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# COUNTERTERRORISM EFFORTS OF SAUDI ARABIA IN CREATE STABILITY OF THE WORLD

Theoretical  
article

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## Keywords

Counterterrorism;  
Peace;  
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## Abstract

*Terrorism is a key issue and an international phenomenon that affects several countries and large communities with various ethnic minorities and religious groups have suffered from terrorism. It leads to a disruption of the progress and development, and as result of these acts valuable resources are exhausted-*

*Across the centuries Islamic history has witnessed disturbances and plots from those who attribute themselves to Islam and whom they abide by Islam regulations and teachings, as Islam calls upon moderation and none interference with others. Therefore, intellectual approach for true Islamic teachings, in terms of belief and thought, none interference, jurisprudence, decency and behavior, did not remain marginal issue, but have become urgent and core requirement nowadays because there has been further delinquency, corruption, temptations and misconceptions at this time. In all Islamic teachings, fighting terrorism needs to happen to achieve peace.*

## Introduction

Terrorism is an increasing real and imminent threat to the whole humanity; a threat that could become a real danger if terrorists achieve nuclear or biological weapons. An effective counter terrorism policy must be large scale, must go beyond focusing on those who seek to harm a small group or even one human being. This is why it is paramount to engage—all countries. A global partnership is essential to address this threat, and we must ensure that new terrorist recruits do not come to take the place of those who have been defeated.

A good research about the terrorism subject should start with a well defining of the key concept of terrorism. Also, the most important definition given to terrorism as literature review shows, are those provided by Poland, Hoffman and The National Institute of Justice.

Poland (2005) writes about the complexity of defining terrorism. Many concepts have been defined and there is no common ground or international agreement on how to define the term. This results in methodological problems for both research and data collection and conflicts over efforts at international counterterrorism.

Hoffman (2012) explains that terrorism is not an easy concept to define “because the meaning of the term has changed so frequently over the past two hundred years.” For example, during the French Revolution, terrorism was viewed in a positive light (see the subsequent description). Hoffman offers a contemporary perspective of terrorism and writes that it is “fundamentally and inherently political,” and about the pursuit, acquisition, and use of power to achieve political change, while using threats and violence.

*The United Nations has struggled with the term for many years. It has been argued that one state's “terrorism” is another state's “freedom fighter.” Or, simply put, terrorism is a “dirty word” drenched in emotion, and it describes what the “other guy” has done.*

The National Institute of Justice (2011) refers to Title 22 of the U.S. Code, Section 2656f(d) which defines **terrorism** as “premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against noncombatant targets [e.g., civilians; military personnel who are unarmed and/or not on duty] by subnational groups or clandestine agents, usually intended to influence an audience.” The National Institute of Justice writes of the Federal Bureau of Investigation definition of terrorism as “the unlawful use of force or 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.”

In Saudi Arabia, starting with 1<sup>st</sup> of February 2014, exists a specific regulation, the

Penal Law for Crimes of Terrorism and its Financing (the “terrorism law”) that defines terrorism as :”Any act carried out by an offender in furtherance of an individual or collective project, directly or indirectly, intended to disturb the public order of the state, or to shake the security of society, or the stability of the state, or to expose its national unity to danger, or to suspend the basic law of governance or some of its articles, or to insult the reputation of the state or its position, or to inflict damage upon one of its public utilities or its natural resources, or to attempt to force a governmental authority to carry out or prevent it from carrying out an action, or to threaten to carry out acts that lead to the named purposes or incite [these acts].”

In order to achieve the sustainable long-term objective, all parties involved against this “war” should go beyond the current existing narrow counterterrorism policies. Only this will allow them to embed in an overarching national security strategy designed to restore leadership and respect in the world. Counterterrorism leadership must be based on a strong commitment to a common system of values in order to build a solid structure of international cooperation which is required to fight terrorists, to meet other key challenges of our time—such as proliferation, climate change and energy security; the danger of pandemic disease; and the need to sustain a dynamic global economy that drives the lives of people everywhere.

Large-scale military efforts have been set in motion to deal with terrorists leads to other advantages for the opponents, as we have seen in Iraq, Syria and elsewhere in Middle East. They gain strong experience in tactics, build new networks of support as well as the social bonds among disparate organizations that will enable future collaboration. They are looking to raise more funds, acquire weapons. Finally, the use of military force against terrorists is believed to be unwise because it is inevitably indiscriminate and often results in the alienation of exactly those individuals in a given community who we do not want radicalized. Military war against terrorist targets often causes the deaths of innocents, women, children and, elder no matter how much care is taken.

Events since the 9/11 terror attacks have underlined the dynamic nature of terrorism.

