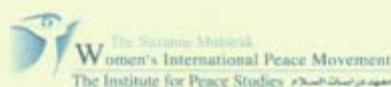


Report of the
International Workshop
Global Extremism, Terror
and Response Strategies

6-7 August 2006

Bibliotheca Alexandrina
Alexandria, Egypt



International Workshop
On
Global Extremism, Terror and Response Strategies

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Foreword:

Since 9/11 international terrorism has occupied an important place in the global policy discourse. The impact of terrorism cannot be simply measured in terms of the number of casualties. The state response to terrorism diverts attention away from important issues of governance such as poverty eradication, environment, social stability, and health, among others. The acts of terror as well as counter-terrorism strategies weaken the trust between societies and individuals. Terrorism is not just about causing bodily harm for political or ideological objectives. Terrorism is about eroding core human values of freedom, justice, trust and tolerance.

The particular counter terrorism approach designed in response to the 9/11 attacks five years ago has proved to be counter-productive. The main perpetrators of the heinous acts are still at large. In stead, thousands and thousands of innocent people of Afghanistan and Iraq have succumbed to death and injuries. There are now at least fifty groups engaged in acts of terror in Iraq whereas none existed five years ago. The Taliban have resurfaced in Afghanistan. There is Islam phobia in the West and resurgence of strong anti-American sentiment in many parts of the world.

Terrorism is not a monopoly of any particular religion and culture. We find it in Asia, the Middle East, Africa, Latin America, Europe and the United States. Thus, no continent is spared. In some countries, terrorism is giving way to extremism, which may not involve physical violence but which may produce absolutist visions of the respective societies. Nothing less than the fabric of human civilization is at risk. Further, if some terrorist groups find access to unconventional technologies, they may find a pathogen or electro-magnetic pulses posing risk to the humanity. As the United Nations General Assembly has stated in the counter terrorism strategy adopted in September this year, terrorism must be unacceptable in all its forms and manifestations.

In order to understand the phenomenon of terrorism from various perspectives and propose response strategies, we jointly convened an international workshop on global patterns of terrorism, extremism and response strategies. We are much grateful to the experts from several different parts of the world that traveled to Alexandria and contributed significantly to the discussion. Biblotheca Alexandrina and the Susanne Mubarak Women's International Peace Movement came together earlier this year to establish Institute of Peace Studies. In its first year, Strategic Foresight Group and the Institute have collaborated in this venture in the spirit of developing and sharing knowledge. We wish to acknowledge the leadership of Ambassador Aly Maher and Ms Ilmas Futehally, the executive directors of the Institute and the Strategic Foresight Group respectively, for their leadership. We also wish to thank Dr Azza El Kholly, for preparing this report.

We hope that the policy communities, scholars and others around the world will benefit from the summary of our discussions at Alexandria. We will be very pleased to receive comments and carry forward the debate on this important issue.

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Global Extremism, Terror and Response Strategies

Introduction

Extremism and terrorism are plagues that take humanity back to the dark ages, a time when human life had no value, and violence prevailed over the rule of law. It is, therefore, of paramount importance to start examining the roots of these phenomena and to discuss appropriate response strategies that must be implemented in order to combat these modern day crises.

Today, there is a global misconception, which tends to think of extremism and terrorism as interchangeable terms. Similarly, there is a growing tendency to equate terrorism with religion, particularly Islam. However, if we were to look at the facts, we will find that out of all the terrorist attacks carried out in the last four years, only 10% of these attacks were executed by groups that align themselves with a particular religion, or act in the name of a religion. Instead 90% of terrorist attacks that were executed have been carried out by groups who have leftist or other ideological agendas. Furthermore, this confusion between extremism and terrorism needs to be addressed in order to better implement a global policy of appropriate response strategies.

According to the UN Resolution 1556 and the High-Level Panel, terrorism is an act, which involves bodily harm to non-combatants or non-military targets. On the other hand, there are extremist groups that use propaganda warfare and may encourage violent action, but are not openly involved in any kind of direct violence. It is important to recognize that these groups are likely to be a much greater challenge in the coming decade examples of such groups include the Islamic Front, Hizb ut-Tahrir, founded in Jordan, located in Central Asia, and currently gaining a large following in Europe. Although Hizb ut-Tahrir is not itself a terrorist organization, it is an extremist group in terms of its propaganda and other tactics. Similarly, there are other leftist organizations that are not exactly involved in terrorist acts but that are involved in extremist and absolutist propaganda. The question to be asked is how does one address a challenge posed by an extremist organization that does not actually commit criminal acts under the jurisdiction of any country but does, nonetheless, propagate an absolutist ideology, which could promote terrorism?

To answer this question and to find appropriate response strategies for this global phenomenon, we need to look at the issues of terrorism and extremism through regional perspectives, their causes and possible response strategies that can be implemented to face this dangerous threat to world peace and human life.

Perspectives

Global Perspectives

There is an increasing gap between the West, more particularly the USA, and the Muslim and Arab world. For many in the Muslim and Arab worlds, the issue that has been neglected and needs to be re-emphasized is that terror can be the work of states as well as groups and individuals, and as such,

terror in all its forms, whether state-sponsored or committed by groups or individuals, should be condemned.

Although terrorism has caused fewer numbers of deaths than disease, poverty, malnutrition and war; its real danger lies in the fact that it causes a number of policy disruptions. For instance, it diverts policy attention, resources and contributes towards poverty and war. In addition, terrorism has a corrosive impact on trust among individuals, as well as between individuals and institutions, in any society, in some cases even allowing for the acceptance of the suspension of civil liberties as seen in the Patriot Act in the United States.

In our world today, an increase in terrorism is, inevitably, going to be much more costly than before for several reasons. The increasing density of human settlements, where many people live in small geographic areas, makes the effect of terrorism on the loss of human life much larger. Likewise, the increasing value of property makes material losses more costly. The adverse impact of terrorist acts on important industries in some countries will result in a loss of investment and cause economic disruption.

