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COUNTERING THE THREAT OF THE GLOBALIZATION OF MIDDLE EASTERN TERRORISM

A PERSPECTIVE FROM RUSSIA AND ISRAELN

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Introduction

Terror began spreading internationally in the late 1960s and early 1970s through the actions of secular ideological and separatist terrorist organizations. Although terrorism was long perceived as an asymmetrical threat as Islamist, and primarily Sunni terrorist organizations gradually gained strength, it eventually evolved into a major global threat to international security. In the late 1980s, many radical Islamist organizations pledged their allegiance to a new force – al-Qaeda¹ (founded in 1988), one of the largest ultra-radical international terrorist organizations of the Wahhabi branch of Islam. Al-Qaeda has gained notoriety as a major and influential player capable of organizing attacks in different parts of the world. Salafi jihadist terrorism fully positioned itself in the international arena with the terrorist attacks of 2001 in the United States.

During the decade following those attacks, the world community mounted a unified struggle against al-Qaeda and its affiliates and came to believe that it was managing to prevent most of the terrorist attacks that the organization planned. The elimination of key al-Qaeda figures, including its leader, Osama bin Laden, led to the conviction that the organization was essentially liquidated and the Salafi jihadist camp effectively destroyed. However, the events of the “Arab Spring” – that inflamed the entire Middle East – proved that assumption wrong.

Many experts initially believed that the “Arab Spring” would deliver a fatal blow to global jihadist forces because its leaders espoused liberal slogans and the movement achieved its early successes through non-violent means that were clearly contrary to the ideology and practices of al-Qaeda. It later became evident, however, that the fall of authoritarian Arab regimes and the ensuing chaos in a number of Middle Eastern countries presented the followers of Salafi jihadism with an ideal opportunity to establish control over the territory of those crumbling countries, and for creating bridgeheads for further expansion. During the initial stages of the “Arab

Spring,” a network of criminal and terrorist organizations, radical armed groups, and extremist political structures took shape in the Middle East, then expanded aggressively and formed the backbone of a “global jihad.”² The terrorist organizations based in the Middle East belong to both the Sunni and Shiite branches of Islam.

Global terrorism is now an acute challenge for countries beyond the Middle East as well. Terrorist organizations are armed with modern weapons and participate in all conflicts in the Middle East. Major regional conflict zones serve as breeding grounds for new outbreaks of terrorism, the evolution of its dominant ideological forms, and the metamorphosis of its organizational structures. These organizations have further developed their tactics as well as the means and methods for the technical, financial, and, most importantly, informational and communications-related aspects of carrying out terrorist attacks. They have also expanded the range of their targets,³ and a constantly increasing number of people die at their hands every year. According to the Global Terrorism Index for 2015, the number of those killed by terrorist acts around the world rose by 80 percent from 2013 to 2014, reaching 14,574 dead.⁴

As terrorism spreads beyond the confines of the Middle East, it becomes more pronounced in some countries and regions than in others. However, Sunni terrorist organizations have

² *Islamist Terrorism and Democracy in the Middle East*. Cambridge University Press: Miller B. *Warm Peace and Hot War: the “Arab Spring” and the Post-Cold War International Order*//Annual Meeting of the American Political Sciences Association, Chicago, August 29-September 1, 2013. P.5–6.

³ Степанова Е.А. Долгосрочный прогноз тенденций в области терроризма (http://www.imemo.ru/files/File/magazines/puty_miru/2016/01/05_Stepanova.pdf)

⁴ *The Index* was developed by an international group of experts under the auspices of the Institute for Economics and Peace at the University of Sydney, Australia. The computational portion is based on information from the Global Terrorism Database of the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism at the University of Maryland. It is the world’s largest statistical database on terrorist activity and contains information on more than 100,000 acts of terrorism committed in the last 10 years. *Terrorism Index 2015* <http://economicsandpeace.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Global-Terrorism-Index-2015.pdf>

¹ *Banned in Russia*. – Ed. note.

proven to be the most active globally. Events in the Middle East have led to the formation of a new Sunni terrorist organization known as the “Islamic State” (ISIL).⁵ The Islamic State is the most active in developing the infrastructure of jihadist organizations around the world. As of this writing, the two largest terrorist organizations – Boko Haram (Nigeria) and the Islamic State (Iraq) – are responsible for 51 percent of all terrorism-related deaths in the world. In the years since it was established, ISIL has been directly or indirectly responsible for 20,000 battlefield deaths in the Middle East, while all other state and non-governmental participants in those conflicts were responsible for a combined 6,000 deaths.⁶

The world community faces the task of developing the necessary measures to combat the threat of terrorism on a global scale. Every state, including Russia, attempts to analyze the nature of this phenomenon and to develop its

own method for countering this evil. The authors believe that an analysis of terrorist activity and a system of counter-terrorism measures developed by the Israeli expert community hold particular promise. After all, Israel has had to repel the terrorist threat constantly throughout its history. The Israeli leadership closely monitors Islamists’ ambitions for reshaping the entire structure of the Middle East region. This is one of the many reasons Israel is determined to oppose radical Islam in the Middle East, including its manifestation through ISIL.

An increasing number of books and articles have appeared in recent years describing the experience of Israeli intelligence agencies in eliminating and preventing the terrorist threat to that state. This report focuses on an analysis by Russian and Israeli experts of the phenomenon defined as “the internationalization of Middle Eastern terrorism” and on practical tasks for countering that threat.

