After the collapse of the USSR, the world's security perspective underwent a major change from the seeming stability of the bi-polar power balance to a system in which sub-national groups and organizations were able to acquire weapons of mass destruction (WMD). Traditionally, the concept of international security has been equated with the use of force between states, with a special focus on great power military operations. However, since the 1980s, this picture has changed with respect to the following: who should be secured; the nature of international threats; and the kind of reactions that are authorized to manage threats.\[1\]

Currently, terrorism is not defined by borders.\[2\] Proliferation of weapons of mass destruction by states and non-states is the major security problem of our time. While terrorism is certainly not a new phenomenon, the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon in September 2001 brought it to prominent attention in the United States and many other countries.\[3\]

Terrorist groups operate in secrecy, often blending in with civilians, and typically attack using means other than large formations of conventionally armed soldiers. Terrorists, unlike guerrilla armies or traditional insurgencies, do not control territory and they have no population to defend. A looming terrorist attack is therefore more difficult to detect and cannot be deterred by the threat of counterattack.\[4\]

**The Changing Nature of Global Security**

Since the terrorist attacks in September 2001, many countries have begun to look at international security in a much broader context than was the case during the bi-polar Cold War conflict. The events of 9/11 served as a wake-up call to the world that international terrorism poses grave dangers to civilian and military populations alike. These attacks were distinct in several ways. First, the deaths associated with the 9/11 attacks were unprecedented: the human casualties were equal to the number of deaths from international terrorism since the 1980s to the end of 2000. Second, 9/11 showed that everyday objects (jetliners) could be turned into deadly weapons with catastrophic consequences. Third, the event showed that the goals of today's terrorists were to seek maximum damages and induce widespread panic, thus differentiating contemporary terrorist acts from the predominantly left-wing terrorist
Since 2002, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) budget has increased by over 69 percent to $36.2 billion for the fiscal year 2004 and $40.2 billion for 2005. A little over 60 percent of DHS's budget was spent on counterterrorism programs on U.S. soil.[5] These expenditures are small compared to the so-called preemptive actions taken in fighting the “war on terror,” including the U.S. wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. According to a new report from the Government Accountability Office (GAO), the U.S. Congress has provided the Department of Defense (DOD) with about $808 billion in supplemental and annual appropriations since 2001, primarily for military campaigns in support of the Global War on Terrorism.[6] Still other proactive spending involves improving intelligence, tracking terrorist assets, and fostering cooperative linkages with other states.[7]

After the September 11 attacks, the United States developed a preemptive national strategy for combating terrorism, which outlined the policy framework for coordinated actions to prevent terrorist attacks against itself, its citizens, its interests, and its friends throughout the world.[8] According to the administration, the 9/11 attacks demonstrated the decreased efficacy of nuclear deterrence. The preemptive strategy assumed that global security entailed redefining the nature of war as follows:

- Crises in the 1990s and 2000s have intensified a trend that started during the Cold War — the shift from war between states to war within states. Many wars and conflicts during and after the Cold War were often between warring parties and non-state actors within national borders.
- Non-state organizations, such as guerrilla groups, terrorist networks, and paramilitaries (unofficial armies especially in Iraq) are increasingly organized along ethnic or religious lines. These actors have reached beyond their national borders. Nowadays, terrorist groups often attack outside the boundaries of their own country, whereas prior to this, most terrorist attacks occurred within countries or sometimes in neighboring countries.
- The primary victims and majority of casualties are now civilians, while military deaths are on the decline. In Iraq for example, it is estimated that more than 30,000 Iraqi civilians have died, well below the 5,000 U.S. soldiers killed in Iraq.[9] At the beginning of the twentieth century, “the ratio of military to civilian victims was about nine to one, while during the Second World War, the ratio was about even. By the end of the century, the ratio had been completely turned upside down as nine civilian deaths occurred for every one military death.”[10]

As a result, some scholars believe that the violence and civil conflict in countries like Iraq, Afghanistan, Sudan, Sri Lanka, Liberia, and Rwanda have features that are qualitatively different from previous conflicts.[11]

We can make three assumptions about the changing nature of international security. First and foremost is that there is a growing link between transnational terrorism and WMD proliferation, making the potential of a 9/11-like attack using nuclear, biological, or chemical weapons likely. Second, there is a growing pessimism about deterrence and its applicability to non-state threats; the argument being that “deterring terrorists” is an oxymoron, and that, in the case of terrorists and WMD, possession guarantees use. Most analysts contend that terrorist groups cannot be deterred that lack populations to protect or territory to safeguard and whose operatives may be willing to die for their objectives. At least, such groups are very difficult to deter given contemporary international standards and political norms, such as the unacceptability of reprisals against innocent civilians.[12] The third assumption is that if deterrence fails, defenses will never be perfect. Despite some defensive tools and measures, such as ballistic missile defense, cruise missile and other air defenses, civil defense, detection, vaccines, port/border checks, and so forth, these measures would not be one hundred percent effective against WMD challenges.[13]