Furthermore, the advance in modern means of transportation allows terrorists to move more easily than before. In fact, the means of transportation have become targets for terrorist attacks as well as tools of attack, as seen in the case of the 9/11 attack. Similarly, revolution in information technology facilitates the work of terrorists and allows them to plan their activities half-way around the globe, finance it from another part and assemble to strike somewhere else within a matter of hours. International mass media, too, allows terrorists to make news quickly and get their message around the world, a factor that could encourage some to resort to terror to achieve their aims. In addition, today, the availability of weapons and explosives at moderate prices allows terrorists to obtain tools of destruction easier than before.

Yet it is the emergence of newer forms of terrorism such as cyber attacks against data banks that need to be studied thoroughly as these are potentially lethal attacks against the very fabric of society, though they do not fit into the traditional concept of violence. Furthermore, the emergence of other types of unconventional forms of terrorism, of which the most important is bio-terrorism, is an extremely serious issue that has to be carefully considered. For example, an air-borne lethal pathogen with an incubation period of a few days would be very difficult to control. Equally important is the examination of the strange phenomenon of suicide bombers, which needs to be tackled at the base of the recruiting and indoctrination processes for these bombers.

Regional Perspectives

The Middle East

There is a problem with the implementation of the rule of law at the international level. While the Middle East is being asked to carry out internal reforms, the rule of law at the international level is violated daily, due to the prevailing unilateralism and international double standards in dealing with problems. The practices of the international society are a major reason behind terrorism today. What is happening in Palestine, Iraq and Lebanon, and the double standards involved in tackling these events will take the region back ten years. There are faulty policies in relation to some critical conflicts in the area, placing Arabs and Muslims under heavy attack worldwide. Western double standards in relation to the Muslim and Arab people have caused these people to lose hope in and respect for the international law.

Furthermore, their exclusion from the world policy-making arena adds to their frustrations. For example, all meetings on global governance exclude third world countries; hence the lack of a legal way of participating in global governance discourse substituted by joining it through illegal ways. Another reason for the proliferation of terrorism is external support of terrorist groups. A good example of this would be the PKK, the bloodiest terrorist organization in the world, which has armed terrorists in Northern Iraq, but which the US cannot touch because Iraq is an independent country. The PKK has offices in the EU countries, and its broadcasting channel is used to incite people to rebel against the Turkish government. Similarly, many other terrorist organizations have offices in New York and European countries that have refused to arrest members under the pretext that it is against democracy. This attitude shows that the West is not sincere in combating terrorism, and that it is time for Western groups to hold detailed sessions of self-criticism. Today, there is a need for a reassessment of concepts such as human rights, democracy, and the free-market economy.

One cause for terrorism is the serious economic and political problems and the focus should be on these problems as causes rather than the attacks, which are results. Extremism and terrorism can also sometimes be a reaction to extremism from the other side; for example, when Iraqi people read about an American soldier who said in an investigation that: "I came over here because I wanted to kill people", surely some of them might resort to reactionary extremist actions. There also should be more serious attempts to engage in dialogue with terrorist groups on both national and international levels.

Extremism and terrorism are not interchangeable terms and should be defined accurately. Furthermore, a distinction should be made between the different types of extremism and terrorism. It is true that all terrorists are extremists but not all extremists, are terrorists. Between them there is a broad highway that often encourages terrorism and, if not carefully monitored, in time extremism can be easily transformed into terrorism. Therefore, it is in this area that measures should be taken to prevent extremists from becoming terrorists.

At the heart of the philosophy of most Islamic groups is the notion of a glorious Islamic past that should be revived. Re-establishing an Islamic Empire is on top of their agenda and they work to achieve this political and religious aim. There are terrorists who use violence and another type who are national liberation groups. Despite the deliberate international confusion between the two, there must be some sort of distinction between terrorist groups and other organizations like the Hamas or the Palestinian Jihad, which sometimes target civilians, but cannot be described as terrorist groups, although some of their actions can be violent. Islamists have had an increasing presence in national liberation groups, which were not originally terrorist organizations, but socio-political groups that have been forced, by the conditions in their countries, to resort to violence like the Hamas and Palestinian Jihad in Palestine, and the Hezbollah in Lebanon.

There are three types of terrorist groups that have appeared in different time brackets. There are the local Jihadi groups that function within the premises of the domestic scene, aiming for a change of regime in their countries and a creation of an Islamic state as their main goal. These groups emerged mainly in Algeria and Egypt of the 1990s. The second type is that of the International Jihadi groups whose goal is to fight for Islam on an international level and to defend the Muslim world from foreign enemies and military intervention. These groups emerged in Afghanistan with the Soviet invasion. The third type appeared more recently, post the American invasion of Iraq. This third type has a two fold agenda: to

effect local regime change and simultaneously fight foreign enemies. In the last three years, the distinction between a local and international enemy seems to have been blurred for this group.

The evolution of these three groups has passed through three distinctive phases. The first phase, between the end of the 1970s and the end of the 1990s, saw the proliferation of local Islamist terrorist groups, whereas the second phase, from the second half of the 1990s to the 9/11 attacks, saw the rise of the second type of international groups which existed, not in the heart of the Middle East but rather in what is known as the Greater Middle East; including Afghanistan, Pakistan and East Africa. The third phase began after the invasion of Iraq where those groups linked what they believe to be traitor regimes with the international enemy. It is important to note here that most Islamic/Arab countries were affected by these terrorist acts and therefore, it is not fair to label Muslims as terrorists only and not think of them as victims too.

The question that needs to be addressed is why extremism is attractive to Muslim youth? Also, why terrorist groups appear only in the 1970s and not before that? The explanation would be in the dire internal socio-economic factors; (Egypt and Algeria are an example), as well as regional issues of liberation. However, one of the major reasons is the fact that many Arab leaders have let down their young people, and their dream of the glorious past. Arab Unity seems to have become a substitute especially with the advance in technology and the entertainment business, which has brought Arab youth together more than ever before. Especially significant is the fact that the dream of an Arab Unity could be a way to have a voice for the otherwise, voiceless Arabs on the international level.

