



# Terrorism as a Social Disease, Undermining Human Rights and Democracy



**Dzhamal Mutagirov\***

*Department of Political Sciences, St Petersburg State University, Russia*

**\*Corresponding author:** Dzhamal Mutagirov, Department of Political Sciences, St. Petersburg State University, Russia, Tel: +7 812 328-94-55; Email: [dezamy@mail.ru](mailto:dezamy@mail.ru)

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## Abstract

Terrorism is a social disease both of individual societies and humankind as a whole and, as any illness, is the result of deviations from the natural course of their life. If contamination of human habitation gives rise to physical illnesses, and epidemics, “filth” of social habitation, i.e. social injustice, anarchy and violence of one groups over others produces some dangerous social diseases, one of which terrorism is.

To prevent the diseases and to treat them effectively after their appearance, it is necessary to determine the exact diagnosis and to establish the true causes of the disease. But so far, the attitude of people to terrorism comes down to fight only its external manifestations without giving proper attention to their roots. In the article the problem of terrorism is considered with an emphasis on its main causes.

**Keywords:** People; Society; State; Social disease; Terrorism; Revenge; Violence; Human rights; Rivalry; International law

## Introduction

In the past three or four decades terrorism in general and international terrorism, in particular, turned into serious factors of national and global politics. Its threat is sometimes compared with those of fascism, to fight which different countries formed a unified anti-fascist front. But for some causes, the nature of terrorism, its roots, and the real ways of elimination, without understanding of which any effective fight against it is impossible, remain without due attention. This article has an aim to eliminate the gap. In it, on the basis of an analysis of the phenomenon according to historical, logical, comparative and other research methods, terrorism is considering as a social disease of any society and humankind as a whole, undermining human and people’s rights and democracy. Particular emphasis is placed on the evaluation of contemporary international terrorism as an outcome of a rivalry between the leading nations of the world, which as the permanent members of the UN Security Council ought to bear a special responsibility for peace and security on the Earth.

Terrorism as a social phenomenon (from the Latin word “terror”, a horror, fear) has deep roots in history. Since the appearance of a man on the Earth force and fear, on the one hand, and awareness of the need for joint actions for survival, on the other, become factors determined a nature of the relations between people. Gradually the societies and states, as social and military-political organizations of the societies, took a place of the individuals; the tools, methods and ways of fighting and rivalry also were perfected. The states as a political-military institutions of the societies with a monopoly on

use of force become the main institute of violence, which people both worship and fear. It is no coincidence that it was identified with the biblical Monster Leviathan.

Extermination of entire peoples and atrocities to disobedient people characterized the practice of many states, evidenced even by “Holy Books”. Terroristic even against its own citizens were the Roman Republic during the reign of C. Sulla, all absolute monarchies, the military-fascist states and dictatorships. There is another type of terrorist regimes as well: relative liberal within countries, but a complete negation of such for other peoples with menace of penalty and interventions.

But, as the saying goes, every act has its counteract. All living things in nature resist the threat and, if it is possible, try, even risking with their lives, to avenge for the insults they painted. Individuals and groups of people copy in such cases the methods of the state violence and terrorism.

Institute of tale on (retribution) is as ancient, as humankind itself. Authors and organizers of the criminal from the ‘avenger’s point of view acts become objects of retribution. It is no coincidence therefore that many acts of an individual terrorism were perpetrated and committed mainly against the heads of the states and their representatives, military commanders, as well as against persons whose activity represented a threat to the existing social systems. In one case, the assassinations were carried out with a view to eliminate a dangerous man and in edification of the lovers to repeat such actions, in other cases for revenge.

It is important not to huddle together all violent acts of the individuals and groups of people. Extermination of the tyrants, self-sacrifice in the name of freedom and independence were considered at all times as the most noble and heroic acts. French Marquis Lafayette, Venezuelan Patriot Francisco de Miranda and others fought for the freedom and independence of the United States, English poet John Byron died fighting for independence of Greece. Thousands of people from different countries joined the ranks of participants of the American, French, Chinese, Russian and other revolutions.