The Islamic State and Rivalries Within the Sunni Terrorist Camp

The Islamic State has adopted a policy of terror in its most expansionist sense in order to establish an Islamic empire or caliphate throughout the Middle East and beyond. According to Russian researcher Y. Stepanova, ISIL is the most prominent example of the interplay of three main trends in the trans-internationalization of modern terrorism – regionalization, the formation of fragmented networks, and the increased “migration” of armed terrorists following a “rehashed” version of “global jihad” ideology with the aim of reproducing the historical “Islamic

caliphate” on the territory of Iraq and Syria.⁷ The “Great Caliphate” project rejects the very principle of dividing the global Muslim community into nation states, and therefore represents a threat to all Muslim countries. By naming its leader, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, as caliph – a rather odd move in the modern Muslim world – ISIL is attempting to lend legitimacy to its goals and decisions and to make them binding on all Muslims. That move provoked considerable opposition in the Muslim world, including among its highest spiritual authorities. That leadership claim by ISIL caused

⁵ *Banned in Russia.* – Ed. note.

⁶ *Terrorism Index 2015* <http://economicsandpeace.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Global-Terrorism-Index-2015.pdf>

⁷ *Степанова Е.А. Долгосрочный прогноз тенденций в области терроризма.* http://www.imemo.ru/files/File/magazines/puty_miru/2016/01/05_Stepanova.pdf

a split in the Sunni jihad movement and created two rival camps: those forces that support ISIL and those that remain loyal to al-Qaeda. But despite that rivalry, both groups advocate the same Salafi jihadist ideology and aim to extend the authority of the Islamic caliphate throughout the world.

The Islamic State has the upper hand in that contest because it has gained control over wide stretches of territory and commands considerable financial and military resources – both of which, however, have been in decline lately. It has 34 so-called “provinces” or “wilayah” around the world, as well as partners in Africa, the Arabian Peninsula, countries of the Maghreb region, the Caucasus, and South Asia. The Islamic State uses terror as an important element of armed struggle and boasts brutal mass killings as its trademark. It employs religious intolerance and force to coerce Muslims to support the idea of a caliphate as a cross-border and transnational authority over mankind.

Contrary to the widely held belief in the West that “global jihadism” consists of a single threat to the world, Russian and Israeli analysts stress that this phenomenon includes a variety of different actors, individuals, communities, and alliances that are often locked in a bitter struggle for supremacy. At the same time, the ranks of jihadist organizations often swell as members of like-minded groups pledge their allegiance through a process of affiliation. This increases their mutual interaction and is a characteristic feature and an important tool that enables them to strengthen their international activities. Their cooperation on ideological and practical matters greatly enhances their survivability, strategies, and tactics.⁸ Renowned Israeli terrorism researcher A. Moghadam proposed a typology of interactions between terrorist organizations and groups.⁹ The typology describes different levels of interaction based on the dynamics

⁸ Moghadam Assaf. *Terrorist Affiliations in Context: A Typology of Terrorist Inter-Group Cooperation*. March 19, 2015 <https://www.ctc.usma.edu/posts/terrorist-affiliations-in-context-a-typology-of-terrorist-inter-group-cooperation>

⁹ Moghadam Assaf. *Terrorist Affiliations in Context: A Typology of Terrorist Inter-Group Cooperation*. March 19, 2015 <https://www.ctc.usma.edu/posts/terrorist-affiliations-in-context-a-typology-of-terrorist-inter-group-cooperation>

of the terrorist activities the organizations conduct, and also their strengths and weaknesses. More or less stable organizations exhibit the highest levels of cooperation. These include Hezbollah after groups of the Amal Movement, the Islamic Students Union, the Dawa Party in Lebanon, and other minor jihadist groups merged with it. Another example is the merger between the Egyptian Islamic Jihad and the al-Qaeda of Osama bin Laden, that gave rise to a new organization, Qaedat al-Jihad.¹⁰ A low level of interaction in this typology indicates temporary tactical cooperation for a specific purpose between individual groups or units.¹¹ The ties linking individual jihadists in terrorist groups and organizations are not only capable of strengthening or intensifying their activities at any time, but also pose a grave threat to international security over the long term and contribute to the emergence of future conflicts. Understanding this phenomenon is an important part of developing effective counter-terrorism strategies and also presents opportunities for practical counter-terrorism operations.¹²

In creating its mission and image, ISIL places particular importance on the concept of martyrdom in the name of God as the ideal in the fight for the “just kingdom” of the caliphate, and uses it as a means for ousting al-Qaeda from the “holy crusade.” It also relies on the services of volunteers and individual militants – so-called “lone wolves” – living in other countries to expand the geographic scope of its activities. Such individuals carry out most of the terrorist attacks in the West. In fact, “lone wolves” belonging to or acting in the name of various terrorist groups were responsible for 75% of all

¹⁰ Levitt Matthew, *Hezbollah: The Global Footprint of Lebanon's Party of God* Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2013, p. 11. See also Blanford Nicholas, *Warriors of God: Inside Hezbollah's Thirty Year Struggle against Israel* New York: Random House, 2011, pp. 46–48.

¹¹ For example, U.S. operations in Iraq in March 2003 led Baathists and jihadists to form a temporary alliance to resist the occupation. Mohammed M. Hafez, *Suicide Bombers in Iraq: The Strategy and Ideology of Martyrdom* Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2007, pp. 52–54.

