

PLURALITY OF DEFINITIONS AND FORMS OF TERRORISM THROUGH HISTORY

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Abstract: *This article discusses the dilemmas of dealing with the definition of the concept of terrorism, which is a relatively old phenomenon, but whose content to the present has not been precisely defined. Numerous characteristics and determinants offered by academic and administrative definitions that we face, at the same time are followed by various forms of terrorism, which further complicates the question of defining this phenomenon. Since in the contemporary moment terrorism is gaining in actuality, it becomes more frequent and takes over as the biggest security threat at the global level, it is important to become familiar with the attempts to determine the term, but more importantly to reach the characteristic features of most terrorist actions in order to, according to them, easier and faster identify potential threats that may be considered terrorism.*

Keywords: *terrorism, academic definitions, administrative definitions, manifestations of terrorism.*

INTRODUCTION

Terrorism is one of the biggest threats to modern security systems of the states, because of which they, particularly in recent decades, have been making great efforts to act preemptively and preventively to this danger. Due to the high topicality of this phenomenon many members of the professional community, as well as the general public, deal with attempts to arrive at the precise definition of the concept of terrorism, in order to better understand the phenomena and achieve better preparedness of society on a global level for responding to this type of risk. However, numerous efforts have not resulted in a single generally accepted definition, for reasons which we will hereinafter discuss.

In the modern world, terrorism is the most prevalent and the most dangerous form of endangering the security of both national states and the citizens thereof. It has engulfed almost all parts of the world, and it is difficult to predict terrorism, especially if we do not understand the nature of terrorist organizations, and if we ignore the preventive component of action against terrorism, or if the fight against this scourge is reduced to dealing with a terrorist act, and on activities thereafter. Terrorism takes a large number of victims and, consequently, can greatly destabilize the security systems of the affected countries.

Bearing in mind the above facts, the basic tendency of this paper is to review some of the important definitions of terrorism, derive from them common features that can be attributed to phenomena that are associated with the terrorism, and consider the different aspects of the current forms of terrorism and its manifestation.

DIFFICULTIES IN DEFINING TERRORISM

Terrorism is not a new phenomenon, but the term terrorism is relatively difficult to define, although it has a long history of use. Descriptions can be found that view terrorism both as a strategy and as a tactic, or as a crime or a sacred duty, somewhere as a justified reaction to oppression, and somewhere as inadmissible horror and monstrosity. Which description dominates depends on the point of view of the one who considers the concept of terrorism. Terrorism has often been an effective tactic for a weaker side in the conflict, and it always represents an asymmetric form of conflict. Because of the secret nature and relatively small organization, its opponents are faced with the struggle against an unclear and often little-known form.

The term terrorism, although widely used, carries meanings that often depend on the prevailing political and ideological framework, as well as the moral, social and value judgment which is added to it. Very often, terrorism has a pejorative connotation, while “the international community cannot reach consensus on whether terrorism is unlawful in all its aspects and situations, or is it sometimes allowed to achieve a legitimate objective.(Krstic, 2016)“

Despite the fact that there are numerous efforts to reach a valid and generally accepted definition of this term, a number of academic and administrative definitions (definitions offered by the institutions of a country or an institution of international organizations) testify to the fact that a consensus on this issue is still not present. Terrorism is always firmly linked with politics, and in the international context it is common for great powers to have different views on terrorist activities and organizations, depending on their interests at any given moment. For example, the United States had long ignored intelligence information which they received about the activities of the terrorist organization Al Qaeda in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the turning point for changing the dominant view of this organization were the terrorist attacks by Al Qaeda in the United States on 11 September 2001. This case too confirms the assumption that “anyone who has the political power to define the legitimacy also has the power to define terrorism (Gacinovic, 2008).”

With academic definitions the main difficulty that arises is the question of the author who attempts to define the concept of terrorism, because due to the attention and publicity drawn by terrorist organizations and actions, many are dealing with this concept, among them many incompetent persons, with varying success.

When it comes to administrative definitions one should not lose sight of the fact that they are always products of institutions, either at the state level, or at the international level. For this reason they necessarily reflect the views of the political institutions in which they arise and therefore such definitions cannot be considered universal and applicable in all situations.

