"New Terrorism": New Challenges, Old Dilemmas

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*T*he attack of September 11, 2001 restored terrorism to the top of the agenda of governments and international forums and led to deployment changes in defensive security services around the world. It also renewed interest in the varying origins, expressions, and implications of the terrorism threat, sparking yet another wave of critical thinking about concepts relating to terrorism and different ways of contending with it. In general, the current wave of thinking argues that several aspects of terrorism have undergone a fundamental change, manifested in a readiness to exceed "known" – albeit not necessarily tolerated – limits of provocation, killing, and destruction. This change was dubbed "new terrorism" towards the end of the 1990s, suggesting that the threat posed by current terrorism is different from the threat posed by terrorism in the past, and that it is in fact much more serious.

The widespread attention given to certain acts of terrorism deemed expressions of a threat with "upgraded characteristics" provides us with a good opportunity to examine continuity and change in terrorism and the ways of coping with

it. The attack of September 11 triggered an immediate, massive response as well as strenuous efforts aimed at preempting attacks in the long term. Overall, the intensity and scope of the response matched the intensity of the attack and the power of the injured country. However, this in itself is nothing new, as anti-terrorism policy has always reflected the perceived threat and the injured country's ability to strike back. It cannot therefore be concluded, based on developments in the war on terror that resulted from the September 2001 attack, that the response threshold for *all* terrorist attacks has been lowered – that is, in all locations, and regardless of the scope of the attack, the identity of the attackers, and the identity of the injured party.

Thus, despite qualitative changes occurring in certain manifestations of terrorism, which lend the threat a new character (hence, "new terrorism"), and even though the response to the September 2001 attack involved an exceptional degree of force, causing qualitative changes in how terrorism is confronted, there has been no fundamental difference in the dilemmas that dictate the range and nature of response. In some respects

what appears is a new kind of terrorism, posing new challenges. However, the response remains as it was – subject to constraints of context and competing interests, and dictated by the unique circumstances of each particular case.

Is It Really "New Terrorism"?

Aside from the scope of destruction and number of casualties, the September 11, 2001 attack had no inherent new components. Attacks on American targets by Muslim extremists were not a new phenomenon, and suicide tactics have been common to terrorism in various regions. The execution of a terrorist attack within the United States was also not a first. Still, the attack represented the evolution and union of characteristics that in some respects recast the phenomenon of terrorism and reflected a current trend of escalation.

The 1990s were relatively quiet in arenas where for many years terrorism had been a central factor in setting the political agenda. Prominent examples in Western Europe include Northern Ireland, Corsica, and Spain. Struggles within the context of the reestablishment and

stabilization of the states of the former Soviet Union and its allies – which resulted in a host of studies focusing on "ethno-nationalist" terrorism – waned, making way for rehabilitation efforts, albeit not without elements of violence (Chechnya is a notable example). Struggles threatening the stability of countries in South and Central America in the 1970s and 1980s, which had served as background for studies of various aspects of low-intensity warfare, also declined. At the same time, however, struggles steeped in terrorism dragged on and even intensified in other parts of the world, such as Central Asia, Africa, and the Middle East. In addition, the number of cases in which terrorists used or threatened to use non-conventional materials increased.

The threat of non-conventional weapons in terrorist organizations was attributed in part to looser controls on access to these types of weapons in "failed states," and the consequent possibility that such warfare materials might fall into the hands of terrorist elements. The resulting scenario previewed a possible tragedy of colossal proportions caused by the convergence of the two extremes in asymmetric warfare: terrorism as a strategy of struggle on the one hand, and mass destruction by non-conventional means on the other.[1] A complementary dimension to the change in terrorism was a greater readiness for escalation within a strategic framework designed to advance far-reaching and uncompromising political goals. Attempts to

classify and adjust calculations regarding the possibilities of preparation and deployment against trends of escalation – though not necessarily the willingness to use weapons of mass destruction – were compiled in a book published by the RAND Corporation entitled *Countering the New Terrorism*.[2] Walter Laqueur described develop-ments in the nature of terrorism over the years as a transition into a post-modern

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phase, applying the term "new terrorism" in order to refer to the heightened inclination of fanatical elements to use weapons of mass destruction.[3] Thus, terrorism, like many other subjects, was the subject of a wave of new thinking that emerged at the turn of the millennium due in part to changes in the balance of power and the world order, and due to new manifestation of terrorist activity. September 2001 was not the first time that these changes were identified.

