

Terrorism in Context of Globalization, Justness of “War on Terror”

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Abstract

Terrorism has posed a threat to human society since times immemorial. People pursuing their ordinary lives often find themselves as targets of indiscriminate violence unleashed by the terrorist activities. The targets of terrorists are not well-known players on the domestic or international scene but bystanders. Terror attacks have not only leashed untold suffering on the lives and property of common people but also affected the course of history and the destiny of nations. The 20th century has also seen a spate of terrorist acts across the world. Conflicts in some continents of the world have been characterised by acts of violence against civilians which were perpetrated with the sole aim of terrorising them.⁹⁹ Threat of violence poses an increasing threat to international security.

Terrorism in Context of Globalization

Terrorism refers to the damage to the financial incomes of different persons, to the disturbance of public tranquillity, physical damage to a particular person, etc. The primary objective of a terrorist group is not always a person, but they aim to attack more large groups, profitable organizations, causing them huge financial damage. The overall effect of terrorism is to reduce the overall capital of

⁹⁹ Parveen Malik, “International Humanitarian Law and Challenges of Terrorism”, 10 CPJLJ (2020) 152.

a society.¹⁰⁰ Many scholars have stated in the recent years terrorist attacks have occurred; it is primarily due to the result of globalization.

Globalization, in general, can be defined as the free movement of capital, goods, knowledge, manpower and services among countries due to the increased technological and scientific improvements and diminished state-centric power. Globalization is the process of integration of cultures. It comes out of the interaction of people from different cultures and societies. Globalization is inherently an economic-originated notion. However, currently it has gained a meaning embracing a political, economic, cultural, sociological and technological formation, which has led to a more integrated world. Ideologically, it was defined as a new phase of capitalism and interrelated with postmodernism.¹⁰¹

The linkage between increased terrorist activities and globalization can hardly be proven due to some difficulties. First, it is difficult to state that globalization is the only driven-factor behind the outnumbered terrorism. Second, violent methods aiming at political aspirations have existed before global process. There is no clear-cut finding that delineates or justifies this thesis. However, it can be argued that globalism has created some conditions that can trigger the use of violence in order to realize political aims. As globalization is deemed the culprit of the uneven distribution of wealth, growth of poverty, de-emphasis of nation states, and regional impoverishment, the violence or use of power against the globalism can be applied and these acts can be assessed as terror by global factors.¹⁰² Globalization is responsible for economic and social inequality, in other words, is a cause for social polarization within the country.¹⁰³ So out of resentment, anger, and resentment, different people and groups can use terrorism as a way of expressing their resentment and nervousness.

¹⁰⁰ Genc Mekaj, Kreshnik Aliaj, “Globalisation as a facilitator of terrorism”, ILIRIA International Review – Vol 8, No 1 (2018).

¹⁰¹ Sertif Demir, Ali Bilgin Varlik, “Globalization, Terrorism and the State”, ALTERNATIVES TURKISH JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS.

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Zimmermann, E., “Globalization and terrorism. European Journal of Political Economy”, 27, S152–S161 (2011).

Globalization also brings inequality and some states cannot protect groups that are affected by the global economic challenges facing the world.¹⁰⁴ Global inequalities caused by globalization can have internal impacts and effects in certain countries which pose internal challenges as a cause of globalization and the challenges that globalization brings. This inequality is largely exploited by terrorist groups who, taking advantage of the challenges and opportunities, try to deport them into the creation of their illegal fields and networks. Thus, the spread and development of terrorism around the world today have occurred precisely because of globalization and its aid.¹⁰⁵

With the increase of technological advancements globally, it is important to highlight how these strategies have made it easier for terrorists to orchestrate and carry out attacks as well as promote their ideals. The emergence of new technology and its rapid and large-scale advancement is one of the reasons which facilitates terrorism. The internet is a useful tool to promote terror-based ideas. There are websites, chatrooms, and software programs that allow the ideas to be integrated and have been an advantage for terrorists. “The internet for the most part is an anonymous forum that provides everyday users to establish communication among various networks.”¹⁰⁶ “Drastic advancements in technology and communication have increased the speed of globalization.”¹⁰⁷

These advancements of new technologies results in an increase in access on a global scale. The connection of globalization between countries and the individuals that reside in them has made the realization of terrorist goals become a reality. The use of social media networks also is a reason why terrorism has been widespread. Social media integrates and connects people from all over the world. A perfect example of a terrorist group that illustrates this is The Islamic State of Syria and Iraq. They have used the

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ Genc Mekaj, “Globalization and Rise of Terrorism”, Path of Science, Vol. 6, No 9, (2020).

¹⁰⁶ Goodman, S. E., Kirk, J. C., & Kirk, M. H., “Cyberspace as a medium for terrorists. Technological Forecasting and Social Change”, 74(2), 193–210, (2007).

