

KING SALMAN ADDRESSES THE UNGA AND HIGHLIGHTS KINGDOM CONTINUED ANTI-EXTREMISM AND COUNTERTERRORISM EFFORTS

In his keynote speech at the 76 Session of the UNGA, September 22 of 2021, the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman bin Abdulaziz highlighted the Kingdom continued anti-extremism and counterterrorism efforts to undermine the ideologies that feed on hate, exclusionary practices of terrorist groups and sectarian militias that dehumanize the entire world. He emphasized it is critically important for the international community to show a strong position against those who support, sponsor, finance and harbor terrorist groups and sectarian militias, or instrumentalize such entities to cause destruction, and wield hegemony.

King Salman has brought a breath of fresh air to the Kingdom long-standing commitment to the principles of international legitimacy and associated decisions, respect for the sovereignty of all countries, and non-interference policies. Equally important, The Kingdom reserves legitimacy to defend the integrity of the Saudi territory against any attacks of ballistic missiles, drones, and booby-trapped vessels plotted by the Houthi militia.

King Salman also indicated that the Kingdom developed an initiative in March of 2021 that would bring the conflict in Yemen to an end, prevent bloodshed, and eliminate the suffering of the Yemeni people. However, the notoriously terrorist Houthi militia rejects peaceful solutions; the Houthis are persistently pushing for the military option to control more swathes of territory in Yemen, while committing daily attacks on civilians in the Kingdom, threatening international navigation and energy supplies 🌸



MAURITANIAN CHIEF-OF-STAFF AND UAE COMMANDER OF LAND FORCES VISIT IMCTC



The Secretary-General of IMCTC, Major-General Mohammed Saeed Al-Moghedi, received, September 7 of 2021, at the IMCTC headquarters, Riyadh, His Excellency Chief-of-Staff of the Mauritanian Armies, Lieutenant-General Mohamed Weld Bembe Ould Makt. In a similar vein, Secretary-General Al-Moghedi also received Major-General Saeed Rashid Al Shehhi, Commander of the UAE Land Forces, and the visiting delegation, September 15 of 2021.

The Secretary-General discussed with the two guests avenues of joint cooperation between IMCTC, the Mauritanian Republic and the UAE. The two guests were provided with a detailed explanation of the IMCTC counterterrorism efforts, and the tasks IMCTC is mandated and entrusted with to further coordinate the efforts of the IMCTC member countries 🌸

WOMEN AND TERRORISM

ARE WOMEN VICTIMS OR CRIMINALS?



Over the recent years, women have risen to prominence in terrorism and ideology of violent extremism; women and men have been equally implicated and involved in such quagmires. Against a backdrop of this gender-based development, women in terrorism have become glaringly noticeable, as they have been tasked and mandated with several responsibilities within terrorist organizations, and the increasing participation and engagement of women in logistics, recruitment, digital propaganda, espionage, and implementation of suicides.

Given the importance of the said issue, IMCTC organized and hosted a keynote lecture on the theme **VIOLENT EXTREMISM: NEGATIVE AND POSITIVE ROLES OF WOMEN**, at the IMCTC Headquarters in Riyadh, Thursday, September 9 of 2021, by Dr. Hayat Youssef Al-Sibyani, Assistant Professor of Theology and Doctrinal Approaches at Imam Muhammad bin Saud Islamic University, along with Ms. Fatima Musleh Al-Qahtani, Advisor to the King Abdelaziz Center for National Dialogue. The keynote lecture was moderated by Ms. Amal Al-Omari, Director of the General Department of Planning and Coordination at IMCTC, in the presence of the Secretary-General of IMCTC, Major-General Mohammed Saeed Al-Moghedi, delegates of the IMCTC member countries and IMCTC staff.

The two speakers presented the reasons for the involvement of women in terrorism and violent extremism, the development of their roles in terrorist organizations and groups, why women have risen to prominence, the most notorious risks associated with women engagement, and the most important methods and means to prevent women from joining such terrorist organizations and groups and their involvement in terrorism and violent extremism.

Reasons

Ms. Al-Qahtani discussed the reasons for the involvement of women in violent extremism through two hypotheses. First Hypothesis: women who have joined terrorist organizations are victims of violence and discrimination in their home countries. Second Hypothesis: societies that suffer from unemployment, ignorance, poverty and other social evils expel women and men, as well. As such, the chances of being recruited by extremist organizations easily increase. The factors that push men to become involved in violent extremism are shared by many women, whether they are psychological, political, religious, social, or economic factors as the following:

- ▶ Violence against women and violations of their rights, including actions committed during armed conflicts and post-conflicts or troubled situations.
- ▶ Women were raped; a research study conducted by the United Nations shows that 39% of women participating in terrorist activities were raped.
- ▶ Forced marriage of underage girls to extremists who force them to join extremist groups; they find themselves over time involved in violent extremism.
- ▶ Exploitation of women's intense passion by ideologues of violent extremism; research studies indicate that (3000) women joined ISIS among the 20.000 foreign fighters of terrorist organization.

Reality-Based Analysis

Dr. Al-Sibyani provided an in-depth analysis of the causes of women's extremism based on reality, revealed by rehabilitation practice and dialogues established with women who joined multinational terrorist groups. Dr. Al-Sibyani also indicated that most of the women interviewed confirmed that they were in a good living and social situation, but a sense of duty and doctrine-driven responsibility was behind their involvement in extremist groups.