Examining "new terrorism" is problematic, if only due to the fact that there is no consensus regarding the

essence of "old terrorism" and its complex of meanings and significances. Terrorism is not a monolithic phenomenon. Rather, it is a form of struggle typified by common strategic and tactical characteristics, yet which are manifested in a variety of political, cultural, and social contexts. In addition to their respective backgrounds, terrorist organizations could always be differentiated from one another according to the nature of their targets and their operational ability, and consequently according to the degree of threat they posed to their environment. The complexity of the phenomenon of terrorism is echoed by the equal complexity of different approaches towards dealing with terrorism, within and between targeted societies and targeted countries. Thus, just as "old terrorism" was not a one dimensional phenomenon with one meaning, "new terrorism" is also not unequivocal in its significance. This discussion will circumvent this obstacle by examining the characteristics usually addressed in discussions of "new terrorism," as well as by attempting to identify the differences between the primary traits of "new terrorism" and those of "old terrorism."

What Makes it "New"?

And so, what *is* new? As mentioned above, there is a growing tendency to characterize "new terrorism" on the basis of cases in which terrorist organizations have used non-conventional warfare materials as well as cases of potential access to

such materials. Obviously, access plays a major role in the potential execution of an attack. On the other hand, if the intention does not exist, then access is not an issue. Thus, efforts have focused on locating the sources and components of the threat by identifying terrorist organizations and cells whose strategy calls for, or may call for, operations inflicting mass casualties and mass destruction. This is where Islamic extremist terrorism comes into the picture. And indeed, for the past twenty years, Islamic extremist terrorists have persistently and systematically acquired for themselves a central location on the map of world terrorism.

Interest in the escalation of Islamic terrorism in general and the consolidation of al-Qaeda's modes of operation in particular emerged during the 1990s.[4] The strategic targets, organizational and structural principles, and methods of operation characteristic of the extreme fringes of Islamic terrorism diverge from the characteristics predominant among other terrorist organizations, and are what caused Islamic terrorism to be perceived as a particularly serious threat in international terrorism. Given the prevalent feeling that what is discussed is indeed a phenomenon with significantly "new" traits, extremist Islamic terrorism has earned the term "new terrorism," notwithstanding the difficulty of drawing a clear distinction between "old" and "new."

Conflict Manifestation: Extremist Islamic terrorism acts to place its own issues on the international agenda by provocation aimed at intensifying the conflict between the Muslim world and leading Western or pro-Western governments. True, the principle of terrorism as provocation is not new: it was formulated explicitly in Russia at the end of the nineteenth century, was adopted and developed by activists of the extreme left in South America in the 1960s, and has guided the struggle of leftist extremist cells

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in Western Europe and other places throughout the world. However, the extreme version of Islamic terrorism is distinct from other manifestations of terrorist struggle not by the principle of violence as an expression of protest and a means of bringing about political change, but rather by what is seen as a complete lack of proportion between the distress, anger, and frustration represented on the one hand, and the violent expression of that protest on the other hand. Moreover, while the violence experienced by many communities in regions classified as "failed" can also be seen as disproportionate to the underlying distress, the disproportion between historic and present injustices and the responses to them, as expressed in extremist Islamic activity, is unique in that the struggle directly targets parties of influence within the arena of international rules and norms. More precisely, concern over the escalation of international Islamic terrorism is specifically related to the fact that Western targets (first and foremost American targets) have been preferred targets of terrorist attacks, along with regimes in the Arab world that are to some degree strategically associated with the West in general, and willing to co-exist with the State of Israel in particular.

