

General Assembly 1- International Security and Disarmament

Implementing Measures to Prevent State
Sponsored Terrorism



Forum:	GA1 – International Security and Disarmament
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Student Officer:	Efstathios Housmekerides
Position:	President of the General Assembly

Introduction

State sponsored terrorism presents a growing threat to nations of every region of the world. Whether large or small, highly industrialized or developing, wealthy or deprived, every nation in the world is actively participating, experiencing, or susceptible to the adverse effects and lasting repercussions of terrorist activity. Unfortunately, terrorist activity has become more brazen, sophisticated, and unpredictable in recent years, leaving nations ever more vulnerable to the dangers terrorism carries. This trend inevitably begs this simple, yet often overlooked question: “Why?”

The purpose of terrorism typically stems from the desire to disrupt the existing political, social, or economic status quo of a perceived enemy state, territory, or entity by means of coercion. In essence, terrorists seek to destabilize world peace and order through achieving a psychological goal—one of pitting one nation against another, polarizing peoples and societies, and embittering humanity. Terrorism need not be exercised toward political ends; it is often the case that terrorists acting upon religious motives may focus their efforts on religious hegemony or fulfilment rather than political matters.

Definition of Key Terms

Terrorism/Terrorist Acts

See Appendix A.



Note: No universal agreement on the definition of terrorism exists. This definition is simply to serve as a guide for delegates in their preparation for debate.

State-Sponsored Terrorism

State-sponsored terrorism refers to a state's deliberate use, support, or assistance to terrorist or terrorism-affiliated organizations as a foreign policy tool.

Violent Non-State Actors (VNSA)

Violent non-state actors (commonly known as non-state armed actors or non-state armed groups) are individuals, groups, or organizations independent of state governments, partly or wholly, which use violence as the primary means of achieving their goals.

Imminent Threat

A standard criterion in international law, described as being “instant, overwhelming, and leaving no choice of means, and no moment for deliberation.” When an imminent threat is present, pre-emptive self-defence—that is, self-defence without being physically attacked first—is justified in international law.

Collective Security

The cooperation of several countries in an alliance with the purpose of strengthening the security of each.

General Overview

Historically, terrorist organizations were poorly funded and thus had no option but to devote significant amounts of time purely with the purpose of generating revenue to fund their activities—yet from a contemporary perspective, this is no longer the case. Government sponsorship and funding in recent years has unfortunately led to organized terrorist groups with superior funding and knowledge on the nature and dynamics of their targets.



Contemporary state sponsored terrorism can be seen in a number of forms. One of the most valuable types of such support is the provision of a safe haven, physical basing, or military protection for a terrorist organization or individual. This form of sponsorship can be seen in the alleged safekeeping of Osama bin Laden by the Pakistani government and military.

Similarly, state sponsors can provide the crucial service of false documentation. This has been seen to be useful not only for personal identification (i.e. passports, national identification, other internal identification documents), but also for financial transactions—often in the form of weapons sales and purchases. Other means of support are granting access to training facilities, expertise, and other assets that would otherwise not be readily available to terrorist groups without extensive resources.

Another major form of state sponsorship is via the extension of diplomatic protections and services. These include “immunity from extradition, diplomatic passports, use of embassies and other protected grounds, and diplomatic pouches to transport weapons or explosives,” of which all or some have been significant to certain extremist groups.¹

Given the various forms of state sponsored terrorism, an inevitable dilemma concerning its implications arise. First and foremost, exercising self-defense and employing a collective security system is problematic due to the lack of a universal language on terrorism. When an issue as intricate as state sponsored terrorism is examined closely, it becomes apparent that, contrary to popular opinion, no common understanding of terrorism exists at all—leaving no common understanding of the enemy in the “war on terror.”²

As one would reasonably expect, the effects of state sponsored terrorist activity stems well beyond a catastrophic event initiated by a terrorist organization. In most nations, particularly among MEDCs (More Economically Developed Countries), systemic and institutional changes occur. Governments devote a greater proportion

¹ “State Sponsored Terrorism.” *Terrorist Goals and Motivations*, Terrorism RESEARCH, www.terrorism-research.com/state/.

² Värk, René. “Terrorism, State Responsibility and the Use of Armed Force.” *Estonian National Defence College Proceedings*, vol. 14, 31 Jan. 2011, pp. 74-111, https://www.ksk.edu.ee/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/KVUOA_Toimetised_14_4_rene_vark.pdf.



of state budgets to the detection and prevention of terrorist activity, perhaps at the expense of departments or areas that are in need of financial support.

