Module 5: Types of Terrorism: State-Sponsored and Nationalist Terrorism

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Module’s Key Topics

- Introduction to State-Sponsored and Nationalist Terrorism (slides 2 - 8)
- Modern Terrorist States (slides 9 - 14)
- State-Sponsored Terrorism (slides 15 - 20)
- Nationalist Terrorism (slides 21 - 30)
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Introduction

- Formal governments around the world have been known to use violence and fear tactics to control the populations within their borders. According to Jeremy Spindlove, "State terrorism, whether it is internal (against its own people or dissenters) or external (using or funding outside terrorist groups or individuals), offers a real threat to international stability and security. Internal terrorism can often inspire the formation of resistance movements, which then may resort to revolutionary or terror tactics. This cycle of terror and violence can result in a whirlwind that can suck in all sanity within its reach- innocent or guilty. Exportation of the support for external terror, sponsored by rogue states, has resulted in a proliferation of terrorist attacks worldwide. Even nations whose official policy specifically rejects the use of terror have been guilty of providing financial and operational aid, often clandestinely, to those who would promote and perform their terrorism."¹

- As an example, the government in Pakistan and its spy branch, Inter-Service Intelligence (ISI), have been accused of providing support to the Taliban, though they are also supporting NATO efforts in Afghanistan. According to a report from the London School of Economics, "Links between the Taliban and Pakistan’s intelligence service have long been suspected, but the report’s author – Harvard analyst Matt Waldman – says there is real evidence of extensive co-operation between the two. ‘This goes far beyond just limited, or occasional support,’ he said. ‘This is very significant levels of support being provided by the ISI.’"²

- In this module we will examine types of terrorism that are directed against formal governments. We will also cover numerous examples where a government is directly involved in carrying out terrorist acts against its own people. Finally, we will look at examples where states sponsor terrorists to conduct aggressive operations against their enemies.


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Definitions

- According to Gus Martin, “It is important to understand conceptually that political violence by the state is the most organized, and potentially the most far-reaching, application of terrorist violence. Because of the many resources available to the state, its ability to commit acts of violence far exceeds in scale the kind of violence perpetrated by antistate dissident terrorists.”

- It is important to distinguish between the terms "state terrorism", "state-sponsored terrorism" and "nationalist terrorism" as the definitions and distinctions can be quite controversial:

State Terrorism

- State terrorism, or terrorism "from above", "is more than repression, suppression, and human rights violations. It involves sponsored or unsponsored Black operations combined with Psychological Warfare where reactionary governments, their militaries, militias, intelligence services, or police forces engage in acts ranging from political and mass murder to torture and crimes against humanity."

- State terrorism usually refers to a situation in which a nation kills its own citizens. State terrorism is generally committed in secret, whereas non-state terrorist groups actively seek global attention.

State-Sponsored Terrorism

- State-sponsored terrorism, "also called warfare by proxy, "puppet" or nuisance terrorism, occurs when a patron state provides political, economic, or military support to a group of people or organization in a host nation to achieve strategic or hegemonic ends by perpetrating aggressive terrorism on the patron's behalf. It implies governments or "legitimate" authorities and their use of terror tactics against enemies as an instrument of both domestic and foreign policy, always to promote state interests. The term conventionally refers to a situation in which a nation backs armed militias and guerrilla movements with the intent of helping them seize control of or destabilize the nation.

- For example, Iran, besides sponsoring insurgent acts in Iraq, has ongoing association with and provides support to Hezbollah, Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad and al Qaeda. Hezbollah is a Lebanon-based terrorist organization formed in 1982 by the Iranian Revolutionary Guards Corps and is closely allied to the Syrian Ba'ath Party regime. With Iran and Syrian support, this organization was responsible for the 1983 bombing of the U.S. Marine Corps barracks in Beirut, the 1982 Israeli embassy bombing in Argentina, the bombing of the Jewish Cultural Center in Buenos Aires and the 1996 Khobar Towers bombing in Saudi Arabia. Hamas, based in the Palestinian territories, is also sponsored by Iran, and its terror wing the Izz al Din al Qassam Brigades are involved in suicide attacks against Israeli targets. Hamas was formed in 1987 and since 2000 has conducted over 425 attacks, with 377 killed and 2,070 injured. Hamas is also responsible for the 2002 suicide bomb attack in Natanya which killed 23 people.

Nationalist Terrorism

- Nationalist terrorism is mostly "traditional" terrorism (also called revolutionary or ideological terrorism), but it is also a large category of terrorism with many subtypes. For the most part, it is practiced by individuals belonging to an identifiable organization with a well-defined command-and-control structure, clear political, social or economic objectives, and a comprehensible ideology or self-interest (Hoffman 1999). Nationalist terrorism is a movement that emerged in consequence of colonial rule and it is described as a form of terrorism through which nationalistic participants attempt to form an independent state against what they consider to be an occupying, imperial, or otherwise illegitimate state.

3. Ibid.
State Terrorism or “Terror from Above”

- One of the first obvious manifestations of state terror originated with the French revolutionary state’s “reign of terror” instituted in 1793, after the popular overthrow of the monarchy. In order to preserve post-revolution order, the new government instituted dictatorial measures, suspending most civil liberties and executing those disloyal to the new Republic. Under the leadership of Maximilien Robespierre, an estimated 500,000 “enemies of the state” were arrested, 40,000 were executed, 200,000 were deported, and another 200,000 died in prison from starvation and torture. It was a period of brutal repression of perceived enemies within the country.

- The history of the modern state is tied up with the history of the premeditated use of terror tactics through political repression and war. State terrorism as a domestic policy or “internal terrorism” is practiced by a state against its own people or domestic enemies, and has led to the most dramatic violations of human rights.

- If we consider the definition of terrorism as the use of large-scale violence on a population, we can trace back the origins of state terrorism to the history of colonization, slavery, empire and genocide. States will revert to terror tactics against their own population or other nations when they sense that the interests of the elite are threatened.

- State terrorism constitutes a premeditated, patterned and instrumental form of state violence designed to instill fear. It is a system in which a government will legitimize its authority through intimidation and force of arms.

State Terrorism or “Terror from Above” (Cont’d)

- Internal terrorism occurs when a government terrorizes its own population to demonstrate the supreme power of the government, and to intimidate or eliminate all opposition. The terror actions usually become the acknowledged policy of the government, and make use of official institutions such as the judiciary, police, military, and other government agencies. Changes to legal codes permit or encourage torture, killing, or property destruction in pursuit of government policy.

- The state’s military, law enforcement and other security institutions sometimes receive assistance from unofficial paramilitaries and death squads to carry out the terrorist actions.

- Large-scale killing and torture are practices usually implemented by states, not individual terrorist organizations. These acts are transparent because states are the ones defining terrorism and identifying terrorists, meanwhile exempting themselves as they engage in “counter-terrorism”. A terrorist state creates a situation of mass disorientation and inescapable anxiety.
State terrorists usually subscribe to an ideology of plutocracy—a system of rule by and for the rich and it is almost always ultra right-wing terrorism. It has often been carried out by very charismatic leaders who become dictators. State terrorism has often followed revolutionary periods, thus legitimizing the actions as the “right of a state to protect itself from revolutionary violence”.

Control of the mass media and suppression of dissent are common trademarks of state terrorism. It is also common for mainstream media to follow the official lead to the extent that it will cover up information and withhold facts.

The use of murder, slavery, terror, arrest, deportation of “subversives”, incarceration without trial, and torture of the population, which all constitute instruments of subjugation, intimidation, interrogation and humiliation, taints the history of almost every modern nation.

According to a report carried out by Amnesty International in 1996, out of 150 countries surveyed, 82 had participated in torture.

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Internal State Terrorism

There are three levels in the scale of violence relating to internal state terrorism:

- **Intimidation**: the government tries to anticipate, discourage and repress opposition and dissent, notably through the use of propaganda.

- **Coerced conversion**: government efforts to create a complete change in a national lifestyle (i.e., the Iranian revolution in 1979).

