

## Counter-Terrorism International Efforts

### Introduction:

The very first step to fight terrorism and eradicate its roots from any society requires a thorough understanding of all aspects and causes of this epidemic so that it can be dealt with on the basis of sound scientific grounds. Nations have different perception about terrorism and its concept which led to disagreement on international level about collaboration to combat terrorism. This disagreement, which could be summarized in one phrase: what is terrorism for some people might be fighting for freedom for others, which led to failure of most international attempts to put an accurate definition of terrorism. Unfortunately, it had a negative impact on counterterrorism international collaboration. Many international organizations and institutes developed their own definitions of terrorism. Whereas in 1980, the United States Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) has defined terrorism as: threat of violence or the use of violence for political purposes by individuals or groups, whether they work for existing government authority or they are against it. These terrorist acts usually intend to shock, terrify, or frighten their target group which is in most of the cases broader than their direct victims. The description given by the media to the members of the terrorist organizations varies according to the political action taken towards them Hence, they are either terrorists,

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subversives, disobedient, dissidents, criminals, or they are freedom soldiers, freedom fighters, militants, or grassroots movement members. Therefore, the need for a common definition was urgently required specially after the spread of terrorism all over the world. UN Member States were compelled by surrounding events to agree on the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

### **Components of International Counter-Terrorism Efforts'**

#### ❖ The United Nations and its central role in countering terrorism:

Terrorism is an epidemic. All states around the world are concerned to combat this issue, and it remained on international agenda for several decades. It was until September 2006 when all states embarked on a new historical phase. All UN Member States agreed for the first time ever on a global strategy to coordinate their counter-terrorism efforts. It was Member States' responsibility to execute this global strategy. Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force ensures that the UN addresses the needs of Member States, provides required policy support, spreads in-depth knowledge of the Strategy, and ensures delivering technical support urgently when needed. The international community response to terrorism was powerful and resolute, especially after September 11, 2001 attacks. There is a common and substantial agreement on objectives and outlines of the Strategy. Although, there are differences with regard to the military equipment, imposing Law

Enforcement as well as differences on the aspects of counter-terrorism. There are also differences in the circumstances that potentially motivate spread of radical propaganda and terrorist recruitment. It is

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important that essential roles of various components forming this methodology should interact with each other. These essential roles include intelligence investigation, political-

diplomatic dimension, intercultural and interfaith dialogue, counter terrorist financing, transport security, combat terrorist-recruitment strategy and counter spread of radical ideology. All these roles must be fulfilled while taking into consideration International Human Rights Law, International Humanitarian Law, and sovereignty of law.

#### ❖ Islamic Military Counter Terrorism Coalition:

The apparent failure of US global coalition against terrorism which was established after 11th September 2001, inefficiency of international coalition against Daesh in Iraq and Syria, increased complexity of Syrian landscape by the flow of foreign terrorists, withdrawal of American troops from conflict areas in Middle East, lack of clarity regarding America's strategic exit perception from Afghanistan and Iraq, not taking a clear stand about Syria, US policy makers' increased attention on the Pacific and China region, and the attempts to reach mutual

understandings with Iran by endorsing the Nuclear Agreement (between Iran and 5+1 Group); all these incidents contributed in disrupting regional security arrangements. Establishment of Islamic Military Counter Terrorism Coalition (IMCTC) was therefore a necessity for granted. In 15th December 2015, IMCTC which is led by KSA, was announced to fight all forms of terrorism. This Military Coalition brings together more than 40 Islamic nations, and is equipped with a joint state-of-the-art situation room, located in its headquarters in Riyadh. IMCTC coordinates Member Countries' counterterrorism efforts through launching initiatives across four main domains: Ideology, Communication, Counter Terrorist Financing and Military. Missions and activities of IMCTC are primarily aligned with international rules and regulations and based on principles of legitimacy, independence, coordination and participation. One of the Coalition's principles is to combat extremism and terrorism in the Islamic World by a joint Islamic effort, and other various directions and methods beyond security prevention to reach ideological, military and communication domains. It aims to dry up terrorism's financial, ideological and communication sources, reduce the margin of maneuver available to terrorist groups, and operate through participation and collaboration in intelligence and security fields.

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## ❖ NATO:

No one can claim that NATO is not aware of terrorism threats. NATO member state presidents' statement in November 2006 proves this fact and NATO's strong determination to counter terrorism. "Terrorism and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) will probably be the

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most significant threats NATO will face during the next 10 or 15 years", they stated. NATO pledged "to protect citizens, lands, forces and infrastructures in

member nations, and utilize all possible means to combat all forms of terrorism". 11th September attacks reaffirm the necessity to prioritize counter terrorism actions. Member Nations, within the NATO or individually, expressed their resolution to eradicate terrorism from its roots. NATO achieved in a short period of time a significant progress in this field by developing various aspects of its missions and activities in order to keep pace with this enormous threat. Nevertheless, NATO lacks a strategy to combine its unique counter-terrorism capabilities to achieve a clear objective. The organization has the means and objective, but lacks the vision and strategy to counter terrorism. Fighting international terrorism requires a multifaceted comprehensive international response prompted by coordination of political, economic, diplomatic, legal, social and military efforts and means, if needed.

Undoubtedly, the NATO structure qualifies it to be one of the best international organizations to fight international terrorism threats.

What can NATO provide to mankind?

1- Article 5 of NATO charter represents the core stone of counterterrorism efforts. It states that any armed attack on one of NATO member nations or more is considered an attack against all member nations. 11th September attacks against USA were therefore considered, by NATO council, that article 5 is applicable and necessary in internationally terrorism-ridden world. They decided to apply this article if external actors are proved to be involved in the attacks.

2- the NATO is considered an ongoing forum to conduct political discussions amongst not only member nations but also participating countries and other international organizations. Thus, it forms a unified front to counter international terrorism by sharing data and information and promoting collaboration when needed.

3- NATO also has the capability to conduct an integrated series of military operations with the participation of many countries. This includes operational planning capabilities and utilizing a wide range of military capabilities in Europe and North America due to its integrated military structure. In addition, NATO is committed to benefit from experiences and expertise acquired throughout operations linked directly or indirectly with the fight against terrorism.

To sum up, it is clear that countering terrorism is an international responsibility. It requires coordinating efforts, sharing information, and developing a unified strategy to ensure international security and peace.