The apparent success of nuclear deterrence before 9/11 was conditioned by two major factors:

- It was directed against the use of nuclear weapons by states possessing such weapons. Nuclear deterrence did not seek to prevent states from acquiring nuclear weapons — it sought instead to prevent their use by holding hostage the enemy state’s targetable territory, leadership, industry, military forces, and cities. Nuclear deterrence moreover did not have to concern itself with threats posed by non-state actors armed with weapons of mass destruction.[14]

In this case, deterrence means to induce at least one of the enemies not to take a hostile action contrary to the interests of the other by convincing the enemy that doing so would not be worth the effort. Deterrence is an effort to manipulate the enemy’s motivation, to challenge the status quo. Yet preemption is based on
“imminent threat.”[15] Like deterrence, it seeks to manipulate the motives of the opponent in order to affect his behavior. However, unlike deterrence, preemption is an attempt to persuade the opponent to change his hostile behavior.[16] Deterrence is successful when the adversary’s expected utility of inaction exceeds his expected utility of action. Preemption is successful when the adversary’s expected utility of changing his action exceeds his expected utility of continuing his present course. Preemption occurs in the wake of failed deterrence. Unlike deterrence, preemptive strategy requires the enemy to make concessions or bear the consequences. “Deterrence occurs when a ‘defender’ tries to manipulate the expectations of a ‘challenger’ such that the challenger is deterred from taking an action contrary to the interests of the defender.”[17] Preemption occurs when a state manipulates the expectations of another state or terrorist groups to change their actions. Conventional wisdom holds that deterrence requires less coercive effort than preemption, whereas preemption adheres to military options.

Thus, as Jeffrey Record explains, substituting preemptive action for deterrence ignores the fact that traditional nuclear deterrence was directed at states already armed with nuclear weapons and aimed at deterring their use in time of crisis or war, whereas preemption or preventive war is enlisted as a means to prevent the “acquisition” of nuclear weapons.[18] Favored by the George W. Bush administration, preemption is a unilateral U.S. initiative aimed at certain states or terrorist groups. In comparison, deterrence is bilateral or multilateral.

The U.S. administration believes that terrorists and certain so-called “rogue” states cannot be deterred or contained. Strategies based on containment and deterrence are therefore inappropriate to ensure security in the twenty-first century threat environment. The need to prevent the proliferation of chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons encouraged the administration to adopt a preemptive strategy.[19] President George W. Bush outlined this new war doctrine in his 1 June 2002 graduation speech at West Point:

For much of the last century, America’s defense relied on the Cold War doctrines of deterrence and containment... But new threats also require new thinking. Deterrence, the promise of massive retaliation against nations, means nothing against shadowy terrorist networks with no nation or citizens to defend. Containment is not possible when unbalanced dictators with weapons of mass destruction can deliver those weapons on missiles or secretly provide them to terrorist allies... Yet the war on terror will not be won on the defensive. We must take the battle to the enemy, disrupt his plans and confront the worst threats before they emerge. In the world we have entered, the only path to safety is the path of action. And this nation will act.[20]

According to this National Security Strategy (NSS), “The United States will, if necessary, act preemptively”[21] to prevent rogue states or terrorist groups from threatening or using WMD against the United States or its allies. The National Strategy to Combat Weapons of Mass Destruction called for “capabilities to detect and destroy an adversary’s WMD assets before these weapons are used.”[22] The inability to deter a potential attacker, the immediacy of today’s threats, and the magnitude of potential harm shaped the U.S. strategy.

The United States identifies three main threat elements for U.S. security: first, terrorist organizations with global reach; second, weak states that harbor and assist such terrorist organizations; and third, rogue states. Al Qaeda and Afghanistan during the Taliban regime cover the first two elements. According to the U.S. administration, rogue states are defined as states that brutalize their own people, disregard international law, threaten their neighbors, seek to acquire WMD for purposes of aggression, sponsor terrorism around the world, reject human rights, and hate the U.S. and everything it stands for.