¹² Mohammed M. Hafez, *Suicide Bombers in Iraq: The Strategy and Ideology of Martyrdom* Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2007, pp. 52–54.

terrorism-related deaths in the West since 2006.¹³ To some extent, that is the realization of a strategy for terror preached a decade ago by former al-Qaeda ideologist Abu Musab al-Suri. According to that theory, only a high number of terrorist attacks can wear down Western intelligence agencies and sow a feeling of insecurity among the civilian population, deepening people's distrust of their leaders.¹⁴

The Islamic State is not only the most extreme and aggressive manifestation of jihadism in the modern world, but also the most intolerant of co-religionists whom they suspect of deviating from the "true faith." Islamic State representatives stress that the restoration of the caliphate nullifies the legitimacy of all other Islamic organizations and that it is the duty of all Muslims to swear an oath of fealty to al-Baghdadi.¹⁵ ISIL has directed that statement to all Islamic organizations, including al-Qaeda, Jabhat al-Nusra,¹⁶ the Muslim Brotherhood and other jihadist groups. These claims by the ISIL leadership have had the effect of uniting many Muslims organizations in opposition to it. In fact,

al-Qaeda has directly challenged ISIL, referring to its declared Islamic Caliphate as the illegal "Baghdadi gang."¹⁷

Despite the widespread notion that ISIL has dealt a crushing defeat to al-Qaeda and its allies, the latter has not lost its social support base. The organizations comprising the foundation of that support base – al-Qaeda of the Islamic Maghreb, al-Qaeda of the Arabian Peninsula, al-Qaeda in the Sinai, al-Shabab in Somalia, Jabhat al-Nusra, and others – continue to support al-Qaeda and to strive to consolidate its position and authority in the areas under their control. Despite the implacable animosity between these two camps of Islamic jihadism, if ISIL were to become greatly weakened and undergo a change in leadership (and especially if al-Baghdadi were eliminated), the possibility of a tactical reconciliation between the groups would increase. According to Israeli analysts, the two groups hold similar objectives, making a rapprochement between, although highly unlikely, not impossible.¹⁸

ISIL Prospects

The scale began tipping in favor of al-Qaeda when ISIL started losing ground, retreating and going on the defensive. Militants are currently defecting from ISIL and either returning or joining al-Qaeda – that gladly welcomes them

after they voice repentance publicly. If al-Qaeda gains in strength as a result, it could pose an even greater threat to the West. The organization has garnered extensive experience working with foreign cells and its methods might become even more brutal because its leaders are now adopting ISIL methods. The terrorist activities of Tanzim Al-Qaeda fiJazirat Sina, an al-Qaeda cell in northern Sinai – an area that has become a terrorist threat in the Middle East – is a good example. The group's leaders call for establishing an Islamic emirate in the Sinai and annulling the Egypt-Israel Peace

¹³ *Terrorism Index 2015* <http://economicsandpeace.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Global-Terrorism-Index-2015.pdf>

¹⁴ Mohammed M. Hafez, *Suicide Bombers in Iraq: The Strategy and Ideology of Martyrdom* Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2007, pp. 52–54.

¹⁵ Winter Ofir, *The Islamic Caliphate: A Controversial Consensus*. In: *The Islamic State: How Viable Is It?* Schweitzer Yoram and Einav Omer (editors). Ramat Aviv, Tel Aviv. p.29.

¹⁶ July 15, 2016, acting in Syria Dzhabhat al-Nusra announced its tactical branch of al-Qaeda and the renaming in Dzhabhat Fatah al-Sham. The move was approved by the leadership of al-Qaeda. http://www.rubincenter.org/2016/08/al-qaida-uncoupling-jabhat-al-nusras-rebranding-as-jabhat-fateh-al-sham/?utm_source=activetrail&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=%20Rubin%20Newsletter;%20August%202016

¹⁷ <http://www.islamnews.ru/news-479498.html>

¹⁸ Mohammed M. Hafez, *Suicide Bombers in Iraq: The Strategy and Ideology of Martyrdom* Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2007, pp. 52–54.

Treaty.¹⁹ The organization is responsible for a series of bombings in Egyptian resort towns, has clashed with Egyptian security forces, and waged attacks against police stations. The major ISIL terrorist group Wilayat Sinai also operates in the area.

It is far too early at this point to write off the Islamic State. Even liberating the main cities that ISIL has captured cannot necessarily prevent it from moving into other regions where it already has branches. And despite international efforts, ISIL retains its considerable human and military potential. Although air strikes destroying illegal ISIL oil fields continue to significantly undermine the organization's economic strength, the material sources of that power in Iraq remain intact. The Islamic State long subsisted on donations from sponsors in the Persian Gulf and the greater Islamic world. One of the unique features of ISIL is its creation of a self-sustaining economic model that not only supports the 8 million people living on the territories under its control, but also funds the terrorist and military activities of the organization itself. That ensures that ISIL will survive at least into the near future. The Islamic State continues to rely primarily on oil proceeds, taxation of occupied territories, to finance its operations. The decentralized IS command structure and the development of its military infrastructure make the organization significantly less vulnerable to efforts aimed at stopping it. The highly effective ISIL tactic of intimidating the civilian population and enemy forces, coupled with the willingness of its militants to sacrifice themselves if necessary, increase its ability to maintain control over conquered territories. Moreover, many experts contend that the U.S.-led international coalition lacks a clear strategic plan in carrying out its attacks against ISIL, thus compromising the effectiveness of the military struggle against the organization.