- **Genocide**: the deliberate extermination of an entire class, or of an entire ethnic or religious group for ideological reasons. State-sponsored genocidal violence targets both enemy combatants and enemy civilians. Genocide goes back to Nero, or the Jacobins during the French Revolution, and later on Nazi Germany (1933-1945), Stalin’s Soviet Union, Rwanda in the mid-1990s, Argentina, Cambodia and the Khmer Rouge. Dictators have found it easier to commit terrorism without world censure than have individuals.¹


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Internal State Terrorism (Cont’d)

According to Gus Martin, state participation in domestic terrorism implies several types of support, which range in intensity from relatively passive encouragement of political violence to unrestrained genocidal violence, including:

- **Vigilante domestic state terrorism**: A form of terrorism where members of governmental security forces unofficially participate in and provide support for the repression of undesirables. Its overall goal is to violently preserve the preferred order. Suppression campaigns usually occur when the state perceives that it is threatened. Nongovernmental vigilantes organize themselves into paramilitaries and operate as death squads.

- **Overt official state terrorism**: The visible application of state-sponsored political violence. This type of terrorism has been practiced in totalitarian societies (e.g., Stalinist Russia, Nazi Germany, Khmer Rouge Cambodia and Taliban Afghanistan). The state openly deploys its security forces to violently assert its authority and it provides support for progovernment political violence.
Covert official state terrorism: The state clandestinely uses its security forces to violently assert its authority and provide support for progovernment political violence. The term refers to the secretive application of state-sponsored political violence. This form of terrorism has been practiced in countries with extensive secret police services (i.e., Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi’s Iran, President Hafez el-Assad’s Syria, General Augusto Pinochet’s Chile and Argentina during the Dirty War.)

Genocidal state terrorism: The state’s resources are deployed to eliminate or culturally suppress an entire population, religious group or other demographic group. The scale of violence during campaigns of state-sponsored genocidal terrorism can be unlimited.  


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The Legitimacy of State Violence

One of the problems linked to state terrorism lies within the power of the state and the legitimacy of state violence. According to George Kren and Leon Rappoport, “There is no moral ethical limit which the state cannot transcend if it wishes to do so, because there is no moral-ethical power higher than the state. Moreover, it seems apparent that no modern state will ever seriously interfere with the internal activities of another solely for moral-ethical reasons.”

The Responsibility to Protect concept may change this. A product of Canadian diplomacy, the Responsibility to Protect concept was created by the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty convened by Lloyd Axworthy, former Canadian Foreign Minister under Jean Chrétien in 2000 and led by Mohammed Sahnoun of Algeria and Gareth Evans of Australia. It was endorsed at the United Nations in September 2005 by approximately 150 heads of state and government, as well as by 40 lesser representatives, and adopted in April 2006 by the UN Security Council. It was designed to protect populations from genocide, ethnic cleansing, war crimes and crimes against humanity wherever they may occur. For the first time, states agreed to a collective responsibility to act within the international community when governments fail to protect the most vulnerable. This agreement seeks to counter cases of genocide like those that took place in Somalia in 1993, Bosnia in 1995, Rwanda in 1994, and Kosovo in 1999 in which the international community did not intervene or intervened too late. However, the responsibility to protect is controversial as it naturally incurs the right to intervene or the “right of humanitarian intervention”. This has caused concern over "Western imperialism" and the appropriateness for states to take coercive military action against another state and intervene in the domestic affairs of a state for the purpose of protecting people while furthering their own interests. Controversy still clouds cases of interventions such as the U.S. intervention in Liberia in 1990, the Persian Gulf War, the U.S. intervention in Haiti in 1994, the UK intervention in Sierra Leone in 1997, and the U.S. intervention in East Timor in 1999. The Bush administration’s invasion of Iraq in 2003 aroused serious suspicions over humanitarian justifications for military interventions. In light of the controversy surrounding the alleged self-interest lying behind several contemporary interventions, the possibility of U.S. military intervention in Darfur remains a touchy subject.

The legitimacy of state violence is a constantly evolving issue. To claim that a state commits terrorism revolves around the issue of a state’s legitimate use of violence. Indeed, questions of importance include what constitutes an illegitimate regime and what types of violence and war are acceptable against an illegitimate regime? As Amy Zalman argues, "In the modern system of nation-states, it is agreed that sovereign states have the legitimate right to use violence in some contexts that individuals don’t. Governments can wage war, but sub-state actors cannot."  

Generally, the definition of state terrorism does not apply to states engaged in war if the actions of their armed forces are within the laws of war, which all nations are expected to follow. These laws of war include international agreements such as the United Nations Charter, the Geneva conventions and the Hague conventions which change over time. The Nuremberg Principles is another document that was created during the Nuremberg trials of Nazi party members as a series of guidelines for determining what constitutes a war crime under international humanitarian law.

In *The Criminology of Terrorism: History, Law, Definitions, Typologies* by Wu Ch’I, it is reported that: "One cannot
avoid long-standing debates, going back as far as Aristotle, over when it is politically and morally acceptable to use unconventional tactics such as violence and fear to bring about political and social change. History is replete with the ideas of great thinkers who believed that, under the right circumstances, unconventional tactics were not only smart, but a moral or civic duty. Religious leaders over the centuries have contributed thoughts about when unjust warfare is just, when "holy terror" is justified, and military thinkers have advocated less-than-honorable tactics.  

Governments have used terror with the excuse of countering terror. Indeed, as Paul Wilkinson suggests, "Historically, it is easy to show how violence perpetrated by autocratic and colonial regimes has almost invariably displayed a symbiotic relationship to the violence of resistance and insurgent movements. Several excellent scholarly studies of the struggle between French forces and the FLN in Algeria have underlined this lesson...It is quite apparent that the French government and higher military authorities in Algeria knowingly allowed lower-level officers in charge of interrogations to make extensive use of torture, not only to obtain information, but also to terrorize the Algerians and to make the costs of helping the FLN greater than the risks of refusing to do so. In this poisoned climate of terror and counter-terror, when torture was often used as a means of irrational vengeance against FLN atrocities, who would be bold enough to assert that the torturer was morally superior to the FLN bomb-planter in Algiers?"  


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**Modern Terrorist States**

Examples of modern terrorist states are, among others:

**Nazi Germany under Hitler’s authoritarian regime:**

- After assuming power, official Nazi policy was aimed at the deliberate destruction of "state enemies" and the resulting intimidation of the rest of the population.
- Hitler suspended civil rights, eliminated all non-Nazi media and banned all demonstrations.
- Hitler’s secret police, the Gestapo, was given full power to eliminate all “suspicious persons”, or to send anyone to concentration camps without trial or hope of appeal.
- As a result of Hitler’s twelve years of rule by terror, an estimated ten to twelve million people died.

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**Modern Terrorist States (Cont’d)**
Stalin’s totalitarianism:

- Joseph Stalin's "purges" of the 1930s are examples of using the machinery of the state to terrorize a population.

- The methods Stalin used included such actions as rigged show trials of opponents, punishing family or friends of suspected enemies of the regime, and extra-legal use of police or military forces against the population.

- Estimates suggest that between 40 to 50 million people were sent to Soviet jails or labor camps called gulags, with approximately 15 to 25 million deaths.

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Modern Terrorist States (Cont'd)

Saddam Hussein’s attack against the Kurdish population in Iraq in 1988:

- Saddam Hussein used chemical weapons on his own Kurdish population during a major battle in the Iran-Iraq war.

- The Kurdish incident, which killed approximately 7000 people, took place in the Kurdish city of Halabja, then held by Iranian troops and Iraqi Kurdish peshmarga guerrillas allied with Tehran.

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Modern Terrorist States (Cont'd)

The Khmer Rouge in Cambodia:
The Khmer Rouge regime lasted from 1975 to 1979 in Cambodia. It consisted of a succession of communist parties, and is remembered for the deaths of an estimated 1.7 million to 3 million people (from a population of 7.1 million) by execution, starvation and forced labor.

The regime carried out a radical program in an attempt to turn Cambodia into a classless society by depopulating cities and forcing the urban population into agricultural communes with the overall goal of turning Cambodians into "New People" through agricultural labor. The entire population was forced into farming in the labour camps.

During their four years in power, the Khmer Rouge overworked and starved the population, at the same time executing selected groups (including intellectuals) and killing many others for even minor violations of the rules.