The lessons to be learned from the Middle Eastern experience in dealing with terrorism should be drawn from the three countries that suffered from it the most: Egypt, Algeria and Saudi Arabia. The phenomenon of terrorism in Egypt began in the last century, ten years after the fall of the Islamic Ottoman Empire, in 1928 with the establishment of the Muslim Brotherhood. In the last decades of the past century, Egypt depended mainly on increasing security measures to combat terrorism, then resorted to eliciting the help of learned men from Al-Azhar, the media and the arts. In Algeria, it was far more complicated, but also began with tightening security. However, in 1997, the state began to see the need to compromise, and political discussion was employed instead of security measures. The Saudi Arabian case is rather different since very little terrorism has been exercised in the country with the exception of a few attacks here and there. However, since the invasion of Iraq, terrorism has increased in the country and the state began to use force to combat terrorism. Eventually, the Saudis implemented a new approach; negotiating with these groups and trying to resolve the conflict peacefully

In most Arab and Muslim countries there is an ongoing struggle between the moderates and the radicals. However, the more the Americans use power, the more they create problems for moderates. The general perception is that it is a war against Islam and Muslims, a thing that moderates, too, find unacceptable.

In a country like Turkey, where the majority of the people are Muslim, extremists can achieve their political goals in most instances through democratic means if the government fails to apply necessary administrative responses. Therefore, governments have to prevent these elements from infiltrating into the governmental structure by detecting the moment when a threat to public peace and constitutional order surfaces, and dealing with it instantly.

In order to understand what happened over the past few years, and the revisions and changes that came over some extremist groups like the Jamaa Islamiyah and Al Jihad, it is important to examine Islamic history. Religious extremists never represented more than 1 or 2% in any given time in Muslim history. Many organizations, that would now, be labeled terrorist groups, have transformed into socio-political groups embracing Islamic ideology. Such groups are similar to the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, the Fils in Algeria, the Muslim Brothers in Jordan and the Justice and Development in Turkey who, significantly, have all participated in the political process over the last four years. Since 2002, twelve Muslim countries have witnessed either wins in elections or gains of a large majority by these groups. Islamic history has examples of many such groups that have eventually become more socio-politically oriented as part of a historical process. The Jamaah Islamiyah in Egypt has revised its tactics and abandoned militant action, which they thought, brought them no victories. Furthermore, the militant existence of such groups depends on the historical context of the times although their ideologies, beliefs and slogans have always been the same. Another reason for revising tactics is the aversion of public opinion to the actions and ideologies of such groups. In the 1990s in Egypt, people were set against members of such groups when they heard them speak or explain their actions. Likewise, in Jordan, after the recent bombings, people felt threatened by the violent behavior of members of these groups. However, here, "conservatism" should not be overlooked as a fundamental term that needs to be examined alongside extremism and terrorism because some ideologies can best be described as conservative like Wahabism.

Asia:

In this region, the causes of international terrorism are clear to the people, but certainly not so clear to the Western world. These causes have a great deal to do with two sets of grievances: local and global. Local grievances are due to corruption, the failure of governments to alleviate poverty, the lack of social justice or ethnic discrimination, whereas global grievances is related to the issue of Palestine and the lopsided policy of the Western countries which condones the excesses of Israel; a policy that is perceived as an injustice not only to the Palestinians but to all Muslims. This has given rise to a sense of injustice at the local and global level and has acted as a strong source of motivation for acts of violence. Thus, in spite of the individual agendas of leaders of terrorist networks, they usually play on these two sets of grievances to gain support at the grassroots without which they cannot operate effectively, even if they have highly skilled and well-funded operatives. It is from these grassroots, and not from the core body of terrorists, that most suicide bombers are recruited.

In Indonesia, the government has been trading carefully, trying to balance the administration of justice and social peace. After the terrorist attacks on Bali Island in 2002 and 2005, the government succeeded in bringing most of the perpetrators of these attacks to justice. However, in dealing with the case of Abu Bakr Al Bashir, the Muslim spiritual leader of the main terrorist network in Southeast Asia, the Jamaah Islamiyah, the Indonesian government had to be extremely careful; for although it could not acquit him, it could not also give him a severe sentence for fear of a militant backlash; a situation that displeased and angered the US and Australia. Of course public opinion in the West is significant, but local public opinion is more important for achieving social peace. Recently, many militant leaders have been

arrested and some terrorist groups have even split into factions because of disagreements among their leaders. According to the International Crisis Group, a new generation of terrorists, specially recruited to become suicide bombers have emerged on the scene.

Although the majority of Indonesian Muslims are moderate and generally condemn terrorism as un-Islamic, there are, however, several small groups of radical Muslims that are creating tension. While some of these groups have ostensibly disbanded in the wake of the first Bali bombings, they still seem to be well organized, well funded and their disruptive activities are given sensational coverage by the mass media. It is important to note here that the Madrasas in Indonesia are society based, the people themselves determine the curricula, and so they are really very independent. There are about fourteen thousand Madrasas but only one, in Central Java, is known to produce terrorists.

Although Indonesian Muslim organizations have shown a disturbing conservative streak, yet there are other organizations like the Nahdatul Ulama, which has 40 million members and the Muhammadiyah with a membership of 30 million respectively that are in a position to win the battle of the hearts and minds of the Indonesian youth and they are beginning to do just that, but are not doing this vigorously enough.

It is important to mention that despite the fact that the Bali attacks were carried out with funding from Al Qaeda, there have been no operational connections between the Al Qaeda and terrorists in Indonesia. In fact, there is absolutely no connection between, terrorists, operating in Indonesia and other parts of Southeast Asia, with those who carried out terrorist attacks in Europe and the Middle East. International terrorism has no global command center. Apparently there exists a Southeast Asian network of small cells cooperating with one another.