A characteristic feature of the senior ISIL leadership and that of other Salafi jihadist organizations is their lack of a sense of responsibility

¹⁹ Siboni G., Ben-Barak R. *The Peninsula threat development and response concept*. http://www.inss.org.il/uploadImages/systemFiles/Sinai%20threat%20and%20respons%20-%20Sibon%20Ben-Barak_corrected.pdf

for the future destiny of their followers: their terrorist activities run contrary to all the rules and norms of international relations and international law. It is necessary to understand the interaction of tribal and clan structures, as well as their historical and social composition in order to mount an effective response to jihadism on a religious level. It is even more important to understand the origins and connections between ISIL and the rise of Salafist jihad.²⁰ Ideological and theoretical considerations are also very important in the fight against Islamic extremism and terrorism. Russian diplomat and Orientalist V. Nosenko rightly pointed out that success in neutralizing radical Islam depends on whether it proves possible to completely discredit its ideology and persuade people of the dangers inherent in its call for a restoration of the “Golden Age” of Islam.²¹

Considering that five of the countries included in the “Caliphate” envisioned by the Islamic State – Russia, China, India, Pakistan, and Israel – have nuclear weapons and combat-ready armed forces, it is clear that the idea will remain a utopian dream for the foreseeable future. At the same time, physically destroying ISIL will not eradicate the ideology of jihadism: it needs no leader or centralized organizational structure. In fact, this is not so much a war for territory as it is a religious struggle in which the leading antagonists possess modern conventional weapons. The Arab Middle East is searching for its identity on the basis of religious unity. It is obvious that it will be a long and difficult process to discredit the ideology of radical Islam, and it would be unrealistic to expect those forces to retreat simply because they have suffered an ideological defeat. The underground remains ready to embrace all groups of fanatics and to carry out new terrorist acts against innocent civilians in various countries of the world.²² Obviously, such organizations are capable of experiencing a certain rebirth or recrudescence thanks to such

²⁰ Kam Efraim. *The Rise of the Islamist State Organization. Strategic Assessment*, 17#3, Ramat Aviv, INSS, 2014, p.42–43.

²¹ Носенко В.И. *Параметры стратегии контртерроризма*. <http://www.intertrends.ru/system/Doc/ArticlePdf/563/Nosenko-27.pdf>

²² *Ibid.*

TERRORISM-2015

In the World

Terrorist attacks

 **11,774**

Total deaths*

 **28,328**

People injured

 **35,320**

Kidnapped/taken hostage

 **12,189**

TEN COUNTRIES WITH THE MOST TERRORIST ATTACKS, 2015

Syria	Iraq	Afghanistan	Pakistan	India
 382	 2,418	 1,708	 1,009	 791
 2,748	 6,932	 5,292	 1,081	 289
 2,818	 11,856	 6,246	 1,325	 508
 1,453	 3,982	 1,112	 269	 862

Terrorist attacks took place in **92** countries

The total number of terrorist attacks in 2015 decreased by **13%**, compared to 2014

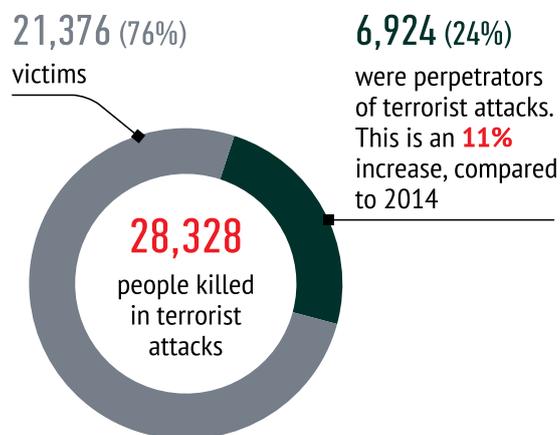
*Includes perpetrators

More than **55%** of all attacks took place in five countries (Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, and Nigeria)

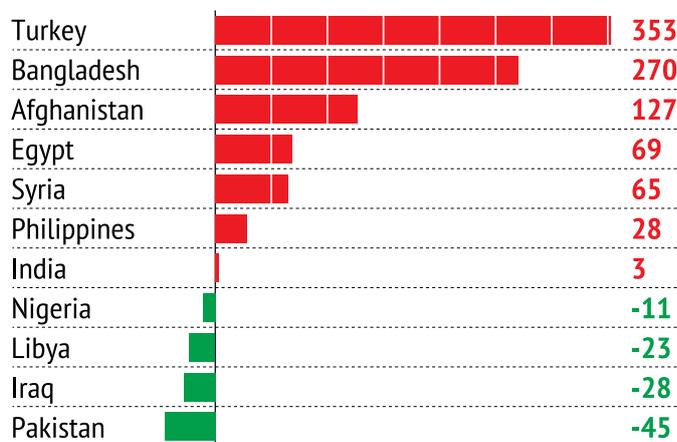
74% of all deaths due to terrorist attacks took place in Iraq, Afghanistan, Nigeria, Syria, and Pakistan

Nigeria	Libya	Egypt	Bangladesh	Philippines
 589	 428	 494	 459	 485
 4,886	 462	 656	 75	 258
 2,777	 657	 844	 691	 548
 1,341	 764	 24	 4	 119

Killed in terrorist attacks in 2015



Total attacks in 2015, compared to 2014, %



Sources: U.S. State Department (<http://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/crt/2015/257526.htm>), National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism

long-term trends as the high birthrate among Muslims in the Middle East, Africa, and Europe, as well as the refugee problem. There is even concern that the heavy influx of Muslims could result in changes to the form of government in European countries. The West is faced with the acute problem of balancing the protection of human rights against certain considerations in the fight against terrorism.

The world might currently be dealing with a qualitatively new wave of the youth protest movement (the so-called “youth bubble”) not only in the problem states of the Middle East, but also in the wealthy countries of the West. The tremendous lack of opportunity for young people in Arab countries and the low educational level among the majority of the population in those countries creates fertile ground for the spread of militant ideologies among the younger generation in the Middle East region and, to some extent, the immigrant population of Europe. Some youth are attracted to the ISIL slogan of the fight for a “higher justice” against the Western world’s dictatorship of values, and so on. In contrast to the youth protest wave of the “turbulent ‘60s,” the new generations of youth – who are exposed to the Salafit jihadist ideology of “the kingdom of justice” – demonstrate a far greater willingness to wage armed warfare against Western governments

and societies and to engage in indiscriminate acts of terror.²³ More than 30,000 people have joined the ranks of the Islamic State, the overwhelming majority of who are youth. One-half of them come from the Middle East and most of the foreign volunteers fighting for ISIL in Iraq and Syria arrived from neighboring Middle Eastern and North African countries, as well as Turkey. Approximately 5,000 hail from Europe and approximately the same number are natives of the Caucasus. It is therefore extremely important to focus not only on military means for combating terrorism, but also on developing a system of measures for diverting youth from ISIL ideas, providing them with “social lift,” and actively involving the younger generation in Russia – and the whole world – in social action in the countries where they live. The Islamic State successfully promotes its propaganda through all forms of mass communication (“media jihad”) and by utilizing the most advanced computer technology. A characteristic feature of ISIL and many jihadist groups is their practice of recruiting children for military action and forming a so-called “army of the future.”