All may agree with the view that terrorism is a major security problem, but consensus on refinement of the concept of terrorism can hardly be achieved in the foreseeable future, especially because of the growing number of different forms of organization and activities that could be linked to terrorism. Consideration of some of the available definitions of this term can at best result in isolating most often characteristic elements that can be attributed to most forms of terrorism, based on which, if the situation requires a specific event could be subsumed under the heading of terrorism provided that the above event can be assigned to identified typical elements common to the majority of terrorist acts.

ACADEMIC AND ADMINISTRATIVE DEFINITIONS OF TERRORISM

Since so far none of the offered definitions of terrorism is sufficiently completed and accepted as a universal and generally recognized, through a short review of academic and administrative definitions of this term we can extract basic characteristics of forms that have historically been related to terrorism.

The very concept of terrorism dates from the reign of terror from 1789, and is derived from the Latin word *terror*, *terroris*, which means fear and political intimidation.

The first definition of terrorism is linked to the Third International Conference for the Unification of Criminal Law, held in 1930 in Brussels. On that occasion, terrorism was defined as a sort of crime against international law, more specifically it included a ridged use of resources that have the potential to produce a general danger (Bajagić, 2000, pp.25).

Subsequent attempts by the academic community as well as individual institutions of states and international organizations to precisely define the concept of terrorism reached a consensus in terms of the most present elements of terrorism - violence as the main method, citizens and governments as targets, causing and foundation of fear and extortion of political or social change as the most common goals, while a large number of casualties that terrorists tend to achieve reveals the spectacularity, as one of the segments for defining terrorism. (Gaćinović, 2011, pp.362)

The dictionary of the French language defines terrorism as the sum of the acts of violence carried out by a political organization with the aim of influencing the population and creating an atmosphere of uncertainty. In the sociological lexicon we can find a description of terrorism as a method of struggle for political goals by using violence, intimidation and blackmail. In German Dictionary, terrorism is defined as a belief, performance and behavior with a tendency of implementation of political goals through terrorist acts, while the English dictionary simply defines this term as killing people for political purposes. (Krstić, 2016).

Among the eminent theoreticians Glaser defined terrorism as “the use of violence by various means in order to achieve individual, personal gain at the expense of the company or to achieve certain political doctrine of which it will depend whether it is a common crime or a law or political crime.(Međunarodna politika, 01.09.1998, p. 7.) “

Theorist Robert specified terrorism as the “use of means of violence in order to achieve

the effects of political, individual or collective attacks, crashes in the form of invasions, keeping or execution of power directed by different political bodies that seek to generate fear and insecurity. (Međunarodna politika, 01.09.1998, p. 7.) “

Theorist Stern theorist has perceived terrorism as “an act of violence or threat of violence to persons who are not combatants or execute vengeance, achieving intimidation or influence an audience otherwise. (Dimitrijević, 6/2005, p.39)“

Among the local authors, Andreja Savic in “Fundamentals of National Security” from 1998 defined terrorism in the broadest political sense as a method of political struggle which is characterized by the systematic use of violence to intimidate opponents and consequently finally crack down his resistance.

Then, in the article “Terrorism as a contemporary security threat” (2011) Radomir Milašinović and Saša Mijalković viewed terrorism as a purposeful, meaningful and very often organized and systematic use of violence and intimidation aimed at creating or exploiting a climate of fear among citizens and rulers but with the ultimate intention of proclaiming certain ideological and political values, goals and interests, and forcing the official, legal and legitimate civil authorities to meet the demands of terrorists. According to these authors, the terrorists may have legitimate goals, but it is illegal and morally unacceptable that in order to achieve such goals they use terrorism as a tool.

Milan Mijalkovski in the paper “Analysis and assessment of the terrorist threat” from the 2004 saw terrorism as a form of war in which there prevail unarmed facilities, while the armed activities are targeted against carefully selected victims with the intent to commit murder, temporary or permanent physical injury or kidnapping, and all in such a way that will result in the intimidation of indirect victims, and ultimately achieve the terrorists’ goals.