Southeast Asian governments are working hard to combat this phenomenon and they are cooperating to help improve their security measures and intelligence policies. In Indonesia, law enforcement agencies now have better coverage of villages, and have succeeded in enlisting more local people in their operations. However, Southeast Asian governments have not succeeded in completely rendering their maritime borders less porous. Nevertheless, the naval forces of Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore have been able to reduce piracy and make the strategic marine passageways less vulnerable to terrorist strikes.

The causes for the increase in terrorism in both Pakistan and Afghanistan are somewhat different although the attack on Islam and the Palestinian problem still constitute major causes. Recently, the Taliban has been gaining strength in Afghanistan, and the Western option of military force to combat terrorism instead of political dialogue, has only served to strengthen the influence of this group. Likewise, in Pakistan, the total reliance on military means to deal with the problems of terrorism has been a mistake, which, unfortunately, still continues. Using heavy weaponry as a means of reprisal against these groups will not end the problem, but has rather magnified it. Similarly, when it comes to extremism, one of the biggest failures of the government is not taking decisions on the role of Madrasas in Pakistan where public support for Jihadi groups is increasing and the recruitment of young people as potential suicide bombers is on the rise. Ironically, the Jihadi option is something that the military establishment has never done away with. The danger is, however, that porous borders with Afghanistan and Kashmir have allowed other groups to take matters into their own hands. This is very much a Frankenstein story where the creator of these groups no longer has the power to control them.

Therefore, it is clear that the war on terror in both countries has reached a stalemate, and that massive military forces inside Afghanistan and on the Pakistan Afghani border have not provided any tangible results. Furthermore, policies of the Pakistani military establishment which has sidelined the progressive and democratic political forces in the country, has also resulted in providing a space for militant elements in Islamic parties who have used this opportunity to become more active. In addition, the massive killings inside Afghanistan had prompted young people to go over to help their kin and eventually they all ended up in jail, and those who were released from Guantanamo Bay came back ready for more militant action. Also, seeing their relatives killed by US planes motivates young people to take part in violent acts as a form of revenge. This has especially been made easier by the availability of CDs and printed material of Taliban training sessions and the attraction of Al Qaeda as a brand name.

However, in both Pakistan and Afghanistan, terrorism is also a result of deep-rooted political and economic problems as well as a reaction to such global issues as the Palestinian cause, Kashmir, Chechnya and now Lebanon. In addition, aligning terrorist acts with religion has proved to be counter-productive. Although the U.S has cautioned the Pakistani government that some Shiites in Pakistan would be heading to Iran to join forces with the Hizbollah during the war on Lebanon, the truth is that this war is seen, not as a war on Shiites, but on Muslims in general, especially after Hamas, a Sunni group came out on the streets in support of Hizbollah. This only goes to indicate that the gap between the two sects is closing rather than otherwise, and that they are ready to unite against a common enemy.

The Jihadi groups in Pakistan and Afghanistan were initially those Mujahedeen who fought against the Soviets. These are foreigners whose countries of origin refused to take them back and, who could not be legally incriminated and sent to prisons in Pakistan or Afghanistan.

In Sri Lanka, the sources of conflict are national. There are three types of extremism in the country: ethnic, political and religious. The ethnic problem began when the British colonial occupation left the country. Initially, when the colonial power came to Sri Lanka in the 18th century, the country was made up of several small kingdoms, which were then unified by the British under one centralized government. When they left, the British handed over the same centralized government to the Sri Lankans, making way for the Sinhalese ethnic majority of 75% to obtain governmental power. The Sinhalese immediately took various actions to correct their "historical role" because during the British occupation, the British favored the Tamil minority at the expense of the majority. They now needed to correct these wrongs and as power was concentrated in a single government in Colombo this now resulted in many acts of discrimination against minority communities, as well as inequalities in the distribution of national wealth. Consequently resulting in unequal development, ethnic discrimination and political exclusion.

Ethnic extremism is dominant in Sri Lanka, and has given rise to major incidents of terrorism. Sri Lanka is notorious for its deadly accurate suicide bombings that have claimed the lives of many people. Extremism and terrorism have become institutionalized in the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), a militant organization that was established in 1975, with the aim of securing an independent country for the Sri Lankan Tamil people. The LTTE aims to carve out more than 40 percent of Sri Lankan territory for their separate country. Currently they have obtained control over about 15 percent of Sri Lanka's territory in the North and East of the country, although the proportion of the population directly under their control is less than 3 percent. The territory that the LTTE controls has many of the institutions of a state,

including a police force, a judiciary, an administrative service, customs and entry control and, of course, a military force comprising of an army, navy and incipient air force.

The LTTE has ethnically cleansed its territories of almost all other communities, in particular the Muslim community who were expelled in large numbers from the northern territories. Its organizational structure is hierarchical and militarized. Ironically, there have been counter terrorism measures against the Tamil militancy practiced by government forces that could justifiably be called state terrorism.

Political extremism in Sri Lanka is manifest in attempts to overthrow democratically elected governments by means of revolutionary political violence. These failed revolutions were undertaken by the People's Liberation Front (JVP), which espoused Marxist ideals and upheld the cause of the deprived rural masses, by seeking to establish a socialist state and severing the country's dependence on the world capitalist system. The JVP utilized a strategy of political assassinations and armed insurrections to achieve its objectives, a strategy that initiated periods of national terror resulting in the death of 15,000 people in 1971 and 60,000 people in 1988-89. In addition to its original Marxist ideology and concern for the socially deprived, the JVP has taken on an extremist Sinhalese nationalism in opposition to the LTTE. Further, even though the JVP has now joined mainstream democratic politics, its ability to mobilize its members for street protests, to launch crippling labor strikes and to engage in propaganda campaigns gives it disproportionate power in society. The National Heritage Party (JHU), which consists of an all Buddhist monk parliamentary group, is also another extremist party, which sees Sri Lanka as a Buddhist country that should be governed according to Buddhist beliefs, and strongly opposes any concession to Tamil nationalism.