The Khmer Rouge isolated the country from foreign influence, closed schools, hospitals and factories, abolished banking, finance and currency, outlawed all religions, confiscated all private property and relocated people from urban areas to collective farms where forced labor was widespread.

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**Modern State Terrorists (Cont'd)**

**The Bosnian war from 1992 to 1995:**

- The war in Bosnia and Herzegovina was a consequence of events that led to the dissolution of Yugoslavia, involving several ethnically defined factions within Bosnia and Herzegovina, namely Bosniaks, Serbs and Croats, as well as a smaller faction in Western Bosnia led by Fikret Abidic.

- A trial at the International Court of Justice began following a suit by Bosnia and Herzegovina against Serbia for genocide and the "ethnic cleansing" of Bosniaks under President Slobodan Miloševic. He was found dead in his cell at the Hague on March 11, 2006 and his trial for war crimes and crimes against humanity consequently ended without a verdict.

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**Modern Terrorist States (Cont'd)**

**The Rwandan genocide in 1994:** An estimated 800,000 to 1,071,000 ethnic Tutsis and moderate Hutus were eliminated by two extremist Hutu militia groups.

**In Africa,** colonial powers often resorted to terrorism to suppress national liberation movements.

**Uganda during Idi Amin’s reign of terror,** from 1971 to 1979, witnessed an estimated 300,000 deaths. Idi Amin launched a campaign of persecution against rival tribes in order to secure his regime, murdering ordinary citizens, former and serving Cabinet ministers, the chief justice, Supreme Court judges, diplomats, academics, educators, prominent Roman Catholic and Anglican clergy, senior bureaucrats, medical practitioners, bankers, tribal leaders, business executives, journalists, and a number of foreigners. In some cases entire villages were wiped out.

**Chile, under Augusto Pinochet** and his Military Government Junta, from 1973 to 1990. After overthrowing Salvador Allende’s freely elected socialist government in a coup, Augusto Pinochet, backed by the United States, led Chile for 17 years while abolishing democratic institutions, instituting a repressive regime and carrying out a program of major social changes. The military dictatorship was characterized by the systematic suppression of all leftist opposition. Approximately 200,000 people either disappeared, were killed, tortured or
exiled during this regime.

**Sudan and Darfur under Omar al-Bashir:** Omar al-Bashir overthrew the democratically elected Prime Minister of Sudan Sadeq al-Mahdi in an Islamist-backed military coup in 1989. Sudan was already caught up in a civil war that started in 1983 and evolved into a major conflict in 2003 that lasts to this day, opposing the southern non-Arab populations against the northern Arab government led by al-Bashir. The rival sides battle over natural resources and land allocation. al-Bashir has introduced Sharia law and his government forces and Janjaweed militiamen remain in conflict with Darfur's sedentary population and rebel groups such as the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army and the Justice and Equality Movement. The Arab-dominated Sudanese government publicly denies that it supports the Janjaweed militia and their attacks. These assaults, combined with decades of drought, desertification and overpopulation, have caused the deaths of an estimated 200,000-400,000 civilians, the displacement of approximately 2.5 million into neighboring Chad and have left more than 3.5 million men, women and children struggling to survive amid violence and starvation. The Sudanese government has suppressed information by jailing and killing witnesses and concealing evidence such as mass graves.

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**State-Sponsored Terrorism as an Instrument of Foreign Policy**

- “External terrorism” is practiced by one state against enemies in the international domain.

- As a foreign policy option, state-sponsored terrorism serves a state’s interest when a state cannot use conventional warfare to achieve its strategic objectives.

- Practically speaking, direct confrontation of an adversary is often infeasible logistically, politically or militarily.

- As a result, state-sponsored terrorism becomes a logical alternative for states pursuing an aggressive foreign policy.

- According to the Institute for Counter-Terrorism, “State sponsored terrorism can achieve strategic ends where the use of conventional armed forces is not practical or effective. The high costs of modern warfare, and concern about non-conventional escalation, as well as the danger of defeat and the unwillingness to appear as the aggressor, have turned terrorism into an efficient, convenient, and generally discrete weapon for attaining state interests in the international realm.”

- For example, instead of provoking a war with Israel, some Arab states have chosen to sponsor Palestinian terrorist groups that carry out the attacks.

- In addition, considering the little hope that many states have in directly attacking superpowers such as the United States, terrorist attacks become an alternative in destabilizing the superpower through a form of “asymmetrical warfare”, where a technically weaker opponent attacks points of weakness in an otherwise stronger opponent through relatively simple means. The terrorist thus has advantages such as selectivity and surprise and leaves no clue about who ordered the attack which constitutes a means to destabilize the powerful defender who must strive to prevent attacks on many fronts.
State-sponsored terrorism in the international domain is often covert, and the violence therefore often remains unaccountable. As the terror destabilizes the adversary, the target of the attack cannot respond in the same manner as it would to a direct attack, unless it eventually finds evidence of the enemy’s responsibility.

The links between regimes and terrorism are often highly ambiguous and indefinable.


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State-Sponsored Terrorism as an Instrument of Foreign Policy (Cont’d)

According to Gus Martin, “As a practical matter for aggressive regimes, state terrorism in the international domain is advantageous in several respects:

- **State terrorism is inexpensive.** The costs of patronage and assistance for terrorist movements are relatively low. Even poor nations can strike at and injure a prosperous adversary through a single spectacular incident.

- **State terrorism has limited consequences.** State assisters that are clever can distance themselves from culpability for a terrorist incident. They can cover up their involvement, disclaim responsibility, and thereby escape possible reprisals or other penalties.

- **State terrorism can be successful.** Weaker states can raise the stakes beyond what a stronger adversary is willing to bear. Aggressor states that wish to remain anonymous can likewise successfully destabilize an adversary through the use of a proxy movement. They can do this through one or more spectacular incidents or by assisting in a campaign of terror."¹

Because state-sponsored terrorism does not depend on a given population for support, nor does it need to obtain any publicity, and because of the vast amount of resources that state-supported groups can obtain, the acts of violence carried out by state-sponsored terrorist groups are typically more destructive than those carried out by self-reliant terrorist groups.

According to Bruce Hoffman, "Identifiable state-sponsored terrorist attacks during the 1980s were overall eight times more lethal than those carried out by groups without state support or assistance."²

Terrorist behavior can be divided into two categories:

- **Clandestine state terrorism:** This is a form of terrorism in which there is direct but covert participation by state agents in terrorist activities.

- **State-sponsored terrorism:** This form of terrorism occurs when terrorist organizations are hired on behalf of the state to take on terrorist actions.

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Surrogate Terrorism

According to former CIA officer Michael Scheuer, "State-sponsored terrorism came in the middle-1970s, and then, really, its heyday was in the 1980s and early-’90s. And typically, the definition of a state sponsor of terrorism is a country that uses surrogates as its weapon to attack other people. The primary example to this day is Iran and

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Lebanese Hezbollah. Hezbollah, in the nomenclature of the discussion, would be the surrogate of Iran.

- According to Bruce Hoffman, "The pivotal event in the emergence of state-sponsored terrorism as a weapon of the state and an instrument of foreign policy was doubtless the seizure in November 1979 of fifty-two American hostages at the U.S. embassy in Tehran by a group of militant Iranian "students". For 444 days, these so-called students – who claimed to have acted independently, without government support or encouragement – held the world’s most powerful country at bay. Throughout that protracted episode they focused unparalleled worldwide media attention on both themselves and their anti-American cause, ultimately costing an American president his reelection to office."1

- The description of state sponsors of terrorism by the U.S. Department of State reads as follows: "State sponsors of terrorism provide critical support to non-state terrorist groups. Without state sponsors, terrorist groups would have much more difficulty obtaining the funds, weapons, materials, and secure areas they require to plan and conduct operations. Most worrisome is that some of these countries also have the capability to manufacture WMD and other destabilizing technologies that can get into the hands of terrorists."2

- Surrogate terrorism is a form of state patronage for terrorism, which occurs when a government provides assistance to a politically violent movement or organization, called "a proxy", beyond its border.

- State patrons will provide support by either directly arming, financing, training or providing sanctuary or psychological support for terrorists.