In the same vein, Dr. Al-Sibyani classified the reasons for women's involvement in violent extremism into cognitive, mental, psychological and economic problems. The cognitive problem is related to false knowledge that results in ignorance of the provisions and degrees of Sharia evidence, the jurisprudence of problems, the interpretation of scriptures, and the purposes of Sharia, equally experienced by men and women. The mental problem is not limited to mental disorders that may be a cause of extremism or crime; it also includes the mental perceptions displayed by extremists manifested in false convictions. A telling example is the belief of the Kharijites and Takfiris that faith is impossible to be imperfect or lacks anything, or the impossibility of having simultaneously faith and immorality in one person. They also believe that people are of two types: a believer with complete faith, or an unbeliever in every aspect outside of faith.

Women are endowed with unique psychological and innate nature, which often influences greatly and clearly decision-making. This is manifested in passion, emotions, subordination to the authority of

the guardian, enthusiasm, impulsiveness, and mental processing. The psychological needs of women are also influential in such areas, such as need for safety, protection, love, appreciation for efforts, self-satisfaction, approval of others, shying away from marginalization, proving themselves albeit misplaced. Equally important, women are also attached to the idea of the brave and valiant one who does not fear the brunt of blame or criticism for the sake of Allah. This is an idea that may outdo the idea of an extremist woman's superhero.

The economic problem is related to the desire for prestige, money, and leadership, and the search for some types of freedom. Such passions are equally shared by men and women.

Women's Roles

Ms. Al-Qahtani identified the development and trajectory of women's roles in terrorist groups. Women's roles were initially limited to being wives, mothers, teachers or domestic workers. Over the course of time, the scope of such roles expanded significantly; women became involved in carrying out terrorist acts. A research study issued by the Counter-Terrorism Center at West Point Military College in the United States, August of 2017, revealed that the suicide operations carried out by Boko Haram relied mostly on women; the total number of suicide bombers sent by Boko Haram to destroy 247 different targets was 434 people, of whom 244 were female suicide bombers, (56%). The Global Terrorism Index (GTI) recorded an increase in the number of suicide attacks carried out by women from 4 in 2013 to 22 in 2018; while the GTI recorded more than 300 suicide attacks by women between 1985-2018.

Dr. Al-Sibyani also discussed the negative roles of women in violent extremism. Such roles are manifested by adopting violent extremism as well as joining and involving in such groups and activities. This is also showcased in alluring other girls, including their relatives or children, into espousing the ideology of extremism. When mothers adopt an extremist method in education, their children may follow suit, as well, in adopting violent extremism.

Still some mothers shore up and paper over their children's misbehavior from their fathers, lest they are told off toughly. They may stand in the face of fathers to prevent them from playing their roles in raising their children, which may develop into disastrous behaviors, which may in turn end with such children adopting extremism and attracting extremists. Many mothers of wanted persons mentioned that their children asked them not to tell their fathers what they intended to do, until their mothers were surprised that their sons disappeared and joined extremist groups.

Why Are Women Focal to Terrorists?

Dr. Al-Sibyani identified the reasons why women have been at the core priorities of terrorist groups, which are desperately seeking to attract and recruit them for key telling reasons, including:

- ▶ **Women Are Soft Power:** Women may get what they want without drawing attention; women can easily evade security inspection procedures, especially in some Muslim countries where women enjoy a social status and security protection and respect, which guarantees them privileges and freedom of movement without prejudice to their cover, which makes it easier for violent extremist groups to obtain security coverage if they engage them.
- ▶ **Exploitation of Women in Media:** Women may be exploited as a media cause. Violent extremism groups promote their cause, ideology and premise in the media, as a Muslim entity supporting women and their issues. It is manifested in creating and exporting the idea and model of a brave Muslim woman to the rest of the Muslim women to attract those looking for this idea, offering an opportunity to prove their leadership and political skills

- ▶ Marriage and childbearing to ensure continued survival of such organizations; children are born to parents who hold the same ideology.
- ▶ **Increasing Terrorist Group Members to Make up for Shortage:** This is commonly practiced regardless of gender and age group, so that the role of women in such groups would shift from being a mujahid's wife to being a mujahid woman, who plays advanced roles in planning and executing terrorist operations, suicide and other terrorist acts.
- ▶ **Ideological Impact of Extremist Ideologies on Children and Youth:** Women play vital and direct roles, such as delegates, ambassadors, or agents among other women.

Women and Counter-Extremism Efforts

Ms. Al-Qahtani further explained the importance of women in combating ideological extremism, highlighting that women can present a new perspective in combating violent extremism, and participate in various relevant activities. Women can contribute to the dialogues that take place with youth to discuss violent extremism and explore the methods leading to violent extremism and prevention methods and treatment approaches.

The representation of women in the sectors concerned with combating violent extremism contributes to increasing their awareness of the threat of violent extremism, new methods and manifestations, while providing women with ample opportunities conducive for learning new countermeasures and viable methods.


Women can also participate effectively in raising awareness and immunizing society, especially among women about the threats of terrorism and extremism, and the effects on individuals, families and societies.

Dr. Al-Sibyani highlighted the preventive roles of women in combating violent extremism in several contexts. At the family level, mothers raise their children ideologically, emotionally and behaviorally on moderation and tolerance, while monitoring and filtering their sources of learning and security awareness.

Mothers play proactive roles in preventing extremism and terrorism, by learning about the psychological and mental characteristics of their children, monitoring emergency transformations children experience, and early observation of signs of extremism that may crop up to nip in the bud any seeds of extremism.

In educational institutions, women contribute to implementing preventive awareness programs, instilling concepts of citizenship and benevolence, training in critical thinking, and avoiding unfair generalizations.