Some members of the Buddhist and Muslim communities in Sri Lanka have shown an inclination towards religious extremism in recent years. Buddhist extremism has taken the form of political opposition to concessions made to Tamil nationalism movement with regards to the ethnic conflict. It has also taken the form of anti-Christian attacks such as church burning, and has exerted efforts to get the government to pass laws restricting religious freedom. On the other hand, Muslim extremism is less visible but there are persistent reports of armed Muslim groups in the conflict zones of the North and East, where the LTTE is seeking to form a separate Tamil state. The purpose of these Muslim groups is to protect the Muslim community from the excesses and territorial ambitions of the LTTE.

The roots of ethnic and political conflict in Sri Lanka are the outcome of a centralization of power and the unwillingness of the central authorities to share such power. Furthermore, the centralization of power in the capital city of Colombo has meant that more than half of the country's economic wealth, and 85 percent of its manufacturing capacity is located in the Western Province, leaving precious little for the other eight provinces. Therefore, the concentration of power is responsible for the inequitable distribution of income and other resources, increasing a sense of social injustice. There are also other causes for extremism such as inadequate linkages where a linguistic and territorial divide exacerbates the ethnic conflict. Sinhalese and Tamils do not speak each other's languages, live in separate regions of the country, and have many myths and stereotypes about each other. Party politics, too, plays a major role in accentuating the conflict as political groups in their competition for votes, appeal to the nationalist, ethnic and religious sentiments of the people. Simultaneously, political parties undermine governmental efforts

of peace making, calling it a betrayal of national interests just to win the public support. Finally, the absence of an effective leadership is yet another cause of extremism in Sri Lanka.

Europe:

Europe has had a long and varied experience with political extremism and terrorism. Some countries have had long histories of civil war, state terrorism, genocide, domestic terrorism and international terrorism, others have been luckier and have been spared most of that. The terrorist attacks of 9/11 and the current campaign for global Jihad now dominates the security situation in Europe, Northern America and the rest of the world. However, the perception and handling of this threat is viewed differently in Europe as opposed to the United States. For example, in the United States terrorism is seen mainly as a threat coming from abroad, and is handled predominantly through the use of military force and the tightening of security measures within the country to prevent the possible infiltration of this threat into the homeland. As such, the current US administration has been highly reluctant to accept that there are political or socio-economic conditions and conflicts that may give rise to terrorism on account of the fact that such considerations may, in some way, justify or give legitimacy to terrorism. As an alternative method, the US has focused on regime change in Afghanistan, Iraq and, later on, could possibly do the same in Iran and Syria on account of their being regimes that promote international terrorism.

Conversely, in Europe, terrorism is not only seen as an exterior threat but also as a threat from within, through the violent radicalization of small segments of the population. Further, a military solution is not seen as a viable solution to the problem of domestic radicalism. The growing feeling that Europe has double standards towards the Middle East and Arab countries exacerbates the radicalization of small segments of the population. This was especially evident when a number of European governments actively supported the invasion of Iraq; in some communities, this added to frustration and anger against state policy. European countries, therefore, now recognize the necessity of preventing terrorism by addressing the conditions and circumstances that give rise to violent extremism. In other words, Europe finds it necessary to start by addressing the root causes of terrorism.

Thus, European countries and the European Union made the prevention and handling of violent radicalism high on the political agenda. In 2006, a European expert group was appointed to study violent radicalism. Its mission is to prepare an annual report about the situation that is causing extremism. It will also discuss such issues as the social and political conditions influencing the radicalization of some young Muslims in Europe, the cartoon crisis and how it was handled, as well as the xenophobic backlash against Muslims in some European countries. The expert group will also provide a report on the state of knowledge on processes of violent radicalization and give policy advice to the EU commission.

However, it could be argued that the European Union, itself, could possibly become a contributor to global extremism. The reason for this being that for the last decade or two, one of the fastest growing trends in European politics is extremism in general and, anti-democratic, xenophobic extremism in particular. This is a result of several factors; one of which is the growing power of Europe as an entity, and the decreasing credibility and power of national political parties. The big political void created by the mainstream political parties is beginning to be filled by extremism. One of the aspects of this extremism is

xenophobia, but it is also linked with anti-democratic feelings from both the extreme right and the extreme left. Thus, extremism in Europe can also result from a growth of extremist radicals who are coming from within the classical European fabric, especially xenophobic trends. In the next ten to twenty years, it is expected that Europe will face more dangers from within the European society.

On the positive side, the European Union is a contributor to the rule of law. Indeed, that is one of the reasons why, for instance, there is a growing divergence between the Europeans and the Americans, because Europeans today perceive Israel as a terrorist state. The fact that the European Union is a construction of law makes Europeans regard the way in which the United States is dealing with the war on terror as a destruction of the rule of law. As such, this can be the positive contribution of the EU in the coming years. Likewise, in terms of bridging gaps, the European Union has been the only existing body, in the past fifty years, that has been building bridges between cultures within the European continent. It can, therefore, develop this asset in different ways especially given that it has succeeded in bringing together people who had been divided by long wars and millions of deaths. This asset, although not quite sufficient in itself, is an experiment, which can be used by others in different perspectives and contexts.

Equally important to the understanding of extremism and terrorism in Europe is the examination of radical Islamist networks on the European continent. The transnational characteristics of the European networks and their multinational member components have resulted in continuous parallel research on 'local conflicts' be they in Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Afghanistan or Pakistan. The European cases have shown that the local 'Diaspora' context provides youth with motivational factors as a result of perceived deprivation and alienation in their immigrant status, while, at the same time, the global context of symbolically important conflicts like Chechnya, Palestine, Iraq and Kashmir, fuel the ideological and political motivations for a violent Jihad.

