Expanding legal frameworks for international cooperation against terrorism

GA6

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Forum: GA6

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Introduction

Over the past couple of centuries the world has started to globalize at a massively increased rate. Along with the economic interdependence that comes with globalization, we as humans have also become more interdependent upon one another. With this increase in interdependency comes an increase in awareness. We have been confronted with many beliefs, opinions and values that don't align with those of our own, and slowly the world has started to grow a wider understanding.

Not everyone however agrees with the modernisation and the globalization our world has and continues to undergo. This often causes us to have political, social and economic disputes. These disputes can develop into large conflicts and still too often result in act of terrorism. An act of terrorism can be committed by an individual, a group or even a state. An act of terrorism can be best described as a tactic and often its goals are to cause harm to its victims and spike fear amongst the communities that surround the victims.

We have seen acts of terrorism all over the world and they come in all different forms. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the rights of women in Iran are just two of the more recent issues that have spiked conversations within media across the world surrounding the definition of terrorism and how we must tackle the issue of terrorism. Although definitions of terrorism are vague and often disputed, there is one thing that member states agree on; terrorism poses a threat to international security and therefore we must work together to combat and prevent acts of terrorism.

Definition of Key Terms

State

According to Britannica, a state is defined as the body or institutions of government. It is separate from other social, religious, or ideological groups in the sense that its fundamental purpose is the creation of order and security through its respective methods; the laws it produces and their enforcement. All states vary respectively in territory and sovereignty.

Terrorism

According to the OHCHR terrorism is defined as the intimidation or the coercion of populations or governments through the act or threat of violence. What factors define an act of terrorism however remains widely debated. Terrorism can be motivated by various factors such as religious, ideological, political, cultural or social beliefs.

Globalization

The term "globalization" refers to the increasing interdependence of the economies, cultures, and inhabitants of the world. Globalization has increased the flows of, and been increased due to flows of; people, money, beliefs, capital and knowledge. The world is becoming increasingly interconnected because of globalization.

Co-operation

Cooperation is defined as the action or process of working together to try and establish a solution or outcome that is beneficial to all parties or most parties involved in a certain issue. International cooperation is crucial in our globalizing world as working together allows parties to solve issues that multiple parties face using their combined knowledge and experience.

Extremism

Extremism is the opposite of conventional values. In other words, extremist groups have values that separate them from the norm of values. Often extremists have a narrow view or belief that they are unwilling or unable to steer away from and this may result in acts of violence often defined as terrorism.

General Overview

Fears of terrorism have become extremely widespread amongst citizens of the world since September 11th of 2001, after the attacks performed by Al-Qaeda upon The Twin Towers and the World Trade Center. The true origin of terrorism is extremely controversial and debated by many historians and experts in the field of security. A book published by Cambridge University Press, written by Brian Frost, argues that modern terrorism was first seen in the mid-twentieth century. This book also argues that there have been three major periods of terrorism, it claims that these periods are from the origin of terrorism in the mid-twentieth century, the latter half of the twentieth century, and the post-9/11 era of terrorism.

The cooperation between non-governmental organizations and member states is vital in order to address the underlying causes of terrorism and to encourage the sharing of intelligence amongst these parties. The strategies that are produced from these discussions should take into account military, diplomatic and socioeconomic factors respective to the individual situation being discussed and issues that are posed through various acts of terrorism. Counterterrorist measures should adapt depending on the form of terrorism. Comprehending the many different forms of terrorism is therefore essential to effectively implement counterterrorist tactics. Some forms of terrorism that pose a huge threat to national and international security are; political terrorism, religious terrorism, domestic terrorism, state-sponsored terrorism and cyber terrorism. These forms of terrorism can also be closely related or intertwined depending on the situation that one is looking at.

Political Terrorism

Political terrorism is a well-known type of terrorism in which the public or political decision-makers and political structures are threatened and challenged through the use of violence. Attacks against political personalities, government officials, or institutions with the intention of causing fear and coercion can fall under this category.

Religious Terrorism

Religious terrorist acts are defined as acts carried out in the name of a particular religious belief. Their motivations are often interpretations of their religious texts or convictions. Religious terrorist acts try to; establish a religious state, resist parties that do not align with their respective beliefs or attempt to pose their ideologies upon a group of individuals. Often these acts are carried out by extremists who identify themselves as a part

of a certain religious belief but they have varying views that do not align with those of the larger religious group that identify with that belief.

Domestic Terrorism

Acts of violence committed inside a nation's borders that aim to defy their government or social systems within that meet the definition of terrorism are referred to as acts of domestic terrorism. These actions, which might include bombings and mass shootings, are frequently motivated by extreme ideologies that don't necessarily have to be religious. These acts can be a result and an expression of a population's frustration with their government and can lead to further political instability within a country.