- Acts of violence carried out by terrorists who are clandestinely working for governments have proven to be relatively inexpensive and fairly risk-free in order to anonymously attack stronger enemies without international punishment.


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**Surrogate Terrorism (Cont’d)**

- The "surrogates" therefore use the terrorists to advance their own national objectives.

- Another example of this form of terrorism was depicted in the 1981-1988 U.S. government-directed guerrilla war against the Cuban-backed communist Sandinista regime in Nicaragua. The United States had supported the former Nicaraguan dictatorship under Anastasio Somoza Debayle, who was overthrown by the Sandinistas, a Marxist insurgent group. Following that, the United States began a campaign against the Sandinista regime by supporting their proxy known as the "contras", anti-Sandinista Nicaraguan counterrevolutionaries. From 1981 until 1983, U.S. support was funnelled by the CIA, which provided training and supplies to the contras who were sent to conduct guerrilla missions against the Sandinistas.

- Another aspect of the U.S. support was that funding to the contra rebels came from profits gained by selling arms to Iran during the Iran-Iraq war in spite of the embargo against selling arms to Iran. In the "Iran-contra affair", Ronald Reagan sold weapons to Iran in an arms-for-hostages operation, in order to release American hostages held by Iranian terrorists in Lebanon, meanwhile using the funds to support the contra rebels in Nicaragua. Evidence eventually surfaced when the contras started committing numerous human rights violations and when a Lebanese newspaper called *Al-Shiraa* printed an exposé on the clandestine arms trade activities in 1986.
In 1982, Congress passed the "Boland Amendment" which forbade the expenditure of U.S. funds to overthrow the Sandinista regime. A second "Boland Amendment" passed in 1984, forbidding all U.S. assistance to the contras.

The U.S. Department of State designates countries that have repeatedly provided support for acts of international terrorism. Currently, there are four countries listed as sponsors of terrorism, namely Cuba, Iran, Syria and Sudan. Iraq was on the list until the U.S.-led coalition toppled Saddam Hussein and Libya and North Korea were removed from the list in 2006 and 2008, respectively.

Iran remains the country which is reportedly the most active state sponsor of terrorism. The country supports many terrorist groups, notably the Lebanese Hezbollah and Palestinian terrorist groups, including HAMAS, Palestinian Islamic Jihad, the al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades, and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command. In addition, its Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) and Ministry of Intelligence and Security (MOIS) have been directly involved in the planning and support of terrorist acts.

Visit the U.S. Department of State's list of State Sponsors of Terrorism for more information.

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**International Laws and Public and Private Organizations**

**Condemning State Terror and State-Sponsored Terrorism**

- Following World War II, international laws were created in order to restrict the ability of governments to use terrorism against their own citizens. On December 10, 1948, the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights without dissent. The declaration is meant to be publicized and "to cause it to be disseminated, displayed, read and expounded principally in schools and other educational institutions, without distinction based on the political status of countries or territories."

- According to this Declaration, "everyone has a right to life, liberty and security of person", and these basic human rights may not be taken away by any institution, state or individual. In addition, states should not administer collective punishments, nor should they punish anyone for a crime that they have not personally committed.

- However, this Declaration only constitutes a statement of principles, with no mechanisms for enforcement. The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights which entered into force in 1976, was a subsequent United Nations treaty based on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, made with more explicit provisions for enforcement compliance.

- Genocide has been regarded as a crime under international law since 1946, when the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted Resolution 96(1).

- Issues revolving around the legitimacy of acts of war are dealt with in a series of international laws of war, most notably the United Nations Charter, the Geneva conventions and the Hague conventions.

- The International Criminal Court, which includes 108 state members, was established after years of negotiations in 2002 to prosecute individuals for genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes. The necessity for the creation of such a court emerged after the Nuremberg trials and the Tokyo trials following World War II, and after the international community created international criminal tribunals specifically to try war crimes in the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda (International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia in 1993, International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda in 1994). There are issues about the Court's jurisdiction, as it can only function when national courts are unwilling or unable to prosecute for genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes. To date, the cases before the Court deal with crimes in Uganda, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Sudan.

2. *The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for
Monitoring State-Sponsored Terrorism

State-sponsored terrorism is monitored by public and private organizations such as:

- **The U.S. Department of State**: The U.S. Department of State compiles a list of state sponsors of international terrorism. By placing countries on its list, the U.S. government imposes four main sets of sanctions:
  - A ban on arms-related exports and sales.
  - Controls over exports of dual-use items, requiring 30-day Congressional notification for goods or services that could significantly enhance the terrorist-list country's military capability or ability to support terrorism.
  - Prohibitions on economic assistance.
  - Imposition of miscellaneous financial and other restrictions, including:
    - Requiring the United States to oppose loans by the World Bank and other international financial institutions;
    - Lifting diplomatic immunity to allow families of terrorist victims to file civil lawsuits in U.S. courts;
    - Denying companies and individuals tax credits for income earned in terrorist-listed countries;
    - Denial of duty-free treatment of goods exported to the United States;
    - Authority to prohibit any U.S. citizen from engaging in a financial transaction with a terrorist-list government without a Treasury Department license; and
    - Prohibition of Defense Department contracts above $100,000 with companies controlled by terrorist-list states.

- **Human Rights Watch**: Human Rights Watch is an independent, nongovernmental organization that is dedicated to protecting the human rights of people around the world. It monitors the status of human rights worldwide and reports on government-sponsored violations of human rights.

- **Amnesty International**: Amnesty International is an independent and democratically-run organization that campaigns for internationally recognized human rights. It publishes reports on governmental political violence.


Nationalist Terrorism

Nationalism became a strong ideological force in the late 19th and 20th centuries with the advent of the modern nation-state and its liberal ideological principles of national self-determination. Along with the newly defined notions of nationalism, statehood and citizenship, popular movements of assimilation or struggle by people who
had been colonized, conquered or oppressed began to emerge. Ethnic nationalism, anti-colonial sentiments and new ideologies such as communism evolved rapidly during the 20th century, leading to many guerrilla war tactics by non-governmental actors.

- According to Bruce Hoffman, the Industrial Revolution engendered massive socioeconomic changes, which led to the creation of new “universalist” ideologies such as communism and Marxism, “born of the alienation and exploitative conditions of nineteenth-century capitalism.”

- In addition, according to Reeta Chowdhari Tremblay, “ethno-nationalism involves an interpretation of complex though not mutually exclusive concepts of nation, identity, national consciousness and nationalism is based on two major premises. In the first place, the justification for ethno-nationalism is a claim for an egalitarian, democratic society where there is a direct control over the allocation of resources and their legitimate extraction. This aspiration for equality and political control is often grounded in the feelings certain groups have towards the larger society that they have been deprived of a status to which they are entitled. In the second place, politics of ethno-nationalism is based on a linkage between political movement and ethnic identity...Consequently, the desire for political and cultural autonomy arises from a simultaneous self-awareness and an awareness of other groups, essential ingredients for converting an ethnic group into a nation.”

- It can be argued that this definition of ethno-nationalism applies to nationalist terrorist groups that base their struggle and legitimize their actions in order to gain a status which they feel they have been denied and are entitled to.

- Nationalist terrorism is usually directed against a government and stems from the desire to rid a country of colonial rule. Indeed, it is a form of terrorism that has its roots in independence movements against what are considered occupying, imperial or illegitimate states.

- In this line of thought, Bruce Hoffman also argues that “Although terrorism motivated by ethno-nationalist/separatist aspirations had emerged from within the moribund Ottoman and Hapsburg empires during the three decades preceding the First World War, it was only after 1945 that this phenomenon became a more pervasive global force. Two separate, highly symbolic events that had occurred early in the Second World War abetted its subsequent development. At the time, the repercussions for postwar anticolonial struggles of the fall of Singapore and the proclamation of the Atlantic Charter could not possibly have been anticipated. Yet both, in different ways, exerted a strong influence on indigenous nationalist movements, demonstrating as they did the vulnerability of once-mighty empires and the hypocrisy of war-time pledges of support for self-determination...The long-term impact of these events was profound. Native peoples who had previously believed in the invincibility of their European colonial overlords hereafter saw their former masters in a starkly different light.”


