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Diplomacy and Terrorism

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Terrorism is a weapon in the hands of the weakest individuals in the fight against stronger systems like governments. Globalisation's developments, as well as the political vacuum created by the fall of some governments, have rendered the contemporary world exposed to a variety of security threats. Diplomacy is a critical component of the fight against modern terrorism. Diplomacy is the most effective instrument for countering developing terrorist methods that cross national borders, and every government has. Terrorism is a worldwide problem. Terrorism has ushered in a new era of bilateral and multinational accords. Governments are frequently forced to deal with terrorist groups, particularly while seizing hostages. Whether they are under government surveillance or incarcerated, they interact with terrorists to convince them to renounce their objectives and enter or help detect new information about the terrorist network and its intentions. The purpose of this article is to discuss the role of diplomacy in the fight against terrorism using various methods like Negotiation, how the UN facilitates the process and how it has been effective till now.

Keywords: *diplomacy, terrorism, united nations, negotiation, conflict resolution.*

INTRODUCTION

Terrorism is used as an instrument in the hands of the weakest players in their battle against stronger systems such as governments. During the Cold War, the threat posed by militant organisations paled in comparison to the threat posed by conventional warfare. Racial and

religious movements were poor because of the ideological complexities of global competition, either due to a lack of funding or because they followed ideological lines. At the grassroots level, there were few opportunities for social movements to form. Criminal networks with a racial or religious basis, on the other hand, have grown in strength since the end of the Cold War. The advances from globalisation and the power gap arising from the fall of some governments also made the modern world vulnerable to various security threats. Whereas typical security risks decreased after the Cold War, unconventional threats became more widespread and pernicious. Terrorism groups relying on racial and cultural influences have arisen as a challenge to the security of the international community.

As a type of unconventional threat, terrorism leads states to formulate approaches to tackle it, to change their security evaluations, and to take counter-measures to defeat them. As central state institutions explicitly tend to lose their authority, non-state actors expand their capacity to mobilise themselves at the grassroots level. Many of the latest militant organisations are being launched at a transnational or regional level. They expand their authority and soft influence over people because of their capacity to create closer and face-to-face networks. Central authorities have evidently seen that it is more difficult to communicate with people and to create a power of attraction.

In this sense, shifting security attitudes in the post-Cold War era encouraged a country's relationship with its soft power and extended the space provided to soft power in the country's study of power ratings; this power was used in foreign policy. With growing asymmetrical challenges on a global and regional scale, such as terrorism, countries are looking for new approaches and resources to address these forms of threats. In this sense, soft power and diplomacy are seen as essential aspects of the state. This article attempts to address the topic of diplomacy's position in the war against terrorism. Diplomacy plays a crucial and essential part in the battle against modern terrorism. What we now consider to be the key qualifications in diplomacy perhaps first appeared at the dawn of civilization in the establishment of the first united human societies. For thousands of years, warfare and the use of arms have become the most effective means of international policy, but the emergence of

nation-states has necessitated political contact between them. As a result, some diplomatic practises can be traced back to the ancient empires of China, India, Egypt.

For the first time, diplomatic relations were controlled in ancient Greece, where city-states battled for hegemony by forming and dissolving alliances and shifting missions. The theory of envoys' absolute inviolability remains the most important legacy of this practise. This theory was later adopted by Rome as well. Gaius Julius Caesar also demonstrated excellent diplomatic skills by using a tactic that became an axiom in the Latin proverb *divide et impera*, or divide and conquer. It is important to note that diplomatic efforts were often based on tensions rather than helping to prevent them and that diplomacy played a role in the discourse on pacified dealings with international affairs, often by negotiations between states, even throughout the Roman Empire. The majority of diplomatic operations need extensive experience, beyond hesitation. Diplomacy can be defined as analytical practise centered on the evidence available, which focuses on the continued gathering and processing of expertise, analysis, and decision making.