The global level of radical violence has been rising, at least in the number of attacks if not losses, the post-9/11 situation is improved. Indeed, few counterterrorism practitioners would have anticipated that as many conspiracies in Europe, Southeast Asia, North Africa, and elsewhere could be countered.

A significant share of tactical counterterrorism work requires intelligence and law

enforcement because most of the areas where terrorist activity takes place are within functioning states.

A recent example for the manifestation of the group's terrorist acts is represented by ISIL.

### **The continuous efforts of Saudi Arabia in counter terrorism**

Saudi Arabia was severely impacted by terrorism long before 9/11. The fight against this "scourge" started when the Kingdom invited foreign forces to liberate Kuwait in 1991. Some extremists opposed this decision and used violence to express their position.

By 1994, Saudi Arabia expelled Osama bin Laden from the Kingdom and it has withdrawn his Saudi citizenship and then he left to Sudan and after to Afghanistan and started fighting against Saudi Arabia.

The most important feature of the continuous fight of Saudi Arabia's Government in combating terrorism is that it is against not just terrorists and their organizations, it is against their ideas and opinions. This makes the difference between Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's efforts and other similar countries which,– follows only army fight and regulation procedures.

Broadly, the Kingdom has initiated several initiatives to counter the extremist mindset and to strengthen moderation and tolerance among its citizens. The following are some of the efforts that have been made in towards this:

**1. Public Awareness Campaign:** Launched a public awareness campaign to intensify the conceptions of the true values of the Islamic faith and to make public Saudi citizens the dangers of extremism and terrorism. The campaign included advertisements on television, radio and billboards, as well as programs on television, in schools and mosques, and even at sporting events. The core element of the campaign was a series of public service 6 November 2012 announcements that played approximately 25 times a day on a number of Arabic satellite networks, including Al-Arabiya, MBC and Future Television, as well as on Saudi TV channels. Six government ministries were involved with the activities responsible with the development and execution of the programs.

**2. Public & Religious Education:** Leading an ongoing program to adapt textbooks to modern times and curricula, to introduce improved teaching methods and provide better training for educators. Efforts such as these combat extremism and prepare Saudi citizens for life in a global economy. These developments included even the Saudi religious schools. Imams have been prohibited from instigation and talk of intolerance, and the Ministry of Islamic Affairs is leading a program to educate imams and inspect mosques and religious education to regret extremism and intolerance.

**3. Counter-Radicalization Program:** The aim of the program is to combat the spread and appeal of extremist ideologies among the public areas with higher traffic and larger human groups. It strives to instill the true values of the Islamic faith, such as tolerance and moderation. A key element of this effort is education about the dangers of radical Islam—including school and religious programs and popular pronouncements, and the provision of positive, alternative outlets for at-risk groups—such as encouraging participation in sporting events and athletic programs, social outings, etc. 7 November 2012.

On a more advanced, focused level, Saudi Arabia has also been leading two different programs: "Counter-Radicalization" and "Rehabilitation." Each of these programs go directly to the active source of extremism propagation and serve to neutralize it. In building these programs, Saudi Arabia's Ministry of Interior appealed to the expertise of a group of international social scientists, psychiatrists, psychologists, and other physicians and experts to create strategies suitable for radicalism. Separately, the Ministry has been working in conjunction with King Fahd Security College and Naif Arab University for Security Sciences to develop and refine the training activities for public security professionals.

**4. Rehabilitation Program:** The rehabilitation program is intended to reintegrate deviants/extremists back into society, change their behavior (disengage them), change their beliefs (de-radicalize them), also to "size up" them according to the normality's features. It is aimed to target deviants who have completed their prison sentences. The program reeducates violent, dangerous extremists and extremist sympathizers by offering them intensive religious debates and psychological counseling. The goal is for them to cancel ideologies that espouse terrorism. Any individual who has committed or participated in a violent crime, constituting murder, will not be released following completion of the course.

Saudi Arabia's rehabilitation program for detainees is known as the longest continually functioning rehabilitation program in the world, and several countries are establishing similar programs using the Kingdom's model, mentioning here Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Yemen, Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia, and the United States military through "Task Force 134" in Iraq. Whilst the initial results of the program were results, the Saudi government still views terrorism as a serious, ongoing threat. The Kingdom continues to clarify its programs and enrolls more detainees in hopes of disengaging and de-radicalizing them (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, <http://embassies.mofa.gov.sa/sites/india/EN/AboutDiplomaticMission/ImportantIssues/Pages/Counterterrorism.aspx>).