Milo Bošković’s in “Criminological Lexicon” from 2003 gave the definition of terrorism as doctrines, methods and instruments to cause fear, panic and insecurity among the population, by means of continuous and systematic use of violence. (Krstić, 2016)

Dragan Simeunović, in the book “Terrorism” published in 2009, defined terrorism as follows: “Modern terrorism is a complex form of organized group, rarely individual or institutional political violence marked not only by frightening physical and psychological, but also sophisticated technological methods of political struggle most usually in times of political and time crisis, but rarely achieved in terms of economic and political stability of a society, systematically trying to accomplish ‘big goals’ in the morbidly spectacular way, and inappropriately in regards to given conditions, primarily social situation and historical possibilities of those who practiced terrorism as a political strategy. (Simeunović, 2009, p.18)“

As for the administrative definitions of terrorism, the United States Department of Defense defines terrorism as “the calculated use of violence against justice and the threat of violence in order to instill fear; intention to coercion or intimidate governments or societies in order to achieve goals that are generally political, religious, or ideological. (*International Terrorism and Security Research*, 2016) “ In this definition there are three key concepts - violence, fear and intimidation.

FBI defines terrorism as “the unlawful use of force or violence against persons or their property to intimidate or coerce the government, the civilian population or any of its segment, all with the purpose of achieving political or social objectives. (*International Terrorism and Security Research*, 2016)

State Department of the United States defines terrorism as “designed, political violence committed against non-combat targets by sub-national groups or clandestine agents, usually in order to influence target groups against which violence is directed. (*International Terrorism and Security Research, 2016*)”

If we look further, beyond the United States, there are even larger differences in the conceptual definition of terrorism.

The United Nations defined terrorism as “the act of deprivation of life or injury or act of destruction or damage to civilian or government property without the permission of certain governments, from individuals or groups of people who act independently, or governments that work from their own initiative or belief in order to achieve a political objective. (Gaćinović, 2005, p.47) “

The European Union has defined terrorism as “the deliberate act that causes serious damage to the country or international organization to intimidate the population, unduly compelling a government or an international organization to do or to abstain from any action, and so seriously destabilizing or destroying the fundamental political, economic or social structure by attacking the life or physical integrity of a person, kidnapping, hostage-taking, capture of aircraft or ships or producing, possession or transport of weapons or explosives. (Gaćinović, 2008).’

In summary it can be said that numerous attempts to define terrorism as a phenomenon which, especially in recent decades seriously threatens security and national, and global levels, did not lead to an exact and generally acceptable definition for all countries and all citizens, but that there is an unequivocal consensus in terms of the threat it poses, fear, intimidation and potentially expanding number of victims. Also, by analyzing the selected administrative and academic definitions of the term terrorism there can be extracted certain characteristic elements of this phenomenon, such as the use of force, political nature of intimidation and spread of fear, innocent persons as victims, the expectation of the psychological effect, unpredictable appearance, extortion, etc.

THE HISTORY OF TERRORISM

The same difficulties that characterize attempts to precisely define the concept of terrorism are inherent to attempts to provide a historical review and determine the roots of the emergence of terrorism. Especially through the history there have been recorded many different events that had some of the elements of terrorism, but which cannot in the full sense, taking into account the context in which they occur, be considered terrorism as we know it today.

For example, many authors consider as terrorist acts attacks by Jews with short swords (sica) against the Roman commanders of Judea, or political killing of the Athenian tyrant Hipparchus (514 BC). Further, as the forerunners of terrorism there are also the Assassins, who were active from 1090 to 1279, and in the name of spreading pure Islam used to kill Persians, Turks and Syrians. Until this period, the acts that may be in some way linked to some of the accepted factors of terrorism, were more motivated by religious and ethnic reasons rather than political. (Keča, 2012, p.34)

The emergence of the term terrorism is associated with the French Revolution (1775-1795) and the activities of the Jacobin rule, when at the same time terrorism spread to other

parts of the world. “Those who advocated revolution and upon the realization of the “reign of terror” proudly called themselves the real terrorists. The purpose of terrorism then was a consolidation of power of the new government by intimidation of counterrevolutionaries, rippers and all others that the new regime considered “enemies of the people”, and terrorism, as such, had a very positive meaning. (Keča, 2012, p.35)“

In the 19th century, the understanding of the term terrorism had changed and as terrorist acts were considered all subversive and illegal activities of the opponents of the capitalist class, which have been performed in order to change the order. This period was marked by numerous demonstrations, political assassinations and various forms of violence in European cities, in order to draw attention to the organizers and perpetrators of these actions. The anarchists used to call themselves terrorists, they carried out various violent actions, and in 1881 they assassinated Russian Emperor Alexander II.

