

PATTERNS OF
Global Terrorism
2003

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UNITED STATES
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Introduction

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We've come to this moment through patience and resolve and focused action. And that is our strategy moving forward. The war on terror is a different kind of war, waged capture by capture, cell by cell, and victory by victory. Our security is assured by our perseverance and by our sure belief in the success of liberty. And the United States of America will not relent until this war is won.

*President George W. Bush
on 14 December 2003
following the capture of Saddam Hussein*

In 2003, terrorists struck at targets around the world, even as Iraq became a central front in the global war against terrorism and the locus of so many deadly attacks against civilians. Al-Qaida and other terrorist groups made clear once again their relentless pursuit of evil in defiance of any law—human or divine. The year saw heinous crimes against the international community, humanitarian organizations, and people dedicated to helping mankind:

- A bomb in a cement truck exploded at the United Nations headquarters in Baghdad in August, killing special UN representative Sergio Vieira de Mello and 22 other persons.
- The Baghdad International Committee for the Red Cross was bombed in October.
- The Catholic Relief Services headquarters in Nassiryah was destroyed in a bombing on 12 November.
- An explosion occurred near Save the Children USA's offices in Kabul in November; the agency has been providing education, health, and economic assistance to children and families in Afghanistan for more than 20 years.

Churches, synagogues, and mosques were all targeted by terrorists in 2003. Among the items captured from al-Qaida terrorists last year were copies of the Koran containing bombs. Clearly, these actions show the terrorists to be enemies of all people, regardless of faith.

The world must remain united against the terrorist threat. The United States, for its part, remains committed to implementing the National Strategy for Combating Terrorism. We will:

- Defeat terrorist organizations of global reach by attacking their sanctuaries; leadership; command, control, and communications; material support; and finances.

- Deny further sponsorship, support, and sanctuary for terrorists.
- Diminish the underlying conditions that terrorists seek to exploit.
- Defend the United States, our citizens, and our interests at home and abroad.
- Use all the tools at our disposal: diplomatic, law enforcement, intelligence, financial, and military.

Diplomacy

Through diplomacy, the Department of State promotes international counterterrorism (CT) cooperation that serves our own interests as well as those of our partners. We enhance the capabilities of our allies to fight the terrorist threat and facilitate the disruption of terrorist networks and the apprehension of terrorist suspects.

During the year, nations around the world continued to increase their counterterrorism efforts and to cooperate both bilaterally and regionally to deter attacks. The OAS, the European Union, the OSCE, ASEAN, APEC, and other organizations took concrete steps to combat terrorism more effectively and to cooperate with each other in the fight. Since September 11, NATO has made great strides in transforming its military capabilities to make the Alliance more expeditionary and deployable against terrorist threats. NATO currently makes a major contribution to the global war on terrorism by leading the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan. Additional Alliance counterterrorism contributions include a maritime terrorism monitoring presence in the Mediterranean Sea, a Chemical-Biological-Radiological-Nuclear defense unit, and a terrorism threat intelligence unit to enhance sharing of intelligence.

At the 2003 G-8 Summit in Evian, France, leaders established a Counterterrorism Action Group of donor countries to expand and coordinate training and assistance for countries with the will—but not the capabilities—to combat terror, focusing on critical areas such as terrorist financing, customs and immigration controls, illegal arms trafficking, and police and law enforcement. During the fourth regular session of the Inter-American Committee Against Terrorism (CICTE), member states agreed to a comprehensive work plan not only to strengthen border and financial controls but also to address threats to seaport and aviation security as well as cybersecurity. In June, President Bush announced a \$100 million Eastern Africa Counterterrorism Initiative to expand and accelerate CT efforts with Kenya, Ethiopia, Djibouti, Uganda, Tanzania, and other countries.

Law Enforcement

The greatly increased law enforcement cooperation among nations that followed the 9/11 attacks continued to expand throughout 2003.