MODERN AS COMPARED TO CONVENTIONAL DIPLOMATIC PRACTICES

- In contrast to conventional diplomacy, modern diplomatic practises representing a diversified range of skills and external internal and extra-institutional links that are not limited to the structured engagement of representatives of various governments. Today's diplomacy is often more concerned about interactions between citizens' organisations, informal institutions, NGOs, intellectuals, researchers than with interactions between two or more foreign ministries conducted by diplomatic missions in the respective states.
- Other features of modern diplomacy include a growing focus on multilateral affairs rather than bilateral relations, a growing presence for large international institutions rather than purely inter-state agreements, and an increasing effect of the globalisation process on the drafting of international negotiation agendas. Contemporary diplomacy is referred to as 'multi-track diplomacy,' in which class members are engaged to a small

extent, and other developing actors are increasingly taking part with their own new methodologies, wishes, access, and proposals.

The primary function of diplomacy is international to serve a given country and to promote its principles and objectives. It aims to act, through the majority party and the president, cabinet, parliament, and others authorised by the Constitution, as an instrument to enforce the foreign policy set out by the appropriate legislative bodies. The execution of foreign policy and the support for international relations with others (countries, international organisations, etc.) also involves the production and administration of particular procedures to perform such tasks, such as the Diplomatic Protocol.

THE DIPLOMATIC APPROACH TO THE RESOLUTION OF TERRORISM-RELATED ISSUES

Diplomacy continues to be the key tool in combating emerging terrorist methods distributed across national boundaries, and every country holds. An adequate and skillfully applied diplomacy is the core factor for integrating all anti-terrorism initiatives into a compact and linked ensemble. Political as well as military actions in fighting terrorism will assist and attempt to settle complex conflicts, both in public and in so-called hidden diplomacy.¹ Fostering transformation without resorting to violence suggests that a familiar feature of traditional protests is increased, while extremist groups' presence is minimised.² Members of such terrorist organisations could be granted partial or conditional amnesty if they have been perceived as part of release movements in their home countries, more delegitimization and diplomatic pressure on countries and all other terrorist supporters terrorist organisations (e.g., withdrawal of diplomatic staff from countries that provide financial support).

Diplomacy, whether in settlements, treaties, or even mediation mechanisms aimed at seeking peaceful anti-terrorist alternatives, may therefore play a significant role in anti-terrorist operations in general. Politicians and diplomats are among the most prominent personalities

¹ Peter G Peterson, 'Public Diplomacy and the War on Terrorism' (*JSTOR*, 2002) <www.jstor.org/stable/20033270> accessed 15 October 2021

² *Ibid*

in state and government agencies and can thus play a decisive part in anti-terrorist diplomatic activity so that they can:

- Ensure that the issue of modern terrorism is standardised by means of prompt foreign activities, with an emphasis on the duty of countries not to offer a safe harbour to terrorists.
- Insist on eliminating the sources of terrorism, regardless of the nature and severity of its activity; and
- In order to ensure international collaboration and the promotion of extremism, documents and records should be used in the initial phase to establish terrorist organisations and organisations.
- Conduct timely meetings to seek the endorsement of planned anti-terrorist operations with relevant foreign and European allies.

Although political support is preferred, military action against terrorism also has to be considered if diplomatic attempts to stop aggression or violence fail. Included in the above-described acts are measures in relation to the origins of terrorism, briefed by the major powers and the United Nations, so as to achieve international assistance in carrying out a successful anti-terrorist project. It is essential to persuade national officials and leaders of international organisations, especially material support, to condemn and deny all hidden communications with terrorists (transit, safe harbor, purchase of weapons, and training of terrorists). It is also essential for friendly governments to provide public support for anti-terrorism efforts to vulnerable countries.