Key Recommendations

- ▶ Developing strategies to support women's ability to confront ideological and violent extremism.
- ▶ Developing educational programs and training courses to introduce women's rights and their roles in confronting and preventing extremism and terrorism.
- ▶ Using the media and social networks in promoting social cohesion, tolerance and inclusion.
- ▶ Developing female teachers through courses, workshops and discussion panels to promote anti-extremism skills.
- ▶ Highlighting and addressing women's issues in accordance with legitimacy, moderation and mercy, while laying bare unfounded allegations of terrorist groups against women 

SMART POWER

THE COUNTERTERRORISM STRATEGY OF THE KINGDOM OF BAHRAIN



■ Dr. Faleh Falihan Al-Ruwaili - Researcher in Extremism Issues, Bahrain

The Kingdom of Bahrain has adopted Smart Power as a counterterrorism strategy. Smart Power per se is a mix of soft power and hard power, which has come into play given the escalation of terrorist acts back in 2013. Both in principle and in practice, Smart Power is adopted as a political approach to address national issues within the institutional system to keep people away from violence in expressing their demands and aspirations. The said smart strategy includes an array of key components:

Security and Legality

Following the escalation of terrorist acts, an extraordinary session of the Bahraini National Council for Combating Terrorism was held on July 28 of 2013. Key recommendations were developed and publicly issued; all manifestations of demonstration, such as sit-ins, marches, and gathering in the capital are strictly prohibited; taking legal measures against political societies that incite or support acts of violence and terrorism; granting the security services the necessary powers to protect society from terrorism; enforcing heavy penalties for involving children in terrorist acts. With all the said must-do recommendations put into action, security operations have to be conducted in a faultless manner to target only those involved, without arbitrary or wrongful arrest campaigns to avoid causing problems and agitating public opinion.

The security counterterrorism measures in Bahrain are based on an integrated legislative structure. It issued legislation in 2004 to create a new section within the Public Prosecution, specialized in investigating terrorism cases, and issued the new Counterterrorism Law of 2006.

The Kingdom of Bahrain notched up many resounding successes in counterterrorism, due to the decision of King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa to reorganize the internal intelligence and counter-terrorism responsibilities of the Bahraini National Security Agency, which produced a clearer identification of tasks and responsibilities, allowing for more capacity building and increased cooperation between the relevant agencies.

The counter-terrorism measures in the Kingdom of Bahrain are strictly controlled to ensure respect for human rights. In November of 2011, the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry (BICI) issued a key report, and King Hamad introduced amendments that included abolishing the powers of arrest and detention.

Combating Terrorist Financing

The Kingdom of Bahrain criminalizes terrorist financing in accordance with international standards and immediately freezes suspicious financial assets; the Central Bank applies regulations stating that financial institutions and other relevant authorities do not have any dealings with entities

subject to UN sanctions. Equally important, the Bank's Policy Committee also develops Anti-Money Laundering (AML) and Combating Terrorist Financing (CTF) policies, implements the recommendations of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), and periodically reviews the licenses of financial institutions to ensure compliance with Central Bank of Bahrain regulations related to AML and CTF.

The Kingdom of Bahrain has evinced robust engagement in CTF and fill any potential loopholes that may be problematic. It also hosted the General Secretariat of the Middle East and North Africa Financial Action Task Force (MENAFATF), which is a regional body similar to the International Financial Action Task Force (FATF). In November 2017, the FATF evaluation team conducted a field visit to Bahrain to collect information for the second mutual evaluation report. The assigned team found that the Kingdom of Bahrain had made much progress in its investigations and prosecutions related to CTF. In 2017, the Kingdom of Bahrain was granted the membership of the Terrorist Financing Targeting Center (TFTC), headquartered in Riyadh, as well as the membership of the Bahraini Financial Intelligence Unit in the Egmont Group of Financial Intelligence Units.

In 2015, the Kingdom of Bahrain organized and participated in several high-profile meetings that focused on disrupting the financial support systems for terrorist

entities and sent a delegation comprising representatives of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Finance, and Interior to the three initial meetings of the Counter ISIS Financing Group in Rome, Jeddah and Washington. In April 2015, the Kingdom of Bahrain hosted the eighth CTF workshop between the European Union and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries. In November of 2015, the Kingdom of Bahrain hosted the Good Giving Conference, which is a CTF workshop to prevent the abuse of the charitable sector, and through international practices to ensure that charitable donations are not used for terrorist purposes.

The Kingdom of Bahrain was granted the membership of the Countering ISIS Financing Group (CIFG), hosted an anti-Hezbollah workshop in the United States and the GCC countries in 2016, and participated in three meetings of the Group in 2016 with delegations from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Interior, and the Central Bank of Bahrain.

On October 25 of 2017, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Kingdom of Bahrain imposed sanctions on several individuals and entities associated with ISIS and Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula for their support or financing of terrorism. On October 23 of 2018, sanctions were imposed on several individuals and entities associated with the Iranian Revolutionary Guard for their financial support. On August 28 of 2019, the Kingdom of Bahrain convicted nine individuals suspected of receiving and transferring funds to support terrorist activities and issued sanctions and prison sentences of up to six years. The Kingdom of Bahrain has also imposed sanctions against individuals and entities associated with the Iranian regime's terrorist support networks across the region. To this effect, the Kingdom of Bahrain has blacklisted Bahrain's Hezbollah, ISIS, February 14 Youth Alliance, Al-Ashtar Brigades, Popular Resistance Brigades, Mukhtar Brigades, and Bahrain Freedom Movement and are all considered terrorist entities.