The twentieth century brought novelties in many fields, including in the field of terrorism, namely the operation of which may be linked to today’s understanding of terrorism. Those who carried out the October Revolution in Russia had used terrorism as a method of struggle in the international field, with the conventional wisdom of the then Russian elite that terrorism is the only effective way for the modernization of Russian society. Violence of this period was the motivating factor for many contemporary acts of terrorism, which, in addition, use new forms and new means, due to the general technological and social development.

Therefore, efforts to determine the precise historical moment of emergence of terrorism require a great deal of caution, because terrorism as a phenomenon has changed and evolved, and what at some distant point in history was called terrorism is very different from the modern terrorist activities. Maybe it is safest to say that the various elements of terrorism occurred throughout history in different, for a specific period typical shapes and that the modern era gave terrorism even broader definition and meaning.

FORMS OF CONTEMPORARY TERRORISM

In terms of forms of terrorism and their identification it is useful to bear in mind the numerous classifications of terrorism, which are performed on the basis of different principles of division, and based on different criteria.

Classifications of terrorism can be carried out according to the methods used by terrorists, according to the means used in carrying out terrorist acts, according to the objectives they want to achieve, by type of actors, i.e. the subjects of terrorism, etc.

One of the more comprehensive classifications identifies the forms of terrorism as follows(Simeunović, 2009):

1. according to methods:
 - classical or conventional terrorism
 - suicidal terrorism
 - cyber terrorism
 - narco terrorism
2. according to means:

- classical or conventional terrorism
 - bio-chemical terrorism
 - nuclear terrorism
3. according to goals:
- ideology motivated terrorism (which can be left-wing or right-wing terrorism)
 - ethnic - separatist terrorism
 - religious terrorism (which can be the terrorism of sects or it can be based on interpretations of the great religions)
4. according to actors – subjects of terrorism:
- individual terrorism
 - terrorism of organizations and illegal groups
 - institutional terrorism (e.g. state terrorism)

Modern terrorism, whose forms and actors' everyday occur in all parts of today's globalized international community is in constant expansion and the end of its activities cannot be perceived in the near future. Terrorism today is very often in the role of fighter of democracy and its accompanying forms, and the most visible is the case of the religion based Islamist terrorism which in this way, using this illicit means, seeks to prevent a change in its traditional and religion-based society.

Islam today shows its expansionist face, particularly against members of the Christian community, regardless of whether it is the Orthodox and Catholic communities, and its ideological product, Islamist terrorism, is in conflict with those who it considers the creators of democracy, secularization, and Western or modern style life that is contrary to the principles of the Islamic religion and traditional societies. Frequently there appear new and very powerful terrorist groups and organizations that declare themselves as organizations that act in the name of Islam, and of their threats and intimidating actions today are not safe even the militarily most powerful states.

Terrorism may appear anywhere, both in the small and poor countries as well in the largest, most economically advanced and militarily very strong ones. Prediction of terrorist actions is very difficult, because it is a phenomenon that carries a huge burden of secrecy regarding the organization, hiring new members, performance, goals and targets. The newly established Islamist terrorist organizations, such as the "Islamic State", "Boko Haram" in Nigeria and others have now overtaken the traditional Islamist organizations both by their brutality and violence, which is why the whole modern world has united in condemning their criminal activity.

The international community, guided by the European Union, the Russian Federation and the United States has also united in a joint operation against the radical Islamic organizations in the Middle East, which through their terrorist operations led to the destruction of certain countries, such as Syria, Iraq and Libya, as well as the exodus of entire nations migrating to the European continent. Europe today is faced with a wave of migrants and to a large extent is itself responsible for the current crisis in the Middle East because the support of the United States and their hegemonic politics contributed to the fact that a large part of the world is now in the state of war, crisis and large migrations.

CONCLUSION

In the modern world, terrorism poses the greatest danger and the greatest threat to the security systems of the countries, because it is linked with ruthlessness and cruelty, and most often directed at carefully selected targets. In order to protect themselves as far as possible from potential terrorist risk, states are forced to employ all available means, to timely plan and organize the defense against terrorism. The overall fight against terrorism should start from the answer to the question of what terrorism is and which actions could be considered terrorist actions, after which there should follow the preventive action both of the state and society as a whole.

The forms of contemporary terrorism are numerous, but the most common is religious-based terrorism that has the toughest and most far-reaching consequences. It is this kind of terrorism that increasingly encourages states to cooperate with each other in dealing with terrorist security risk.

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