In the view of the U.S. administration, the war on terrorism became a “counterproliferation” war against the acquisition of weapons of mass destruction, especially nuclear weapons, by state and non-state entities hostile to the United States. It was not only an act of terrorism that prompted a sea change in U.S. security policy but also what the new NSS called the “gravest danger ... at the crossroads of radicalism and technology.” Accordingly, the administration recognized the threat of extremist groups or states and their unprecedented destructive ability: “When the spread of chemical and biological and nuclear weapons, along with ballistic missile technology ... occurs, even weak states and small groups can attain a catastrophic power to strike great nations. Our enemies have declared this very intention, and have been caught seeking these terrible weapons. They want the capability to blackmail us, or to harm us, or to harm our friends.”[23] Former secretary of defense, Donald Rumsfeld, stated, “What’s new is the nexus between terrorist networks, terrorist states and weapons of mass destruction that, when combined with missile technology, can make mighty adversaries of small or impoverished states, or even relatively small groups of individuals.”[24] Current U.S. strategy is focused on what
What is terrorism? While terrorism has existed in one type or another for centuries (if not millennia), no international and comprehensive definition has been accepted. Scholars and political organizations pose various definitions of terrorism. The difficulty encountered when trying to define terrorism is connected directly to the source of the definition. In other words, the group or organization defining terrorism will normally determine its meaning. Schmidt and Youngman, the authors of Political Terrorism, identified 109 different definitions. Many efforts to define terrorism as an international legally binding instrument were unsuccessful. Jonathan White proposes that terrorism must be examined through the contextual elements of history, conflict, political power, repression, media, crime, religion, and specific forms of terrorism. Bruce Hoffman offers the following definition of terror: “Violence — or, equally important, the threat of violence — used and directed in pursuit of, or in service of, a political aim.” Walter Enders and Todd Sandler define terrorism as “The premeditated use of threat or use of violence by individuals or sub-national groups in order to obtain a political or social objective through the intimidation of a large audience beyond that of the immediate victims.” According to Caroline Kennedy-Pipe, “terrorism may be defined as the use of violent or intimidating methods to coerce a government or community — a phenomenon noticeable throughout modern history.” The United Nations defined terrorism as follows: “The act of destroying or injuring civilian lives or the act of destroying or damaging civilian or government property without the expressly chartered permission of a specific government, this by individuals or groups acting independently... in the attempt to effect some political goal.” The UN definition also considers all war crimes as acts of terrorism. However, attacks on military installations, bases, and personnel are not considered acts of terrorism. The U.S. definitions of terrorism do not include state-sponsored terrorism. The FBI refers to terrorism as “the unlawful use of force and violence against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social objectives.”

Surprisingly, the U.S. government — the leader in the global war on terrorism — does not have a single comprehensive definition of what constitutes terrorism. The U.S. State Department, for example, defines terrorism as “premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against noncombatant targets, i.e., in addition to civilians, military personnel who at the time of the incident are unarmed or not on duty, by sub-national groups or clandestine agents, usually intended to influence an audience.” This definition characterizes the victims as “noncombatant” and further states “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.” The U.S. Department of Defense characterizes terrorism as “the calculated use of violence or threat of violence to inculcate fear; intended to coerce or to intimidate governments or societies in the pursuit of goals that are generally political, religious, or ideological.” The DOD definition of terrorism is distinguished from the definition of the Department of State in three main elements. First, the threat, not the use of violence, is now included. Second, the noncombatant distinction is ignored, so that the roadside bombing of a U.S. military convoy in Iraq would be terrorism. Third, religious and ideological incentives are explicitly identified. Nevertheless, both definitions share five minimalist elements: violence, political motivation, perpetrator, victim, and audience.

Almost all definitions of terrorism hinge on five determinant elements:

1. **Violence**—without violence or threat of violence, terrorists cannot compel a political decision maker to respond to their demands. Violence is used to achieve goals.

2. **Perpetrator**—the perpetrator aspect is controversial. If a state or government uses violence and terror tactics against its own citizens (in dictatorial states such as Stalinist Russia), is this counted as a terrorist act? In such cases, the literature usually speaks of state terror, though not necessarily terrorism. In cases where states support sub-national terrorist groups by providing safe havens, funding, weapons, intelligence, training, or other means, we can speak of state-sponsored terrorism. Libya’s purported sponsoring of the downing of Pan Am flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland, on 21 December 1988 is one such example.

3. **Motive**—the type of motivation determines the type of terrorism. In the absence of
a political/social motive, a violent act is typically labeled a crime rather than a terrorist act.