Strategic Objectives: Escalation is first and foremost related to the struggle's objectives, which are formulated in such a way as to preclude the possibility of dialogue between the Muslim world and its adversaries. In contrast to many other organizations, the strategy guiding extremist Islamic organizations does not include objectives that, if advanced, might help mitigate the struggle. Attacks are meant as steps towards a total confrontation. This conception of the struggle explains the willingness to cross the lines of attack intensity to which the world had been exposed, perhaps had even grown accustomed to, prior to September 2001. Suicide attacks serve this message of an uncompromising struggle only too well. It is this element of far-reaching strategic objectives that explains the willingness of Islamic extremist terrorist organizations to pay the

immediate price of any response to showcase attacks.

Tactical Objectives: The fear of costly reprisal operations apparently does not restrain or circumscribe this brand of extremist Islamic terrorism. It is hard to imagine that the architects of the September 2001 attack and of previous showcase attacks (for example, the August 1998 attacks on two American embassies in Africa) did not consider the possibility of a response that would damage the organization's infrastructure. However, if the aim of the attack is to provoke a response and intensify the conflict that constitutes the struggle's background, then the response itself represents a success. The price paid by the organization does not detract from the value of the provocation. Thus, in the case of the September 2001 attack, al-Qaeda scored a double success. While the massive response of attacking Afghanistan and toppling the Taliban regime disrupted (but did not completely destroy) the organization's operational capacity, the attack and the response sharpened the already existing tension between fundamentalist Islam and the cultural and political values of the West. Attacking Afghanistan also sparked a severe debate between the Western allies regarding the nature and scope of their response to terrorism, and revealed the limitations of American influence and power.

Organizational Features: It has been shown that organizations frequently avoid provocation at any cost. Changes in modes of operation, especially those that involve moderation, are dictated by the need to protect operational infrastructures and bases of popular support, and to sustain a positive public image of the struggle. Considerations such as these help explain intervals of quiet interspersed in the violent activities of various Palestinian organizations. Similarly, periods marked by a decline in intensity of the struggle can be found in the history of organizations adhering to the same ideological

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platform as al-Qaeda. These include Hizbollah, which reduced its military operations after the IDF withdrawal from southern Lebanon in May 2000; Hamas and Palestinian members of Islamic Jihad, which in late June 2003 accepted the Palestinian Authority's calls for a *hudna* (ceasefire); and Egyptian elements of Islamic Jihad, which moderated their struggle beginning in the mid-1990s, due to decisive action taken by the Egyptian regime.

In contrast, extremist Islamic cells of al-Qaeda and similar organizations that operate on the international front are free of such exigencies that dictate caution to organizations dependent on a defined territorial base and a foundation of popular support. The willingness of Islamic terrorist organizations to cross the lines in their showcase attacks reflects not only their intention of escalating the conflict, but also an awareness of the difficulty of striking at the infrastructure of an organization that has minimal dependence on a defined territory. This organizational characteristic echoes the absence of a direct connection with a given population. For these reasons, such organizations are exempt from the moderating consideration of the welfare of a given community.

In addition, the organizational borders of cells are flexible and characterized by a lack of a strict chain of command. Thus, the absence of standard organizational principles, such as ties to a physical location and population base and a structured, established hierarchy, has enabled operations based on local initiative that make maximum use of communications technology and freedom of movement – of operatives, warfare materials, and funds – between countries and continents. All of these factors increase the advantage of the element of surprise consistently enjoyed by the terrorists.