Legitimate and noble is also the extermination of the occupiers of the native country and their collaborators by any available to the patriots' ways and means, many of which are akin to terrorist. Some acts, committed in defense of social justice, especially if the legal ways to do that are unacceptable because of corruption and inaction of the law, would be included to the row. Thinking about the phenomenon of individual terror, it is necessary to take into account one more important aspect arising from the basic rules and regulations of objective life formed under the influence of national systems of values, including the world's religions.

As the French scientist Block [1] has noticed, "All people of the middle ages in general and feudalism in particular lived under the sign of revenge. Revenge was a sacred duty of the insulting. It does not replace even the insulting's death. Then the whole group of kinsmen included into revenge. And there was no more valuable moral obligation than that one". The world religions, prescribing the standards of conduct to their followers, called to act on the principle of "life for life and even to render the enemy multiple measures. Therefore, any exhortations like 'be civilized', 'act according to the law' or a threat of punishment do not influence on many adherents of these faiths. Especially when there are no institutions, capable evaluate objectively the actions of the rapists and to punish them according to law. The victims of injustice and violence, being convinced in the necessity of punishing the rapists, "take the role of judges" on themselves. In doing so, they consider themselves as "fighters for justice". According to American analyst Hoffman [2], "terrorist...believes that he serves the cause of "goodness", aimed at the achievement of greater good for the broader masses of people real or imagined, that he and his organization supposedly represent".

Modern international terrorism is mostly derived from the struggle and rivalry of the states for influence in the world, and in all likelihood, will be continue, manifesting itself in different forms, until there will remain discriminatory relations between individuals, groups and countries.

On the conduct of the states and groups of people in the world it can be predicted the possible geography and character of terrorism. It is no coincidence that in the past decades, the main targets of terrorist attacks became the Russian Federation, the United States, and their allies. In the late 1990's and in the early noughties the Russian leadership has provoked senseless and fratricidal war in the Chechen Republic, destabilizing situation in the entire Northern Caucasus, and this led to a series of terrorist acts across the country.

The legal settlement of this unjust action assisted to decrease the number of the terrorist acts.

The United States and some of their allies also behave themselves in the world, not always thinking about the consequences of their acts. According to estimates of the prominent American lawyer and ex-Minister of Justice Ramsey Clark, during the intervention in Yugoslavia in 1999, NATO forces have committed 19 international crimes of [3]. Tens of thousands of innocent people were maimed, orphaned, deprived their homes and property of; millions of people were forced to leave the native land, turned into refugees and displaced persons, among whom there were many of those, who tried to take revenge on the perpetrators of their troubles and misfortunes. Indeed, many terrorist acts followed after [4].

Revenge can be justified if it is directed only against the perpetrators of the tragedies escaped lawful punishment. Annihilation of the murderers of Israeli athletes during the Olympics in Munich in 1972 was a legitimate act, but somehow differently should be evaluated other acts of the Israeli authorities to murder three leaders of Fatah and the Popular front for the liberation of Palestine in April 1973 in Beirut by undermining the seven-story building, inhabited by many civilians of Lebanon [5].

After the shelling of the Russian aircraft over Syria by Turkish authorities, and shooting the descending on parachutes pilots in November 2015, there were voices in Russia to "search and destroy" the perpetrators. The Russian President said that "we will pursue terrorists wherever we can find them". He ordered to destroy any force, which may be a threat to Russian troops in Syria. It is obvious that the outrage here has replaced the law. On the reasonable standards of national and international life it is necessary first to prove the culpability in all cases, and then to punish the criminals depending on the severity of the guilt.

The occupiers, aggressors and dictators always have declared people's resistance movements terroristic and fighters for freedom and independence-terrorists and ordered to shot them without any trial. The people of the occupied countries rightly believed and believe that their partisans are heroes and patriots. Due to impossibility and futility of open appearances for resisting to violence of the illegitimate powers (foreign or own) people resorted to spot dead-blows with objectives, firstly, to take revenge and to escalate of fear in the enemy's camp and, secondly, to bring the world's attention to their calamities.

Apparently, the Arab officials, who believed that "the reason for the spread of terrorism is not the absence of democracy but the general discontent with the policies" of the Great powers, and that "the only way to achieve stability in the region is to change their policy toward the Arab world" [6] are not so far from a truth. According to them, the Arabs belligerence and arising from it terror is a reaction of the Islamic world to attempts to impose on him overseas values considered here as immoral.