²³ Ganor, Boaz. *Four Questions on ISIS: A “Trend” Analysis of the Islamic State* <https://www.ict.org.il/Article/1424/Four-Questions-on-ISIS>. 24/06/2015

Just the fact that a great many people support the idea of creating a caliphate covering North Africa, the Middle East and even Europe is troubling. The pan-Islamic sentiment in the region is clearly so strong that people are giving serious thought to the idea of Muslim and Arab unity. Oddly enough, the local population's weariness with the bloody chaos and terror has played into the hands of the Islamic State. It is also important to acknowledge that Sunni tribes support the Islamists, despite their cruelty and cynicism. After the fall of former Iraqi President Saddam Hussein's regime, Shi'ite militants terrorized Iraqi

Sunnis, and following the withdrawal of U.S. troops, Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki launched a policy of direct discrimination against Sunni tribes.

The appeal of ISIL could outlast that of the caliphate itself for a time, and ISIL veterans will doubtless spread out around the world. Terrorist acts are committed from Sydney to Paris in the name of ISIL. The world has never faced such a terrorist threat before, and ISIL militants are still young, meaning that the danger of terror will continue for many years. Moreover, the political factors that gave reason for ISIL to hope it could achieve statehood might prove more durable than the organization itself.

Potential Threats to Russia

Of all the potential targets of terrorist attacks, Russia is obviously one of the most important for radical Islam. Serious potential exists for the jihadist movement to spread in Russia and the former Soviet republics. The greatest concern at present is the jihadists educated on Russian soil, local IS supporters, and militants who have returned from Syria and other Middle Eastern countries – along with the extremist groups that continue their subversive activities in the North Caucasus long after the end of the Chechen war. Russia's involvement in resolving the crisis in the Middle East, and particularly its resolute assault against ISIL there, prompts jihadist supporters to retaliate in order to compel Russia to withdraw from the Middle East. The Russian military campaign in Syria might be only the first part of a whole series of possible Russian military campaigns along this country's southern borders.²⁴

Russian supporters of jihad receive support from abroad, especially from the Middle East. As result, ISIL has established a branch in the North

Caucasus (the Caucasus Emirate)²⁵ and recruited individuals from Russia and the Muslim former Soviet republics for its international terrorist activities. The adherents of radical Islam have also formed cells among the Muslims residing in a number of Russian regions. Terrorist activity in the so-called "Caucasus Emirate" accounts for one-half of all terrorism-related deaths in Russia.²⁶ Extremist forces are actively recruiting among Chechens of Georgia's Pankisi Gorge, as well as in a number of areas on the Georgian border with Azerbaijan, creating a potential crisis zone on Russia's border in the South Caucasus.²⁷ It is worth noting at the same time that residents of the North Caucasus live in relative peace and calm.

²⁵ *The Caucasus Emirate is a separatist-terrorist movement of radical Islam that ostensibly includes Dagestan, Chechnya, Ingushetia, Kabardino-Balkaria and Karachay-Cherkessia, Tatarstan, and the Urals, as well as the armed groups operating in these republics. The Caucasus Emirate was proclaimed on 7 October 2007 by the president of the unrecognized Chechen Republic of Ichkeria, Doku Umarov. Al-Qaeda, Hamas, Taliban: the eight largest Islamic groups in the world. http://www.aif.ru/dontknows/file/al-kaida_hamas_taliban_8_krupneyshih_islamistskih_gruppirovok_mira_21/08/2014*

²⁶ *Terrorism Index 2015 <http://economicsandpeace.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Global-Terrorism-Index-2015.pdf>*

²⁷ <http://rian.com.ua/analytics/20160101/1002955328.html>

²⁴ *Тренин, Д. Россия защищена от актов экстремизма? <http://carnegie.ru/2016/08/14/ru-64326/j3n7>*

Russia and the entire international community face the challenge of finding ways to curb ISIL and jihadist forces generally. Despite the fact that the number of terrorist and extremist crimes in Russia is relatively low compared to the internal and external threats before it, the country is systematically implementing anti-terrorism measures to protect the population. In 2015, Russia placed 23rd on the Global Terrorism Index, fully 12 notches better than in 2014. In fact, Russia has experienced

less terrorist activity in the last two years than at any time since 2007. The number of those who died at the hands of terrorists fell from 137 in 2013 to 57 in 2014.²⁸ Russian security forces work very effectively: they have reduced the number of terrorist attacks while increasing their ability identify and stop those attacks in advance. At the same time, there is a clear need to develop a new and comprehensive policy for accomplishing a range of objectives in combating the terrorist threat.

