



## PAMUN XVI RESEARCH REPORT— The question of countering terror

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### Introduction of Topic

Coming from the Latin verb “terrere,” meaning *to frighten*, the term *terror cimbricus* became a proverbial term used to signify a state of emergency in Rome. Consequently, the word *terror* has come to be associated with abuse. The act of terror has always been committed to instil fear in human minds in order to achieve some overall goal. Terrorism is classified as a war crime, a fourth-generation warfare and a violent act against humanity. Yet, it has unfortunately been frequent throughout history. Just in 2016, there have been over 40 terrorist attacks, where radical groups seek domination. Newspapers have been filled with articles describing savage massacres, unjustifiable shootings, gruesome statistics and other acts of unforgivable malice. With the United Nation’s ultimate goal of global peace, the issue of combating terrorism has been on the agenda of the Security Council for decades.

### Definition of Key Terms

#### *Terrorism*

The definition of the word has certainly been a challenging process, as the word possesses a lot of weight. Till date the United Nations has not found a fully comprehensive definition of the term. The Federal Bureau of Investigation have defined the term by stating that it involves violent acts or acts dangerous to human life that violate federal or state law. These acts appear to be intended to intimidate or coerce a civilian population, influence the policy of a government by intimidation or coercion; affect the conduct of a government by mass destruction, assassination, or kidnapping<sup>1</sup>.

In 2004, the United Nations Security Council defined terrorist acts to be: “criminal acts, including against civilians, committed with the intent to cause death or serious bodily injury, or taking of

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<sup>1</sup>“Definitions of Terrorism in U.S. Code.” *FBI*. FBI, 30 Nov. 2015. Web. 23 Aug. 2016.

<<https://www.fbi.gov/investigate/terrorism>>.

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 to abstain from doing any act, which constitute offences within the scope of and as defined in the international conventions and protocols relating to terrorism, are under no circumstances justifiable by considerations of a political, philosophical, ideological, racial, ethnic, religious or other similar nature”<sup>2</sup>

### *Sunni Islam*

Formed in 632 CE, Sunni Islam is a branch of Islam which believes that Prophet Muhammad’s first successor or Caliph was Abu Bakr. Sunni Islam is the largest branch of Islam, and constitutes of almost 90% of the world’s Muslims. It is usually seen as the denomination of Islam which is far more inclusive of what it means to be Islamic, even though it shares many of its ideals with other branches. Sunni Islam focuses on the power of God and human fate.

### *Shia Islam*

Also formed in the 632 CE, Shia Islam contradicts with Sunni Islam, as it believes that Prophet Muhammad’s Caliph was Ali, his son-in-law. Shia Islam accounts for 15% of Muslims and most followers are in Iran, Yemen and Bahrain.

### *Salafist jihadism (or Salafism)*

Salafist jihadism is a 20<sup>th</sup> century ideology based on the belief of Sunni Islam and the militant movement of Islamic groups (jihadism) perceived to be “rooted in Islam” which existentially threaten civilians. Terrorist organisations such as ISIL, al-Qaeda and the Taliban are Salafist jihadist groups.

## Background Information

### Al-Qaeda

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<sup>2</sup> Published. "UN Security Council Resolution 1566, Terrorism." *Council on Foreign Relations*. Council on Foreign Relations, 08 Oct. 2004. Web. 20 Aug. 2016. <<http://www.cfr.org/international-organizations-and-alliances/un-security-council-resolution-1566-terrorism/p11223>>.

Al-Qaeda is an international, Salafist organisation established in 1988 by Osama bin Laden. The group was founded in order to train thousands of willing men to fight in the Afghan resistance against the Soviet Union (who had invaded Afghanistan at the time). In the New York Times, a reporter found that the objectives of the jihad were to “establish the rule of God on earth, attain martyrdom in the cause of God and purify the ranks of Islam from the elements of depravity.”<sup>3</sup>

Since its creation, al-Qaeda has committed several acts of violence worldwide, and countries which have suffered the most include Syria, Yemen and Somalia. Some of the most violent and gruesome acts include the September 11 attacks where the Pentagon and World Trade Centre were hijacked, the bombings on the US embassy in 1998, the 2002 car bomb attack in Kenya and the 2002 Bali nightclub shootings. The tactics used by the group including bombing, suicide, kidnapping and assassination. The group has always desired to use and obtain biological and chemical weapons of mass destruction in order to target large, public symbols (such as the World Trade Centre).