¹⁰⁷ Kirshner, J., “Globalization and National Security”, New York: Routledge, (2013).

interconnectedness of the internet and technology to recruit soldiers from other countries to orchestrate and participate in their terrorist attacks. This link that has been established for years has allowed terrorists to attack in foreign countries¹⁰⁸.

Globalization is a facilitator for terrorism as things have become easier because of the sharing of resources and weapons. While countries are notorious for doing this, the same can be said about terrorist groups as well. Production, profession, and the exchange of information within and between terrorist teams have additionally been impacted by technical advancement, professional openness, and international market adjustments. It has facilitated communication and has allowed terrorist groups to invite members into their organizations increasing their numbers astronomically. Terrorists have exploited globalization and have been using it to increase their resilience, resources and presence globally.¹⁰⁹ Terrorism has existed before the integration of technological advancements. However, these individuals using it has allowed it to spread more because of the impact of globalization.¹¹⁰

The possible measures against international terrorism could be as follows:

- 1) to eliminate the communication channels between various terrorist organizations and criminal groups operating in the territory of any state;
- 2) to shut down all sites and Internet resources that contain material of a terrorist nature and/or propaganda of extremist ideas;
- 3) to create a common international database on terrorism, which will serve as a tool for collecting and analysing information on terrorist elements, groups, movements and organizations around the world;

¹⁰⁸ Mekaj, M. G., & Aliaj, M. K., “Globalisation as a facilitator of terrorism”, ILIRIA International Review, (2018).

¹⁰⁹ “The Effect of Globalization on Terrorism”, Philip R. Passante, (2021).

¹¹⁰ Zimmermann, E., “Globalization and Terrorism. European Journal of Political Economy”, 27: S152–S161, (2011).

4) to hold a regular dialogue with the leading politicians, cultural and religious leaders to disseminate ideas to combat terrorism, explaining the terrorists' real objectives, thus creating in civilians' minds the image of the real enemy – the terrorism;

5) to formulate the so-called 'counter-terrorist ideology'.¹¹¹

War on Terror

On 20 September 2001, in an address to a Joint Session of Congress and the American people, President George W Bush declared a 'war on terror' immediately in the aftermath of 9/11 attacks. He demanded that the Taliban stop harbouring members of Al-Qaeda, and warned that the Global War on Terror (GWOT) would not end until terrorism was eradicated.¹¹²

The concept of the 'war on terror' has proven to be both an attractive and a potent rhetorical device. It has been adopted and elaborated upon by political leaders around the world, particularly in the context of military action in Afghanistan and Iraq.¹¹³ The targets of the campaign are primarily extremist groups located throughout the Muslim world, with the most prominent groups being Al-Qaeda, the Islamic State and their various franchise groups.¹¹⁴ The successes of the first years of the war on terrorism included the arrest of hundreds of terrorist suspects around the world, the prevention of further large-scale terrorist attacks on the American mainland, the toppling of the Taliban regime and subsequent closure of terrorist-training camps in Afghanistan, the capture or elimination of many of Al-Qaeda's senior members, and increased levels of international cooperation in global counterterrorism efforts.¹¹⁵

However, critics argued that the failures of America's counterterrorism campaign outweighed its successes. According to many accounts, the GWOT has failed miserably. They contended that the war in Afghanistan had effectively scattered the al-Qaeda network, thereby making it even harder to counteract, and that the attacks in Afghanistan and Iraq had increased anti-Americanism among the world's Muslims, thereby amplifying the message of militant Islam and uniting disparate groups in a common cause.¹¹⁶ Other critics alleged that the war on terrorism was a contrived smokescreen for the pursuit of a larger U.S. geopolitical agenda that included controlling global oil reserves, increasing defence spending, expanding the country's international military presence, and countering the strategic challenge posed by various regional powers. Far from meeting its objective of eradicating all international terrorists, it has had the effect of fuelling the most dramatic and dangerous rise in terrorism ever seen including the emergence of the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL).¹¹⁷

In Iraq, U.S. forces had overthrown the government of Saddam Hussein in 2003, and U.S. war planners had underestimated the difficulties of building a functioning government from scratch and neglected to consider how this effort could be complicated by Iraq's sectarian tensions, which had been held in check by Saddam's repressive regime but were unleashed by his removal. By late 2004 it was clear that Iraq was sinking into chaos and civil war; estimates of the number of Iraqi civilians killed during the period of maximum violence—roughly 2004 to 2007—vary widely but generally exceed 200,000. U.S. casualties during this period far outnumbered those suffered during the initial 2003 invasion. Afghanistan, which for several years had seemed to be under control, soon followed a similar trajectory, and by 2006 the U.S. was facing a full-blown insurgency there led by a reconstituted Taliban.

¹¹¹ Alexander S. Rozanov, "Combating International Terrorism in the Context of Globalization, Globalistics and Globalization Studies", 281–284.