Community Partnership

The sources of social and cultural risks and the threats necessitate building strong and real partnerships between community actors, such as government, civil society organizations, academic institutions, and the media. Therefore, the kingdom of Bahrain has implemented many community programs and activities:

- ▶ The TOGETHER program to combat violence and addiction, implemented by the Community Police, is a true embodiment of community partnership. The program is implemented in many schools across the country. More than 100,000 students benefit from the project.
- ▶ Positive communication and interaction with the community, promoted by the Security Media Department in the Ministry of Interior through various mass media communications, and through robust engagement in many community events. Again, editions of the SECURITY magazine are published in Arabic and English, including many security and social media coverage press interviews to educate and sensitize readership about security aspects and avoid risks, as well as familiarizing them with the efforts made by the departments of the Ministry of Interior. The Security Media Department places a special attention to children and raises security awareness through the WATANI magazine, which instills the values of loyalty and promotes the sense of belonging to the Kingdom, and to enhance the security culture among youth, in addition to making the WATANI magazine easily available and accessible through social media and websites, with more than half a million followers.

Regional and International Cooperation

The Kingdom of Bahrain cooperates closely with international partners throughout the region. It has ratified the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism in March 2008, and the Collective Security Agreement of the GCC countries on December 30 of 2012, which helps to combat transnational organized crime and terrorism by sharing information and close coordination. The Kingdom of Bahrain also participated in the meeting of the Counter-Terrorism and Border Security Working Group between the United States and the GCC countries in August 2015 in Riyadh. In 2016, Bahrain and the GCC countries led efforts in the Arab League and the OIC to blacklist Hezbollah as a terrorist group. In 2016, The Kingdom of Bahrain deepened and furthered its security cooperation with the GCC countries and participated in a large-scale multilateral counterterrorism exercise - Arab Gulf Security (1), which included joint training between police forces in several countries. The Bahraini forces have also engaged in

the Saudi-Led Coalition operations against Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula and against the Houthis in Yemen.

Anti-Extremism Efforts

The Ministry of Justice and Islamic Affairs leads the all-out efforts of the anti-extremism and violent extremism in the Kingdom of Bahrain. It has regularly organized key workshops and courses for religious scholars from the Sunni and Shiite sects, addressing the definition of extremism, associated effects, and prevention methods. The Ministry also conducted a review of Islamic studies curricula taught in schools. In 2016, the Bahraini government began developing a national strategy to combat violent extremism consistent with the United Nations Secretary-General's Action Plan to Prevent Violent Extremism and developed many governmental institutions and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). As of 2021, programs targeting youth from vulnerable population groups have come into play to prevent such target groups from extremism, rehabilitate prisoners with extremist ideologies, and integrate them into society.

In 2017, the Kingdom of Bahrain issued the Alternative Sentences Law, which aims to commute penalties for minor crimes that may lead to extremism and violence. In March 2019, Bahrain launched the National Plan to Strengthen the Sense of Belonging as part of national efforts to enhance citizenship, loyalty and the sense of belonging to the Kingdom.

Treatment Strategies Results

The counterterrorism smart strategy implemented by the Kingdom of Bahrain has achieved several positive results, such as undermining many cells affiliated with terrorist organizations over the past few years, including a 14-member cell that received training by the Iranian Revolutionary Guard in February 2017, and a 10-member cell, including a woman, were affiliated with the Al-Ashtar Brigades in August 2017, and an 18-member cell affiliated with the Qassem Soleimani Brigades in 2020. The traditional riots that harmed citizens, residents, security men have also decreased 

MEDIA AND TERRORISM AMBIGUOUS VISIONS



■ Karim Shafiq Mohammed - Egyptian Journalist

Given its digital manifestations, the media has become a breeding ground for extremist and excommunication-driven movements to create incubator environments favorably conducive for their fundamentalist ideologies. All propaganda platforms are critically important to such groups. Empowered by the state-of-the-art media technologies, they perform varying and complex functions to serve their political, ideological and methodological goals, most notorious is recruiting individuals and attracting sympathizers, while sowing ideological and political chaos against the opposition parties that renounce their aggressive practices and armed terrorist attacks.

Using Media Outlets

One of the goals of the indirect media extremist movements is to spread their ideologies among wide sectors to communicate and instill political and organizational information and experiences, while interlinking and yoking together with similar ideologies or different groups. They take this action into one step further to make narratives available for debate, discussion, and gaining legitimacy rather than being trapped into forced exclusion.

Several excommunication organizations, such as ISIS and Al-Qaeda, have been able to infamously use the influential and complex media tools. Consequently, globalization of terrorism, inter alia, has come into play. Terrorist groups, especially ISIS, have attached great importance to the media, and have taken advantage of the great technical progress to employ the smart online system to build their savage propaganda image. Terrorist groups have become ubiquitous rife across all digital applications, smart phones, modern media, and social networks through which they launch huge media campaigns. The media, with all its manifestations and sources, has become ideologically weaponized notoriously juggled by terrorists, achieving the same destructive results as physical lethal weapons.

Terrorist groups exploited media freedoms in some Western countries, drawing on the concepts and values of pluralistic and private media to promote their agendas and political ideologies, which in turn paper over and patch up their aggressive operations. Instead of being rejected, terrorist groups, are becoming sometimes accepted, while some others they sneak into a popular welcome. They have successfully drummed up for a sense of being oppressed; it is a propaganda that makes such terrorist groups fight off counternarratives. Unwittingly, the media pays a good service to terrorist excommunication for their propaganda to be promoted.