4. **Victims**—the victim identity is the most controversial. Actually, all mentioned definitions consider terrorist assault against civilians as terrorism. However, the main question is this: Is an assault against a passive military target or a U.N. peacekeeper a terrorist act? The Israelis recognize an attack against a passive military target as a terrorist act, whereas other states may not when the military person is part of an occupying force. The data set “International Terrorism: Attributes of Terrorist Events” (ITERATE) considers terrorist actions against peacekeepers, but not against an occupying military force, as a terrorist act.[36]

5. **Audience**—audience refers to the population that the terrorist act intends to intimidate. For instance, a terrorist bomb in a commuter train is meant to cause widespread social anxiety, because such bombs can occur in any train or public place. Examples include suicide bombings in Iraq and Pakistan and shootings and explosions in Indian railway stations (especially the recent attacks on 26 November 2008). Thus, the audience broadens beyond the immediate victims of the assault. Regarding the 9/11 attacks, al-Qaeda’s audience was, on at least some level, everyone everywhere, not just the immediate victims associated with the four hijackings or the U.S. government. Therefore, terrorists are willing to extend their audience beyond their immediate victims by making their actions appear to be random, so that those far from the event feel insecurity and anxiety. In fact, by intimidating a target population, terrorists intend that the victims will apply pressure on policymakers to concede to their demands.[37]

**New Terrorism vs. Old Terrorism**

Who are the “new” terrorists? The new terrorism should be properly defined and its applicability to current circumstances evaluated. The September 11 terrorist attacks in 2001 have completely transformed the perception of terrorism throughout the world and required the redefinition of a long list of concerns regarding international and national security.[38] Of course, some scholars make a distinction between transcendent and international terrorism: “A transnational terrorist organization is based in one country but operates at times outside its territory. An international terrorist organization not only operates outside a particular territory but is also based in several countries and is comprised of members of different nationalities;” hence “Al-Qaeda is truly international.”[39] In the post-Cold War era, particularly after 9/11, the notion of a “strategic revolution” has been associated with terrorism. Al Qaeda was deemed an example of new terrorism, perhaps even “catastrophic terrorism,” and at odds with the old lessons of seemingly well-known phenomena.[40] Bruce Hoffman, a senior analyst with RAND, developed the most plausible explanation regarding the emergence of new forms of terrorism in the mid-1990s.[41] He argued that terrorism now included new adversaries, new motivations, and new methods, all of which challenged many of the most essential assumptions about terrorism and how it operated. Hofmann argued that while terrorist attacks were declining, casualties were increasing. The new religious terrorism was overturning the old dictum that terrorists wanted only a few people dead, but many people watching. [42] The essential distinctions between old (traditional or nationalist) terrorism and new (transnational) terrorism are related to territoriality, motivation, and individualization.

**Territoriality**

Old or traditional terrorism is homegrown and has consequences for the host nation, its institutions, population, property, and policies. In a domestic event, the perpetrators, victims, and audience are all from the same country. With the old domestic terrorism, states were self-reliant if they possessed sufficient resources. Therefore, antiterrorist strategies did not involve other states, as neither the terrorist acts nor the government’s reactions affected foreign interests.[43] With the new terrorism, states have to cooperate with other countries’ intelligence agencies and security forces in order to address the root causes of terrorism.[44] In this regard, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) launched its global technical cooperation program on “strengthening the legal regime against terrorism” in October 2002. The program supplies the framework for UNODC’s specialized assistance to countries for ratifying and implementing the global conventions and protocols associated with the prevention and suppression of international terrorism and for setting effective mechanisms for global cooperation.[45]

Traditional terrorist groups tended to have a particular geographical focus for their political goals. Notable examples were the Stern Gang in British Palestine (a Zionist extremist organization founded by Avraham Stern in 1940 in order to gain political independence); the Shining Path in Peru (the most formidable guerrilla force founded 1960s); the ETA in Spain (Euskadi Ta Askatasuna, a Basque separatist paramilitary organization); the Red Army Faction in Germany (an extreme left–wing revolutionary movement); and the Tamil Tigers in Sri Lanka (an ethnic-based militia striving for
Tamil autonomy). The perpetrators of traditional terrorism are individuals or groups with strong nationalist ideas and goals. Sometimes they want to establish an independent state, or abolish an entire political system and replace it with another. Nowadays terrorist groups lack delimited borders and do not operate in particular states.