Therefore, it is important to recognize forms of extremism related to Islamic minorities in Europe and identify their relationship to foreign terrorist groups. Europe has a geographically and socio-economically diverse immigrant community whose ties to the home country and sojourn in Europe vary to a large extent. However, it is only a small minority, which is seen to be moving towards militancy. Much as it has been a sanctuary for Islamist expatriates of various ideological shades in the past, in recent years, Europe is still an arena for moderate, semi-radical and radical Islamists who engage in support activities for Jihadist insurgencies in North Africa, the Middle East, and parts of South and South East Asia. The danger, however, is that it is also becoming an arena for recruitment and activity. Likewise, it has become a target for small groups of highly motivated and more or less trained terrorists, with varying ideological and organizational ties to Al-Quaeda and other local or regional terror groups.

Terrorist plans and attacks in Western Europe over the past few years have involved multinational and transnational operating 'ad-hoc' Jihadi terrorist groups that were either associated with, or inspired by, Al-Quaeda. The cells seen in Europe are composed of male Muslim immigrants (first and second generation), most often of North African ancestry. They comprise of political refugees as well as legal and illegal immigrants, and sometimes these cells also include a few ethnic European converts to Islam. The profiles of those engaged in these activities include criminals, drug addicts or 'socially misplaced people'; but many are also gifted, educated, employed individuals that are seemingly assimilated into Western European countries. Many are married with children, and many did not appear to have been religious or politically active prior to their affiliations with militants. It has been noted that the leaders of such groups

are often described as 'model immigrants'; very few fit the 'typical' terrorist profile. The terrorists usually resided in Europe prior to joining Jihadi groups, and thus, they were recruited to Islamist militancy inside Western Europe, although there are examples of operatives who were recruited in North Africa, Pakistan, or other places.

The typical profile of the Islamic militant in Europe is a young, alienated male North African or Middle Eastern immigrant who has become a 'newborn Muslim', and taken active steps to seek out the radical Islamist doctrine, visited radical mosques, and encountered a 'gatekeeper': a 'Jihad-veteran' who trained and fought in Afghanistan, Chechnya, Bosnia and Kashmir. Although the recruitment normally happens through cliques of friends who become radical together, they need a gatekeeper in order to link to a Jihadi movement. These gatekeepers provide knowledge about how to join militant groups and where to go in order to receive the necessary training. Today, unfortunately, an increasing number of young people are being recruited.

The causes of extremism and terrorism among immigrant youth in Europe are many and complex. Furthermore, motivations exist at different levels: personal, social – related to the local European context – and global. Personal crises and/or problems are certainly a reason. Many recruits joined during personal crisis and transitional phases (death of parents, divorce or depression). Another factor on the individual level is 'relative social deprivation'; for example, raised expectations of being fully accepted as a member of European society, an aim that is not fulfilled, prompts young Muslim immigrants to join Jihadi groups. Moreover, problems of fitting into Western societies and leaving their traditional cultures led to a feeling of alienation, which Jihadi groups are more than willing to offer a solution to by offering alienated, immigrant youth the social gains of companionship, identity and 'direction in life'. Frustration is also another factor that contributes to the proliferation of radicalism. The fact that in the aftermath of 9/11, security measures became tighter, surveillance stronger and the persecution of radical Islamist milieus in European countries more pronounced, has led young people to feel more frustrated. Likewise, regional European issues such as tightened security, restrictive immigration legislation and restrictions on civil liberties may prompt further radicalism.

More importantly, though, is the idea of 'global defensive Jihad against aggressors attacking Islam and Muslims', which is the single most important motivational factor at the group level. The conflicts in Palestine, Kashmir and other places, are used to recruit young people by making it appealing to them to join their Muslim brothers in fighting aggressors. In this way, they are motivating people to take part in these conflicts, thus producing more Jihadis. Furthermore, political and military developments in areas of symbolic value like Palestine, Chechnya, Afghanistan and Iraq, as well as the political grievances of radical Islamists are important motivational factors for the terrorist group as a whole.

Central America

In the last thirty years, extremism and terrorism have changed in Central America. Many people who participated in the extremist and violent acts of the 1970s and 1980s in this region were part of a trend that existed within the larger context of the cold war.

Geography, history and international situation must be considered in order to better understand extremism and terrorism in Central America. In the 1970s and 1980s, the cold war and the competition between the United States and the Soviet Union over different territories, influenced what was happening

in Central America at that time. The violence that broke out between leftist groups and capitalist groups only existed in El Salvador, Nicaragua and Guatemala. Honduras, on the other hand, acted as a hub for the groups that supported the United States, and many of the groups that worked on behalf of governments that supported the US system operated from there. However, terrorism at that time was not only the violence in which capitalist and communist supporters engaged, there was also what was known as state terrorism or state sponsored terrorism. This included death squads that were hired by states to kill regime opponents and to terrorize civilians. Furthermore, the intensity of violence in Central America was exacerbated by another geographical factor: proximity to the United States and the interest of this power in Central American affairs, especially after the loss of Cuba to the communists in the late 1950s.

By the early 1990's, and with the end of the cold war, there was a reduction in the *raison d'être* of many of those conflicting groups. At the same time, the United Nations and other international bodies supported peace talks in the three countries that had suffered from violence. Consequently, a democratic system was established and elections helped to bring some of those who had been politically excluded into the system.