**5. Efforts in education abroad:** In all world countries knowledge is considered to be the foundation of the renaissance of nations; this explains the reasons why the government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia offered a special place this domain. His concern for sustainable development of human resources in the Kingdom, convinced also the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz Al Saud to establish in 2005 the initiative to create the King Abdullah Scholarship Program.

The program is intended to be a significant cornerstone for Saudi universities as well as the public and private sectors in the Kingdom by providing them with highly qualified Saudi citizens and through the development, preparation and qualification of human resources in an effective manner. The final aim of these actions is intended to prepare them for an international and competitive labor market and for various fields of scientific research.

The figures published for this effort indicate that the number of scholarships abroad now reaches nearly 180,000 students in different countries, out of which over 90,000 in the USA. Tens of thousands of students graduated and returned to Saudi Arabia in the past five years, applying successfully what they studied abroad. The Saudi Government saw as a great opportunity for its students to be sent to study abroad and to interact with other societies, for better understanding of other society's values, to come back in their country and share these values they gained when studying abroad.

#### **6. Laws and regulations to combat terrorism:**

The regulatory efforts done by Saudi Arabia in order to combat terrorism are very important and they are underlining a specific feature of the war against terrorism in comparison with other states, that have just an army "war".

The newest laws according to this theme were issued in 2011 and in 2014. Also since 2011, Saudi authorities have increasingly pursued prosecutions of peaceful human rights and social activists, many of whom prosecutors have charged with, the provisions mentioned in the new law's definition of terrorism.

The new definition contained in the law issued in 2014 seems to be similar excluding several some additions as Human Right Watch observed. These additions are exceedingly vague, such as "disturb(ing) public order", "shak(ing) the security of society or the stability of the state" or "insult(ing) the reputation of the state."

#### **7. Global Interfaith Dialogue Initiative:**

Launched an international effort to promote interfaith dialogue.

In early 2008, Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz started the interfaith

dialogue as a way to highlight the commonalities among the world's religions. To launch this work, King Abdullah established a meeting on June 4, 2008 of more than 500 Muslim scholars from around the world. The conference underlined the significance of dialogue and highlighted the need for the faiths and cultures of the world to combat extremism and intolerance. This was followed by the World Conference on Dialogue in Spain on July 16, 2008. The conference was hosted by King Abdullah and King Juan Carlos I of Spain and gathered together 300 delegates from around the world representing Islam, Buddhism, Christianity, Confucianism, Hinduism, Judaism and Shintoism. The most important moment of this meeting was a special session of the UN General Assembly on November 12, 2008, where more than 25 world leaders attended. The fourth international interfaith conference was organized by the Muslim World League; it was held in Geneva on September 30-October 1, 2009, under the patronage of Swiss President Hans-Rudolf Merz. The most important result of the conference, hosted by King Abdullah and King Juan Carlos I of Spain was the establishment of the KAICIID Dialogue Centre (King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz International Centre for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue). The aim of the Center was to enable, empower and encourage dialogue among followers of different religions and cultures around the world. The headquarter of the Centre is in Vienna and it is an independent, autonomous, international organization, without any political or economic influence (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, <http://embassies.mofa.gov.sa/sites/india/EN/AboutDiplomaticMission/ImportantIssues/Pages/Counterterrorism.aspx>).

#### **8. Collaboration between Saudi Government and United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre (UNCTC)**

Saudi Arabia continued the efforts to maintain worldwide peace also by appealing to its financial resources and donating important amounts to the organizations with involvement in this continuous fight. Saudi Arabia has donated \$100 million for the United Nations Counter - Terrorism Centre (UNCTC) with the occasion of a special event staged in the office of the UN Secretary-General at the organization's headquarters in New York.

UNCTC was established in 2011 with an initial \$10 million contribution by Saudi Arabia. It was anticipated by Saudi King Abdullah back in 2005.

UN's Chief Ban Ki-moon welcomed the generous donation by the Saudi King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz al-Saud, declaring consideration for the financial aid.

Ban already personally thanked King Abdullah in Jeddah "for his leadership on this and so many other issues." He said it included the previous

Saudi contribution of \$500 million to meet humanitarian needs in Iraq.

Ban said he stood confident that the “timely contribution” by Saudi Arabia would make a real difference at national, regional and global levels.

The Center, could work in collaboration with donor countries such as the United States Germany and UK, that are willing to help with bilateral or regional assistance and it has supported 31 counter-terrorism worldwide projects covering all four pillars of the United Nations global counter-terrorism strategy.

The UN’s Chief Ban said that he expected the UN Counter Terrorism Centre to play “a significant role” together with 34 entities of the Counter Terrorism International Task Force “to more effectively mobilize UN counter-terrorism efforts in the world.

