



## SMALL-DOLLAR COSTS AND SUBSTANTIAL LOSSES

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Cheap and accessible small arms and light weapons have glaringly become the weapon of choice much preferred for many terrorist groups around the world; such weapons meet their goals and threaten international peace and security. The situation was made worse by the poor international response in combating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, in addition to the challenges that states face to detect and seize them, as well as the porous borders that allow terrorists and criminals to funnel illicit weapons.

It is clear that vehicle ramming and stabbing have notoriously become the preferred and inexpensive weapon of terrorist organizations to confirm their ability to survive and terrorize, by the lone wolves and the sleeper cells scattered in the countries of the world. The link is definitely close between terrorism and organized crime, including the illicit trade in light weapons. Small-dollar terrorist attacks have a major impact on economic markets, and are an obstacle to sustainable development and a threat to the rule of law.

### STRATEGIES

Terrorist organizations resorted to low-cost operations, after making unremitting and concerted international efforts in combating terrorism and terrorist financing, which made these organizations lose their financial resources and logistic capabilities, and made them change the pattern of terrorist acts to further promote the following strategies based on small-dollar terrorism as it achieved several benefits for the organization at the lowest possible cost. The cost of cheap terrorist attacks is only a few hundred dollars, a little more than the cost of renting vehicles, housing and feeding activists for weeks.

These attacks, at their low cost, have notoriously severe effects in spreading fear and terror among people, negatively affecting economic interests and public services, and

economically exhausting countries, potentially going beyond such destruction, reducing the number of human losses to terrorist organizations and groups, and facilitating infiltration into security measures through several areas, hence concealing plots of the organization to carry out complex operations, overburdening the security and intelligence services, giving them such a hard time.

Terrorist organizations are aware that the existing traditional international measures to address terrorist financing cannot disrupt small-dollar terrorism in light of planning terrorist attacks using a completely different and difficult-to-detect model, such as fraudulent student loans and others.

## MEANS AND TOOLS

Various efforts have been made to learn about the types of activities of terrorist groups. They seek to realize different goals, triggered by their beliefs, members and resources. Moreover, their political contexts are also contributory to their involvement. The following list explains the most important methods of various terrorist groups in small-dollar attacks.

### 1) Vehicle Ramming

It is one of the patterns used by DAESH, which is difficult to combat despite the tight security measures and the pursuit of terrorist cells. It is a message from the organizations that each and every one is a potential target, especially after extremists have switched to using tools that are more easily accessible, such as vehicles. Such an attack triggered a new ultimatum of the success of the digital propaganda of DAESH in publishing its directives on ways to commit violent massacres using vehicles. Terrorist operations of vehicle ramming still continue in Europe to claim more lives. The vehicle ramming in Barcelona is a notoriously telling instance, which claimed 14 lives and in which dozens were injured.

### 2) Stabbing

Lone wolves prefer to use knives, as they are deeply ingrained in and convinced of the ideology of DAESH. It is reported that fighters in Chechnya were the first to have used knives to slaughter Russian soldiers. Not only did they perpetrate horrendous and violent massacres, they also filmed the slaughtered targets and broadcast the whole massacre on recorded tapes! Such organizations developed rules and principles for the use of sharp tools, demonstrating the best way to use such tools, the places that must

be targeted, and the best types of knives and their specifications. Telling examples of these attacks include the operation that resulted in the injury of 83 members of the Jordanian General Security Organization, after they were attacked with sharp tools by Jihadist Salafis.

### 3) Arson

An accurate understanding of the danger of fire as a weapon, and the implications of the response are essential to internal security. It requires new policies and partnerships to tackle this emerging threat. Setting fires is an attractive weapon for terrorists for several reasons, including: setting fires hardly requires any training; the fire and associated smoke could penetrate military defence installations, hence making the tactical response more difficult; the images of fires grab global attention, thus increasing the relentless media follow-up; setting fires creates unique challenges, contrary to the usual threats.

### 4) Digital Terrorism

Most of the terrorist organizations and groups have successfully gained the know-how and savvy along with technical tools necessary to penetrate the virtual world, and increase the number of websites promoting their beliefs and goals at the lowest cost. Drawing on a low-cost method allows the dissemination of information about the organizations and their propaganda, and further facilitates the means of communication with affiliated members, allowing the flow of information, facilitating the establishment of groups, reducing the cost of recruiting members, and creating enthusiastic incentives for engagement. The flow of information is available to everyone, and it is difficult for the security services to control it, as such groups circumvent security monitoring, and easily create websites and anonymous accounts.