State sponsored terrorism is a unique form of terrorism in that it has a prominent effect on the dynamics of the international community. When the leader or leading party of a nation rather than a rogue extremist group is accused of lodging or supporting a terrorist attack, the dynamics of international trade, communication, and interactions are compromised. One unfortunate consequence of such a situation can be seen in international aid agencies, where such agencies may be less willing to operate in or near the accused nation, adversely impacting citizens who may be in desperate need of international aid.³

Although state sponsorship appears to follow a diminishing trend, it continues to merit close attention as the salience of state-sponsored terrorism relates not only to the level of support (i.e. number of sponsors), but also to the threat potential arising from said support.⁴ It is also important to note that weapons, including those of mass destruction, have only been advancing in terms of potency and strength. Therefore, somewhat paradoxically, at a time where the level of state sponsorship is at its nadir, the threat potential of terrorism is at its apex, as the proliferation of nuclear capabilities to terrorist sponsors poses a significant change in potential consequences of state sponsored terrorism.

Major Parties Involved

Pakistan

Pakistan is perhaps the world's most active sponsor of terrorism—contrary to the viewpoint of the United States of America where this label is said to belong to Iran.

Islamabad has long worked with various terrorist or terrorist-associated groups in its fight to wrest Kashmir from India; Pakistan worked with such groups to train jihadists to fight in Kashmir.

³ McFayden, Elgie. "Global Implications of State Sponsored Terrorism." Kentucky State University, 25 Sep. 2009, pp. 1-20, https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1528198#.

⁴ Collins, Stephen D. "State-Sponsored Terrorism: In Decline, Yet Still a Potent Threat." *Politics & Policy*, vol. 42, no. 1, 21 Mar. 2014, pp. 131–159., doi:10.1111/polp.12061.



In the 1990s, the Pakistani army and the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) worked closely with the Taliban at all levels, playing a pivotal role in creating and advancing the terrorist group. Support from Osama bin Laden and for fighters in Afghanistan also led to the creation of *Lashkar-e Tayyaba* (LeT), a jihadist group. Pakistan's support for groups such as the Taliban and LeT can also be contributed in part by violent non-state actors with affiliations to the Pakistani government.

Despite claims from the Pakistani government that ties to such jihadist groups have been cut, "Pakistani recruits are often found in the ranks of the Taliban and other groups and attacks are often found to be planned from and organized in Pakistan."⁵

On May 1, 2011, Osama bin Laden was located and assassinated while living in a safe house in Pakistan, less than a mile from the Pakistan Military Academy. This has given rise to allegations that the Pakistani government and military put in place an extensive support system in the safekeeping of Osama bin Laden.

India

India has been accused by Pakistan and Sri Lanka of carrying out "economic sabotage" in their respective countries. From August 1983 to May 1987, India, through its intelligence agency Research and Analysis Wing (RAW), provided arms, training, and monetary support to six Sri Lankan Tamil insurgent groups including the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), a militant organization based in northeastern Sri Lanka that has been accused of performing terrorist acts. The Pakistani Government and the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) have accused Indian consulates in Kandahar and Jalalabad, Afghanistan, for providing arms, training and financial aid to the Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA) in an attempt to destabilize Pakistan.

Following the June 2017 Pakistan bombings, Balochistan government spokesman Anwarul Haq Kakar admitted that India played a role in the attack in the suicide attack in Quetta.

⁵ International Crisis Group, "Countering Afghanistan's Insurgency: No Quick Fixes," *Asia Report* N°123, November 2, 2006, pp. 9-10, www.crisisgroup.org/library/documents/asia/south_asia/123_countering_afghanistans_insurgency.pdf.



Iran

Former United States President George W. Bush has accused the Iranian government of being the "world's primary state sponsor of terror." A 2016 report from the US Department of State reaffirms that "Iran remain[s] the foremost state sponsor of terrorism in 2016."⁶ See Appendix B for a visual on Iran's activity in financing terrorism.

Hezbollah, a group condemned by nations such as the United States of America and Israel for committing terrorist acts, was trained, founded, and supplied by Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps. However, the European Union differentiates between the political, social, and military wings of Hezbollah, designating solely its military wing as a terrorist organization. Various other nations maintain relations with Hezbollah.

The previous Ahmadinejad administration has been accused by the United States, the United Kingdom, Israel, and Yemen of sponsoring terrorism either in their or against their respective countries.

The United States and the United Kingdom have accused Iran of backing Shia militias in Iraq who have carried out terrorist acts against Coalition troops, Iraqi Sunni militias and civilians, and Anglo-American-supported Iraqi government forces.

Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia is largely agreed to be the world's greatest source of funds and support for Salafist jihadism, which forms the ideological basis of terrorist groups including but not limited to al-Qaeda, LeT, the Taliban, and the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). The United States of America has accused Saudi Arabian donors of constituting the most significant source of funding to Sunni terrorist groups worldwide. Pakistan-based *Lashkar-e-Taiba* has also been accused by the United States of America to have carried out the 2008 Mumbai attacks using a Saudi-based front company to fund its activities.

Violence in Afghanistan and Pakistan is bankrolled in part by wealthy, conservative donors across the Arabian Sea. Notable mentions of countries from

⁶ United States, Congress, "Country Reports on Terrorism 2016." *Country Reports on Terrorism 2016*, U.S. Department of State. paei.state.gov/j/ct/rls/crt/2016/272228.htm.



which these donors originate include Qatar, Kuwait, and the United Arab Emirates—all neighbors of Saudi Arabia.