Israeli Experience in Countering the Terrorist Threat

The Israeli experience in combating terrorism is unique in that the state has struggled with the threat posed by Palestinian terrorist groups – that, by the way, were not always Islamist – throughout its history, and now wages counter-terrorist activities directed primarily against Hamas, Islamic Jihad, and Hezbollah. The latter three organizations carry out most of the terrorist attacks against Israeli citizens and all operate in close proximity to Israel’s borders. In the years since the country was founded, Israeli intelligence agencies have developed a range of strategies and tactics for combating the terrorist threat. Counter-terrorism operations carried out by highly trained Special Forces are now the “calling card” of the Israeli intelligence community.²⁹ In addition, the Israel Defense Forces have repeatedly engaged Hamas and Islamic Jihad terrorist forces on Palestinian Authority territory, and also Hezbollah militants in Lebanon. Over time, however, it has become clear that even repeated strikes against the territories and countries from which terrorist organizations stage attacks against Israel has not brought a lasting solution to the problem of curtailing terrorism. In short, this experience shows that it is impossible to solve the problem primarily through militarily means.

Israeli security forces employ five main methods for reducing or preventing terrorist attacks. The first is detecting and isolating organized groups of potential terrorists (so-called “sleeper terrorists”). In the territories, this is the responsibility of the army, and in Israel proper, the security forces. The second involves developing a system for predicting possible attacks by specific individuals and/or groups by analyzing statistical data on groups under surveillance and creating behavioral profiles of specific individuals and groups based on data analyses of their past activities. By also considering data available from various media and social networks along with all available intelligence, it is possible to identify the telltale signs of a potential terrorist. That information is passed to agencies capable of thwarting the attack. The goal is not only to build an effective system of prevention, but also to create a sense among the general population that it is futile to even attempt a terrorist attack. From the psychological standpoint, such attacks would lose all purpose if they fail to damage the country’s economic or political life. The third method involves constantly monitoring media, social organizations, and civil society for individuals carrying out subversive activities. Fourth, the authorities “clear

²⁹ Щегловин Ю.Б. *Размышления о борьбе с терроризмом*. М.: Институт Ближнего Востока, 2015. С.129

²⁸ *Terrorism Index 2015* <http://economicsandpeace.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Global-Terrorism-Index-2015.pdf>

the streets of guns” by eliminating the unauthorized production, sale, transport, and smuggling of weapons – primarily in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The fifth involves making only limited use of collective punishment methods while removing and separating those who promote terror from the mass of the civilian population. The goal is to isolate potential terrorists from their own compatriots by creating an atmosphere of trust toward the Israeli authorities. Israel faces its most urgent challenge in working at the grassroots to prevent terrorism and efforts are made to involve a broad section of the population in the practical struggle against the terrorist threat. Constant and systematic monitoring enables the authorities to identify and halt terrorist activity at the earliest stages of its appearance. This is possible because all of the Israeli security forces have made a concerted effort to earn the public’s trust and confidence and now enjoy a high degree of authority in society.

This accumulated experience forms the basis of Israel’s concept for domestic security. For many years, three main objectives – the so-called “holy triangle” – served as the foundation of that concept³⁰: contain the threat, deliver a decisive defeat on the battlefield (“battle field decision”) after giving advanced warning (reconnaissance is the largest branch of the Israeli military), and, finally, deliver pre-emptive strikes, each of which must give new force to deterrence. All Arab-Israeli wars can be analyzed from the perspective of this triangle. This three-pronged system has proven ineffective, however, at combating the newest terrorist threats. New terrorist organizations, realizing that states, including Israel, hold an indisputable advantage in the use of conventional weapons for standard military operations, have focused instead on such non-standard or asymmetric methods as personal terrorism, chemical weapons, and cyber attacks.

Israel’s modern security doctrine takes a more balanced approach to containment and offensive operations, giving added emphasis to the protection of the civilian population with the use of early

³⁰ More precise data was obtained during talks with representatives of the Israeli secret service

warning systems and citizen checks, and through deployment of antimissile and air defense systems.³¹

In an ever-increasing number of incidents, individuals from a range of countries carry out indiscriminate terrorist attacks against civilian targets. The Global Terrorism Index for 2015 indicates that the number of civilians killed by terrorists increased by 72% – 80% in 2013–2014.³² Israel has also given particular attention in recent years to combating “lone wolf” terrorists – a problem that is increasingly alarming the international community but that Israel has long confronted. In the last year, most of the individuals who carried out the 620 such recorded attacks against Israeli citizens within the country and 1,500 attacks against Israelis in the West Bank were acting alone, without the direct support of any known terrorist organization.³³ Since October 2015, Israel has been hit with a new wave of unmotivated and indiscriminate killings of civilians, primarily carried out by “lone wolves.” Palestinian attackers used knives and cars to kill more than 40 Israeli citizens. In most cases, the attackers acted alone, without instructions from a terrorist group. Such attacks are particularly difficult to prevent because the assailants strike at unpredictable times and locations, do not belong to terrorist groups that Israeli intelligence agents could infiltrate and monitor, and do not go through a detectable preparatory stage. Islamist sites and social networks disseminate the call for this type of terrorist attack. This method – developed by al-Qaeda – requires only that the potential attacker have Internet access: no major investment of funds or efforts to create organizational structures and channels of communication is needed.³⁴ Various forms of media and the Internet make it possible to control the whole process remotely.

³¹ Israel has implemented effective defensive systems such as the “Iron Dome,” “David’s Sling,” “Solomon’s Spear,” and others that have intercepted most terrorist attacks from the air

³² *Terrorism Index 2015* <http://economicsandpeace.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Global-Terrorism-Index-2015.pdf>

³³ *EU looking to Israeli expertise to help spot ‘lone wolf’ attackers.* [http://www.bicom.org.uk/news/eu-looking-to-israeli-expertise-to-help-spot-lone-wolf-attackers/21st July 2016](http://www.bicom.org.uk/news/eu-looking-to-israeli-expertise-to-help-spot-lone-wolf-attackers/21st%20July%202016)

³⁴ Щегловин Ю.Б. *Размышления о борьбе с терроризмом.* М.: Институт Ближнего Востока, 2015. С163–164.