State-sponsored Terrorism

State-sponsored Terrorism occurs when a state's government or highest authority financially aids, supports or even deploys terrorist groups to further their political interests and agendas. Often it is hard to separate state-sponsored terrorism from non-state sponsored terrorism in these situations as states try to cover their support and involvement in these acts.

Cyber Terrorism

Additionally, cyber terrorism has been of growing concern in recent years. This type entails using the internet to launch attacks on vital infrastructure, interfere with communication systems, or the act of stealing private data. Cyber terrorists create a special threat to the security authorities by taking advantage of flaws in digital systems. There is a lot of controversy surrounding the term cyber terrorism and whether cyber attacks can even be considered an act of terrorism. However, when defining terrorism as any act that threatens governments or individuals through coercion or intimidation cyber attacks can certainly be seen as acts of terrorism.

Terrorist acts can be committed by a variety of individuals and groups. Developing effective techniques to counter-terrorism doesn't just require an understanding of the forms of terrorism that pose a threat but also the parties conducting them. It's critical to remember that various players can have completely different goals, ideologies and tactics, and that counterterrorism frequently necessitates a multifaceted strategy that tackles both the obvious threats that these groups pose to the security of our member states and their underlying motivations.

Timeline of Key Events

Date	Event
4th of December 1971	McGurk's bar bombing, Belfast.
5th of September 1972	Munich Massacre, Munich
27th of March 1977	Tenerife Airport Disaster, Canary Islands
20th of August 1978	Cinema Rex Fire, Abadan
20th of March 1995	Tokyo Subway Sarin Attack, Japan
26th of February 1993	World Trade Center bombing, New York City
11th of September 2001	September 11 attacks, New York City
12th of October 2002	Bali Bombings, Indonesia
1st of September 2004	Beslan school siege, Russia
26th of July 2009	Boko Haram uprising, Nigeria
5-6th of May 2014	Gamboru Ngala Massacre, Nigeria
16th of December 2014	Peshawar School Massacre, Pakistan
7th of January 2015	Charlie Hebdo shooting, Paris
22th of May 2017	Manchester Arena Bombing, The UK
31st of May 2017	Kabul car bombing, Afghanistan
15th of March 2019	Christchurch Mosque Shooting, New Zealand
21st of April 2019	Easter Bombings, Sri Lanka

Major Parties Involved

Countries in a state of war

When a nation is at war, it may provide circumstances that make terrorism more likely to occur or that encourage terrorist activity. Some factors that contribute to and facilitate terrorist groups are; political instability, poverty and displacement, tensions, accessibility to weapons, and poor conditions. All these factors may lead to more vulnerability of government and civilians which

makes for an easy playground for terrorist groups to take control. 5 of the top 10 countries affected by terrorism are countries in a state of war, and the other 5 are subject to conflict.

NATO

NATO is an intergovernmental military alliance between 30 countries from Europe and North America. NATO works to defend its member states from terrorist acts and cooperates with its member states to gain an increased and shared intelligence of terrorism across its member states. Their solutions are mostly those of military importance. They aim to increase technology that can detect, combat and prosecute terrorists.

INTERPOL

Interpol provides the needed platform for cooperation between police forces of 180 member states around the world. It also works closely with the Security Council in order to implement its resolutions. They are large supporters of increased surveillance and the sharing of intelligence across member states as a method to combat terrorism.

UNODC

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) is the main UN body that strives to combat terrorism through strengthening the legal framework surrounding terrorism. The UNODC works to bring justice to all victims of terrorism and helps member states to combat acts of terrorism. It also works closely with the Human Rights Commission to support individual member states as they struggle to combat terrorism and persecute actors for their actions.

Possible Solutions

Even though there have been a lot of international efforts and resolutions that have tried to define and address terrorism, it's still difficult to come up with a definition that everyone agrees upon because of the subtleties and complexity of the term. The lack of a widely accepted definition puts emphasis on the difference in interpretation of the term and what is truly to be considered terrorism. Therefore international bodies such as the UN and its member states should work together to try and come to an internationally accepted term that covers all or at least as many of the complexities of the term as possible. This can help limit misinterpretation of the term and will make a large contribution to the resolution of this issue.

A large part of terrorism remains state-sponsored. In order to reduce and combat state-sponsored terrorism, state-sponsored terrorism should be specifically defined. In order to hold states accountable, neutral bodies could be introduced that monitor states and report upon any concerns regarding the combatting or supporting of terrorism. These reports could work to advise nations on what the best solutions could be in order to solve these threats and would strive to minimize conflict. These acts can then be reported upon and shared with international bodies such as the UN which will then further review these reports and decide what will be the next best course of action.

Establishing an independent body in charge of producing an annual list of active or previously active terrorist individuals, groups and organizations. This list should be internationally recognised so that all member states can work to combat the activity of these groups and improve their national security.

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