¹¹² <https://www.georgewbushlibrary.gov/research/topic-guides/global-war-terror>

¹¹³ Miriam Gani and Penelope Mathew, "Ch 1: Introduction: Letters from the Front, Fresh Perspectives on the 'War on Terror'", ANU Press.

¹¹⁴ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/War_on_terror.

¹¹⁵ <https://www.britannica.com/topic/war-on-terrorism>.

¹¹⁶ Tharanga Yakupitiyage, "Global War on Terror Coincides with Dramatic Increase of Terrorism"

<http://www.commondreams.org/news/2015/11/26/global-war-terror-coincides-dramatic-increase-terrorism>

¹¹⁷ Nicolas J.S. Davies D, "We Need to Ent the Disastrous Failure of the War on Terror"

<http://www.alternet.org/world/disastrous-andfailed-war-terror>

The Bush administration faced domestic and international criticism for actions that it deemed necessary to fight terrorism but which critics considered to be immoral, illegal, or both. These included the detention of accused enemy combatants without trial at Guantánamo Bay and at several secret prisons outside the United States, the use of torture against these detainees in an effort to extract intelligence, and the use of unmanned combat drones to kill suspected enemies in countries far beyond the battlefields of Iraq and Afghanistan.¹¹⁸

By the end of Bush's presidency, public opinion had turned negative concerning his handling of the Iraq War and other national security matters. This discontent helped Barack Obama, an outspoken critic of Bush's foreign policy, win the presidency in 2008. Under the new administration, the expression *war on terrorism*—still closely associated with Bush policies—quickly disappeared from official communications. Obama made the rejection explicit in a 2013 speech in which he stated that the United States would eschew a boundless, vaguely defined “global war on terrorism” in favour of more focused actions against specific hostile groups. Under Obama, the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan were gradually wound down, although at the end of Obama's presidency in 2016 there were still U.S. troops in both countries.¹¹⁹

Conclusion

Globalization is a matter of historical development, which establishes Western values, institutions, interests, and security conditions while spreading out the capitalist economic, social and political order with the help of monetary, technological, and military power. Globalization is a fact and a historical process with its pluses and minuses but terrorism is a moral defect and a crime against humanity. Any organization uses terrorist acts cannot be justified for any reason. Nothing legitimizes terrorism; it cannot be a compelling excuse neither to civilize savages

nor to fight against superior powers. Simply murder of innocent people is not excusable. There is a cause-effect relationship between globalization and instability which stems from the adverse effects of globalization, the imbalance of power, disparity of players; and power vacuum. All these three factors have created a fragile environment for stability as well as a favourable ground for terrorism. Globalization, while breaking the walls of the nation state and supporting disparities in the societies on the one hand, has alienated those who are not part of it and provoked the tendency of violence. For sure globalization has created security concerns more than the stability it produced. Failed states, minorities and separatists used terrorism to counterbalance the power gap or to solidify their authority. Collapse of bipolar security environment and impoverishment of the nation-state as a consequence of globalization have exacerbated instability. As one of the most severe element of instability, terrorist organizations gain ground by exploiting consequences of globalization and pose threat by using advantages of globalization. Therefore, there is an indirect relation between globalization and terrorism¹²⁰. It has now been established and acknowledged that the GWOT has resulted in gross human rights violations. Since September 2001, the US government has been directly responsible for a broad array of serious human rights violations in fighting terrorism, including torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, extraordinary rendition, enforced disappearance, arbitrary detention, and unfair trials.¹²¹ Despite the absolute prohibition of torture by international law, it was not only used in Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq and at the Guantanamo Bay camps, but also its use was defended at the time.¹²² Further, the large number of civilian casualties inflicted as collateral damage in the course of aerial bombing raids by the US and its allies in Afghanistan and Iraq, even if unintended, were foreseeable and hence no less

¹¹⁸ “Globalization, Terrorism and the State, Sertif Demir, Ali Bilgin Varhk”, ALTERNATIVES TURKISH JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS.

¹¹⁹ <https://www.britannica.com/topic/war-on-terrorism>.

¹²⁰ Sertif Demir, Ali Bilgin Varhk, “Globalization, Terrorism and the State”, ALTERNATIVES TURKISH JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS.

¹²¹ Joanne Mariner, “U.S. Human Rights Abuse in the War on Terror” <http://www.couterpunch.org/2009/03/17/u-s-human-rights-abuses-in-the-war-on-terror/>

¹²² Jeremy Waldron, “Torture, Terror, and Trade-Offs: Philosophy for the White House”, 186-87, Oxford University Press, Oxford, (2010).

repugnant. The war on terror became war on human rights.¹²³

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¹²³ David Rose, “Guantanamo: The War on Human Rights”, New Press, New York, (2004).