Terrorist fundamentalist groups do not care that their operations receive extensive media coverage; rather, they seek to always use such media channels for provocative purposes and justify their malicious ideologies through messages couched in terror and panic, making others fall victims to their clutches, mesmerized and hypnotized by graphic scenes that shock naïve followers.

Al-Qaeda and ISIS owned media companies, and press platforms, (visual, audio and print publications). For instance, they have radio stations that communicate their ideologies and beliefs that support terrorism across all regions and publish details of terrorist operations to gain support and attract supporters and sympathizers. The lifelong media of terrorists aims to reach public opinion and to propagandize their ideologies. Their media provides all takfiri groups with an important means of overt communications, researching into development methods for weapons and explosives, while pooling and soliciting donations from all over the world.

Dr. Nabil Abdel-Fattah, a researcher in extremism, states in a research study, featuring AMBIGUOUS VISIONS: MEDIA AND TERRORISM that the goal of a fundamentalist political organization that practices violence and terrorism is to communicate its political, religious, ethnic or national premises to public opinion at home and abroad, which over the course of time snowballing into

the associated members in detention centers or prisons, or to the political administrations of major countries.

Concept Generalization

The generalization of the concept and description of terrorism leads to the inclusion of various acts of violence, be it social, political, religious and sectarian; protests fueled by political and religious beliefs may sometimes be yoked together with the concept of terrorism. The generalization of the concept of terrorism gives the security and media agencies and politicking great resilience to include any security or political threats from illegal groups in the blacklisted organizations practicing violence and terrorism. The generalization and ambiguity of the concept of terrorism leads to the concealment of correct and accurate scientific and knowledge-based descriptions of political and social violence groups with sectarian and religious faces, not to mention that condemning extremist ideology and violent acts leads to a pattern of verbal counter-violence.

The media discourse is shrouded in ambiguity and deficiency related to the level of knowledge of fundamentalist groups, ideologies, references, methodological and organizational developments, and poor concept of political, media and security actions with these groups. In many cases, the use of the media by takfiri groups is to achieve specific political demands, such as releasing their members from prison, obtaining a ransom, or fulfilling a group's demand, as is the case of the kidnappings of foreign tourists.

Criticism and Objection

Some Western media have criticized and objected to their indirect influence in achieving the goal of spreading terrorist and violent operations among innocent children, women and men, and some politicians, writers and clerics.

This view is supported by Mohammed Al-Sammak, senior researcher. In his *TERRORISM AND POLITICAL VIOLENCE*, Al-Sammak states between the media and terrorism are yoked together by a problematic correlation; each side achieves some functional, professional and political goals, while some goals are overlapping. Walter Lacker, senior historian and politician, states that a media professional is the best friend of a terrorist, which is consistent with what one of the leaders of the terrorist organization Al-Qaeda also mentioned: a terrorist organization gains half the battle through media follow-up.

According to the Global Terrorism Index (GTI), Europeans spend less time online; only 56% of Western Europeans use Facebook vis-à-vis 68% of Northern Europeans. 30% of Western Europeans use Instagram vis-à-vis 40% of Northern Europeans, and 10% of Western Europeans play video games vis-à-vis 18% of North Americans.

According to the UN report, between January and April of 2020, INTERPOL monitored about 907,000 spam emails, 737 incidents caused by malware programs, and 48,000 links to malicious website addresses, all related to the COVID-19 pandemic. INTERPOL collected the said data based on a survey conducted between April and May in the 194 member countries. 48 countries responded, including 42% in Europe, 19% in Asia, 17% in Africa, 12% in America, and 10% in the Middle East.

Nabil Abdel-Fattah, senior researcher, states that ISIS has employed social media and networking for its agendas empowered by highly experienced technical capabilities, providing high levels

of maneuverability, banning, blocking, removing media content and creating new accounts under pseudonyms.

Threat of Violence

Given the multifaceted manifestations of violence, be it symbolic, physical, verbal and rhetorical, violence per se is an integral part of the political, religious, ideological, social and cultural fields in human societies, causing different and complex types of exclusion and segregation of social, national, linguistic, religious, sectarian, ethnic and regional groups.

Political, cultural and religious exclusion leads to a spate of frustrations, and an increased sense of injustice, grievance, hate and malice. Moreover, the psychological, social and political traumas may, at one stage, generate aggressive motives, which later produce a complex of violence, manifested in protest, insurgency or terrorism, targeting religious icons, or economic interests, ethnic, linguistic, or national groups, political leaders, writers, journalists and creators, or ordinary people who become human targets for acts of violence and terrorism to spread terror and fear.

Media Threat

Lacker confirms what Marshall McLuhan, the communication scholar, states "Without communication, there would be no terrorism". Their common vision reveals the fact that the media has a dangerous role in justifying and supporting terrorism, while giving it legitimacy through its various temptations.

In practice, we can use the analysis conducted by Michael Jeter, Professor of Economics and Finance at Yvette University in Medellin, Colombia. The research study was based on a sample of more than 60,000 terrorist attacks, between 1970 and 2012. The result reveals that terrorist attacks were on the increase. The global terrorism database recorded about 1,395 attacks in 1998. This number has doubled in recent decades, reaching close to 8,441 in 2012.

Jeter states that terrorist organizations receive wide media attention, and that terrorism is ubiquitously rampant on television, newspapers, and on radio. We also know that terrorists need media follow-up and spread their ideologies, sow fear and recruit followers; an attack in one country increases and multiplies the number of attacks in the same country by an average of 11% to 15%. The results indicate the need to reduce the reporting of acts of terrorism. This decreases the ripple effect of attacks. Jeter further explains: We may need to rethink the media follow-up that provokes terrorism and stop providing terrorists with a free media platform. Media follow-up of other events that cause more damage in the world should not be neglected, at the expense of media blitz in discussing terrorist crimes.