Relative Autonomy: Al-Qaeda and like-minded organizations are largely free of externally imposed constraints, due to the fact that their operations are not dependent on the policies of specific governments. While infrastructure is necessarily located in one state or another

(occasionally a state which, even if it does not actively support the organization, will not act against it in full force or at all), an independent financial basis endows al-Qaeda leadership and activists with operational independence and freedom from the considerations that usually constrain governments and, in turn, organizations that they support and control. This independence weakens and in some instances even makes superfluous the familiar relationship between terrorism and sponsoring states. State sponsorship of terrorism has enabled injured states to blame the supporting state and take disciplinary actions against it, even if the placement of blame has not always been translated into direct punishment in general, or military punishment in particular. However, in the case of al-Qaeda, for instance, the ability to take economic or military action against a supporting state is markedly reduced, as is the ability to curtail significantly the capabilities of cells.

Exhibitionism and Escalation are also relative terms. The world has known waves of powerful terrorist attacks with mass casualties in the past. They have included attacks on states that have a wide range of reprisal options and a proven willingness to respond, such as the United States and Israel, and they also resulted in the heightened deliberation of the challenges posed by "terrorism," albeit not "new terrorism." However, the organiza-tional and operational characteristics of the extremist version of Islamic terrorism

that have crystallized over the past two decades substantiate the premise that a distinctive change has in fact taken place, as reflected in the attack of September 2001. In addition, for decades the United States has constituted a preferred target for attacks in various parts of the world launched in the name of a variety of ideologies. It should be recalled that the same ideological platform led to the attack on the US Marines base in

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Beirut in October 1983, the attack on the World Trade Center in February 1993, and the attack of September 2001. Still, the showiness of the September 2001 attack, in addition to demonstrating sophisticated planning and operational abilities, crossed a line, with the forecasted and catastrophic convergence of terrorism and mass destruction, even without the use of non-conventional materials.

The term "new terrorism" is therefore largely linked to distinctive characteristics shared by the extremist fringes of terrorist elements, especially those belonging to militant Islam. These characteristics include: a

wide geographical dispersal of infrastructure for attacks, which facilitates a borderless range of operation; ill-defined organizational boundaries; a loose chain of command; minimal commitment to the welfare of a specific community; and no need for a primary sponsoring state. Along with the uncompromising definition of targets and their translation into a strategy of showcase operations in the spirit of strict religious principles, all of these factors explain the continuing escalation by cells and organizations belonging to this framework. This escalation is the heart of the issue referred to, generally, when discussing "new terrorism."

Nonetheless, the picture presented here does not encompass all contemporary terrorist activity. The trend towards escalation visible in the operational deployment and activities of extremist Islamic cells does not necessarily reflect a trend among elements involved in terrorism in other parts of the world. Islamic terrorism is not the only current threat. There are other extremist elements around the world completely devoid of contact with a population and lacking political objectives that might form a basis for negotiation, such as the Japanese Aum Shimrikyo ("Supreme Truth"). While al-Qaeda can serve as a source of inspiration for such groups, their operations are limited (though by no means rendered meaningless) by limited resources and determined efforts of governments to thwart their plans, including the monitoring of materials that can be used for

weapons of mass destruction, which was intensified around the world after September 2001. Many other conflicts in the world are waged in a manner that does not correspond to the organizational structure and trend of escalation that distinguish "new terrorism," and most of them are not waged in areas that rank high on the Western public agenda. Since these struggles do not enjoy comprehensive media coverage, al-Qaeda and similar groups dominate the arena of terrorism in terms of public awareness and scope of response. Moreover, many of the terrorist organizations engaged in their respective battles rely on the support of or the ability to control a specific population. Therefore, it is possible that undermining this basis of support and source of legitimacy (for example, as a result of a political or economic solution offered by the attacked regime, combined with military counteraction) can considerably weaken them.

It should also be noted that among the terrorist organizations that do not have the same structure, modes of operation, or history of escalation as al-Qaeda are some Islamic organizations operating in Islamic countries. Under current political conditions, they would rather not expose themselves to the type of risks and dangers that a mass casualty showcase attack incurs. A move towards extremism among these groups is possible in order to counter a tendency to moderation and restraint, as has happened in the past. For example, the founders of the

Palestinian Islamic Jihad split from the Muslim Brotherhood in the Gaza Strip (later to become Hamas), arguing that the Brotherhood leadership was not militant enough. However, in light of ruling regimes' close supervision of Islamic organizations in the Middle East and in Asia, it is difficult to believe that such a development could become a widespread trend.