**Motivation**

19 What Bruce Hoffmann called “new terrorism” and a “new generation” of terrorists characterized by scattered structures and goals that are religious rather than political, go far beyond the creation of a theocracy, and include a strong embrace of mystical beliefs.[46] For example, according to Indian and Pakistani officials, many terrorist attacks within the two countries derived from extreme religious groups such as al Qaeda and Lashkar-e-Taiba. Terrorism has only recently become religious. When the contemporary international terrorism first emerged, none of the terrorist groups and organizations could be classified as religious.[47] Traditional terrorism had political roots, yet religion lies at the root of the present wave of terrorism. Of course, religion played a part in some traditional forms of terrorism, for instance, the confrontation between Catholics and Protestants in Ulster. However, for Islam’s more enthusiastic and/or dogmatic adherents, the separation of politics and religion is completely unacceptable, since the only truly ethical politics follows the revealed truths of religion.[48]

20 Osama bin Laden and the al-Qaeda terrorist network are the prime examples of the new terrorism. Nevertheless, the new terrorism is not limited to radical Islamic groups. The current trend of Western states to focus on the link between Islam and terrorism is misleading because violent religion is not supported by the text of the Quran, the holy book of Islam.[49] Non-Islamic terrorist groups such as right-wing Christian extremists also exhibit many features of the new transnational terrorism.

21 Considering catastrophic terrorist attack, Nadine Gurr and Benjamin Cole describe nuclear–biological–chemical (NBC) terrorism as the “third wave of vulnerability” experienced by the United States beginning in 1995 (the first two waves were the Soviet test of the atomic bomb in 1949, and the aggravating nuclear arms race that followed).[50] David Rapoport made a similar assessment by saying that religiously motivated terrorism is the “fourth wave” in the evolution of terrorism.[51] Interestingly, warnings about non-traditional terrorism were raised frequently before 2001.[52] For example, Ashton Carter, John Deutch, and Philip Zelikow declared in 1998 that a new threat of “catastrophic” terrorism had appeared.[53] Some analysts believe that terror has evolved from being a means to an end, to becoming the end in itself, and that many radical terrorist groups seek destruction and chaos as ends in itself.[54] R. James Woolsey, the former CIA Director, has been quoted in the National Commission on Terrorism: “Today’s terrorists don’t want a seat at the table, they want to destroy the table and everyone sitting at it.”[55]

**Individualization**

22 Usually, the victims of traditional terrorism were not chosen at random. For example, in 1975 the terrorist known as Carlos the Jackal (né Ilich Ramírez Sánchez), who attacked an OPEC conference held in Vienna, took some 70 hostages, and killed three. In this case, the victims were targeted for their symbolic value and the terrorist had an elaborate escape plan that worked. Although, some kinds of traditional terrorism have slipped into violence for the sake of violence, this kind of terrorism usually targets individuals who are symbols of what it is opposed to, such as heads of state, diplomats, bankers, and so forth. On the contrary, the new terrorism seeks “bit by bit” genocide and depersonalization of its targets. Suicide bombings in Iraq since 2003, which have killed thousands of people, mostly Iraqi innocent civilians, and the various explosions and shootings in Pakistan and India, exemplify indiscriminate killing by the new terrorists.[56] The agents of new terrorism do not discriminate between individual members of their target groups. “Not only are civilian men, women, and children indiscriminately killed if they are perceived to belong to an enemy state, nation, or ethnic or otherwise identified group (‘apostates,’ Jews, US citizens, Westerners), but recent incidents have shown that the boundaries of nationality are also becoming irrelevant and that even the remotest connection with the ‘enemy,’ such as working for the UN or the Red Cross in Iraq, qualifies one as a potential target.”[57]

23 Patterson, Kretzmann, and Smith, characterize the new terrorism with five points. First, the new terrorism makes use of high technology (military, intelligence, communication) to assault targets anywhere in the world seen to conflict with its transboundary aims. This is an invariable consequence of globalization. Second, new ideological commitments are the source of catastrophic fanatical streaks in the new terrorism. “This shift in ideology sees terror at least in part as an ends in itself rather than just a tactic to achieve a political end.” Third, contemporary terrorists have a new range of targets. The new “targets are often chosen to maximize destruction and for the amount of press and global attention as illustrated by attacks of September 11
and activities of Al Qaeda.” Fourth, globalization and the information technology revolution have allowed terrorists to overcome large distances with relative anonymity. Moreover, the possibility of access to biological, chemical and nuclear weapons has also increased. Fifth, terrorist groups tend to adopt a less hierarchical, more networked form. There are fewer chains of command and fewer instructions given from a centralized leader. Because of the non-hierarchical nature of command, the security services of nation-states cannot penetrate these cells and networks easily. Traditional terrorism often had identifiable operational leaders such as Andreas Baader and Ulrike Meinhof (Red Army Faction) or Abimael Guzman (Shining Path). Contrary to common perceptions, terrorist cells operate nowadays with much greater independence from their headquarters. The March 2004 Madrid train bombings were perpetrated by relatively independent al Qaeda cells operating in various European countries.\[^{58}\]