## Taliban

The Islamic fundamentalist group, the Taliban, was founded in 1994 mainly involved in the wars in Afghanistan. In fact, from 1996-2001, the Taliban took over the country and enforced the *Sharia*, a strict set of religious rules governing Islamic faith. The Taliban denied starving citizens the food supplies which the United Nations had sent, and burnt the earth resulting in thousands of burnt homes and miles of infertile land. Their ideology is said to be hugely anti-modern, considering their interpretation of the *Sharia* and the way it was used during this period of control where Afghans were brutally treated.

Similar to al-Qaeda, the Taliban began as a group of students training to fight in the Afghan civil war which was taking place. The movement swept throughout Afghanistan, and the group gained quick momentum. In August 1994, the Taliban became a force within the Afghan civil war claiming that they wanted the country to be purified from corruption and a new, pure version of Islam was to be created. According to UN statistics, the Taliban are responsible for 80% of the casualties taking place in the Afghan wars.

## The Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant

The Islamic State is a name which has been headlining newspapers, as violent acts of hatred and malice spread across the world. The group has been behind some of the most brutal terror attacks

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<sup>3</sup>"Military." *Al-Qaeda (The Base)*. N.p., n.d. Web. 23 Aug. 2016.  
<<http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/para/al-qaida.htm>> .

of the century, including the series of attacks in Paris in January 2015, bombings in Baghdad, suicide bombings in Afghanistan, massacres in Iraq and Yemen and the shootings in countries over the world, including the recent nightclub shootings in Orlando. It was estimated that so far in 2016 alone, the Islamic State has been responsible for over 1300 deaths and over 2700 injured civilians.

The Salafi jihadist group, strictly following the principles of Sunni Islam, have been active since 1999, and have named themselves a worldwide caliphate, which basically implies a single group “ruling” the world as a government. This is strongly advocated by leader, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, who believes that the group claims political, military and religious authority over all Muslims. Similar to the Taliban, the Islamic State has taken control of countries (Syria, Iraq, Libya, Nigeria and Afghanistan) and have begun enforcing their radical interpretation of the *Sharia*.

## Boko Haram

Operating mainly in the northern Africa, Boko Haram is an Islamic extremist group with allegiance to the Islamic State. Based in Nigeria, but active in Chad, Cameroon and Niger, the group has been responsible for over 20 thousand deaths and the displacement of 2.3 million civilians. The group has been responsible for continuous series of bombings, assassinations and shootings since 2009 in order to achieve an Islamic state. The name comes from the Islamic principle, “haram” which means forbidden as followers are denied to partake in any Western social practices. This includes banning wearing Western garb, denying equal education for both genders and opposing the right of anyone to vote in any Western elections.

## Major Countries and Organizations Involved

### United States of America

The United States has been a key player in the war against terrorism.

In the beginning of the turmoil in Syria, the United States has been aiding those against President Assad. The US began by supplying non-lethal weapons, as well as training to young soldiers and intelligence. In fact, President Obama and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) spent 1 billion US dollars providing arms to government opposing forces in Syria. However, in 2014, as the war escalated and other key players such as the Islamic State became involved, the US government began to heavily intervene. President Barack Obama delivered a speech in September 2014 claiming the US’ s ultimate

goal was to ultimately destroy the Islamic State. Thus, a series of airstrikes began by the US, accompanied by many countries including Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar and Jordan.

The United States also began to intervene in matters in Iraq, where troops were dispatched in regions across the country in order to assess the Iraqi forces and the the Islamic State. The US has been performing airstrikes in the country since June 2014, as well as dropping humanitarian aid. Some countries have allied themselves with the United States, namely: the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Italy, Canada, Turkey and Denmark. On 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2014, 59 countries decided to support anti-Islamic State followers and agreed to cut off all financing for the Islamic State.