Al-Qaida is no longer the organization it once was, largely due to such cooperation. Most of the group's senior leadership is dead or in custody, its membership on the run, and its capabilities sharply degraded. More than 3,400 al-Qaida suspects have been arrested or detained worldwide.

In the United States, international terrorist suspects repeatedly faced the rule of law:

- In February, the Department of Justice (DOJ) announced the indictment of the alleged North American leader of the Palestine Islamic Jihad, Sami Al-Arian, and seven co-conspirators. The indictment charges them with operating a racketeering enterprise that has supported numerous violent terrorist activities since 1984. Al-Arian and three others were placed under arrest.
- In March, DOJ announced the indictment and arrest of three members of the Army for the Liberation of Rwanda for the brutal murder in 1999 of two American tourists in Uganda.
- In May, a naturalized American citizen, Lyman Faris, pled guilty to surveilling a New York City bridge for al-Qaida, and in October he was sentenced to 20 years for providing material support to that group and conspiring to give them information about possible US targets for attack.
- Also in May, the Justice Department unsealed a 50-count indictment against two Yemeni nationals for the bombing in October 2000 of the USS Cole that killed 17 American sailors and wounded more than 40.
- In November, two Yemeni suspects were extradited from Germany to the United States on federal charges of conspiring to provide material support to al-Qaida and HAMAS.
- Throughout the year, numerous members of terrorist cells that were disrupted in Detroit, Portland, Buffalo, and Seattle pled guilty to or were convicted of charges of conspiracy to provide material support to terrorists, including al-Qaida and the Taliban.

Intelligence

With enhanced intelligence sharing among nations, terrorists are being tracked down, and plots are being thwarted.

In March, al-Qaida operational leader and mastermind of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, was captured in Pakistan and turned over to US authorities.

In August, his associate—Riduan bin Isomuddin, or Hambali—was arrested in Thailand and also turned over to US authorities. Hambali is believed to have been largely responsible for the terrorist attacks in Bali that killed more than 200 people.

Information gained from captured enemy combatants and imprisoned terrorist suspects continues to be exploited effectively around the world.

In January 2003, President Bush announced the creation of the Terrorist Threat Integration Center, which began operations last May. The center analyzes threat-related information collected domestically and abroad to form a comprehensive threat picture and to ensure information sharing among US agencies.

In September, Attorney General John Ashcroft, Secretary of Homeland Security Tom Ridge, Secretary of State Colin Powell, FBI Director Robert Mueller, and Director of Central Intelligence George Tenet announced the creation of the Terrorist Screening Center to consolidate terrorist watch lists and provide 24/7 operational support for the thousands of federal screeners across the country and around the world.

Financial

The world community is waging an unprecedented campaign to disrupt the flow of money to terrorist networks and cripple their ability to operate on a global scale. The United States is working closely with other governments and international institutions to block terrorist assets overseas, take preventive measures to keep assets out of terrorist hands, and offer training and assistance to governments that seek to improve their institutional ability to carry out anti-money laundering strategies.

Virtually every country in the world has expressed support for the war on terrorist financing: 173 nations have issued orders to freeze terrorist assets, more than 100 countries have introduced new legislation to fight terrorist financing, and 84 countries have established financial intelligence units to share information.

The 31-member Financial Action Task Force (FATF), the world's standard setter for fighting money laundering, has adopted recommendations for countries that seek to protect their financial systems from terrorist financiers. More than 90 non-FATF countries and jurisdictions have already submitted self-assessment reports to FATF on their compliance with these recommendations.

Some 350 terrorist entities and individuals have been designated under Executive Order 13224, signed by President Bush on 23 September 2001, which freezes the assets of terrorists and their supporters and authorizes the government to identify, designate, and freeze the US-based assets of those who offer financial support to terrorist groups.