Continued political activity may continue to create the conditions for the successful international critique of terrorism-friendly countries which may result in policy changes within them or their permanent withdrawal from terrorism. Modern diplomatic activity has resulted in the various meetings (political, expert, and scientific) of international governmental and non-governmental organisations which have deprived these organisations of the authority they seek, in line with the United Nations Charter and international conventions on the war

against Terrorism.³ Political and diplomatic efforts are often increasingly important, in order to retain general international recognition for the security force's actions against terrorist attacks, not only national activity but also for the decision to make use of military units for anti-terrorist operations.⁴

UN's CONFLICT RESOLUTION ROLE

In a major 2016 study reviewing foreign attempts to combat Al Qaida and the Islamic State, the International Crisis Organization observed that the growing influence of these organisations in recent years is "more a product of instability than its primary driver." According to the study, "preventing crises would do better to contain violent radicals than countering violent extremism would do to avoid crises."⁵ As a result, the UN's most operationally meaningful approach to counter-terrorism could be in war resolution, peacebuilding, or peacekeeping operations in countries where militant organisations exploit pervasive insecurity. Over the last two and a half decades, the UN has gained a wealth of experience and a track record of achievement in its attempts to end civil wars. Nonetheless, major questions have been posed with regard to the UN conflict management tools in places such as Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Syria, Somalia, Yemen, Lebanon, and Mali, particularly in its peacekeeping actions.⁶

First, the growing presence in today's civil war environments of Islamic jihad organisations makes UN peace efforts more complicated because many of them meet maximalist demands which cannot be fulfilled or integrated into agreed arrangements on human rights and democratic governance. Second, even though these organisations are driven only by regional, genuine and rectifiable grievances, main powers prefer not to negotiate with them, all of which are designated by the United Nations, the United States, or the EU as terrorists. Third, it has been difficult to include Jihadi movements in the field of humanitarians which, in the past, the UN used successfully with other armed non-state actors. Fourthly, the UN has steadily become a target of those organisations, primarily engaged in self-defense instead of local citizens,

³ Andrew Selth, 'International Terrorism and Challenge to Diplomacy' (19) *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 103-112

⁴ *Ibid*

⁵ International Crisis Group, "Exploiting Disorder," p. ii-iv

⁶ *Ibid*

restricting its capacity to interact with local peoples, attracting hearts and minds, and mediating tensions locally. Finally, as stated in 2015, a high-level United Nations peacekeeping study states: "United Nations peacekeeping missions are not prepared because of their configuration and character to engage in military counter-terrorism operations."⁷

NEGOTIATION AND TERRORISM

Since then, terrorism has ushered in a new age of bilateral and multilateral agreements. Governments, in particular when taking hostages, are often obliged to negotiate with terrorist groups. They communicate with terrorists to persuade them to abandon their objectives and to enter or to help detect more information about the terrorist network and its plans, regardless of whether they are under federal surveillance or detained. In the one side, there is the state, and on the other, there are individuals or associations that are not formally recognised by the state but have gained the status of a negotiating partner by coercion or threat of force. Terrorists are occasionally given safe surrender, parole, or shortened terms for previous felony convictions, as well as restitution and protective measures for themselves or their family members. The aim of these settlements is to reduce the number of militants while also disrupting their network.⁸

One unintended consequence may be the spread of mistrust and suspicion among terrorists. Terrorists have used counter-tactic techniques to make recent offers of amnesty futile, having learnt from the first series of government amnesties for terror groups. When terrorists are arrested for the first time, the government has a good chance of negotiating with them and offering them shorter sentences in exchange for information. The Red Brigades are widely viewed as the most politically motivated of all major Italian criminal organisations, as well as the most adamant in refusing to cooperate with the government in any way.

The kidnapping and subsequent murder of Italian Prime Minister Aldo Moro in 1978 marked the pinnacle of their strength and activities. The state was faced with a classic "prisoner's

⁷ 'Uniting our Strengths for Peace – Politics, Partnerships and People' [2015] High-level Independent Panel on United Nations Peace Operations 31

⁸ *Ibid*

dilemma" in this situation. First, the special counsel was given broad powers to impose a full range of fines on those who refused to cooperate. This ranged from releasing cooperating Red Brigade members with no penalty, to giving the shortest possible sentence with assurances of exemption from retaliation, to strict sentences for those who did not cooperate.