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**Nationalist Terrorism (Cont'd)**

- This form of terrorism is also associated with nationalist groups that fight for the rights of either national, ethnic, religious or other oppressed groups within a state in which they consider they are denied the basic rights granted to others.

- Such "nationalist terrorist" groups tend to consider themselves as "freedom fighters", engaged in valid but asymmetric warfare. The issue about whether a group is a terrorist group or consists of legitimate "freedom fighters" is highly subjective. As Amy Zalman and others insist,¹ "one man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter".

- According to Reeta Chowdhari Tremblay,² "Against the present global background of an economically
interdependent state system (which in itself questions the sovereignty of the nation-state), recent world-wide demands for self-determination and political aspirations for independent statehood based on ethnic claims have multiplied. We are not only witnessing challenges to the boundaries of existing states, but such conflicts are proliferating in a “quest for the perfect nation-state”.

- A question does arise, however, pertaining to the reason why some groups “feel that their cultural identity is incompatible with the mainstream culture and can only be maintained in a separate territorial state.” As Reeta Chowdhari Tremblay asks us: “What can generate a sense of nationality so strong that it can demand and receive the human sacrifice?” and “Why do certain ethnic groups clamour for political autonomy in certain states and not others?”

- Acts of terrorism perpetrated in the 1970s and 1980s were often carried out by nationalist separatist and social-revolutionary terrorists, who wished to call attention to their cause. In order to gain attention from the public, this form of terrorism is usually overt and the perpetrators claim responsibility for their acts. By attracting media attention to their cause, the terrorists try to force their adversaries to redress their grievances, and to initiate political reform to possibly grant independence to a minority community. Violence, in this sense, is used “to draw attention to, or generate publicity for, a cause, but also to inform, educate, and ultimately rally the masses behind the revolution.”


### Slide 23

**Nationalist Movements**

**Earliest Insurgent Movements in Modern History (Macedonia)**

- One of the earliest insurgent movements in modern history involving guerrilla warfare was that of the Macedonians against the Turkish Ottoman Empire from 1893 until 1903. During this period, several movements of independence began to arise, with the desire to establish a Macedonian state.

- The most famous group that fought for the independence of Macedonia was the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization (IMRO) that organized the Ilinden Uprising of August 1903, an organized rebellion against the Ottoman Empire that led to the proclamation of the Krušev Republic, the first modern-day republic in the Balkans, which lasted ten days.

- The Republic of Macedonia declared its independence from former Yugoslavia in 1991 and IMRO emerged as the leading nationalist party. Many members of the IMRO entered the government of the Republic of Macedonia and the party describes itself as a Christian Democratic party which supports the admission of Macedonia to NATO and the European Union.

### Slide 24

**Nationalist Movements (Cont’d)**

Other nationalist groups which have been or continue to be considered terrorist groups include, among others:

**The IRA**

- The Irish Republican Army (IRA) originated from a military organization which was recognized in 1919 as the official army of the Republic of Ireland and which struggled for and won independence from Crown forces between 1916 and 1921.

- In 1920, Ireland was split between
The IRA, a militant group, emerged in the late 1960s to defend the Roman Catholic minority in Northern Ireland which opposed the Protestant majority. In doing so, the group opposed British rule in Northern Ireland and sought to unify the province with the Republic of Ireland, in order to form a sovereign socialist all-island Irish state. The group has a political wing called Sinn Fein.

Though the IRA still considers itself to be an armed force opposing the illegal foreign occupation of its country, it has offered its apologies to families of its victims, and since 2000, it has been removed from the State Department's list of designated terrorist groups. For decades it was considered one of the most dangerous terrorist groups in the world.

In July 2005, the group announced the end of its armed campaign. Two groups, known as the RIRA (the Real IRA) and the Continuity IRA (CIRA), split from the IRA (also referred to as the PIRA – the Provisional IRA) when the group agreed to a ceasefire.

Although the IRA has officially ended its armed campaign, there are still signs of activity from the dissident groups that emerged after the ceasefire was signed. These include the RIRA, the CIRA and Ogliaigh na hEireann. The emergence of such groups hints at the possibility of renewed armed conflict. A recent intelligence report exposed the likelihood of an imminent attack on Northern Ireland Army bases after a series of violent incidents which included the deaths of two NI soldiers in March 2009, as well as the discovery of sophisticated bombs and explosives. Further evidence suggesting the resurgence of IRA-related dissident groups includes the 2008 case of a Real IRA man arrested in Lithuania for buying guns and explosives. There is no telling what to expect from the dissident groups, but the continuation of hostile activities, as well as recent evidence of a rearmament campaign, do not bode well for prospects of a prolonged ceasefire.

IRA dissidents opposed to Northern Ireland's 1998 peace accord and the Catholic-Protestant government it spawned have planted a string of car bombs in the British territory since January 2010. Most have failed to detonate, and none have caused serious injuries.

For information on the IRA's splinter groups, read this short Council on Foreign Relations backgrounder.

Slide 25
Nationalist Movements (Cont'd)

The ANC

- The African National Congress (ANC) was initially created in 1912 in South Africa with the aim of bringing all black South Africans together to defend their rights and freedoms and to take action against the legal authority of the white minority's supremacy.

- After a half-century of practicing non-violent mass action and community activism similar to Gandhi's non-violent protest against the British Empire, the ANC founded a military wing in 1961 to protest against the Apartheid regime.

- ANC attacks, considered as terrorist acts and carried out in the 1970s and 1980s, targeted government facilities, the South African military, and some foreign businesses. Tactics included car and street bombings and assassinations.

- In the late 1980s, President F.W. de Klerk released Nelson Mandela from jail and began talks to bring Black South Africans into the political process.

- The ANC became a legal political party in 1990, and Mandela was elected president in 1994. Since that time, the ANC, a social-democratic political party, has been South Africa's governing party.

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Nationalist Movements (Cont'd)

ETA

- ETA (Euskadi Ta Askatasuna) is a Basque nationalist-leftist group that seeks to create an independent Basque nation-state in the southwest region of France and northwestern region of Spain. The group formed in 1959 and exists to this day.

- The Basque are a distinct group of Christians that have their own language and culture. The group first emerged as a student resistance movement that opposed General Franco's repressive military dictatorship. Batasuna, a Basque political party, acted as the political branch of the Basque illegal terrorist group ETA.

- The group has led a violent campaign for independence, counting 800 deaths over the last 30 years. In March 2006, ETA declared a permanent ceasefire and expressed a willingness to join the political process. However, on December 30, 2006, ETA carried out a car-bomb attack at the Madrid Barajas International Airport, killing two people and injuring 26. According to Spanish Prime Minister Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero, this clearly represents a violation of the permanent ceasefire.

- According to a January 10, 2007 Agence France Presse article, even the political wing, Batasuna, had been surprised and deceived by the attack. In a press communiqué, ETA claimed responsibility for the attack, warning that it could strike again if the Spanish government continues its crackdown in the Basque region, in reference to the arrest of ETA militants and the banning of its political arm, Batasuna. Batasuna has been urging the group to respect the ceasefire, insisting that the peace process is not dead.\(^1\)
On June 5, 2007, ETA officially ended the ceasefire that was negotiated in March 2006, declaring that the government was not meeting their conditions for continuing negotiations. Meetings between the government and leaders of the group are believed to have taken place several times in Norway, but the group is accuses Prime Minister José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero of arresting, torturing and persecuting its members. The end of the ceasefire came ten days after local elections in which Batasuna candidates were banned from running.

Spain's prime minister had established his mandate on a promise to end the violence in the Basque region, and despite the success of the permanent ceasefire declaration, and the tentative negotiations with the group, he has now broken all links with ETA.

Since ETA and the Spanish government broke relations after officially ending the ceasefire in 2007, ETA has once again reiterated its right to use violence to achieve its aims. This proclamation came after an onslaught of police operations that targeted the high leadership of ETA, including the recent arrest and ensuing deportation from France of suspected ETA chief 'Txeroki', which have considerably weakened the group. Despite its resolution to continue using violence, ETA has also stated that it would welcome a political solution in the form of allowing the Basque provinces to hold a referendum to decide on their independence, a solution which is apparently favored by locals. An agreement on the part of the Spanish government is highly unlikely, especially considering Zapatero's vows to jail all ETA members and to accept nothing but unconditional surrender.