United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre is one of the key partners of The Kingdom Saudi Arabia in the war against terrorism. As an effect of these hard and continuous efforts, it adopted a Strategy in April 2012

Since terrorists and terror financiers do not act solely within the borders of any specific nation, Saudi Arabia trusts in international cooperation as an element of success in its counterterrorism efforts. Saudi officials, security and counterterrorism experts work and collaborate with their partners at every level of governments throughout the world to certify programmatic effectiveness and to sustain cooperation (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Middle East Eye, <http://www.middleeasteye.net/news>).

**9. Political efforts:** At the end of September 2014, at Jeddah, in Saudi Arabia, took place an International Meeting where was formed a broad international coalition to combat terrorism. At this Meeting, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Prince Saud Al Faisal mentioned that all Arab states have to work together in order to combat this scourge and its sources drying up (terrorism also) and he said that the Kingdom strongly condemns all acts of terrorism. American President Barack Obama compared terrorism showed by ISIL organization with a cancer that has to be removed and he said that it represents a danger not just for Irak, it threatens the interests of all Americans.

**10. UNESCO’s Programme** Abdullah bin Abdulaziz International Culture of Peace and Dialogue : On 30 September 2014, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia approved the release of USD 2,050,000 for Phase II of the “Abdullah bin Abdulaziz International Programme for a Culture of Peace and Dialogue” implemented by UNESCO, in close cooperation with the King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz Centre for National Dialogue. The ten approved projects under the Phase II will scale up the long-term sustainability of capacity building

initiatives and tools geared to the promotion of intercultural dialogue.

Main effects in Phase I launched in 2012, are about the elaboration of instruments and guidelines to help Member States in the revision of textbooks and curricula eliminating gender, cultural or religious stereotypes; dialogue and e-training platforms to encourage young journalists in media information literacy and intercultural dialogue, graduate and postgraduate diplomas in universities in the Arab States as well as pertinent online dialogue-based resources. A pedagogical manual on “South-South Philosophical Dialogue” and a touring exhibition on “Writing Peace” were intended to influence the contribution of each culture and civilization to the building of a peaceful world . Separately, the Programme came with a platform on which youth could share their vision on culture of peace and dialogue, which involved an International Conference on “Youth Volunteering and Dialogue” that was held in Jeddah in December 2013, but also the international contest on “Pathways to a culture of peace” and capacity building workshops within the “Learning to live together media campaign” and “Reporting to the other” initiatives.

The International Programme adds to UNESCO’s work on the promotion of intercultural dialogue for mutual understanding and cooperation for peace <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/media-services/single-view/news/>).

**11.The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia leads an important and influential role on the international stage with the purpose to contribute towards and achieve global peace and economic stability.** The establishment of a global system contributes to the group’s goal of promoting strong growth, which is balanced and sustainable in the circumstances of preserving the interests of all countries, developed and developing alike.

To maintain development, all states engaged in the fight against terrorism need to sustain a high level of investment in technology, especially signals intelligence and they need to have a less-politicized, serious discussion about surveillance needs abroad and at home. There is also a continuous need to improve the quality of intelligence analysis, which has been unequal in recent years and less of a focus in this fight. Restructuring has created supplementary layers of bureaucracy and not, as engaged, dramatically reduced territory battles or improved intelligence sharing. Further reorganization, however, would be a mistake, consuming time and resources better devoted elsewhere. It would be more useful to use small fixes and redirect energies into counterterrorism instead of line-diagram revisions and it has to be taken into consideration that a strong proactive answer contains a dilemma for

politicians and the electorate in a liberal democracy. If a targeted government pursues significant antiterrorist policies that curtail the general threat at home and abroad, these efforts may trigger a backlash that leads to a direct attack at home.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is working towards an enhancement of the stability of global energy markets through its predominant leading presence in the global oil market. Such stability takes into account the interests of oil producing and consuming countries by retaining additional production capacity to meet the increasing global demand.

### Conclusions:

The methods of fighting terrorism used by Saudi Arabia through last decades have set the basis of the global actions and have been proven to be successful. The methods include —military force, ideologies, ideas and economic components, focused on cutting financial funding for these groups, both internally and externally, encouraging dialogue and tolerance among people on all over the world, offering support to any institution or center involved in the fight against this disease. It is a fact that Saudi Arabia uses a lot of valuable resources to help- other countries fighting the same fight against terrorism for the same purpose: to install a sustainable peace among nations.

Saudi Arabia's efforts are to prove the humanity that Islam is not calling to fight, it calls for harmony and peace and the concept of *jihad* is wrong used by many fanatics and terrorists organizations.

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