According to Russell Howard, “new terrorism” is clearly different from “old terrorism” in six very distinguishable ways.\[^{59}\] First, new terrorism is more violent. Terrorists previously wanted attention, not mass casualties. Now terrorists want both. In fact, the most critical element of the new threat is the nature of violence, which is extreme, and does not discriminate between military and civilian. Second, old terrorism was mainly directed at effecting change in local politics, but new terrorism is “transnational,” perpetrated by non-state actors operating internationally to destroy the West and all Islamic secular state systems. Third, new terrorism is much better financed than earlier terrorism, using not only legitimate but also illegitimate income sources to finance its operations. The contemporary terrorist threat relies either on self-financing or individual supporters and in both cases is supported by the convenience of the modern international financial system and technology to transfer funds.\[^{60}\] Fourth, new terrorism’s forces are better trained in the black arts of war than previous “old” terrorists. For example, al-Qaeda uses various camps and training centers in many countries, and especially in Afghanistan. Fifth, because of the level of fraternization involved, the new terrorist threat, especially the religious extremist one, is more difficult to penetrate than prior terrorist networks. The uses of networked, cellular command structures by al-Qaeda pose serious security challenges to the U.S. and its allies. Sixth, the potential availability of weapons of mass destruction to current terrorists creates cataclysmic threats. Old terrorism up to the 1980s was characterized by the use of small arms, plastic explosives, rocket-propelled grenades, and anti-aircraft missiles.

Terrorism is transnational when an event in one state involves perpetrators, victims, organizations, governments, or people of another country. If an event begins in one state but ends in another, then it is a transnational terrorist incident, as is the case for a hijacking of a plane in state A that is made to fly to state B. An attack against a multilateral organization is a transnational event owing to its multi-country effects, like 9/11, or even in the case of the suicide car bombing of the UN headquarters in Baghdad on 19 August 2003. The destruction of the WTO towers was a transnational event, because victims were from ninety various states, the mission had been organized abroad, the terrorists were foreigners, and the implications of the incident (for example, financial repercussions) were global. Transnational terrorism requires that states correlate their policies. Intelligence about a shared transnational terrorist threat that is collected by one country can benefit other potential target states. As such, transnational terrorism has increased the need for states to coordinate antiterrorist strategies, a need that states had resisted until September 11.\[^{61}\] There should be a broad range of coordination among states, especially with respect to a variety of terrorist actions such as hostage missions (skyjacking, kidnapping, and hostage taking) bombings, assassinations, threats, suicide attacks, armed attacks, sabotage, nuclear weapons attacks, and chemical or biological attacks.

**Conclusion**

Terrorism has been dramatically transformed in recent years. The categorical fanaticism that is apparent in terrorist groups across a spectrum of belief systems is an important part of this transformation. In the past, terrorist groups were more likely to be dominated by pragmatic considerations of political and social change, public opinion, and other such elements. Today, a phenomenon that was a rarity—terrorists bent upon death and destruction for its own sake—has become commonplace. Besides, the statelessness of today’s terrorist groups, removes crucial pressures that once held the extreme terrorists in check or prevented them from reaching top positions in their organizations.\[^{62}\] The experts of international terrorism have connected the meaning of “new” terrorism with different actors, incentives, goals, strategies, and actions.

New terrorism takes religious and apocalyptic ideologies as its main motivations to action. The new terrorists have ambiguous goals on the systemic level and value destruction for its own sake. For the new terrorists the means are the ends. The old terrorism was comparatively intelligible, limited, precise, and frequently connected to territory, therefore making the political, cultural, or social grievance more susceptible to bargaining.
New terrorism seeks to kill as many people as possible and is specifically drawn to weapons of mass destruction. By contrast, the old terrorism targeted specific groups or institutions and was limited in its means. Old terrorism preferred centralization, hierarchical organization, and skilled personnel, but new terrorism is decentralized, more networked, and inspiration-driven, which opens it up to amateurs and nonprofessional “fighters.”

Notes

The author is indebted to the editors and anonymous reviewers of GSJ who helped me immensely with this paper. For all remaining defects and failures, I accept complete responsibility.


[3] Jack Patterson, Eliza Kretzmann, and Tom Smith, “Global Security and Insecurity: Responses to Terrorism and Other Threats,” in Michael T. Snarr, D. Neil Snarr (eds.), Introducing Global Issues, Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2005:72. Asymmetric wars like the “war on terror” that take place in an arena with a civilian population require an analysis and adjustment of the leading variables. The first adjustment is linked to intelligence. While in a conventional war, the commander asks the operations officer where is the adversary, in an asymmetric war, the first question asked is, who is the adversary. The enemy in an asymmetric war does not wear a uniform and is part of a civilian population, and thus it is not always obvious who he or she is. Moreover, the adversary can be an ordinary civilian during the day and a terrorist at night. Yet the more important dimension in terms of “who the enemy is,” is political rather than tactical; see Giora Eiland, “The Changing Nature of War” (accessed 5 February 2010).