In Iraq, press and media follow-up coverage have aimed to establish the sectarian image to stoke takfiri groups, while sowing seeds of population divisions on a separatist, isolationist and sectarian basis, increasing sectarian dichotomies, tensions and sensitivity.

All official and private media institutions should be aware of the threats of their media coverage of violent terrorist acts. This helps to better promote media objectives in such a manner that waters down and dilutes the goals of terrorists. Governments should pay attention to media censorship, monitor the activities of terrorist media organizations, and take measures that limit and eliminate their media activities 🌀

2040 WORLD TRAJECTORY

Conflicts, Overpopulations, Environmental Degradation, and Grievances Instrumentalized and Weaponized by Terrorists



■ Editorial Team

The world is going through frenzied changes at a blistering pace, making it more difficult to provide futuristic insights, given the fact that the magnitude, speed, and scope of the vicissitudes of life are unprecedented; the results cannot be accurately expected. However, the intelligence centers can still map out the features of such changes and develop methods to evince readiness and preparedness. The Global Trends 2040 Report, issued by the National Intelligence Council in the United States of America every four years, since 1997, is one of the great efforts that have come into play in 2021. The said report provides featured insights, analyses and perceptions.

The 2021 Report is developed around two key principles: (1) identification and assessment of the major powers that shape the future strategic environment and (2) The investigation and exploration of how leaders and peoples act on and respond to such major powers. The analyses of the provided are divided into three sections:

Section One explores structural powers in four key areas: demographics, environment, economics, and technology. They make up key areas in shaping the future, are relatively global in scope, predictable with a reasonable degree of confidence based on the data made available.

Section Two examines how such structural powers interact to influence major activities emerging at three levels of analysis: individuals and society, states, and the international system.

Section Three identifies and uses several key uncertainties to create five future visions of the world in 2040. These scenarios are not intended to be predictions; they are meant to broaden the focus of possibilities, further exploring different combinations of

how structural powers, emerging movements, and key uncertainties operate.

Future Terrorism

The report expects that terrorist groups would continue to feed on societal fragmentation and poor management to achieve ideologies and access to power through violence. Over the next twenty years, the report predicts regional and local conflicts, overpopulations, environmental degradation, and democratic decline will likely exacerbate political, economic and social grievances that terrorists have long instrumentalized and weaponized to gain supporters and find havens to stage conspiracy, provide training, and orchestrate more organizational agendas. Such factors will have different dimensions and effects across many regions and countries. Equally important, internal migration from the countryside to the city is likely to deplete the resources of states and reduce global and domestic counterterrorism efforts. Terrorist groups based on religious foundations are likely to be the largest and are likely to represent the largest transnational threat because they draw on an influential ideological reference and the ability to capitalize on territories uncontrolled or poorly controlled by governments, especially in Africa, the Middle East and South Asia.

The right and left terrorists who promote a spate of issues, such as racism, environmental protection, and anti-government will flourish in Europe, Latin America, North America, and possibly other regions. The insurgencies will exploit sectarian conflicts over ethno-national and sectarian issues to stoke and fuel terrorism. Accordingly, some insurgencies will fade away, and others will be more powerful. Although some groups will aspire to launch cross-border attacks and maintain their cross-border links, most

attacks will still be launched by local groups against local targets to achieve local goals. Iranian and Lebanese Hezbollah efforts will increase the threat of disproportionate attacks on the interests of the United States, Israel, and countries in the Middle East.

Tactics of Terrorists and Counterterrorist Forces

It is likely that most terrorist attacks in the next 20 years will continue to use weapons similar to those currently available, such as small arms and Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) because it is easily accessible and reliable. However, technological advances, such as artificial intelligence (AI), biotechnology, and the Internet of Things (IoT) may provide opportunities for terrorists to launch high-profile attacks by developing new, more cross-border attack methods.

Terrorists will also seek weapons of mass destruction and advanced weapons to launch horrific attacks that cause mass casualties. For instance, ISIS in Iraq and Syria launched mustard gas attacks and used drones on a large scale, as do the Iranian-backed militants. Autonomous delivery vehicles guided by AI systems can enable a single terrorist to hit dozens of targets; technological advances can enable virtual terrorist training camps, connecting experienced terrorists with potential operatives in havens.

In turn, technological innovations that expand the surveillance capacity of local governments help combat terrorists. Governments are likely to significantly expand the volume and type of data they collect and provide the tools to screen such data. Advances in biometric identification, full motion video analysis, and metadata analysis will allow; Governments have improved capabilities to locate and track down terrorists. The development of precision long-range strike capabilities could undermine terrorist havens beyond the reach of police or infantry forces.

Reshaping Counterterrorism Landscape

The report suggests that the change in the movement and activity of the international force, especially in the wake of the rise of China and the competition of major powers, would challenge the efforts of counterterrorism led by the United States, and might make it more difficult to establish bilateral partnerships, or multilateral cooperation, regarding efforts to collect passenger data and sharing information to prevent terrorists from crossing borders and entering new conflict areas. Poor countries are likely to suffer from domestic threats, particularly if international counterterrorism is limited. Some countries facing existential threats, such as insurgencies in which terrorists are active, may choose to sign non-aggression pacts that make terrorists free to organize within their borders, while other countries are forced to submit to terrorist rule over large swaths of their territory.