The Department of State's Counterterrorism Finance Unit and the interagency Terrorist Financing Working Group coordinate the delivery of technical assistance and training to governments around the world that seek to improve their ability to investigate, identify, and interdict the flow of money to terrorist groups.

The United States has blocked some \$36 million in assets of the Taliban, al-Qaida, and other terrorist entities and supporters; approximately \$26 million of this has been turned over to the Government of Afghanistan. Other nations have blocked more than \$100 million in terrorist assets.

Military

In Iraq and Afghanistan, military force is being brought to bear against terrorists with real success.

The capture of Saddam Hussein in December 2003 was a major defeat for the thugs and terrorists who supported him. Through Operation Iraqi Freedom, the United States and its Coalition partners defeated the Saddam regime, effectively neutralizing a state sponsor of terrorism and removing a government that had used weapons of mass destruction against its own people. Iraq could no longer be used as a sanctuary by the network run by Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, whose relationships with senior al-Qaida leaders helped establish a poison-and-explosives training camp in northeastern Iraq.

During Operation Enduring Freedom, the United States has built a worldwide Coalition that dismantled the oppressive Taliban regime in Afghanistan and denied al-Qaida a safehaven. The Coalition remains engaged there.

(Most of the attacks that have occurred during Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom do not meet the longstanding US definition of international terrorism because they were directed at combatants, that is, American and Coalition forces on duty. Attacks against civilians and against military personnel, who at the time of the incident were unarmed and/or not on duty, are judged as terrorist attacks.)

Conclusion

We have made significant progress in the two and one-half years since the global war on terrorism began. But the ultimate success of this global counterterrorism campaign will hinge, in large part, on two factors: sustained international political will and effective capacity building.

First, we must sustain and enhance the political will of states to fight terrorism. The key to maintaining a coalition is underscoring to its members every day that the fight is not over and that sustained effort is clearly in their long-term interests. We have made tremendous progress on that score.

I would cite Saudi Arabia as an excellent example of a nation increasingly focusing its political will to fight terrorism. Saudi Arabia has launched an aggressive, comprehensive, and unprecedented campaign to hunt down terrorists, uncover their plots, and cut off their sources of funding. The horrific bombings in Riyadh in May and November served to strengthen Saudi resolve, hasten existing counterterrorism efforts, and open new avenues of cooperation. I have made numerous trips to the Kingdom during the past year and met with the highest levels of the Saudi Government, and I have been greatly impressed with the strides they have made and their seriousness of purpose.

Second, we need to enhance the capacity of all states to fight terrorism. The United States cannot by itself investigate every lead, arrest every suspect, gather and analyze all the intelligence, effectively sanction every sponsor of terrorism, prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, or find and fight every terrorist cell.

I would cite Malaysia as a nation that is helping others increase their counterterrorism capacities while also increasing its own. Malaysia opened the Southeast Asia Regional Center for Counterterrorism in August. Participants from 15 nations from South and Southeast Asia received US-provided training at the center in ways to cut off sources of terrorist financing. Malaysia is a key partner in the war on terrorism, and its role in creating a regional center for building counterterrorism capacity and sharing information about terrorism in Asia is most welcome.

The United States shares that goal of assisting governments to become full and self-sustaining partners in the global fight against terrorism.

This fight will be of uncertain duration, but additional deadly attacks are certain.

As Secretary Powell reminded us on the second anniversary of the September 11 attacks: “Led by the United States, nations all around the globe have come together in an historic effort to wipe terrorism from the face of the Earth. Faithful friends and former foes alike have united against terror, and we are bringing every tool of statecraft to bear against it—military, intelligence, law enforcement, financial, and most certainly diplomatic.”

US Policy

President Bush has laid out the scope of the war on terrorism. Four enduring policy principles guide our counterterrorism strategy:

First, make no concessions to terrorists and strike no deals.