Despite these challenges, Israeli security services discovered when analyzing these “lone wolf” attacks that they have certain features in common. An analysis of the numerous such attacks committed in Israel over the past nine months made it possible to create a generic profile of the “lone wolf” terrorist and identify certain patterns in his behavior. Thus, the average “lone wolf” Palestinian terrorist is a youth no older than 24 years of age, but could also be a minor. About 10% are women. He or she hails from one of six or seven villages previously tagged as a “potentially dangerous” source of terrorist activities. This is because the potential terrorist is motivated and inspired by the “success” of a terrorist attack carried out earlier by a fellow villager. The locations of the attacks are fairly straightforward and are usually confined to five or six nearby points on the map that the terrorist can reach easily. It is also possible to identify potential “lone wolf” terrorists by monitoring social networks. A typical “red flag” occurs when an individual posts messages on their profile expressing support for terrorism, praising terrorists, applauding terrorist attacks or acts of violence, voicing suicidal intentions, etc. Taking tough measures against such individuals is a reliable means of preventing possible terrorist attacks and the deaths of dozens of people. Working with undercover informants is another traditional tool for preventing terrorist attacks. For example, information provided by an agent that a person who has not driven a car for the last six months suddenly borrows an unregistered automobile (of which many exist in Arab villages) indicates with high probability that he is preparing a terrorist attack using that car. Controlling illicit arms trafficking is another effective counter-terrorism measure. The article states that, although the “copycat” effect can lead to an increase in “lone wolf” attacks, successful efforts by intelligence agencies to thwart those assaults likewise tend to dampen the spirits of would-be assassins by showing them the futility of their schemes.³⁵

³⁵ “Israeli intelligence agencies developed a ‘recipe’ for fighting ‘lone wolf’ terrorists,” 27 July 2016, 17:35, <http://9tv.co.il/news/2016/07/27/229190.html>.

The Israeli special services seek to greatly minimize the number of terrorist attacks by suicide bombers, and do so by expanding their network of undercover informants among the Arab population in both Israel and the occupied territories. These agencies have also achieved significant success in curbing “lone wolf” attacks by closely monitoring media and users, managing thereby to intercept 75% – 85% of all such attacks in the preparation stage.³⁶

Israel is considered a leader in the use of cyber technologies to protect the public from terrorism. Israeli security forces have developed methods for identifying potential terrorists before they carry out attacks. This is a comprehensive system that includes cyber security techniques, reconnaissance, and monitoring of social networks that makes it possible to expand and develop the database along with experience gained from the analysis of previous terrorist attacks and information obtained from terrorists in custody.³⁷ Israel and the European Union already cooperate extensively in this area. British Minister Matt Hancock announced in 2015 that Britain would expand its cooperation with Israel on cyber security matters. Following the terrorist attacks in Nice and Germany in July 2016, the EU counter-terrorism division turned to Israeli cyber security experts to learn from their successful experience in dealing with “lone wolf” terrorists.

Israeli specialists believe that their methodology can be applied worldwide, and particularly in Europe. However, a number of fundamental differences between Israel and Europe make it difficult to repeat those successes there. In Europe, not only do the terrorists live in the same countries they attack, but some are local natives or naturalized citizens that are deeply integrated into the very society they target. The EU lacks a comprehensive security system or doctrine governing the way member states fight terror. To change that situation, Europeans must exercise

³⁶ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LOH_iTiX0bw

³⁷ EU looking to Israeli expertise to help spot ‘lone wolf’ attackers. [http://www.bicom.org.uk/news/eu-looking-to-israeli-expertise-to-help-spot-lone-wolf-attackers/21st July 2016](http://www.bicom.org.uk/news/eu-looking-to-israeli-expertise-to-help-spot-lone-wolf-attackers/21st%20July%202016)

control over the populations that spawn terrorists and the means of propaganda that influence them.³⁸

The terrorist threat to the West derives primarily from terrorist groups based in Afghanistan, Iraq, and other countries of the Middle East and North Africa. Al-Qaeda cells were especially active in the West up until 2014. After that, the Islamic State called for more attacks in the West, resulting in a 74 percent increase in deaths caused by “lone wolf” terrorists acting in the name of ISIL – up from 100 in 2006–2014 to 164 in the period since.³⁹

Most terrorists are former or recent immigrants who live in densely populated areas

of Western countries that are home to cells of terrorist organizations. Only intelligence agencies experienced in working with such populations can cull out individual terrorists from the surrounding population, convince the people of the futility of terrorism, and isolate terrorist organizations. Such methods could also find application in Russia, especially in the field of public outreach. The citizens of most countries are unprepared to confront terror and their citizens quickly panic when in danger. By contrast, Israeli citizens do not run from terrorists, but actively fight them. When the people do not panic, terror is ineffective and the terrorists do not become heroes.

Current Objectives in the Fight Against Terrorism

Russia faces the task of working with other countries, and particularly with Israel, to develop a so-called “strategic counter-terrorism” program for warning of and preventing terrorist attacks. Russian and Israeli experts believe that the international community could aid the fight against terrorism by creating a dedicated force under international command. On the operational front, the international community should develop and implement a joint (bilateral and multilateral) counter-terrorism strategy that takes into account the different interests of the parties involved and incorporates the understanding that no compromise or agreements are possible with such an opponent.