Terrorist groups may be increasingly ubiquitous among additional non-state actors in conflicts, such as private companies and mercenaries. It may include some conflicts between states, and international interventions in local conflicts, more armed agents, private military companies, and terrorist organizations as agents and private sector companies can reduce the cost of equipping specialized units to fight these conflicts and find manpower in countries that suffer from population decline. Some groups can achieve goals more quickly using fewer forces and asymmetric techniques. Russia has used private groups and agencies in conflicts in Libya and Syria. Private companies have provided a wide

range of logistics and other services to coalition forces in Afghanistan, Iraq, and other countries.

Global Challenges

The report analyzes common global challenges, including climate changes, diseases, financial crises, technological transitions, and disruption. The report predicts that they will appear frequently and intensely in nearly every region and country, and create widespread pressures on nations and societies, and potentially disastrous shocks.

Unfortunately, the magnitude of transnational challenges exceeds the capacity of existing international systems and structures. A great mismatch exists at all levels between systems and organizations to address challenges and needs. The COVID-19 pandemic has provided a stark example of poor international coordination on health crises, mismatches between existing institutions and funding levels, and future health challenges.

At the level of countries and societies, a persistent gap is likely to exist between what people demand and what governments and companies can provide. In many parts of the world, people are constantly taking to the streets to express their dissatisfaction with the ability of governments to meet a wide range of needs and expectations. Against such imbalance, the old systems, most including bureaucratic institutions and practices and typology of governance will be unstable and, in some cases, weakened.

Many societies will be increasingly divided over the identity of affiliations; societies will be at greater risk of collapse. Relationships between societies and governments will come under constant strain, as states struggle to meet the constant demands of the population. Therefore, politics within states is likely to become more volatile and contentious, and no region, ideology, or system of governance seems to be unaffected by future changes or to have the keys to a more stable future.

Power Structure

- ▶ Slowing global population growth and rising life expectancy will help some developing economies; however, rapid aging and shrinking populations will affect many advanced economies. It will be difficult to build on decades of progress in education, health, and poverty reduction or even to maintain them.
- ▶ Climate change will greatly exacerbate risks to human and national security and force countries to make choices. Burdens will be unevenly distributed, increasing competition, contributing to instability, and encouraging political movements.
- ▶ Global economic trends will shape conditions within and between countries; the most prominent features of these trends are high national debt, a more complex and fragmented trading environment, spread of global trade in services, new employment disruptions, and the continued rise of powerful companies.
- ▶ The pace and scope of technological developments will increase, human expertise and capabilities will be transformed, new tensions and disruptions will be created for all actors, and global competition will increase in the essential elements of technical excellence 🌀

IMCTC AND FINANCIAL ACADEMY

HOLD TRAINING PROGRAM ON TERRORIST FINANCING RISKS



In close cooperation with the Financial Academy, IMCTC held a key training program on the theme THE RISKS OF TERRORISM OFFENCES, TERRORIST FINANCING, MONEY LAUNDERING, COUNTER-MEASURES & PREVENTION METHODS, in Riyadh. The two-phase program was administered as follows (August 10-11, 2021) and (September 12-22, 2021).

Conducted by Dr. Alaa Al-Din Al-Jazouli, a faculty member at the Islamic University of Madinah, the said program introduced the concepts of terrorist financing and money laundering, spelling out all associated threats and risks on society, especially the economic and social dimensions. It also provided a deep understanding of the indicators of suspicious terrorist financing and money laundering operations, identified prevention methods adopted to combat terrorist financing and money laundering, while keeping abreast of the international, regional and national relevant efforts and initiatives.

Equally important, the program highlighted the risks stemming from the charities covertly exploited in terrorist financing and money laundering operations. Core to the program was the legal, supervisory, and financial procedures proposed for regulating charities to be further enhanced in such a manner as to ward off any suspicious involvement in illegal activities.

Of great note, the program explained the methods and indicators that better pinpoint terrorist financing, highlighting the three-pronged supervisory strategy adopted to combat terrorist financing: (1) identify and assess the risks of terrorist financing; (2) identify the contribution of the relevant supervisory authorities to ensure the compliance of financial and business institutions; (3) develop an internal audit system to monitor that the basic requirements for counterterrorism and combating terrorist financing are made available, while carrying out periodic and continued reviews for such systems as to identify and address any weaknesses, while double-checking the commitment to implementing the systems in effect.

The program also analyzed the economic, political, social and security risks of money laundering and relevant countermeasures. Economic risks of money laundering include market distortion, instability, high inflation, low national income, price fluctuations in global stock exchanges, and distorting the image of local and

international financial markets. Social risks of money laundering include increased unemployment rates, living slow standards, crime and corruption high rates. Political and security risks include gangs committing money laundering crimes, corruption, penetration, and vulnerability of government structures and infrastructure.

More importantly, the program reviewed methods of money laundering through non-bank financial institutions, such as money transfer offices, exchange companies, insurance companies, and stockbrokers. The program provided respective models and examples for each.

The program also turned the spotlight on the methods of money laundering through non-financial businesses, such as trading in valuables, precious metals, jewels, antiques, business of accountants, auditors, lawyers, and people working in the real estate sector, tourism, travel agencies, or in car dealerships and rental exhibitions.

Dr. Al-Jazouli explained in detail the methods of combating money laundering and terrorist financing, according to the risk assessment approach provided for in the recommendations of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), including, inter alia, identifying and monitoring risks accurately, developing appropriate policies, criminal justice law, enforcement laws, financial law and relevant regulations, transparency, clarity, and serious international close cooperation. Furthermore, Dr. Al-Jazouli brought to focus other international frameworks for combating money laundering and terrorist financing other than the FATF, such as the Egmont Group of Financial Intelligence Units, the Basel Committee on Banking Supervision (BCBS), the World Bank (WB), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the Wolfsberg Group Directives of the European Union – First Directive 1991; Second Directive 2001; Third Directive 2005).