Experts have warned that despite ETA's diminished strength, the separatists are still capable of major disruption and deadly attacks.

In June 2010, Batasuna, the banned political wing of ETA, signed a "strategic agreement" with a tiny, legal party to seek an independent Basque state through peaceful means. The deal between Batasuna and the left-leaning Basque nationalist party Eusko Alkartasuna comes ahead of regional elections in the northern region of Spain in 2011 and at a time when ETA is reportedly set to announce a ceasefire.


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**Nationalist Movements (Cont'd)**

**The PLO**

The Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) was founded in 1964 in an effort to achieve Palestinian liberation and to give a voice to a vast number of Palestinians who were living in refugee camps in Lebanon. It is a political and paramilitary umbrella organization for various militia groups fighting for the establishment of an independent state of Palestine.
Palestinian state.

- PLO groups include Al-Fatah, Force 17, Hawari Group, PLF, and PFLP. The group's primary goal has been the destruction of the state of Israel which led it to carry out massive terrorist campaigns since its inception.

- By 1988, the (now deceased) Yasser Arafat, who was the PLO's leader at the time, announced the right of the state of Israel to exist and renounced PLO terrorism. Israel made several agreements with the PLO in 1993 which resulted in the formation of the Palestinian Authority (which has existed since 1994), where Palestinians live under partial self-rule in the West Bank and Gaza. The peace process in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is ongoing and could one day result in an independent Palestinian state.

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**Nationalist Movements (Cont'd)**

**The LTTE**

- The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam was founded in 1976. The group's goal is the establishment of an independent Tamil state. It is a politico-military organization that is in conflict with the predominantly Sinhalese Sri Lankan government.

- Since 1983, there has been an on-and-off civil war in Sri Lanka between the LTTE and the government. There are strong ethnic and territorial disagreements between both, with alleged discrimination against the Tamil minority. The group controls most of the northern and eastern coastal areas of Sri Lanka.

- Notorious in the group are the Black Tigers, an elite unit of members responsible for conducting suicide attacks against political, economic and military targets.

- The LTTE signed a ceasefire agreement in 2001, suddenly dropping its request for a separate state, but violent incidents have increased since that time, especially since late 2005. The October 16, 2006 suicide bombing carried out by the group against a military convoy killed approximately 130 sailors, wounding another 300. It was their deadliest attack since 2002, thereby jeopardizing the peace talks and hope for peace in Sri Lanka, where full-scale conflicts between the LTTE and the military have resulted in the displacement of thousands of civilians. It seems clear that neither the LTTE nor the government are yet interested in reaching an agreement.

- According to an October 30, 2006 *BBC News* article, the international community fears that both sides now appear to be gearing up for another major battle. It is important to note that the Sri Lankan government has also been accused of state terrorism. Whether it was part of the military strategies against the rebel LTTE group or previously against the uprisings of a Marxist nationalist political party called JVP, the Sri Lankan state has carried out many terrorist activities including Tamil civilian massacres, involuntary disappearances, assassinations of political opponents, torture and rape.¹

- After 25 years of violence and political unrest, the Tamil Tigers were finally defeated by the Sri Lankan government...
following a year of particularly bloody fighting. The beginning of 2009 already pointed to the demise of the LTTE when the Tamil stronghold of Kilinochchi was overtaken by government forces in early January. The struggle unfortunately trapped thousands of innocent civilians in the midst of the violent battles, leading many international leaders to call for a temporary ceasefire to allow for their escape out of the battle zones. By mid-February, the rebels, under heavy losses, accepted a UN-mediated ceasefire, but still refused to surrender. The government, however, opposed all ceasefires and pushed ahead with its military campaign. Finally, on May 18, the Sri Lankan forces defeated the LTTE by taking over the last guerrilla bastion in the northeast of the island nation and by announcing the death of Tiger leader Velupillai Prabhakaran. This government victory, however, was not expected to bring peace to the country in the short term. The end of the conflict has given way to tense and bitter resentment among the Tamil minority, both inside and outside of Sri Lanka. The bloodbath that took place during the latest battle, the lack of respect for civilian life and the present treatment of refugees and suspected rebels by the Sri Lankan government all hint at slim prospects for a peaceful resolution and could even incite future rebel activities.

- Canada and the United Kingdom were two major countries where the LTTE had immense influence on local politics and in turn could put pressure on Sri Lanka and on international organizations. The Toronto constituency of Canada had over 6,000 eligible Tamil voters and the Minister of Foreign Affairs at one time came from this constituency. The LTTE infiltrated the Liberal Party. At one point, Tamil party delegates outnumbered others in many constituencies.

- For more recent information on the LTTE, read this short Council on Foreign Relations backgrounder.


**Slide 29**

Nationalist Movements (Cont'd)

The KLA

The Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) emerged in 1995-1996 when a series of attacks were carried out on Serbian police, Serb government officials, Serb refugee centers and civil targets in Kosovo. It is an ethnic Albanian organization that fought alongside Croat and Muslim military formations for the independence of Kosovo from Serbia when its policy of non-violent resistance failed to make progress. The group's campaign eventually led to the Kosovo War of 1999, when NATO launched an air war against Yugoslavia to stop the Serbian ethnic cleansing led by former President of Serbia and of Yugoslavia, Slobodan Milosevic.

The KLA was transformed into the Kosovo Protection
Corps which patrols the province with NATO forces.

- In March 2006, KLA’s former leader Agim Ceku was elected Prime Minister of the province. Slobodan Milosevic was indicted by the UN’s International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia for crimes against humanity in Kosovo with charges of violating the laws or customs of war and grave breaches of the Geneva conventions in Croatia and Bosnia and genocide in Bosnia. Milosevic died of a heart attack after five years in prison.

### Slide 30

**Interactive Map**

India

[Interactive Map]

**Sikh Extremists**

**Ideology**

Sikh terrorist groups have been fighting for the independence of Sikhs from India and the creation of a Sikh state called Khalistan in the wealthy Indian province of Punjab. The insurgency increased in the 1980s, and the Sikh Nation declared its independence from India on October 7, 1987. However, the province of Punjab is occupied by a vast number of Indian soldiers. Sikh terrorist groups have been supported by Pakistan’s external intelligence agency, the Inter Services Intelligence (ISI), with the broad intention of creating a link between Khalistani and Kashmiri terrorist groups and other pan-Islamist terrorist groups. Many of the Sikh terrorist leaders fought in Afghanistan during the Cold War. Sikh terrorism is sponsored by expatriate and Indian Sikh groups that are active internationally. In 1984, Sikh separatists assassinated Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, following a bloody insurgency in Punjab that spanned several years.

**Membership**

Active groups, in recent and previous years, include Babbar Khalsa (Wadhava Singh), International Sikh Youth Federation (Lakhbir Singh Rode), Dal Khalsa (Satnam Singh Paonta), Bhinderanwala Tiger Force, Saheed Khalsa Force, Azad Khalistan Babbar Khalsa Force, Khalistan Liberation Front, and the Khalistan Commando Force.

**Lifespan**

The insurgency in Punjab started in the late 1970s.

**Targets**

Indian officials and facilities, other Sikhs, and Hindus.

**Sources**

(Sources: Wikipedia, Global security.org, MIPT Terrorism knowledge base)
BKI

Ideology
The Babbar Khalsa International is an organized terrorist group that wants a fundamentalist independent Sikh state called Khalistan based around the Punjab region of India. Khalistan declared its independence on October 7, 1987, however there are a half-million Indian soldiers occupying the wealthy province of Punjab. The group allegedly has links to Pakistan's external intelligence agency, the Inter Services Intelligence (ISI), which reportedly supports the revival of terrorism in Punjab. At least 29 leaders of various Punjab militant organizations are believed to be located in Pakistan and receiving active support from the ISI. The group is largely sponsored by expatriate Sikhs, particularly in the United Kingdom and Canada.

Membership
The BKI is currently led by Wadhwa Singh, who is reportedly hiding in Pakistan with his chief deputy, Mehal Singh.