By 2015, the international community had achieved 19 agreements on combating terrorism. According to them the states ought to freeze the assets of the terrorist organizations and to

create conditions for cooperation among the states, cooperate through exchange of the intelligence information, carry out a strict border control to prevent the movement of terrorists, to deny them access to weapons, and any safe havens [7]. But in fact the 'war against international terrorism' has led not to reducing the number of pain points in the world and strengthening the rule of law in it, but to further destabilizing of the international order. As the head of the law school at Notre Dame Mary Ellen O'Connell justly observed, some leaders, appropriating the law of war (to kill without warning and detain people without trial), completely forgot about responsibilities under the international law [8].

If the processes of internationalization and globalization, and formation of universal civil society do reduce the role of the states as national political institutions, the fear of terrorism strengthens and amplifies them, contributes to the further expansion of the repressive bodies and restricts democracy, and therefore the states themselves could generate it and exaggerate the possible dangers. So, the events of September 11, 2001 in the USA became the reason for establishing the Department of the Homeland Security in the structure of administration of the United States, which was not existed in the previous two hundred and twenty-five years. That is, "the war on terror gently followed after the prospect of war with Iraq allowed the State to accumulate more power" [9].

The terrorist act in Beslan (Russia, 2004) became a cause for the limitation of democracy in the country by abolishing of the governor elections and strengthening of the 'power vertical', substituting the elected by the people and responsible to them representatives to appointees of the President and responsible personally before him. The terrorist attacks on Russian aircrafts over Sinai (31 October) and over Syria (November 14), 2015 'helped' temporarily divert the population's attention from internal problems generated by the crisis, inflation, corruption and the government's inability to cope with them. Bombings in Paris (November 13, 2015) led to propose the revision of the Constitution of the Fifth Republic with empowerment of the President of France. So the old maxima "divide and rule!" may be amended and extended: "and do originate fear!"

Though the terrorists may be terribly bothersome, they are unlikely to pose a danger to the public or the security of the state, the American political scientist Kenneth Waltz believes. Terrorism does not change the first basic fact of international politics the gross imbalance of power in the world in favor of the United States. Instead of, "the effect of September 11 became an increasing of the American power and increasing their military presence in the world" [10]. Waltz's colleague Amitai Etzioni is solidary with him. The construction of the American half-Empire considerably accelerated after September 11, 2001, although many of his blocks were put in place much earlier, he writes [11]. The American organization 'Active democracy' justly ironized over the fact that the powerful and terrible enemies of humanity have been broken during six years of the second world war, but the mighty powers find themselves helpless before forces without aircrafts, fleets, tanks and many others [12].

Now the term 'terrorism' is pronounced roughly with the same sense as the words 'heretic' in the middle Ages and 'communism' were pronounced in the XIX - XX centuries, i. e. with horror and contempt. The labels 'terrorism', 'terrorist organization's given as frank killers, motivated by personal animosity, so combatants, justly struggling for the freedom and independence of their peoples. The term is used also by rival political and social forces against each other. So, in Myanmar (Burma), the military government has presented all critics of the regime as 'terrorists', while dissidents considered the same regime as terroristic. In May, 2016 some entrepreneurs of France tried to accuse even the participants of the strikes against the tightening of the labour law in terrorism.

When the sound meditation, the movement of Arabs for the democratic and law abiding statehood, relying on true national values, is a consequence of the most flagrant interference of the foreign states in all spheres the region's life. It is possible to assume that part of the people decided, how that has often happened in occupied countries, to start a resistance movement and to take the destiny of their country into their own hands, and to form new national institutions guided by own system of values, as they had imagined them. According to political theory, it is a split of the society and the commencement of the civil war to abolish the form of government became destructive, since "it is the Right of the People to alter or... to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to affect their Safety and Happiness" [13]. For the little educated in his most part people religion became a unifying of factor. Thousands representatives of other countries and nations joined the ranks of the rebels. Why? Everybody more or less known history can easily find the right answers to the question: For the same reasons, why hundreds and thousands of foreigners fought in the ranks G. Washington's army during the war of independence in the United States and participated in the revolutions of the XIX -XX centuries.