Terrorists affiliated with fundamentalist cultural, social, or racist groups are usually the least willing to collaborate. The prevalence of suicide terrorist attacks shows that no victim is safe from members of such religiously committed organisations. They would almost never decide to bargain with the authorities when they are apprehended because they feel it will be a betrayal of a great objective, despite being thoroughly indoctrinated and persuaded of the justifiability of even the most violent operation. They are unconcerned with the promised rewards of compromise or the possibility of the harshest possible punishment if they refuse. This is why, in cases of this kind of terrorism—whether domestic, foreign, or international—applying the “carrot-and-stick” approach is most difficult. Kidnapping and hostage-taking are common terrorist acts in which the terrorists set the ransom and insist that the government take certain action in exchange for the release of their hostages.

In situations of kidnapping, the exact location of the terrorists is unknown and they feel personally secure. When they take hostages, the government monitors the physical location and the terrorists often face the possibility of government action which could put their lives at risk. There are situations in which high stakes on both sides are dramatically won or lost by such characters. The authorities face a very difficult problem: should they refuse to meet the requests of the terrorists, threaten the death of the robbers or do they yield to their demands and risk further acts of terrorism? The situation is thus much more complex and delicate in circumstances of rebellion when, under intense public pressure, preparations for the emancipation of the hostain are in effect during the heat of the moment. Therefore, two different and conflicting viewpoints must be shown simultaneously: primary concern for the life of the captives and determination to fight terrorism. ivorad Kovacevic says:

“Important decision-making factors include assessing the dangers of a police operation against the terrorists on the one side, and the terrorists' willingness to carry out the attack and actually kill the

hostages on the other, even though it means their own death. The terrorists' motivation is critical for this assessment: religious or other fanaticism, a desire for liberty or sovereignty, mental illness, personal rights, or a desire for money or attention.”⁹

This also has a significant effect on whether the party involved in the hostage-taking is well-trained and properly indoctrinated—in this case, the odds of a successful police operation that may not endanger the hostages' lives are slim—or amateurs, which raises the chances of success. According to some research, only 1% of terrorists who have taken hostages have given up their reported demands. Terrorists exhibit adaptable behaviour, adapting their activities to the government's proven readiness and capacity to combat them.¹⁰

Smaller instrumental agreements reached during negotiations, such as including food, promising peaceful surrender, and even safe passage (if the hostages were not injured), had no direct effect on the rise of terrorism. When appropriate security strategies are adopted, certain types of terrorism become less common and fruitful. There have been fewer incidents of air hijacking and assaults on embassies since the widespread introduction of airport metal detectors. Terrorists will often respond to changing situations by seeking new targets in locations where defence is lowest and the element of surprise is greatest. Governments will often need more time to respond to changes in terrorist tactics than terrorists will need to react to changes in security measures. Only the dramatic attack on the World Trade Center in New York revealed to the US government how insufficient security controls in American airports were, especially on domestic flights, and inadequacy that made US territory highly vulnerable.¹¹

⁹ Kovacević, *Međunarodno pregovaranje* (International Negotiations) 438

¹⁰ *Ibid*

¹¹ *Ibid*

CONCLUSION

Diplomacy is the most important weapon at any country's disposal in the fight against modern terrorism, one that transcends national borders and is increasingly unhindered, if not encouraged, by globalisation. Terrorist organisations and organisations will then expand their networks to cover the entire globe. Diplomacy, when skillfully used, serves as the connective tissue that can bring all anti-terrorism efforts together into a compact and well-connected whole. Anti-terrorism policies and activities became scattered and unconnected in the absence of effective diplomacy, and therefore ineffective.

Terrorists' activity does not improve as a result of a UN treaty or settlement. Diplomacy, on the other hand, advocates all other weapons used in the war against terrorism, whether it deepens the normative foundation for them or guarantees the international legal structure for their use. Financial regulation is a vital method for tracking terrorist activity. Terrorists' movements may be limited or even stopped by denying them access to financial services, and a shortage of resources makes it impossible for terrorists to conduct operations.

When it comes to putting an end to terrorism attacks, we face two major challenges. One issue is that terrorism does not necessitate large sums of money; the other is that it is incredibly difficult to track down terrorist funding. Both of these are impediments to all aspects of modern-day terrorism combat. Diplomacy may not fix the first problem, but it can have a huge effect on how we deal with the second.