Lifespan
BKI formed in the late 1970s and exists to this day.

Targets
The BKI carries out attacks in India against Indian officials and facilities, other Sikhs, and Hindus.

Sources
(Source: Wikipedia)

Iran

MEK

Ideology
The MEK is considered the most powerful opposition group to the Iranian government. It is a militant organization that was expelled from Iran after the Islamic revolution in 1979 primarily because of its radical Marxist ideology. The group is Muslim and Marxist, and believes in the separation of Church and State. The MEK's ultimate goal is the overthrow of the Iranian regime and its replacement with the group's own leadership. It is designated as a terrorist organization by the United States, the European Union, Canada and Iran. The group received a lot of support from Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq and ultimately relocated in various camps there. However, U.S. forces have cracked down on MEK's bases in Iraq since the 2003 invasion, and French authorities arrested 160 people, including co-leader Maryam Rajavi, after raiding an MEK compound outside Paris in June 2003.

Membership
The group is led by a couple, Massoud Rajavi and Maryam Rajavi.

**Lifespan**
The mid-1960s to the present.

**Targets**
Prior to the Islamic revolution in Iran, the MEK conducted anti-Western attacks. Since the MEK was expelled from Iran, it has conducted terrorist attacks against the interests of the clerical regime in Iran and abroad.

**Sources**
(Sources: Iran case study, U.S. Department of State, Council on Foreign Relations)

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**Sri Lanka**

![Map of Sri Lanka](image)

**LTTE**

**Ideology**
The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam's goal is the establishment of an independent Tamil state. It is a politico-military organization that is in conflict with the predominantly Sinhalese Sri Lankan government. The group controls most of the northern and eastern coastal areas of Sri Lanka. Notorious in the group are the Black Tigers which are an elite unit of members responsible for conducting suicide attacks against political, economic and military targets. The LTTE signed a formal ceasefire agreement in 2001, dropping its requests for a separate state, but violent incidents continued to be carried out by the LTTE. The Sri Lankan government formally ended the ceasefire on January 2, 2008, which was followed by a major suicide bomb attack against a Sri Lankan Army bus in Colombo. The violent struggle came to a peak on May 18, 2009 when Sri Lankan forces finally overtook the last Tiger stronghold. The attack also claimed the life of LTTE leader Prabhakaran, which ensured the defeat of the LTTE and the end of the conflict.

**Membership**
Until his recent death, the founder and leader of the group was Velupillai Prabhakaran. His death, which took place on May 18, 2009 while trying to escape an attack from government forces, also signaled the defeat of the Tamil rebels. The LTTE is said to have had an estimated membership of 8,000 to 10,000 before its defeat.

**Lifespan**
The LTTE was founded in 1976 and was active until its defeat by the Sri Lankan armed forces on May 18, 2009.

**Targets**
The group targets key personnel such as Sri Lankan political, economic and military leaders. The group has also conducted massive attacks against other Tamil militant groups, resulting in their status as the dominant military group...
fighting for the cause of Tamil Eelam.

Sources
(Sources: Council on Foreign Relations, Wikipedia, U.S. Department of State)

Ireland

![Image of Ireland map]

IRA

Ireland

Ideology
The Irish Republican Army originated from a military organization which was recognized in 1919 as the official army of the Republic of Ireland and which struggled for and won independence from Crown forces between 1916 and 1921. In 1920, Ireland was split between an independent state in the Catholic south, and a smaller northern region called Ulster which remained British due to the Protestant majority. The IRA, a militant group, emerged in the late 1960s to defend the Roman Catholic minority in Northern Ireland which opposed the Protestant majority. In doing so, the group opposed British rule in Northern Ireland and sought to unify the province with the Republic of Ireland, in order to form a sovereign socialist all-island Irish state. The group has a political wing called Sinn Fein. Though the IRA still considers itself to be an armed force opposing the illegal foreign occupation of its country, it has offered its apologies to families of its victims, and since 2000, it has been removed from the U.S. State Department's list of designated terrorist groups. In July 2005, the group announced an end to its armed campaign. Two groups, called the RIRA (the Real IRA) and the Continuity IRA (CIRA), split from the IRA (also referred to as the PIRA – the Provisional IRA) when the group agreed to a ceasefire.

Membership
Early leaders of the IRA include Seán Mac Stiofáin, Ruairí Ó Brádaigh, Dáithí Ó Conaill, Joe Cahill, and Billy McKee.

Lifespan
The group emerged in 1969, and it called a ceasefire in July 1997, on the understanding that Sinn Féin would be included in political talks for a settlement, which resulted in the Belfast Agreement of 1998. The IRA exists to this day, but has officially renounced its campaign of violence.

Targets
The IRA's primary targets were British troops, police officers, prison guards and judges.

Sources
(Sources: Council on Foreign Relations, Wikipedia, U.S. Department of State)

Philippines
ASG

Ideology
The Abu Sayyaf Group's goal is the establishment of a separate Islamic state for the Muslim minority population of Mindanao, an island in the southern Philippines. The group is a fairly small militant organization, which was founded in 1991, when it split from the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), one of the two major Muslim separatist movements in the southern Philippines. It split when the MNLF started negotiating a peace process with the government, demanding an independent Islamic country. It reportedly has links to many Islamic fundamentalist organizations worldwide, namely al Qaeda. The founder of the group, Abduragak Abubakar Janjalani was a former insurgent in the war in Afghanistan during the Soviet occupation.

Membership
The founder and leader of the group was Abduragak Abubakar Janjalani, up until his death in 1998. After that, his brother Khadafy Janjalani took over the leadership. Abu Sayyaf has a membership of approximately several hundreds of young Islamic radicals.

Lifespan
The group emerged in 1991, and exists to this day.

Targets
Abu Sayyaf targets Filipinos, including businesspeople and schoolchildren, as well as Westerners.

Sources
(Sources: Council on Foreign Relations, The Institute for Counter-Terrorism)

Palestine
ANO

Ideology
The Abu Nidal Organization is an international terrorist organization that seeks the elimination of the state of Israel. It therefore opposes the Arab-Israeli peace negotiations, the U.S., the PLO and all moderate Arab regimes. The organization has been sponsored by Iraq, Syria and Libya. Originally, Abu Nidal represented al-Fatah, the dominant faction of the PLO, formerly led by Yasser Arafat, in Sudan and later Iraq. The organization broke ties with the PLO in 1974, after it proposed the creation of a Palestinian national authority as a step toward Palestinian independence. Abu Nidal believed only in an armed struggle against Israel.

Membership
The leader of the group, Abu Nidal alias Sabri al-Banna, was killed by the Iraqi regime in 2002. At its peak, the ANO had 400 members, but it has lost much of its strength.

Lifespan
The organization emerged in 1974, when Abu Nidal split from the PLO. It is reportedly inactive at the moment.

Targets
The Abu Nidal Organization's main targets are the West (including the United States, the United Kingdom and France), Israel, moderate Palestinians, and Arab countries.

Sources
(Sources: Council on Foreign Relations, U.S. Department of State, the MIPT Terrorism Knowledge Base)

Hamas

Ideology
Hamas is the largest Palestinian militant movement dedicated to creating an Islamic state in the territory of "Palestine" (including all of Israel and Palestinian territories). It is listed as a terrorist organization by Australia, Canada, the United States, the European Union, Israel and the United Kingdom, and it also forms the majority political party of the Palestinian Authority. The origins of the group go back to the Muslim Brotherhood, which is a Sunni, Islamist, religious movement that started in Egypt. Hamas started its armed struggle in the early stages of the Intifada (1987) and refuses to recognize the state of Israel. It constitutes the strongest opposition group to the Middle East peace process and the PLO. Hamas has links with other terrorist organizations, including al Qaeda and Hezbollah.

Membership
The founder of the group was Sheikh Ahmed Yassin. Current leaders include Ismail Haniyeh, Mahmoud al-Zahar, Hassan Yousef, Mohammed Abu Tir, Jamila Shanti, and Mohammed Deif.
Lifespan
Hamas formed in 1987 as an outgrowth of the Palestinian branch of the Muslim Brotherhood. It exists to this day.