### Russian Federation

Since 2015, the country has been performing air strikes on official request from the Syrian government. The Russian Federation has also sent operation forces and military advisors to Syria. The goal of the Russian intervention is to take down jihadist groups such as the Islamic State and retake parts of the country from opposing forces (this includes groups which are allies of the United States). The Russian Federation has been a close ally of President Assad and have vetoed previous resolutions in the Security Council which have been against Assad. Russia has also sending military arms to Syria, despite much international disapproval. Several sources including Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International have stated, however, that Russia is responsible for many war crimes by their airstrikes and targeting children's hospitals. The Syrian Network for Human Rights reported that the Russian Federation was responsible for the death of over 200 children.

### Afghanistan

The Taliban's involvement in Afghanistan left the country very weak. In 1996, the Taliban took over the capital of Kabul and formed the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan. The country followed laws strictly set down in the *Sharia* and was under heavy military control. However, today, the country is on its way to reconstruction and development.

### Nigeria

The effects of terrorist, Islamic group, Boko Haram have been strongly felt in Nigeria, Cameroon and Chad. Headquartered in Nigeria itself, Boko Haram has been violently raiding parts of the country. Villages are burnt, innocents are shot, women and children are murdered. Since the group began its insurgency, over 250 thousand people have been killed, while 2.3 million have been forced to leave Nigeria. It is clear that something must be done by countries. Though its military has successfully taken

over a lot of land conquered by the militant group, the group still poses a threat internationally. That being said Nigeria's military has been rather ineffective, compared to its neighbors. Nigeria has often been very proud of its army, specifically several months ago before the presidential elections. Former President, Goodluck Jonathan, looking then to be re-elected denied all claims of Nigeria's inability to deal with Boko Haram, in order to please his people and avoid criticism from the opposing party. Truth be told, the country's military intervention has been insufficient in solving the issue.

### Cameroon, Chad and Niger

Though often criticized for its numerous Human Rights violations, the Chadian army has proven itself to be a major player on the issue of Boko Haram. Chad despite being one of Nigeria's poorer neighbors, has been able to, set an example for other African nations in the fight with Boko Haram. Upon the arrival of the militant group, Chad felt some immediate economic implications. Boko Haram had cut off numerous trading routes, passing through the country, putting a halt to Chadian trade. This gave Chad the incentive to join the fight and truly set the stage for other nations to join in the offensive on Boko Haram.

Both negatively affected by attacks carried out by Boko Haram, Cameroon and Niger have each contributed to the fight against the militant group. Having both provided much military and technical aid, these nations have proven their loyalty to their Nigerian neighbor in this time of conflict. Being among the major members of an African task force against Boko Haram, these nations have had a direct involvement in the issue. This task force, in which aid and information is shared between several African states, with the primary objective of putting an end to Boko Haram, has been very active in this issue, specifically the nations within the task force.

### The United Nation's Counter Terrorism Committee

In the wake of the 9/11 attacks, the Security Council created the Counter Terrorism Committee (CTC) with the following goals: "addressing conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism, preventing and combatting terrorism, building Member States' capacity to prevent and combat terrorism and to strengthen the role of the United Nations system in this regard, ensuring the respect for human rights for all and the rule of law as the fundamental basis for countering terrorism."<sup>4</sup> The committee has been taking charge of over 30 projects and over a thousand people involved.

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<sup>4</sup> "COUNTER TERRORISM." *UN News Center*. UN, n.d. Web. 20 Aug. 2016.

<<http://www.un.org/en/counterterrorism/>>.