Timeline of Key Events

Date	Description of Event
24 September 2014	The Security Council passes resolution 2178 (2014), directly addressing the issue of terrorist-financing by member states.
May 1, 2011	Osama bin Laden is killed in Pakistan.
28 September 2001	In response to the September 11 attacks, the Security Council passes resolution 1373 (2001) to crack down on state-sponsorship of terrorism.
11 September 2001	A series of terrorist attacks take place in the United States of America under the al-Qaeda terrorist organization.
9 December 1999	The International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism (1999) takes place.
1980s	Iran plays an instrumental role in establishing Hezbollah from a range of small and weak radical Shi'i groups in Lebanon.

Previous Attempts to Resolve the Issue

Several attempts have been made in limiting state sponsored terrorism, the most prominent of which are listed below:

- 1) [Security Council resolution 1373](#) (2001), building upon the [International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism](#) (1999), “calls on States to prevent and suppress the financing of terrorism, inter alia, by criminalizing the collection and provision of funds for terrorist purposes, and urges them to set up effective mechanisms to freeze funds and other



financial assets of persons involved in or associated with terrorism, as well as to prevent those funds from being made available to terrorists.”⁷

- 2) The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) has proposed detailed recommendations on countering terrorism sponsorship/financing.⁸
- 3) The Security Council, in [resolution 2178](#) (2014), “urges Member States to disrupt terrorist-financing activities linked to [Foreign Terrorist Fighters] FTFs and to criminalize the financing of FTF travel.”⁹

Measures such as these appear to have been relatively effective; state-sponsored terrorism has been on the decline since its peak in the 1980s, and a greater global awareness has been dedicated to the matter. Despite this trend, it must be noted that weapons and their capabilities advance as technology advances, meaning that efforts should be centred on the weapons themselves as well.

Possible Solutions

In order to alter the cost-benefit calculus, reduce state involvement in terrorism, or limit the scope of terrorist activity, the careful fulfilment of the following steps may provide effective action. Thus, one solution that would likely accelerate efforts in resolving state sponsored terrorism would be in reaching a universal, international agreement in regards to an exhaustive definition of terrorism.

Another solution could come in endorsing some form or method of country classification in accordance to the relative level of support they provide to terrorist organizations. Based off of this classification or otherwise, defining and agreeing upon consequences that nations accused of terrorist sponsorship must undertake would likely assist efforts in settling the issue.

Perhaps the most comprehensive approach would be in establishing a permanent international mechanism to combat terrorism, ensuring punitive measures

⁷ United Nations. Security Council resolution 1373, S/RES/1373 (28 September 2001), available from [undocs.org/en/S/RES/1373\(2001\)](https://undocs.org/en/S/RES/1373(2001)).

⁸ “Assessment of Member States Compliance with FATF Recommendations and Strategy on Combatting Terrorist Financing.” *Financial Action Task Force (FATF)*, www.fatfgafi.org/publications/fatf_general/documents/speech-special-committee-terrorism-may-2018.html.

⁹ United Nations. Security Council resolution 2178, S/RES/2178 (24 September 2014), available from [undocs.org/en/S/RES/2178\(2014\)](https://undocs.org/en/S/RES/2178(2014)).



are taken against states engaged in terrorism and warning against any infringement of these measures.¹⁰

A possible solution from an economic standpoint would be via imposing boycotts, tariffs, embargos, and other restricting measures on states found to be sponsors of terrorist groups. Likewise, imposing “a secondary boycott on states that continue to maintain economic and other ties, whether open or covert, with states on which a boycott was imposed because of their involvement in terrorism” would serve as further restriction.¹¹

Delegates must keep in mind that when preparing resolutions for this issue, international law is abided and nations’ sovereignty is respected. Additionally, delegates must consider tackling the issue from a number of different standpoints in an attempt to produce comprehensive solutions. The feasibility and

Appendices

Appendix A

In accordance with the [United Nations Security Council Resolution 1566](#) (2004), terrorist acts are condemned as:

criminal acts, including against civilians, committed with the intent to cause death or serious bodily injury, or taking of hostages, with the purpose to provoke a state of terror in the general public or in a group of persons or particular persons, intimidate a population or compel a government or an international organization to do or to abstain from doing any act, which constitute offences within the scope of and as defined in the international conventions and protocols relating to terrorism, are under no circumstances justifiable by considerations of a political, philosophical, ideological, racial, ethnic, religious or other similar nature.¹²

¹⁰ Ganor, Boaz. “Countering State-Sponsored Terrorism.” *International Institute for Counter-Terrorism*, ICT, 25 Apr. 1998, www.ict.org.il/Article/1140/Countering#gsc.tab=0.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² United Nations. Security Council resolution 1566, S/RES/1566 (8 December 2004), available from [undocs.org/en/S/RES/1566\(2004\)](http://undocs.org/en/S/RES/1566(2004)).



Appendix B



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