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The trends and characteristics for which the term "new terrorism" was coined are neither homogenous nor absolute. Islamic terrorism itself is not one dimensional and does not constitute quintessential terrorism around the globe. Rather, it is an extreme version of a phenomenon with many facets, also dependent on the international climate and various immediate exigencies. Even in this era of escalation, linked both to the nonconventional threat and to Islamic fanaticism, the "classic" characteristics of terrorism have remained intact. The "new" characteristics of terrorism have complemented rather than replaced the "old" ones.

Dilemmas of Response

The September 2001 attack evoked an exceptional response, due to the shock it caused and the future threat that it implied. It is no accident that such an unprecedented attack resulted in a demonstration of military might and sparked a broad international effort aimed at improving capabilities of defense and contending with terrorism in the long term. However, while this terrorist attack reflected a trend towards escalation, combining familiar characteristics and newly formed elements of terrorism, the extended response, despite its force and its multi-faceted nature, has reflected an adherence to a familiar repertoire. This assessment is based on an analysis of steps taken as part of the war on terrorism during the two years since September 2001. Examination of these measures indicates that no fundamental changes have taken place in the interplay of goals, dilemmas, and constraints that serve as the basis for deciding on responses.

The Afghanistan campaign that followed the September 2001 attack was not the first case of a massive military response to a terrorist attack, which disregarded the sovereignty of another state in order to weaken a terrorist infrastructure, punish a terror-supporting regime, and convey a message of deterrence. The war also did not reflect the institutionalization of the military option as an automatic response to terrorist attacks in general and to "new terror" in particular. The determination that the American administration displayed towards the

Afghanistan campaign elicited impressive international support, and even when unconditional support was not forthcoming, the US was spared outright condemnation. Significantly, though, in most cases support was conditional. This was an indication of the intentions of governments, as in the past, to retain independence in choosing the arena for anti-terrorism action and the range and timing of operations. It was also intended to forestall the interpretation that their support was in fact giving the United States, or any other country, carte blanche for responding to terrorism with a massive military response.

Overall, considerations that constrain responses to terrorism (including a fear of criticism or sanctions, which may be expected if limitations on the struggle are ignored) decrease in importance when the direct internal threat to the stability and status of a government increases. But the situation is different and will remain different in cases of external threat. Advocacy of military action against terrorist organizations and governments that support them will continue to be challenged by competing considerations – such as fear of entanglement in a prolonged campaign, or concern that a campaign will impact on inter-state relations or strategic and economic relations with terror-sponsoring states. In addition, states will find it difficult to mobilize support for a military effort that is presented as an operation against terrorism if it appears that the operation will serve as a means of advancing any interests aside from pure defense against an explicit threat. Thus, the sweeping international criticism of Israel's war against Palestinian terrorism reflects an assumption that, in addition to fighting terrorism, Israel is attempting to secure its continued control of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Similarly, the American administration failed to convince the interna-

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tional community that the war in Iraq should be seen as part of a comprehensive campaign against terrorism.

Differences in states' interpretations of the need to defend themselves from terrorism reflect not only divergent views on the type and range of potential responses, but also the gamut of policies towards the varied sources of terror. For example, the American administration, even against the background of the war in Afghanistan, expressed reservations regarding the sweeping manner in which some governments interpreted its policy and seemingly adopted it. Israel's use of force against the Palestinian Authority, India's response in its battle against Kashmir rebels, and Russia's policy in Chechnya all evoked the disapproval of the United States, stemming from a concern that an escalation in fighting terrorism might hinder the possibility of easing confrontations and might give rise to an escalation in terrorism, as well as to developments that are no less (and possibly even more) threatening than terrorism itself. Israel's decisive battle against Palestinian terrorism was considered a hindrance to the mobilization of Arab support for the emerging campaign against Iraq. War between India and Pakistan has been and remains a threat that overshadows the threat of terrorism and the urgency of addressing it. Escalation of the conflict in Chechnya has been regarded as a factor that will make it difficult to prevent the war on Islamic terrorism in Afghanistan from being perceived as just one expression of an overall war between the West and the Muslim world. Equally blatant is the attempt of the American administration itself to persist in trying to sever the ties between the Syrian government and terrorist organizations through diplomatic means. Finally, there is no better illustration that responses are determined per individual circumstances and that the military option is no default mechanism independent of various constraints than the fact that the United States has refrained from attacking Iran, a country that consistently tops the State Department's annual list of terror-sponsoring states.