The US Government will make no concessions to individuals or groups holding official or private US citizens hostage. The United States will use every appropriate resource to gain the safe return of US citizens who are held hostage. At the same time, it is US Government policy to deny hostage takers the benefits of ransom, prisoner releases, policy changes, or other acts of concession.

Second, bring terrorists to justice for their crimes.

The United States will track terrorists who attack Americans, no matter how long it takes.

Third, isolate and apply pressure on states that sponsor terrorism to force them to change their behavior.

There are seven countries that have been designated state sponsors of terrorism: Cuba, Iran, Iraq, Libya, North Korea, Sudan, and Syria. (Although Iraq remains a designated state sponsor, sanctions against Iraq have been suspended. Iraq's name can be removed from the list once it has a government in place that pledges not to support acts of terrorism.)

Fourth, bolster the counterterrorist capabilities of those countries that work with the United States and require assistance.

Under the Antiterrorism Assistance program, the United States provides training and related assistance to law enforcement and security services of selected friendly foreign governments. Courses cover such areas as airport security, bomb detection, hostage rescue, and crisis

management. A recent component of the training targets the financial underpinnings of terrorists and criminal money launderers. Counterterrorist training and technical assistance teams are working with countries to jointly identify vulnerabilities, enhance capacities, and provide targeted assistance to address the problem of terrorist financing. At the same time, special investigative teams are working with countries to identify and then dry up money used to support terrorism. We are also developing workshops to assist countries in drafting strong laws against terrorism, including terrorist financing. During the past 20 years, we have trained more than 36,000 officials from 142 countries in various aspects of counterterrorism.

A broad range of counterterrorism training resources from other US Government agencies, including military training by the Department of Defense, is being brought to bear to bolster international capabilities. We will work with the world community and seek assistance from other partner nations as well.

Our Terrorism Interdiction Program helps friendly countries stop terrorists from freely crossing international borders.

Our Rewards for Justice program offers rewards of up to \$5 million for information that prevents or favorably resolves acts of international terrorism against US persons or property worldwide. Secretary Powell has authorized a reward of up to \$25 million for information leading to the capture of Usama Bin Ladin and other key al-Qaida leaders.

Note

Adverse mention in this report of individual members of any political, social, ethnic, religious, or national group is not meant to imply that all members of that group are terrorists. Indeed, terrorists represent a small minority of dedicated, often fanatical, individuals in most such groups. It is those small groups—and their actions—that are the subject of this report.

Furthermore, terrorist acts are part of a larger phenomenon of politically inspired violence, and at times the line between the two can become difficult to draw. To relate terrorist events to the larger context, and to give a feel for the conflicts that spawn violence, this report will discuss terrorist acts as well as other violent incidents that are not necessarily international terrorism.

Legislative Requirements

This report is submitted in compliance with Title 22 of the United States Code, Section 2656f(a), which requires the Department of State to provide Congress a full and complete annual report on terrorism for those countries and groups meeting the criteria of Section (a)(1) and (2) of the Act. As required by legislation, the report includes detailed assessments of foreign countries where significant terrorist acts occurred and countries about which Congress was notified during the preceding five years pursuant to Section 6(j) of the Export Administration Act of 1979 (the so-called terrorist-list countries that have repeatedly provided state support for international terrorism). In addition, the report includes all relevant information about the previous year's activities of individuals, terrorist organizations, or umbrella groups known to be responsible for the kidnapping or death of any US citizen during the preceding five years and groups known to be financed by state sponsors of terrorism.

In 1996, Congress amended the reporting requirements contained in the above-referenced law. The amended law requires the Department of State to report on the extent to which other countries cooperate with the United States in apprehending, convicting, and punishing terrorists responsible for attacking US citizens or interests. The law also requires that this report describe the extent to which foreign governments are cooperating, or have cooperated during the previous five years, in preventing future acts of terrorism. As permitted in the amended legislation, the Department is submitting such information to Congress in a classified annex to this unclassified report.