Finally, the program also included a presentation of the efforts made by the Arab and Muslim countries, and acknowledgment of their positive initiatives to combat terrorist financing and money laundering. Given their enormous importance and excellence, the said initiatives need to be constantly developed based on their long-standing commitment of continued governance 🌸

DELEGATES OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA ASSUME RESPONSIBILITIES AT IMCTC



Delegates of the Federal Republic of Nigeria assume their respective responsibilities at the IMCTC headquarters, Riyadh, September 6 of 2021, alongside the 25 IMCTC member countries. The IMCTC Secretary-General, Major-General Mohammed Saeed Al-Moghedi, welcomed the delegates of Nigeria, highlighting the great roles assigned to the delegates in achieving the IMCTC

goals and implementing the initiatives in various counterterrorism domains.

Of great note, IMCTC brings together in perfect harmony 41 member countries, working in tandem to better coordinate their counterterrorism efforts and support international efforts aimed at maintaining international peace and security 🌸

IMCTC Secretary-General Visits General Staff of Kuwaiti Army and Ministry of Media



His Excellency the Chief of the General Staff of the Kuwaiti Army, Lieutenant-General Khaled Saleh Al-Sabah, received, August 30 of 2021, at the headquarters of the Kuwaiti Chief-of-Staff in the State of Kuwait, the Secretary-General of IMCTC, Major-General Mohammed Saeed Al-Moghedi.

The two sides discussed avenues of joint cooperation between IMCTC and the State of Kuwait on issues of common interest. Major-General Al-Moghedi provided an overview of the IMCTC counterterrorism efforts. IMCTC is entrusted and mandated with enhancing cooperation among the IMCTC member countries, pro-

moting legitimacy, independence, coordination and engagement, and while ensuring that the counterterrorism actions and efforts made by the IMCTC member countries are in perfect harmony with international regulations, norms and laws.

In a similar vein, Major-General Al-Moghedi also visited the headquarters of the Kuwaiti Ministry of Media, September 1 of 2021, where he held a meeting with Mr. Faisal Al-Mutalaqem, Assistant Undersecretary of the Ministry of Media for External media, and other senior officials of the Ministry 🌸

IMCTC MARKS THE 91 NATIONAL DAY OF THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA



Saudi Arabia's Delegates to IMCTC held a ceremony celebrating 91 National Day of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia at the IMCTC headquarters, Riyadh, led by IMCTC Secretary-General and Military Commander, alongside the delegates of the IMCTC member countries, and IMCTC staff.

Marking the festive occasion, Major-General Dhafir Al-Shehri, Delegate of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to IMCTC, delivered a keynote speech, highlighting the Kingdom's achievements at the national, regional and international levels, underscoring the Saudi leading role in the global economy, while best providing optimal services for Muslims and the Two Holy Mosques, and the unremitting efforts that paid off in establishing the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and the Muslim World League. Major-General Al-Shehri commended the Kingdom's key role in counterterrorism and anti-extremism efforts, best showcased in IMCTC, which is entrusted and

mandated with countering terrorism, refuting and laying bare hate speech, coordinating all-out efforts made in the war on terrorism and violent extremism. "The Kingdom today is a quintessential model in the Middle East for continued modernization, development and progress across all fields, in perfect harmony with the Kingdom's Vision 2030; the Kingdom has become a good example to follow in observing and providing the optimal welfare equally for citizens and residents across social, educational, health, and security fields", added Major-General Al-Shehri.

The IMCTC delegates and staff extended to the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman bin Abdulaziz and His Royal Highness Crown Prince, Prince Mohammad bin Salman, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense, may Allah protect and safeguard them, the sincerest congratulations on this joyous and auspicious occasion 🌸

IMCTC AT THE RIYADH INTERNATIONAL BOOK FAIR 2021

IMCTC will be an added value and a breath of fresh air to the 2021 Riyadh International Book Fair, to be held for 10 days, as of October 1, 2021.

The IMCTC pavilion at the 2021 Riyadh International Book Fair includes selected samples of the IMCTC publications across the four key domains, showcased by (1) ALTAHALOF, which is a quarterly magazine issued in Arabic, English and French of selective themes to discuss counterterrorism efforts from ideology and media perspectives; (2) ALLIED, which is issued monthly in Arabic, English and French, and discusses national, regional and global developments in counterterrorism; (3) BOOK REVIEW, which is a monthly publication that provides a review of the latest books and research studies on terrorism issues; (4) INTERNATIONAL REPORTS, which provides a summary of the key reports issued by international bodies and research centers on terrorism issues.

The Secretary-General of IMCTC, Major-General Mohammed Saeed Al-Mogheidi, stated that the IMCTC participation in the 2021 Riyadh International Book Fair highlights the IMCTC awareness of the importance of the cultural and educational roles played in counterterrorism by demystifying the pure truth of Islam, debunking and laying bare extremist concepts and ideologies, while providing protection for the wider communities.

Of great note, the 2021 Riyadh International Book Fair will be launched under the auspices of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman bin Abdulaziz, at the Riyadh Front, with key publishing houses coming from different countries. The 2021 Fair, supervised by the Literature, Publishing and Translation Authority, will herald a significant expansion in various activities and events, representing 16 cultural sectors. The Republic of Iraq is the guest of honor for the 2021 Fair 🌸