The need to address terrorism by taking background and circumstances into consideration constitutes a guiding principle of both American and European policy. In the Israeli-Palestinian context, the American administration has attempted to promote the roadmap in order to prevent Palestinian terrorism from hindering efforts to stabilize the Middle East and in hopes of lessening the conflict and minimizing its contribution to Islamic militancy. This policy reflects an awareness of the need to address terrorism by treating its background conditions, as well as the elements nurturing its support on the domestic level and from outside. In similar vein, European Union governments demonstrated their preference for a defensive approach rather than any sweeping support for a militant approach to fighting terrorism. Significant constitutional and organizational steps have been taken within the European Union to improve its capability of joint defense, although difficulties have arisen in setting up principles of systematic and uniform action. One of the prominent achievements of the multi-national effort to develop an effective policy against terrorism that emerged after September 2001 was an operative definition of terrorism, agreed upon by the states of the European Union, which centered on a detailed description of the violent tactics characteristic of terrorism. However, attempts to translate this definition into a list that could serve as the basis for coordinated action against terrorist organizations encountered

difficulties, reflecting the fact that subversive struggles are not carried out through violence alone, but through social and educational activity as well. This problem was illustrated by protracted dis-agreement regarding how to handle the civilian branches of Hizbollah and Hamas.

These examples are not unusual. In general, they reflect a familiar inability to formulate a binding

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definition of a phenomenon that has many faces and occurs in a variety of contexts – in other words, a definition that is acceptable to the many parties that examine it from differing and often opposing angles. These examples also illustrate the way that attitudes towards terrorism differ according to the level of threat it poses and whether the source is domestic or external. Some governments of Western Europe, including those who deliberated the legal status of the civilian branches of Hamas and Hizbollah, have not hesitated in the past to declare as illegal non-military branches of (or fronts for) militant

organizations, for example, the I.R.A. or E.T.A.

A major obstacle to the goal of decreasing the terrorist threat by dealing with its root stems from the unwillingness of extremists among those leading the Islamic struggle – those whose organizational character-istics and modes of operation serve as the basis for defining their activities as "new terrorism" – to allow political and economic compromise attempts to obstruct their drive towards direct confrontation, aimed at changing world order. On the other hand, the chances of lessening the threat through military means have decreased as well, due to these cells' organizational characteristics, relative independence, and wide geographical dispersal. The practicality of a military option is also limited, due to the restraint dictated by constant concern that an all-out confrontation may increase the support for the organization coming under attack and intensify the motivation to enroll in its ranks.

The many considerations pre-venting a sweeping implementa-tion of the military option, along with the limited ability, at least in the near future, to undermine the terrorist threat through compromise and remedying past injustices explain why the war on terror has thus far focused on attempting to foil attacks. Despite the shock it caused and the trend of escalation it reflected, the attack of September 2001 did not change the essential matrix of considerations and did not remove the constraints on the use of force that

have recurred time and time again in the current war on terror. The price in human life and human rights, inevitable in undertaking a comprehensive war on terrorism, is an important consideration, if only out of concern for the criticism that results when these aspects are disregarded. After all, the answer to the question of how many people it is justifiable to harm in order to save other lives is significant in political as well as in philosophical terms. Thus, since September 11, 2001, governments and many international forums increased their efforts to institutionalize the war on terrorism within a supportive framework stressing intelligence and prevention, and based on co-ordination and joining forces. These steps were aimed at obviating a situation in which terrorism dictates the national and international agenda, and also at preventing a scenario in which states will be able to regard themselves as free to or forced to use a military option, despite the dangers and heavy costs involved.