## Timeline of Events

Date	Description of event
August 27, 1978	War in Afghanistan begins
December 24, 1979	Soviet invasion in Afghanistan
1988	Creation of al-Qaeda
30 April, 1992	Beginning of the Afghan civil war
1994	Creation of the Taliban
September 27, 1996	Beginning of the Taliban's rule over Afghanistan
August 7, 1998	US embassy bombings in Tanzania and Kenya by al-Qaeda.
1999	Creation of the Islamic State
September 11, 2001	September 11 or 9/11 attacks, where 4 airplanes were attacked by suicide bombers from al-Qaeda. Almost 3000 civilians were killed, and over 6000 were injured. One of the deadliest terrorist to have taken place.
2001	Creation of the Counter Terrorism Committee
2002	Boko Haram is founded
October 23, 2002	Moscow theatre hostage crisis
February 26, 2003	War in Darfur begins
September 1 <sup>st</sup> – 3 <sup>rd</sup> , 2004	Beslan school hostage crisis takes place. Over 1 thousand people were taken hostage, including over 700 children. Over 350 deaths.
July 29, 2009	Islamist insurgency by Boko Haram
March 15, 2011	Syrian civil war begins
December 15, 2013	South Sudanese civil war
January, 2014	Iraqi civil war begins
January 7, 2015	Charlie Hebdo shooting
March 19, 2015	Yemeni civil war begins

## Relevant UN Treaties and Events

- 2001: Creation of Counter Terrorism Committee (CTC) (S/RES/1373)
- 2004: Creation of Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED) (S/RES/1535)

- 2013: Mandate of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED) until 31 December 2017 (S/RES/2129)
- 2015: Women and peace and security, adopted on 13 October 2015 (S/RES/2242)
- 2015: Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts, adopted on 17 December 2015 (S/RES/2253)
- 2016: The situation concerning Iraq (S/RES/2299)

## Main Issues

After reading the above, it must be clear that terrorism is something which threatens the peace and security of all citizens, globally. Tackling terrorism involves the united strength of the UN, governments, organisations and civilians working together, aiding those in need in the short term, whilst also going back to the root of the problem in the long run. The reasons and roots of terrorism are what is accelerating this violence and terror, and are listed below:

### Intolerance

Many radical organisations have had their own interpretations of Islamic texts. The *Sharia* is the name given to a set of laws in Islam. While the contents of these laws cannot be altered, their interpretation certainly can as terrorist groups use this to their advantage, in order to instil fear and “purify” countries. The Sharia is both detailed and broad; its laws cater to both public and private beliefs and behaviours for those who follow it, yet most of what is written is said to be broad, which has left room for this radicalisation. The text is interpreted to be strongly intolerant towards women and foreigners who are not “pure” since they do not follow Islam as a religion. Such laws include:

1. The law which states that a woman’s testimony in court carries half of the weight of a man’s.
2. Men are allowed to beat their wives if they are deemed uncooperative.
3. Any Muslim who becomes a non-Muslim must be punished by death.
4. Any Muslim who marries a non-Muslim must be punished by death.
5. A woman who is raped cannot testify against her rapist.

In addition, the haram (as mentioned above) is the main principle followed by terrorist groups such as Boko Haram, which refers to forbidden acts, prohibited in the Quran. There are many fundamental things which are considered to be haram, such as teaching children that harming other children and animals is



a sin, as well as educating children in basic morals. However, there are many other aspects which are misogynistic and non-secular.

The brutality of the acts committed by these groups spring from the intolerance of such texts. When the Taliban took over Afghanistan for 5 years, they enforced such acts believing that this would cleanse the country. With the ultimate goal of “ruling the world”, the Islamic State would implement these laws strictly.

### Sunni and Shia Islam

The clash between Sunni and Shia is one which has inflamed conflicts between governments and terrorist groups, leading to some of the worst crises in the modern age. For example, the Yemeni civil war began because of the disagreement between Sunni and Shia populations. Sunnis are in the majority in most countries, and Shias tend to be a small percentage, making up poorer sections of society. Thus, Shias have often stated that they have been the victim of oppression and discrimination.

