



CENTRE FOR SECURITY COOPERATION
Dialogue and Cooperation Division

**“COUNTER TERRORISM THROUGH
REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL SECURITY COOPERATION”**
(6th – 8th May 2008)

RACVIAC – Centre for Security Cooperation and the Ministry of Defence of Bosnia and Herzegovina organized in Sarajevo, Army Hall, a two-day seminar aimed at highlighting the importance of cooperation between the countries and related security organizations. International experts representing different institutions and organizations shared their expertise arousing lively interest among participants.

A threat without borders

... combating the threat of terrorism, which goes beyond national boundaries, is an issue of priority.

The idea of “terror” or “terreur” in French, that is the creation of extreme fear for political aims, was developed as an ideology during the French revolution, where particularly M. Robespierre brought the idea to new levels of violence. He was possessed by the idea of getting rid of all old elements of society and creating a political utopia.

Today, there are many definitions of terrorism. One widely accepted definition of “terrorism” is that of the *New Oxford Dictionary of English* (1998, p.1915): “the use of violence and intimidation in the pursuit of political aims”.

The most important aspect of the new era in terrorism is the need to produce urgent solutions to the terrorist issue as well as the states and communities, which support terrorists.

The problems with terrorism are widespread. It would be wrong to think that a single national force or a single method could solve these problems. The underlying issues with regard to terrorism should be determined and solutions produced in order to provide permanent, long-term solutions in the fight against terrorism. As long as the international community continues to maintain its resolute, worldwide fight against terrorism and sustains the pressure it exerts on it, the terrorist organizations will not have the opportunity to launch a major attack.

Terrorists do not respect international borders or cultural differences. On the contrary, extremist ideologues exploit these to generate hatred, justify the use of violence, and recruit vulnerable young people. Terrorists are the world's greatest proponents of the discredited thesis of a "clash of civilizations". Theirs is a discourse of "us versus them".

Close cooperation as a prerequisite

Close international cooperation across borders and regions is required if terrorism is to be effectively defeated.



Combating terrorism requires a comprehensive approach such as ratifying counter terrorism conventions and making domestic legislations to implement them, intelligence sharing as well as taking measures on immigration control and terrorist financing. At the same time, counter-terrorism capacity of each country needs to be enhanced. A mid and long term approach is also vital. This would include building an environment making it more difficult for terrorists to act, combating root causes of terrorism and promoting mutual understanding among cultures, religions and civilizations.

Countries can contribute decisively to the defeat of terrorism by working together towards developing a global strategy, which is to be established on the basis of its founding values: democracy, fundamental rights and the rule of law. They must focus their attention on different aspects of prevention; preparedness and response to further enhance, and where necessary, complement the capability to fight terrorism.

The seminar contents

...but having in mind the urgent need of the world community to react promptly to the increasing problem of terrorism.

The seminar gathered 61 participants from 20 countries, international organizations and NGOs.

The aim of this two-day seminar was to highlight the importance of cooperation between the countries and related security organizations in terms of the fight against terrorism as well as to discuss different aspects and threats of terrorism. The main purpose was to provide the participants with a common understanding on the meaning of terrorism; then to clarify the effects of globalization on terrorism; to highlight efforts of regional countries for a better regional approach to fight against terrorism; to draw attention to the international organizational efforts against the phenomena and last, but not the least, to foster participants to exchange information, opinions and different understanding on how to carry out a successful regional and international cooperation in the fight against terrorism. The seminar comprised lectures on all relevant aspects concerning information sharing on regional peace, stability and security issues.



The lecturers followed a chronological sequence from the dimensions of the threats to the analyses of different aspects of terrorism.

The following lectures were given during the two-day seminar:

Counter terrorism - The collective responsibility by Dr. John LE BEAU (George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies, Germany), *Dimensions of Global Terrorism Threat* by Lt. Col. M. Uğur ERSEN (Centre of Excellence Defence Against Terrorism, Turkey), *Understanding terrorism: changes, issues and prospect* by Mr. Jonas HARTELIUS (Senior Fellow, East West Institute, The Netherlands), *Global strategy in counter-terrorism: UN perspective* by Mr Zdravko STOJANOVIC (UNODC - TPB Regional Consultant for South Eastern Europe, Croatia), *NATO's military concept for defence against terrorism* by Maj. Marco CRIMI (Anti Terrorism Section Head, ALCC Heidelberg, Germany), *Clarify the risks and specificities of WMD terrorism and the link between CBRN trafficking and terrorism* by Mr Sergey BATSANOV (UNICRI – Terrorism Unit, Italy), *Working together across cultural, ethnic, regional and religious lines* by Dr. Athanasios E. DROUGOS (International relations expert, Greece), *Terrorist and its financing* by Mr. Jasmin AHIC (Faculty of Criminal Science, Bosnia & Herzegovina), *Preventing terrorist recruitment and communication* by Mr. Mario JANACEK, Expert for Combating Terrorism Ministry of Security, Bosnia & Herzegovina), *Advantages and disadvantages of regional cooperation - B&H national perspectives* by Col. Zemir SINANOVIC (Head of J2, Staff Armed Forces of Bosnia & Herzegovina).



The Minister of Defence of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Mr. Selmo Cikotić, Minister of Security, Mr. Tarik Sadović and Ambassador Nedžad Hadžimusić, Director of RACVIAC – Centre for Security Cooperation, opened the seminar.

Minister Cikotić underlined the importance of undertaking the joint activities in the fight against terrorism, pointing out that all the countries in the region shared the common ambition of establishing a joint platform for dialogue and cooperation on all security matters.

Minister Sadović agreed that terrorism was posing the biggest threat to world peace and security. He confirmed their country's readiness to fight this "global evil" and acknowledged the joint efforts of all government entities.

Ambassador Hadžimusić highlighted the importance of cooperation between the countries and related security organizations. He emphasized the specific value of the seminar in providing a constructive platform for dialogue and inclusiveness. Ambassador saluted all participants of the seminar, which is a telling proof of the readiness of the countries to work closer together for a more stable and secure region.

The following discussions generated by the distinguished lecturers were most interesting. Here are the participants' consolidated conclusions from the discussions:

Even today there is still an ongoing dispute over drawing a clear line between terrorist act as a criminal offence and armed action as the form of the fight for freedom. The consequence is that, in spite of whole range of definitions created in the past to the modern one provided by the Council of the European Union Framework Decision on Combating Terrorism in 2002, there is still neither common, universally accepted definition of terrorism nor universal international convention against terrorism.



The Organization of United Nations adopted a number of resolutions and multilateral agreements (conventions and protocols), criminalizing individually different forms of terrorism with a view to creating the international legal tools for the fight against terrorism on the global level.

Counter-terrorism in the 21st century is clearly a collective responsibility in confronting this transnational threat and a close international cooperation across borders and regions is required if terrorism is to be effectively defeated.

The main area of cooperation on counter-terrorism remains the exchange of information among countries.

Some additional effort has to be put in this direction, considering that information sharing and international cooperation remain insufficient against the terrorist target as of 2008.

Among different instruments of cooperation the following have to be included: diplomatic, intelligence, law enforcement, customs, border control, public affairs.

Conclusions.

...it is impossible to make the terror disappear from the reality.

Terrorism still endures even in the modern democratic societies. Consequently, it is impossible to make the terror disappear from the reality. What we can do is to reduce the chance of terrorism occurring.

As time changes, causes of terrorism also vary. It is difficult to figure it out clearly. However, according to what was discussed during the seminar, we could affirm that there are several potential causes, which might provoke terrorism, such as various religious conflicts, inequality, poverty, failure of politics, corrupt politicians and lack of political freedom and civil liberties as well as authority of the government.



These matters are connected to other issues and expand to new causes, which make the situation even worse.

For many reasons, the lack of capability of governance and the lack of communication deserve to be pointed out.

In addition, speakers pointed out the necessity to diligently examine different ways of terrorists financing their activities and to put additional efforts to destroy their fund network. Due consideration was also given to the use of Weapons of Mass Destruction, which was still a possible serious risk to be addressed by countries.

Furthermore, lecturers pointed the upcoming threat in the evolution of terrorism as the cyber terror. Cyber space is yet vulnerable to attacks targeting not only at digital data, but also remote control of public/private infrastructure, such as nuclear facilities, dams etc. Terrorist networks do use cyber space not only for attacks, but also for recruitment, fundraising and promotion purposes. Participants are confident enough that the next generation of terrorism will take its shape in the cyber space.

Unfortunately, national legislations and countering bodies are not established nor empowered enough to respond timely, appropriately and efficiently to this global threat.

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