Targets
The organization’s main targets are Israeli civilians and military, suspected Palestinian collaborators, and Fatah rivals.

Sources
(Sources: Council on Foreign Relations, U.S. Department of State, the MIPT Terrorism Knowledge Base).

PLF

Ideology
The PLF’s main objective is the destruction of the state of Israel and the establishment of a Palestinian state. The PLF is a militant Palestinian group that split from the PFLP-GC in the mid-1970s over a conflict about Syria’s military intervention in Lebanon, which the former leader of the PLF, Abu Abbas, resented. The group experienced more splits in the 1980s, which led to the formation of a pro-Syrian faction, another faction settled in Lebanon, and a pro-Iraqi faction under the command of top member Abu Abbas. Abbas’s faction has been responsible for the more prominent terrorist attacks carried out by the PLF. Iraq is one of the main supporters of the PLF. The most important attack carried out by the group was the hijacking of the Italian cruise ship Achille Lauro on October 7, 1985 during its passage from Egypt to Israel.

Membership
The group was formerly led by Abu Abbas, and is currently led by Abu Nidal al-Ashqar since Abu Abbas agreed to abandon terrorism and acknowledge Israel’s right to exist, and then died in 2004.

Lifespan
The group was founded in 1977 and exists to this day.

Targets
The PLF is active on the Israeli northern border, staging attacks against civilian and military targets through the Lebanese border.

Sources
(Sources: ICT, CDI, Council on Foreign Relations)

PFLP

Ideology
The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine is a Marxist-Leninist Palestinian secular nationalist political and military organization which was supported by the Soviet Union and China. Syria has provided substantial financial support, training, and safe havens to the group. The PFLP saw the Palestinian nationalist movement as part of a broad movement to transform the Arab world along Marxist-Leninist lines. It joined the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) in 1968, and became its second-largest faction after Yasser Arafat’s al-Fatah party. It opposes conservative Arab regimes, and is committed to destroy Israel, and apply Marxist doctrine to the Palestinian struggle. The PFLP currently opposes the peace process with Israel and continues to espouse the use of violence against Israeli targets. It is notoriously known for its terror tactics in airline hijackings in the 1960s and early 1970s.

Membership
The PFLP is led by the founder and former leader of the PFLP-GC, Ahmed Jibril.

Lifespan
The group was founded in 1967.

Targets
Its main targets are Jewish, Israeli and American.
Sources
(Sources: MIPT Terrorism Knowledge Base, Council on Foreign Relations, CDI)

Pakistan

JeM

Ideology
The Jaish-e-Mohammed is an Islamic militant group that seeks to unite Kashmir with Pakistan. It split from another Islamic militant organization, Harkut-ul-Mujahideen. The group uses violence to force a withdrawal of Indian security forces from Jammu and Kashmir. The JeM was reportedly created with the assistance of Pakistan’s Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) as well as the Taliban, Osama bin Laden and other Sunni militant groups from Pakistan. The JeM is designated as a terrorist organization by India, the United States and the United Kingdom.

Membership
The leader of the group is Maulana Masood Azhar and the organization includes several hundred armed supporters.

Lifespan
The group was formed in 2000 and exists to this day.

Targets
The terrorist activities carried out by JeM mainly target India.

Sources
(Sources: The Center for Defense Information, the South Asia Terrorism Portal, Wikipedia)

Peru
Sendero Luminoso (The Shining Path)

Ideology
Sendero Luminoso is a Maoist guerilla organization that formed as an outgrowth of the Communist Party of Peru, and its former leader, Abimael Guzmán, advocated a state of permanent revolution, demanding the complete overthrow of existing Hispanic social structures and their replacement with a communist peasant revolutionary regime. The group also opposes any influence by foreign governments. Sendero Luminoso took up arms in 1980. The attacks of the group were particularly violent and terrorized Peru for decades before they were beaten back in a 1990s crackdown initiated by former Peruvian President Alberto Fujimori. Since 1987, the group has reportedly developed ties to narcotics traffickers and to the peasant coca growers.

Membership
The former leader of the group was Abimael Guzmán until he was captured in 1992. Since his capture, the group has reportedly been sporadically active.

Lifespan
The group was founded in the late 1960s and exists to this day. The group has lost much of its former strength, but recent developments have created fears of the group's resurgence.

Targets
The Shining Path has targeted Peruvian peasants, army and police patrols, trade union organizers, popularly elected officials, the general civilian population, and occasionally U.S. interests with attacks on Western embassies and businesses.

Sources
(Sources: Council on Foreign Relations, MIPT Terrorism Knowledge Base, Wikipedia)

United Kingdom
ISYF

Ideology
Sikh terrorist groups have been fighting for the independence of Sikhs from India and the creation of a Sikh state called Khalistan, in the wealthy Indian province of Punjab. The insurgency increased in the 1980s, and the Sikh Nation declared its independence from India on October 7, 1987, however the province of Punjab is occupied by a vast number of Indian soldiers. The ISYF is part of these Sikh organizations committed to the creation of an independent state of Khalistan for Sikhs living within India. The external intelligence agency of Pakistan, the Inter Services Intelligence (ISI) has allegedly supported this organization for a long time.

Membership
Amrik Singh and Jasbir Singh Rode are the founders of the group. The ISYF is currently headed by Lakhbir Singh Rode.

Lifespan
ISYF was founded in the United Kingdom (UK) in 1984 and exists to this day.

Targets
Targets include Indian officials and facilities, other Sikhs, and Hindus.

Sources
(Sources: South Asia Terrorism Portal, U.S. Department of State)

Spain & France
ETA

Ideology
Basque Fatherland and Freedom (ETA) is a Basque nationalist-leftist group that seeks to create an independent Basque nation-state in the southwest region of France and northwestern region of Spain. The Basque are a distinct group of Christians who have their own language and culture. The group first emerged as a student resistance movement that opposed General Franco's repressive military dictatorship. Batasuna, a Basque political party, acted as the political branch of the Basque illegal terrorist group ETA. The group has led a violent campaign for independence, counting 800 deaths over the last 30 years. In March 2006, ETA declared a permanent ceasefire and expressed a willingness to join the political process. However, ETA ceasefires have deteriorated into violence before.

Membership
The top leader Mikel "Antza" Albisu Iriarte and his companion, Soledad "Anboto" Iparraguire, also a member of ETA, were arrested in October 2004. Harriet Aguirre, ETA's alleged second in command, was arrested in October 2005. In 2007, Garikoitz Aspiazu, alias "Txeroki", suspected of being involved in the Madrid-Barajas airport attacks, became the latest top leader to be arrested while he was detained by French police during a surprise raid.

Lifespan
The group formed in 1959 and exists to this day.

Targets
ETA mainly targets national and regional officials and government buildings in Spain as well as in Basque regions.

Sources
(BBC News, Council on Foreign Relations, MIPT Knowledge database)

Turkey
PKK

Ideology
The PKK is an armed militant Marxist-separatist group that has tried to create an independent Kurdish state in lands inhabited by the Kurds, such as southeastern Turkey and other neighbouring countries, including northern Iraq, western Iran, and parts of Syria and Armenia. The population of the Kurds has reached approximately 25 million, and they share the same ethnicity and language. The group has used force and the threat of force against both civilian and military targets for the purpose of achieving its political goal. In a major crackdown on the group in 1999, the PKK's leader, Abdullah Ocalan, was arrested and the group's 5,000 fighters withdrew to northern Iraq, all the while renouncing the armed struggle and reconstituting itself as a political party. The PKK received support from foreign countries, most notably Syria, as well as Greece, Iran and the Soviet Union.

Membership
Abdullah Ocalan is the leader of the group, though he is imprisoned on an island near Istanbul.

Lifespan
The PKK was founded in 1973 and transformed itself into a paramilitary organization in 1984. It exists to this day.

Targets
Most attacks have been on Turkish security forces, but the PKK has also attacked Kurdish civilians who refused to cooperate with the group. It has also kidnapped foreign tourists in Turkey, carried out suicide bombings, and attacked Turkish diplomatic offices in Europe.

Sources
(Sources: Council on Foreign Relations, U.S. Department of State, Wikipedia)

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Sources


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**Websites**


