rudimentary understanding of modern events.
- A good policy would be to institute compulsory national volunteer service for all 18-year-old boys and girls in order to allow for the mixing of different races, ethnicities and religions for the achievement of common goals.



PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

- The United States' cultural diplomacy is often underestimated in winning the Cold War. But the exposure of Western values to those people under communism played a crucial role negating the falsehood being propagated about capitalism and democratic systems.
- One crucial method of countering the extremist agenda is to not retreat in the face of extremist rhetoric.



PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

- Exhibiting the openness of Western culture, its diversity, its willingness to listen to others' opinions and engage in a thoughtful debate, as well as the overall accountability of Western institutions under the rule of law are all facets that could expose the hollowness of extremist rhetoric.



THE EXAMPLE OF ETA

- The modus operandi is as follows: they claim a historical “conflict” between the Spanish State and the “Basque People,” describing Spain as a State characterized by serious democratic flaws, where torture is exerted, the Basque citizens’ rights and freedoms are restricted and the original sovereignty and independence of the “Basque Nation” are hindered by force.



THE EXAMPLE OF ETA

- This message is conveyed through complex and efficient propaganda campaigns to the “target audiences” – national governments, civilian sectors, the media, European and world bodies, other nationalist groups, anti-globalization movement and outstanding international leaders and personalities.



THE EXAMPLE OF ETA

- As far as the media is concerned ETA has managed to enjoy a significant margin of helpful doubt: practically all of the mainstream media outlets in the United States will not call ETA a terrorist group or its members a terrorist.
- They are systematically referred to as “separatists” or “independentists.” However, ETA is listed as a terrorist organization by both the US State Department and the European Union.



THE EXAMPLE OF ETA

- A constant feature of such propaganda campaigns is to present ETA members as VICTIMS.
- Another argument employed is to present Spain as a State that tortures prisoners, especially ETA militants or supporters.



THE EXAMPLE OF ETA

- The aim was to deprive the Spanish State of legitimacy, within the Basque country and abroad, without acknowledging the rights and freedoms envisaged by the Spanish Constitution and, thus, justifying the terrorist activity as a political tool to gain independence.



THE EXAMPLE OF ETA

- This argument is also intended to show the “democratic deficit” of the Spanish constitutional system, as a way to fuel the false image of a Basque country which is allegedly oppressed by two States (Spain and France), whose democratic legitimacy is questioned.



THE EXAMPLE OF ETA

- “Torturer state” and “democratic deficit” are two concepts that ETA puts together successfully, and this has given the terrorist group some legitimacy in certain European and US circles.
- Through this view of “legitimate struggle,” ETA gains the support of different groups and organizations, some of which have Parliament representatives, leading to the paradox that it is among the organizations that fight for human rights where they find more understanding and support.



THE EXAMPLE OF ETA

- The Basque country is one of the wealthiest of Spain's Autonomous Regions. It has its own Parliament and an independent tax system which is unique in Europe (it has even been criticized by the European Commission).
- The Basque country has two official languages: Spanish and Basque. It has its own police forces, which among other tasks, are in charge of fighting terrorism. All these fundamental individual or collective rights stem from the Spanish Constitution of 1978.



THE EXAMPLE OF ETA

- The reason why the freedoms envisaged by the Spanish Constitution cannot be fully enjoyed in the Basque country is the existence of a terrorist group that threatens, extorts and kills the Basque citizens – such as politicians, journalists, teachers, businessmen, writers, artists or priest and nuns – who do not support its political project. It also carries out indiscriminate attacks in the rest of Spain.



THE EXAMPLE OF ETA

- This situation has led thousands of people to voluntary exile (reducing the votes for non-nationalist options) and has forced the parties that abide by the Constitution – which are strongly affected by terrorist attacks carried out by ETA – to struggle to find candidates for their slates in many towns in the Basque country.
- The direct consequence of this climate of terror is that the abstention rate in elections is one of the highest in Spain, particularly in rural areas under the rule of Batasuna, the political wing of ETA.



THE EXAMPLE OF ETA

- Currently in the Basque country around 1,000 people have escorts as they have been threatened by ETA or its political and social entourage. They include citizens from all walks of life whose common purpose is to live by the 1978 Constitution.
- Needless to say, those with convictions contrary to the Constitution do not need the security arrangements.



THE EXAMPLE OF ETA

- We must bear in mind that United Nations Security Council resolution 1373 (2001) states that “all terrorist acts, methods and practices are against the purposes and principles of the United Nations and intentionally financing terrorist acts, planning them and inciting to their perpetration is also against such purposes and principles of the United Nations.”



THE EXAMPLE OF ETA

- The most chanted slogan in demonstrations organized by Herri Batasuna, or by any of the organizations of the Basque movement is:

“ETA KILL THEM”



HIZB-UT-TAHRIR (HUT)

- HUT is an Islamist organization whose goal is the establishment of a Pan-Islamic Caliphate incorporating all Muslim countries.
- Its vision is based on the social and cultural unity of all Muslims, and the imposition of pure Islamic law, uninfluenced by Western philosophy or institutions.
- It also calls for the overthrow of governments in the Muslim world, in order to replace them with those that would work towards the establishment of a Pan-Islamic Caliphate.



HIZB-UT-TAHRIR (HUT)

- It is an organization that is banned in most Muslim countries, but functions openly in some Western countries, especially Britain.
- HUT has often cited the spread of Western culture in Muslim lands as the source of social corruption in those countries.
- Its rhetoric has included condemnation for Western practices of free speech and democratic elections, as well as individual prosperity and independent thought.



HIZB-UT-TAHRIR (HUT)

- HUT establishes its case for a Pan-Islamic Caliphate on the basis of protecting Muslims from military attacks by Western countries.
- It says that Muslims have been victimized by Western powers, first during the years of colonialism, and now through a neo-colonial financial and cultural system, as well as projection of Western military power in Muslim lands.
- HUT uses its speeches particularly against those Muslim countries that are allies of the United States, such as Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Pakistan.



HIZB-UT-TAHRIR (HUT)

- For HUT, suicide bombers are called martyrs. The organization believes that those without the necessary weapons to challenge and overthrow Western interests and regimes are left with no choice but to use their bodies to resist occupation and assert their independence.



HIZB-UT-TAHRIR (HUT)

- HUT has an elaborate recruitment system that focuses on young Muslim men, between the ages of 18 and 25.
- Their target recruits are those without suitable employment prospects and Muslim immigrants who have failed to assimilate in their adopted countries.



LOOKING AHEAD

- The United Nations and the Counter-Terrorism Committee are working hard with Member States to develop legal provisions against extremist rhetoric that would incite violence against civilians.
- Such vicious indoctrination of susceptible minds should not be allowed to continue and cross-cultural understanding and tolerance must be aggressively adopted and promoted as the most principal virtues of today's globalized world.