### Tactics

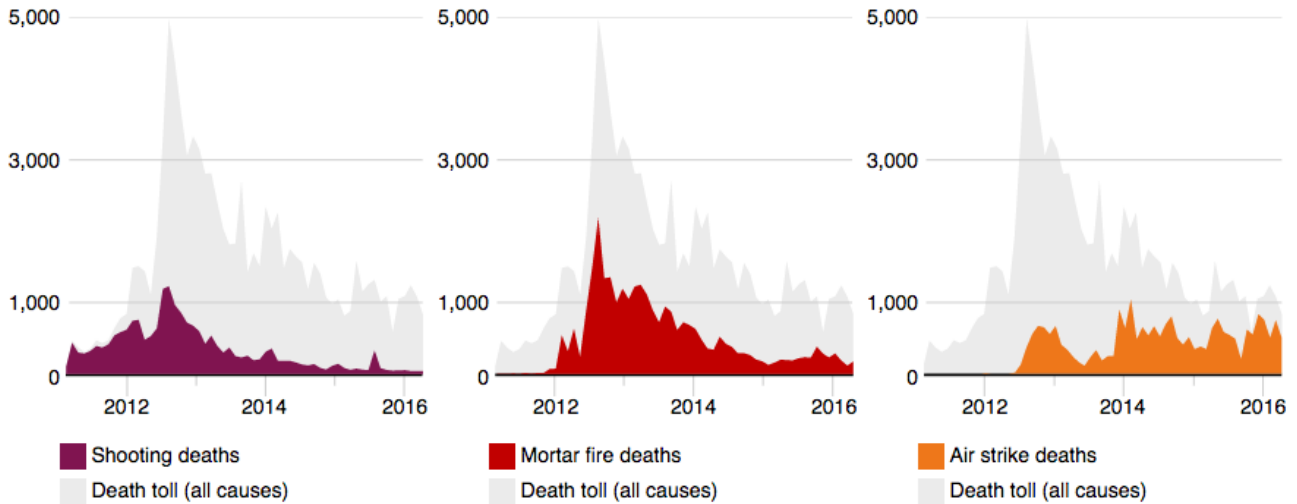
Terrorist organisations use several tactics in order to achieve their goals, including the illegal acquisition of arms and the various kinds of attacks.

#### Acquisition of arms

Most terrorist acquire their arms from Jordan and Turkey. These countries have lax security over the large supply of ammunition left over after the Libyan revolution of 2011. In addition, US government had begun to train Syrians in order to fight groups such as the Islamic State and President Assad. The operation cost 500 million US dollars, but resulted in only a few being trained, and most of the arms crossing sides. The program was shut down quickly after this realisation. Similarly, when arms are sold between countries, there is again, lax security and consequently, arms can be intercepted along the way. Furthermore, there is a large black market for arms, where dealers will sell arms readily to anyone who can afford. Such groups get money most commonly through kidnappings, robbery and sometimes through trade. The Taliban acquired a large portion of their money by trading opium. This has also led to corrupt government officials being bribed, and trading arms.

#### Attacks

In the Syrian civil war, the 3 ways most civilians have died have been because of shootings, mortar fire and air strikes.



Source: Violations Documentation Center

The use of rocket and mortar fire has prevalently been used since 1982, and has grown over the past years. It has been estimated that approximately 1.5 million people have been endangered by mortar attacks. Air strikes are carried out by countries such as the United States and the Russian Federation, but have caused several deaths of civilians, as shown in the statistics above.

## Possible Solutions

There is no doubt that combating terror in the world is a dynamically challenging issue. However, there are solutions which can be implemented in both the long and short run to aim to fix the problem at hand. The first would be military training in countries such as Nigeria who face the threats of Boko Haram, and yet those military remains to be incredibly weak. The military is also suffering from a deep loss of morale, and so training could be a strong motivator. In addition, in order to limit terrorist's access to arms, governments of member states should identify zones where arms could possibly lie and confiscate them. Such zones tend to be abandoned and have lax security, thus teams should be put together in order to identify such areas and strengthen forces. Furthermore, when trade regarding arms takes place between countries, governments should strive to make this process more secure.

Regarding long term solutions, one of the most effective is education. Education is the strongest tool human beings have to facilitate change. It is imperative that the current and next generations are educated, so that anti-modern, non-secular, misogynistic and racist ways are understood to violations of people's basic human rights.

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