Although extremism does not by default lead to terrorism, it can sometimes lead to other things, and that is what Central America is going through today, subject to the same conditions of geography, history and international relations. Here, geography takes precedence. Columbia is one of the main producers of cocaine and other drugs and thus, as expected organized crime is prevalent here. To market these drugs in the United States and other European countries, drugs are trafficked through through Central America, making it the crossroad and gateway for the transportation of drugs. Today, not only is it a gateway for the drug trade, but also for arms trade and human trafficking, going from South to North. Many of the groups who were disenfranchised with the end of the political violence of the 1970's and 1980's found in such trades a way of making a living, and a means to end their continuous economic and social hardships. At the same time, the gang model which exists in urban areas in the United States, and which contributes to organized crime, collaborates with Central American groups to transport drugs, guns and humans. This type of illegal transaction is accompanied by violence that is not very similar to the terrorism of the 1970's and 1980's where the purpose was to bring down a certain political regime or to effect major social reforms and changes in society. It is interesting to note that this type of urban, profit oriented violent trade is not only going from South to North, but is also a trade that is coming from North to South through the stealing and peddling of merchandise from the rich United States and Canada and bringing it down to Central America and, sometimes, from there to Africa and other parts of the world.

Conclusion:

In an age of unprecedented advances in science and technology, it is rather incongruous to find the world divided into separate islands; characterized by a lack of communication and dialogue. Extremism and terrorism are problems of humanity and, as such, all humanity should cooperate to find solutions to these problems. The first and major requirement to combat this phenomenon is the need to have absolute unity among the political forces worldwide because any effective responses to terrorism must be through international channels.

Cooperation also entails building bridges between peoples and cultures. The world of the Internet and mobile phones requires an unprecedented level of cooperation between police and intelligence agencies

of all the countries of the civilized world. Countries that oppose terrorism must establish new means of communication to deal with Terrorism. Such international cooperation must be structured around an internationally agreed upon legal infrastructure that is broadly recognized around the world.

On the international level, the world must also seek to readdress perceived grievances that fuel the anger of vast populations and chief among these is solving the political problem of Palestine. If the issue of Palestine were comprehensively and equitably resolved, much wind would be taken out of the sails of many Muslim militant groups. This is true not only in the Middle East, but also in Southeast Asia where the issue of Palestine has been causing a lot of negative vibrations among Muslim circles. Furthermore, the international community must recognize the need to define and agree upon certain norms that can be activated and where people will be obliged to act. The UN Security Council Resolutions is one good step in that direction but there is a lot more that needs to be done. On the other hand, the international society should show that international law is important and that there are legal ways that govern international relations. By the same token, the West, particularly the United States, should recognize that applying double standards in dealing with certain problems could be a direct cause of terrorism.

On the socio-economic level, both local and international powers need to collectively assist in developing economic opportunities for a rising tide of young people by promoting joint ventures in middle income countries, supporting home-grown reform efforts, and opening up employment possibilities for youth. Similarly, political reforms and the establishment of participatory inclusive approaches are necessary measures to reduce political violence, especially terrorism. Dialogue, rather than military intervention, should be an option that must be fully explored. Political inclusion and representation are vitally important strategies that can become extremely effective in combating extremism and terrorism. This is especially important in Europe where, until now, national or European parliaments have very little representation of minorities which inevitably entails little or no influence in the decision making process in the political sphere. Parallel to that, it is mandatory to gain more understanding of the processes of disengagement from terrorism and the conditions that facilitate or hamper such disengagement. This may make possible the process of suggesting practical steps to reduce terrorism by making it feasible for terrorists to end their violent activities. Moreover, it is important to evaluate various policies to facilitate disengagement from terrorism, such as amnesty programmes and rehabilitation programmes in order to clarify under which conditions such programmes work or fail. Efforts to identify and render harmless potential Jihad-entrepreneurs should be increased. States should guide youth to more constructive and peaceful ways to act out their activism.

In dealing with terrorism, well-thought-out contingency plans must be presented to deal with various forms of terrorist attacks because different threats require different plans, and there is no such thing as a single plan for anti-terrorist contingency planning in any country. This particular issue is relevant when dealing with unconventional forms of terrorism. On the other hand, preventive efforts to attract those at the extreme towards moderation should be examined, and an alternative vision must be thought of to counter balance the one advanced by militants. Whereas the extremists promote a vision of an austere Islamic state based on the conspiracy theory that liberalism, democratization and human rights are nothing but a trap designed by the West, a credible alternative vision, building on the glorious Islamic past with its policies of inclusion, tolerance and cultural achievements should be offered to Muslim youth because if the notion of the glorious past in the Muslim heart and mind is not considered, the world will be

missing something very significant. Simultaneously, there are so many questions in Muslim history that need to be revived and discussed among Muslims. Also, it is very important that the spirit of the graceful values of Islam be communicated to the youth to allow them to resist, with a proper understanding of Islam, extremist ideologies. At the same time, Muslims should open bridges to the West as their ancestors have, and not be afraid of being exposed to other cultures, and to benefit from them and, hopefully, contribute to them. As such, there is a pressing need to develop and expand the role of education and the media in the Muslim world. On the other hand, the openness and progressiveness of Islam and analyses of Islamic history have to be disseminated; not only in the Islamic and Arab world, but also in the West because the public needs to know that the “other” is not what the extremists make them out to be.

To succeed in winning the battle over this disturbing phenomenon, several actors must be brought onto the scene. Education, democratization processes, social and political reform, the active participation of civil society and the media are factors that must be developed and constantly revised to assist in the solving of this problem.

In light of all of the above, it is necessary to recognize that now is the time that humanity should take the decision to end problems of extremism and terrorism as it had once done away with slavery, piracy and gender discrimination. Indeed, it is time to try and solve this problem in order to prevent policy disruptions, lack of trust between the different sections of society, and among different cultures. Only then, will the world be able to pay attention to more pressing problems like poverty and environmental policies. Terrorism is a problem of humanity and as such, the world must address it collectively because if it is viewed as the predicament of a certain sect, religion or culture, very little can be achieved towards resolving the problem.

Recommendations:

The recommendations are seen on three different levels: practical; national and regional; and global.