The association between the cyber world and terrorism has recently come into play, especially when DAESH successfully recruited a large number of volunteers of different nationalities. Counterterrorism has shifted from a direct physical modality into a spectral cyber confrontation; real wars have turned into digital wars, and the cyber space has become one of the most lethal and destructive weapons if it is used for malicious purposes and the realization of malicious extremist intentions. Cyber-based terrorism can be classified as a type of cybercrime if it is used in an investigation for terrorist purposes. Digital terrorism depends on the use of modern scientific and technical capabilities, and the exploitation of means of communication and information

networks to terrorize and harm others. The spread of «I love you» virus destroyed information valued at about ten billion US dollars, and the «Blaster» virus wreaked havoc on half a million computers. In the International Convention against Cybercrime, the Council of Europe estimated the cost of repairing damage caused by information viruses at about \$ 12 billion per year.

## 5) Drones

The cost of «unmanned aircraft» is relatively low, and their use does not require much training. They can disguise to monitor devices (radars), and are often anonymous. This gives drone users the opportunity to evade any associated responsibilities, making drones highly desirable commodity for those who wish to impose their visions and orientations at the lowest costs, and do not prefer to enter into open conflicts with high costs, financially and humanly. Therefore, terrorist organizations began to use drones, as they are cheap and commercially available for legitimate use, as well as for hostile actions.

The continued work of illegal armed groups to improve drones indicates that in the near future the risks associated with their use for terrorist purposes in the world could increase. The use of these drones is no longer restricted to armies only; a large number of countries and groups have acquired some types of these cheap drones, which have become available in different sizes and for various purposes. DAESH has used these drones on the battlefields in Iraq and Syria; the Houthi terrorist group in Yemen uses advanced drones to attack the Arab Coalition to Support Legitimacy in Yemen.

## 6) Sports Terrorism

Terrorism has always been a way for extremist groups to draw the attention of local audiences, governments, and the world to their cause. Terrorists plan their attack to obtain the maximum gains, and they choose the targets that will achieve this precisely for them. The feasibility of a terrorist act is not in the act itself, but in the reactions to the action. It is this logic that has made sporting events often targets of terrorism; sports terrorism causes panic among thousands of spectators. This is one of the most important goals and objectives of terrorism. It causes panic on the largest scale, and is intended to elicit an exaggerated reaction from society and governments, often successfully.

## 7) Water Terrorism

The importance of fresh water and irrigation water is great for human health and the ecosystem, and for the smooth functioning of the commercial and industrial economy, which makes water networks potential targets of terrorism. The terrorist opportunities of striking water networks are real and great. Such opportunities could not have any immunity to protect them from being targeted.

The reality confirms that there is a long history of such attacks that directly target the water infrastructure, and pollute water by introducing toxic substances or disease agents, rendering it unusable. This results in great harm to people, livestock and plants. However, there is great ambiguity in the importance of such threats today, vis-à-vis to other targets that may be subject to terrorist attacks, or the effectiveness of such attacks in reality. Historical analyses and evidence indicate that it is difficult to bring about heavy losses due to attacking water networks, although there may be some apparent exceptions.

## 8) Chemical Terrorism

Chemical terrorism appears to be the most important option of all the weapons of mass destruction used by terrorists. This is for many reasons, including chemical agents are relatively cheap, readily available (they can be stolen, manufactured) and can be easily transported and used. Also, finding basic information and instructions on creating a chemical agent available on the Internet without effort or hassle.

Examples of terrorist use of this type of terrorism are the Japanese sect, Aum Shinrikyo, carried out the largest chemical terrorist attack with nerve gas – sarin – in a Tokyo metro train in 1995, killing 13 people and injuring more than 6000 others. The number of victims was not large because the sarin gas used in the attack was diluted. If it was more concentrated, it would have claimed the lives of thousands of people. Chemical terrorism can have a very significant impact by sending chemicals through ventilation and air-conditioning systems in the underground metros and in airports, shopping centers and other buildings.