Such an international program would include a system whereby member countries would identify terrorist activity at its very earliest stages and share operational information with partners in a timely manner. The idea of strategic counter-terrorism involves the creation of a global and

widely accessible data bank on terrorist activity in the very earliest stage of its appearance. The only possible way to stage counter-terrorism operations successfully is to develop a joint strategic defense policy for the Middle East and the rest of the world, and to mount an effective response to each threat according to the relevant circumstances. To eradicate the Islamic State and its partners, as well as al-Qaeda and its branches, it is necessary to declare war on them – a war that must be pursued until all Salafi-jihadist terrorist forces are defeated. The strategic military objective is to halt the advance of the enemy, confine that enemy to a small and clearly defined territory, and then strike vigorously to inflict a crushing defeat. The key to success lies in united military, propagandistic, and ideological efforts through the establishment of joint international multilateral organizations.

It is expensive for individual countries to defend themselves against terrorism. Governments must spend an increasing amount on counter-terrorism systems as the number of attacks grows and civil society becomes increasingly vulnerable. The West – including the U.S. – spent \$117 billion on national security in 2014. The growing cost of security will pose a heavy burden on the national

³⁸ “Former head of the Israeli secret service explained how to deal with ‘lone wolf’ terrorists,” <http://cyplive.com/ru/news/eks-glava-specsluzhby-izrailiya-obyasnil-chto-delat-s-terroristami-odinochkami.html> 27.07.2016.

³⁹ *Terrorism Index 2015* <http://economicsandpeace.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Global-Terrorism-Index-2015.pdf>

economies of the least wealthy countries. That makes the task of creating a global counter-terrorism system all the more urgent.

The fight against terrorism can only succeed if it is waged at all levels: political, economic, military, and at the level of intelligence agencies. Considering the geographic scope and intensity that terrorist acts have reached in the 21st century, the struggle against it requires international cooperation – especially among those countries that are threatened at all four levels. Real cooperation at the political level is the most difficult to achieve because it is hindered by the foreign and domestic policies of the ruling circles of certain countries. Without political cooperation, however, a complete victory over terrorism is impossible. It is also necessary to reach agreement concerning the economic struggle against terrorism. Activities to combat financial flows are not carried out in public and such illicit funding is difficult to control. Military cooperation against terrorism naturally occurs only with the appearance of a real enemy such as guerilla or regular units of militants. For intelligence agencies to cooperate effectively, they should carry out joint operations, work together to prevent terrorist attacks, create a common data bank, and so on, but this is difficult to achieve given the mutual distrust that exists between the intelligence agencies of different countries.

However, cooperation between regional players should prove the decisive factor in eradicating terrorism in first the Middle East, and later the rest of the world. Four Middle Eastern countries with a strong national identity – Turkey, Iran, Israel, and Egypt – can play a central role in achieving unity of purpose and objectives in combating the Salafi-jihadist threat to the entire Middle East. Experts speak of the need to create a new region-wide organization or union, to revive the “peripheral pact” model of the 1950s that could, in today’s environment, serve as a foundation for the fight against regional and global terrorism. Unfortunately, the leading states of the region have not yet overcome their fundamental differences, making it impossible for them to unite in the struggle against the common threat of terrorism. It is sometimes

thought that most countries prefer the exclusive use of force in fighting terrorism. However, force is used not against the ideology of terrorism, but against the violent acts it inspires. There has been increased discussion in recent years of encouraging the Muslim countries of the Middle East to use “soft power” so that they would serve as “first responders” of sorts against all types of terrorism in their region.

In pursuing counter-terrorism objectives, the national interests of various countries align as often as they collide, creating a complex and, at times, contradictory knot of intentions. It is important for every country, and especially countries such as Russia and Israel, to find reliable partners and allies in that struggle because both face a real and present danger of terrorism. The Russian and Israeli positions concerning the globalization of terrorism and the appropriate methods for combating it largely coincide, although they disagree on some points regarding Hezbollah and Hamas. Russian and Israeli intelligence agencies are deepening their cooperation on counter-terrorism measures. To reinforce that effort, and in light of the acute threat posed by radical Islam, the two countries should establish direct and large-scale bilateral cooperation.

The fact of Russia’s active presence in the Middle East gives added urgency to the need to decisively confront the forces of Islamic jihad in that region, and ultimately in Russia. According to famed Israeli military expert Giora Eiland, the West is ignoring six essential steps for eradicating the Islamic State. The West, he argues, should cooperate with Russia, convince Turkey to play a constructive role in Syria, support Kurdish forces fighting ISIL, organize reconnaissance activity to obtain the necessary information for waging effective and timely strikes against ISIL, adopt a UN resolution calling for stiff sanctions against countries, companies, and individuals that engage in trade with ISIL, and, finally, launch a meaningful war against the ideology of the Islamic State.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ Eiland Giora. *Six steps to defeat ISIS*. <http://fathomjournal.org/what-the-uk-can-do-to-defeat-isis-briefing-with-maj-gen-ret-giora-eiland/AUTUMN/2015>

Although Israel is not the main target of international jihad at present, it is capable of making a significant contribution to any future cooperation in the fight against international terrorism. In fact, Israel is already contributing by providing intelligence on the major theaters of war near Israel's borders and sharing its practical experience in combating terrorism. Israel has created a Counter-Terrorism Training Center where officers from 60 countries, including Israel, undergo specialized training.

The stabilization and subsequent reduction of the threat of terrorism on a global scale will only become possible once significant progress is made in resolving the largest and most intense conflicts in the Middle East, with the help of active international cooperation.⁴¹ That, in turn, is only possible if the world's leading countries join forces to create an effective and comprehensive strategic counter-terrorism program in which Russia and Israel play a significant role.

⁴¹ Е.А.Степанова Долгосрочный прогноз тенденций в области терроризма. http://www.imemo.ru/files/File/magazines/puty_miru/2016/01/05_Stepanova.pdf



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