[8] Preemption as policy began with a small group of foreign policy specialists serving in the first Bush Administration. They drafted a Defense Planning Guidance, which asserted that, since the U.S. was the sole superpower in the post-Cold War world, it should implement a strategy of preemption. When President Clinton took over the presidency, these advisors – including Dick Cheney (former Vice President), Donald Rumsfeld (former Secretary of Defense), and Paul Wolfowitz (former World Bank President), collaborated on the “Project for the New American Century” and published “Rebuilding America’s Defenses. Strategy, Forces, and Resources For a New Century,” whose provisions would be outlined in George W. Bush’s preemptive doctrine after many of the authors became policy advisors and cabinet members in his administration. See “Draft Defense Planning Guidance,” Zfacts.com, 18 April 2006, (accessed 18 May 2010). See also John L. Hammond “The Bush Doctrine, Preventive War, and International Law,” The Philosophical Forum, Spring 2005.

[9] Some find this data very misleading. They argue that the number of deaths to-date are greater than this data shows. See “Over 70,000 deaths...” (accessed 5 February 2010).

[10] Jack Patterson, Eliza Kretzmann, and Tom Smith, (2005):72. With many international tensions, new conflicts have emerged within state borders. One example of
these new conflicts is civil war inflamed by ethnic and religious conflict and spurred by greed and struggle for control of a country’s mineral or timber resources. With these new conflicts, one often sees another development: civilians become the deliberate targets of combat rather than its incidental victims. Today, victims of war cover all portions of the population regardless of gender or age. The conflicts in Angola, Afghanistan, the Caucasus, Colombia, Sudan, the Great Lakes region of Africa, Palestine, West Africa and the genocide in Rwanda and atrocities of Srebrenica – all put civilians at the center with attendant and ongoing human suffering and costs.


[12] Former US vice-president Dick Cheney has argued: “In the days of the cold war, we were able to manage the threat with strategies of deterrence and containment. But it’s a lot tougher to deter enemies who have no country to defend, and containment is not possible when dictators obtain weapons of mass destruction and are prepared to share them with terrorists, who intend to inflict catastrophic casualties on the United States.” *The New York Times*, 27 August 2002 (accessed 18 May 2010).


[25] See Kerby Anderson, “Terrorism in North America,” (accessed 18 May 2010). Of course, some scholars suggest that the issue is not about preemption per se, but instead about preventive military action, “that is, taking preventive action before the need is certain and balancing the risks of acting against those of not acting” (M. Elaine Bunn). There is considerable debate concerning the distinction between preemptive action and preventive action. Kegley and Raymond distinguish between these two activities as follows: “A preemptive military attack entails the use of force to quell or mitigate an impending strike by an adversary. A preventive military attack entails the use of force to eliminate any possible future strike, even when there is no reason to believe that aggression is planned or the capability to launch such an attack is operational, whereas the grounds for preemption lie in the evidence of a credible, imminent threat, the basis for prevention rests on the suspicion of an incipient, contingent threat.” See Charles W. Kegley and Gregory A. Raymond, “Preventive War and Permissive Normative Order,” International Studies Perspectives, 4, no. 4, (November 2003):388. See also “Preemption vs Prevention” and Mahdi Mohammad Nia, “The Debate over Preemptive and Preventive Action” (both accessed 5 February 2010; corrected 14 April 2014).

[26] Several kinds of terrorism arise from the strategies adopted by terrorist groups. The various kinds include domestic, international, and state-sponsored terrorism, as well as “demonstrative” and “destructive” or “suicide terrorism.” Suicide terrorism has been called “the most aggressive form of terrorism” that seeks “to kill the largest number of people.” See Robert A Pape, “The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism,” The American Political Science Review, vol. 97, no. 3 (Aug. 2003):345.