UN Role in Fighting Terrorism

The United Nations continues to provide focus and energy to the international community in its collective fight against terrorism. In 2003:

- The **Security Council** adopted four resolutions directly related to terrorism. Resolution 1456, drafted by the Foreign Ministers of the Security Council in January, reinforced the Council's commitment to combating terrorism and Resolution 1455 strengthened the mandate of the 1267 Sanctions Committee (see below). Resolutions 1465 and 1516 condemned specific acts of terrorism in Bogota, Colombia, and in Istanbul, Turkey.
- The **Counter Terrorism Committee (CTC)**, established by Security Council resolution 1373 after September 11, made progress toward its ambitious goal of raising the level of performance of the governments of all 191 member states in the fight against terrorism. Since the CTC's inception, all 191 members have interacted with the CTC, and many have taken positive steps as a result, such as acceding to the 12 international terrorism conventions or revising their own laws to better fight terrorism. As a force multiplier, the CTC has been successful in involving international, regional, and subregional organizations in the fight against terrorism.
- The **1267 Sanctions Committee**, also established by the Security Council, maintains a list of individuals and entities associated with al-Qaida, Taliban, and/or Usama Bin Ladin subject to international sanctions—asset freezes, travel bans, and arms embargoes—that member states are obligated to implement. The Committee list contains nearly 400 names, including some of the most notorious al-Qaida–related individuals and groups. An estimated \$136 million in assets has been frozen by member states.
- The **General Assembly** negotiated and adopted an antiterrorism resolution, 58/81, and continued work on the negotiation of a Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism and Nuclear Terrorism.
- **Secretary General Kofi Annan** continues to effectively use the bully pulpit to condemn terrorism. In a speech on 22 September, he said, "Terrorism is a global threat, and it can never be justified. No one has the right to kill innocent civilians. On the contrary, the use of terrorism to pursue any cause—even a worthy one—can only defile that cause, and thereby damage it."
- **UN Secretariat** staff of the Terrorism Prevention Branch in Vienna, Austria, continued to help countries build the legal framework necessary to ratify and implement the 12 international counterterrorism conventions.

UN Specialized Agencies are also involved in the fight against terrorism. For example, the International Maritime Organization and the International Civil Aviation Organization engaged in security-related activities designed to make it harder for terrorists to operate in the commercial shipping and aviation arenas. The **International Atomic Energy Agency** conducted missions that enhanced the controls on radioactive materials.

Definitions

No one definition of terrorism has gained universal acceptance. For the purposes of this report, however, we have chosen the definition of terrorism contained in Title 22 of the United States Code, Section 2656f(d). That statute contains the following definitions:

The term terrorism means premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against noncombatant¹ targets by subnational groups or clandestine agents, usually intended to influence an audience.

The term international terrorism means terrorism involving citizens or the territory of more than one country.

The term terrorist group means any group practicing, or that has significant subgroups that practice, international terrorism.

The US Government has employed this definition of terrorism for statistical and analytical purposes since 1983.

Domestic terrorism is probably a more widespread phenomenon than international terrorism. Because international terrorism has a direct impact on US interests, it is the primary focus of this report. However, the report also describes, but does not provide statistics on, significant developments in domestic terrorism.

¹ For purposes of this definition, the term noncombatant is interpreted to include, in addition to civilians, military personnel who at the time of the incident are unarmed and/or not on duty. For example, in past reports we have listed as terrorist incidents the murders of the following US military personnel: Col. James Rowe, killed in Manila in April 1989; Capt. William Nordeen, US defense attache killed in Athens in June 1988; the two servicemen killed in the Labelle discotheque bombing in West Berlin in April 1986; and the four off-duty US Embassy Marine guards killed in a cafe in El Salvador in June 1985. We also consider as acts of terrorism attacks on military installations or on armed military personnel when a state of military hostilities does not exist at the site, such as bombings against US bases in Europe, the Philippines, or elsewhere.