The noble means should be applied to achieve the noble objectives. But the leadership of the Islamic movement from the beginning had chosen wrong and illegal direction. Instead of supporting truly national-patriotic forces in the region for its independence and progress, it announced all those, who does not adhere to the Wahhabi version of Islam, infidels to be killed, mobilized children from 14 years of age, what are prohibited by international law, organized public executions of fallen into their hands foreign journalists and experts, worked in the region according to cooperation treaties between the states, as well as barbarically destroyed artifacts of humankind of pre-Islamic times. Humankind considers all this as international crimes, which it must suspend and to punish the perpetrators. As a result, the so called Islamic movement obtained the nature of international movement of the criminals, against which the Kurdish self-defense groups from Iraqi and Syrian Kurdistan actively fought. The Turkish President R. Endogen forbade Turkish Kurds to help their fellow men on the other side of the border. But the feelings of consanguinity and solidarity at times are stronger than any taboos, and Turkish Kurds

travelled to Syria to fight with terrorists. They have been accused by Turkish authorities in Islamism, and their living areas were bombed at the end of July 2015, killing many patriots, to what the Kurds, in turn, responded with organization explosions near Turkish police centers, as well as with assassination of Turkish servicemen.

Where is the cause and where is the consequence here? The official Turkish press estimated these steps of the Kurds as terroristic. But the Kurds, forced to defend themselves and respond to state violence by relatively small pinpricks, and with no less a reason believe that the actions of the Turkish authorities were terroristic. That is indeed the case, shows The attempts of the Turkish authorities to establish their control over region of Afrin with Kurdish population carried out under the cynical slogan "olive branch" will help to find the correct answer.

It was said about rivalry the world's leading states as one of the factors that feed international terrorism. This is well illustrated in the case of the ISIL. July 1, 2015 the leader of ISIL Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi named Russia, helping the government of Syria, and the United States, bombing a part of the controlled by him territories, his enemies. Logically, the opponents of the ISIL had to come together for a joint fight with it, but instead, the United States authorities announced in September of the same year that the main danger for them originates from "Islamic State" and Russia, placing them in a same row. An elusive mind puzzle has originated. Russia and the United States de facto acted as allies in combating the ISIL. But "struggling" verbally with the radical wing of the terrorists, the leadership of the United States along with the Saudi Arabia actually continued to provide the so-called 'moderate' wing with the anti-tank missile complexes BGM 71 TOW [14], 'turning a blind eye' to the fact that the lion's share of aid going to the 'moderates', went for the 'radicals'. So, according to an American expert on Syria, Professor D. Landis, from 60 to 80% of the weapons passed America fell into the hands of Al-Qaida and its affiliates [15,16]. American public organization "Active democracy" on its website provides evidences how the United States authorities and their allies support terrorist in different parts of the world, including the ISIL [12]. This practice shows that the true object of the policy of all participating in the region's processes is the strengthening their influence here, for achieving what they are willing to cooperate with anyone, at least with the Satan.

## Conclusion

The individual terrorism grows out of the state terrorism. A false understanding of the national interests, resulting interstate conflicts and rivalry, also serves as breeding soil for international terrorism; they make any joint and effective combat with it impossible. Moreover, this leads to the reproduction of terrorism in new forms and manifestations. The most effective ways of overcoming terrorism are respectful attitude to the rights and freedoms of all individuals and peoples, and benevolent participation in resolving all conflicts between them in strict compliance with the norms of the international law. The ways to remove threats of international terrorism are, approximately the same as within individual countries-democratization of public

life in fact, the rule of law within countries and while solving all the world's problems [17]. "Such is the moral construction of the world, that no national crime passes unpunished in the long run...", a prominent theorist and practices of democracy Thomas Jefferson wrote, "Were your present oppressors to reflect on the same truth, they would spare to their own countries the penalties on their present wrongs which will be inflicted on them in future times" [18]. Many of these 'wrongs' have the appearance of terrorism.

Objectively minded American scientists also see the true causes of terrorism and real ways to its remedy. The Americans, the well-known political scientist Robert Keohanesays, could try to understand more about global politics, to become less arrogant towards other cultures and political systems, and more determined to play a positive role in improving of the appalling living conditions often conducive to support terrorism and other forms of violence [19].

It is hard to disagree with that opinion of the distinguished scientist. The same might be said of the authorities of the Russian Federation and the other 'Great Powers'.

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