[27] Jonathan R. White, Terrorism 2002 Update. Toronto and Ontario, Canada: Wadsworth/Thomson Learning, 2003:5-7. Some writings focus on three key contextual elements: history, conflict, and the media. Over the last two hundred years, the concept of terrorism has been transformed. The origin of modern (old) terrorism can be traced back to the French Revolution and was commonly used to explain actions taken by the French government during the Reign of Terror. By the middle of the nineteenth century, terrorism came to mean violent revolutionaries who revolted against governments. Over the next one hundred and fifty years, terrorism was associated with violent actions taken by labor groups, hate crimes like those of the Oklahoma City bombers or, currently, with the actions of violent religious fanatics who seek to destroy the West, especially the United States. The nature of “conflict” is another significant contextual element to look at when examining terrorism. During the French-Algerian War in the 1950s, both the French military and the Front Liberation National (FLN) reverted to what clearly amounted to terrorist tactics. The nature of conflict is definitely a discriminating element in distinguishing if an act is classified as terrorism, insurgency, or guerilla war. In other words, “one person’s terrorist is another person’s freedom fighter.” A final contextual factor to consider when examining terrorism is the role that the “media” plays. When one hears of a terrorist attack or use of terrorism as reported by the media, one should take it with a grain of salt. The media exploits the word terrorism in order to sensationalize and sell their story to the public. Media sensationalism can lead to any number of activities inappropriately defined as terrorism.


[31] State sponsored terrorism refers to a state that “...repeatedly provides support for international terrorism either by employing such acts as a means of political expression or by harboring terrorists and thus becoming an accomplice.” See Greg Bankoff, “Regions of Risk: Western Discourses on Terrorism and the Significance of Islam,” Studies in Conflict & Terrorism, 26: 6 (November/December 2003):423.


The ITERATE project “is an attempt to quantify data on the characteristics of transnational terrorist groups, their activities which have international impact, and the environment in which they operate” (accessed 29 April 2010).

Some scholars define new terrorism with respect to the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, believing that these attacks not only represented the single worst act of terrorism on U.S. soil, but also marked the beginning of a new wave of terrorism, what many terrorism experts refer to as “new terrorism” or “super terrorism.” See: John Gearson, “The Nature of Modern Terrorism,” The Political Quarterly 73, no. S1 (August 2002):7.

RAND is a nonprofit policy think tank, which addresses the challenges facing public sectors throughout the world. Its initial mission was to provide research and analysis to the United States Armed Forces. RAND has since expanded, working with other states, private institutions, international organizations, and commercial organizations. It is known for its rigorous quantitative analysis, used to support policy recommendations. See RAND Corporation as well as the Wikipedia entry on RAND Corporation (both accessed 29 April 2010).

The main challenge in responding to contemporary terrorism is the requirement that states and their governments share intelligence. Since state intelligence agencies all deal in secret materials, the barriers to sharing information and other resources are high. See Thomas C. Bruneau, “Introduction,” Strategic Insights, volume VI, Issue 3 (May 2007), (accessed 29 April 2010; corrected 14 April 2014).

Religiously motivated attacks are increasing in frequency. In 1968, there were no global terrorist organizations classified as “religious;” by 1980 there were 2 out of 64, and by 1995 there were 25 out of 58 — an increase from 0 to 43 percent. See Bahram M. Rajaee, (2004):8.


Stéphane Leman-Langlois, Jean-Paul Brodeur, 13.


[56] On 26 November 2008 reports indicated that a large number of people were killed in a series of shootings in Mumbai. Terrorists used automatic weapons and grenades in their attacks, which mostly targeted tourists. Gunmen opened fire on a crowded train station, luxury hotels and restaurants. The several targeted locations included Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus station, Oberoi and Taj Mahal hotels. At least 101 people, including at least six foreign nationals, were confirmed dead, and at least 314 have been injured. All except one of the attacks took place in South Mumbai, at the crowded Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus (CST) railway station and at two five-star hotels. See the blog entry on 2008 Mumbai Terrorist Attacks (accessed 29 April 2010). Some of the former terrorist attacks in India include: 18 February 2007, two improvised explosive device (IED) blasts in two coaches of Samjhauta Express, the Delhi-Attari special train for Lahore, at Deewana near Panipat in Haryana. In this terrorist attack, 67 people were killed and 50 injured. 11 July 2006, seven bomb blasts at seven locations in local trains across Mumbai city. In these attacks, 228 people were killed and 890 injured. 6 December 1997, IED blasts in three trains in Chennai, Pandyan Express (Tiruchi), Cheran Express (Erode) and Alley Express, (Thrisur), 10 people were killed and 150 injured. See the list of Railway Attacks in India from 1999 to 2009 (accessed 29 April 2010).

[57] Stéphane Leman-Langlois and Jean-Paul Brodeur, 133-134.

[58] See Jack Patterson, Eliza Kretzmann, and Tom Smith, 73-75.


[60] Al Qaeda is a wealthy, multi-national organization with very large income streams; it has investments and concealed accounts throughout the world. See Brian Murphy, “The shape of terrorism,” Fayetteville Observer, Aug. 21, 2002, 95. See also Victor Comras, “Al Qaeda Finances and Funding to Affiliated Groups,” Strategic Insights, vol. IV, issue 1 (January 2005).