On the Practical Level:

- Need for international legal, judicial and intelligence cooperation. The framework has to be developed in a manner that individual freedom and civil liberty are not undermined.
- Need for new security arrangements between North and South, as well as East and West.
- Expanding of educational opportunities and increasing investment in education at all levels. This includes conflict resolution and prevention methods, as well as creating cultural tolerance and understanding through bilingual education and exchange programs.
- Need for large-scale cultural exchanges, where large numbers of people get exposed to different cultures.
- Media cooperation between Western and Islamic countries.
- Promotion of political dialogue processes.
- Need for serious evaluation of amnesty schemes in a cooperative manner.
- Need to examine unconventional and long-term threats.

On the National and Regional Levels:

- Promotion of democracy and open society where there is space for effective political representation and communication for marginalized sections of society within a legal framework.
- Need for structural response and mechanisms to address socio-economic grievances, and to create inclusion.
- Neutralizing third country support for terrorist activities and ending state-sponsored terrorism.

On the Global Level:

- Resolving the Palestinian problem and ending military occupation in a just manner.
- Need for a fresh look at the use of force and the state of international relations.
- Reassessing of global power structures and determining the kind of affirmative action required.
- Crafting of an alternative vision of society for the Arab world; a vision that captures the imagination of the masses, drawing lessons from the glorious period in Islamic history, and creating a new and positive partnership between Islamic and Western countries.

6 th August 2006		
9:30 – 10:00 am	Opening Session Chair Dr. Ismail Serageldin	-Welcome Address Amb. Aly Maher -Introduction Mr. Sundeep Waslekar -Key Note Address Dr. Ismail Serageldin Age of Inconclusive Wars Amb. Hesham Youssef
10.00 – 11:20 am	Perspectives on Terrorism in the Middle East Chair Professor Amr Abdalla	-Perspectives from Egypt Dr. Kadry Said -Perspectives from Turkey Dr. Sedat Laciner -Intra-Regional Comparisons Dr. Diaa Rashwan
11:20 – 11:40am	Coffee Break	
11:40 – 12:40pm 12:40 – 1:00 pm	Discussion Concluding Remarks - Chair	
1:00 – 2:00 pm	Lunch	
2:00 – 3:00 pm	Perspectives from South and South East Asia Chair Ms. Ilmas Futehally	-Perspectives from South East Asia Amb. Wiryo - Perspectives from Pakistan and Afghanistan Ms. Mariana Baabar -Perspectives from Sri Lanka Dr. Jehan Perera
3:00 – 3:45 pm	Discussion	
3:45 – 4:00 pm	Coffee Break	
4:00 – 5:00 pm	Perspectives from the West Chair Prof Tore Bjorgo	-Perspectives from Europe Dr. Frank Biancheri Dr Laila Bokhari -Perspectives for Central America Dr. Amr Abdalla
5:00 – 6:00 pm	Discussion	
8:00 pm	Dinner Hosted by Institute for Peace Studies	

Alexandria Workshop 6-7th August 2006
Programme

7th August 2006		
9:00 – 10:00 am	Tour of Bibliotheca Alexandrina	
10.00 – 11.00 am	Round Table on similarities and differences between regions based on the previous days presentations Chair Amb. Aly Maher	
11:00 – 11:15 am	Break	
11:15 – 12:30 pm	Alternative Vision for the Arab World Chair H.E.Dr. Nadia Al Saeed	-Lessons from History Dr. Ismail Serageldin Young Arab Leaders and Public- Private Cooperation H.E. Dr. Nadia Al Saeed
12:30 – 1:10pm	Discussion	
1:30 – 2:30pm	Lunch	
2:30 – 3:30pm	International Cooperation for Deconstructing Terror Chair Amb. Rauf El Reedy	-Mr. Niccolo Rinaldi -Prof Tore Bjorgo -Mr. Sadi Cayci
3.30-4.40 p.m	Discussion	
4:30 – 5:30pm	Conclusion Chair Mr. Sundeep Waslekar	Amb Aly Maher

List of Participants:

1. Ambassador Ambassador Abdel Rauf El Reedy, President, Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs, Egypt
2. Ambassador Aly Maher, Director, SMWIPM Institute for Peace Studies
3. Prof. Amr Abdalla, San Jose, Professor and Dean for Academic Programmes, University for Peace, Costa Rica
4. Dr Daa Rashwan, Cairo, Research Scholar at Al Ahram Centre for Political and Strategic Studies, Egypt
5. Dr Franck Biancheri, Research Director, Global Europe 2020, France
6. Ambassador Hesham Youssef, Chief of Staff of the Secretary General, League of Arab States, Egypt
7. Ms Ilmas Futehally, Vice President, Strategic Foresight Group, India
8. Dr Ismail Serageldin, Director, Bibliotheca Alexandrina, Co-chair
9. Mr Jehan Perera, Director, National Peace Council, Sri Lanka
10. Ms. Laila Bokhari, Research Scholar, Norwegian Defence Research Establishment (FFI), Norway
11. Ms Mariana Baabar, Diplomatic Editor, The News International, Pakistan
12. Dr Mohamed Kadry Said, Military Adviser, Al Ahram Centre for Political and Strategic Studies, Egypt
13. H.E. Dr. Nadia Al Saeed, President of Dead Sea Institute and former Minister for Information Technology of Jordan, Jordan
14. Mr. Niccolo Rinaldi, Brussels-Belgium, Deputy Secretary General of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats in the European Parliament
15. Mr. Sadi Cayci, Legal Adviser at Centre for Eurasian Strategic Studies, Turkey
16. Ambassador Sastrohandoyo Wiryono, Senior Adviser at Centre for Strategic and International Studies and former chief negotiator for Aceh, Indonesia
17. Dr. Sedat Laciner, Director of International Strategic Research Organisation, Turkey
18. Mr Sundeep Waslekar, President, Strategic Foresight Group, Co-chair
19. Dr. Tore Bjørge, Research Director, Norwegian Police University College, Norway

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Long term research projects and scenario building exercises to map the future of global issues or of specific regions, countries or sectors. Policy change and parallel diplomacy initiatives to resolve intractable problems within and between countries.

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