Without detracting from their cumulative significance or effectiveness, these measures became part of a long though not continuous list of steps aimed at providing a systematic, coordinated answer to the challenge of terrorism. As has been the case in previous periods that were marked by an international interest in terrorism, governments declared their intentions of taking decisive action, formulated decisions, updated existing agreements, and organized agencies and institutions aimed at improving their capability of preventing attacks

and at facilitating coordination among the entities involved in the war on terrorism. This time, too, there were disagreements within and between states, and among different departments and agencies regarding possible modes of operation, the necessary range of operations, and their expected effectiveness.

More than anything else, the efforts invested in preparations for preventing attacks and decreasing the

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terrorist threat showed that the threat of "new terrorism," with all its proven power, did not fundamentally change the nature of the framework of constraints and possibilities according to which responses are designed in unique and immediate contexts. These constraints and exigencies do not pertain only to the nature and scope of the perceived threat, but also to the capabilities and concomitant limits on freedom of military and political action among those who attempt or are required to find a response to the threat.

Conclusion

Terrorism will continue to constitute a major dilemma on the international agenda, whether it is perpetrated by Islamic extremists or by someone else; whether it is carried out using conventional means or non-conventional means; and whether the newest tragedy is similar to the one that preceded it, or worse. Moreover, the threat remains, regardless of whether the percentage of mass casualty attacks out of all terrorist activities around the world increases or not. Evidence that has accumulated over the past two years indicates that excessive provocation is likely to alter the relative weight of the different factors involved in decisions regarding the nature and intensity of a response, and, in certain instances, may unleash restraints on the response. If attacks similar to the September 2001 attack occur more frequently, it is fairly certain that there will be a greater frequency of harsh responses as well as accelerated efforts to develop uniform standards for prevention and punishment. Still, it appears that the changes in certain elements of terrorism over the past few years have not fundamentally changed the nature of the threat or the essence of the dilemmas involved in formulating a response.

These dilemmas require coping with different manifestations of the terrorist challenge according to the unique circumstances of each case. Such circumstances include the identity of the terrorist organization and its aims, the intensity and nature of the attack, and the political status

and military capabilities of the injured country. The current global order and balance of power facilitates and possibly dictates a differential response to various threats, such as threats resulting from countries' development of non-conventional weapons. This differentiation finds expression in part in the definition of some situations as threats, while other situations are accepted with a de facto stamp of approval. Similarly, the differential rather than blanket response to terrorism, be it terrorism characterized by "old" traits or terrorism characterized by "new" traits, will continue to guide states' responses to the threat of terrorism that confronts them.

Notes

1. Richard A. Falkenrath et al., *America's Achilles' Heel: Nuclear, Biological, and Chemical Terrorism and Covert Attack*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1998; Sidney D. Drell et al., *The New Terror: Facing the Threat of Biological and Chemical Weapons*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999.

2. Ian O. Lesser et al., *Countering the New Terrorism*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 1999.

3. Walter Laqueur, *The New Terrorism: Fanaticism and the Arms of Mass Destruction*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999.

4. See, for example, Ehud Yaari, "The Afghans are Coming," *The Jerusalem Report*, July 2, 1992, pp. 30-31; Anat Kurz,. "Middle Eastern Terrorism in the International Arena," *Strategic Assessment* 1, no. 4 (1999): 10-12; Yoarm Schweitzer, "Middle East Terrorism: The 'Afghanistan Alumni,'" in Shlomo Brom and Yiftah Shapir (eds.), *The Middle East Military Balance 1999-2000*, (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press with the Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies, 2000), pp. 121-33.