

TERRORISM IN THE CONTEXT OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SOCIETY

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Abstract: *Terrorism, as a form of emergence of asymmetric warfare, is a major transnational threat, driven by ethnic, religious, nationalist, separatist, political and economic reasons. Terrorism is a special social phenomenon, which at the beginning of the century and the millennium, through its vastness and variety of forms of manifestation, reached a complex, wide-scale feature. This article analyzes the terrorist phenomenon taking into account the characteristic elements of those who have had a great resonance - the common feature of all is the terror element, an element of primary importance having a serious weight in terms of moral and legal.*

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Introduction

The social paradigm of terrorism is based on the idea of a link between social or community movements and terrorism, underlining that this phenomenon grows amid the decline or weakening of these movements, not by expressing and directly causing the weaknesses of the reference cause and even more, substituting them artificially, voluntarily, and more and more violently as this substitution is artificial. This paradigm defines the "inversion" that an individual, becoming a terrorist, abusively identifies himself with a social, national, or other cause, giving it a new meaning. What characterizes terrorist organizations around the world is that terrorists have intentions, but they have no principles - neither moral nor political. For them, ideology is mere talk.

Terrorism is inevitably related to power: acquiring and using power to operate a political change. According to the Explanatory Dictionary of the Romanian Language, to terrorize means *to inspire someone's horror through threats or intimidation methods*³³. Meanwhile, violence is defined as *the use of force by an individual or a group of individuals, in order to prejudice the integrity of a person and/or his(their) property*.

Terrorism does not only produce terror. Moreover, terror is not always the main result of a terrorist act or a terrorist campaign. Terrorism seriously affects both the social structure and the individual as such, being able to distort the code of perception and the images that society members depend on and trust. Uncertainty about the behavioral aberration induced by terrorism can lead to social disorientation and discouragement.

Terrorism, although it does produce individual victims, is a crime against an entire social community. Terror is a natural psychological phenomenon, and terrorism is the conscious exploitation of it. Terrorism has a coercive character, designed to manipulate the will of its direct victims and the target audience. The degree of fear is generated by the very nature of the crime in question, by its mode

³³ *Explanatory Dictionary of Romanian Language*, Univers Enciclopedic Publishing House, Bucharest, 1998, p.638

of committing or its apparent uselessness and absurdity, by indifference to human life, to material and cultural assets or to the symbols of that society. This justified fear is the source of the potency of terrorism, as the intimacy of society is affected by such a continuing threat. To keep its credibility unaltered, terrorism systematically materializes the potential threat in bloody violence. For this reason, sociologists define terrorism as *the use of undercover violence by a group in order to achieve political goals*.

Terrorism, as a method of action, means the practice of terror. It designates acts that are likely to provoke, in a certain environment, a feeling of intense fear, the predilection of an inevitable evil, in other words, acts of intimidation under all circumstances. It can be added that, viewed as a whole, terrorist offenses are considered to be serious threats, in a concrete case, with the tendency to repeat themselves. Under the notion of terrorism, it does not concern the nature of the action, but the method of execution.

In criminal discipline, terrorism³⁴, in the broadest sense, means any crime, whether political or social, whose execution or even announcement, cause a general fear and which by its nature creates a general danger.

In the view of criminalist Donnedieu de Vabres in the characterization of terrorism, the purely political goal is not absolutely necessary. It is a fact of a gang, often an international one, which gives it particular efficacy; the processes they use are likely to cause terror - explosions, railroad damage, etc. Finally, the offense must create a common danger³⁵.

Professor J. A. Roux defined terrorism at the Fourth Conference on the Unification of Criminal Law as any action involving the use of dangerous means for persons or goods undertaken to terrorize the population.

In Romania there have been concerns about the definition of terrorism, especially after 2001. The national strategy for preventing and combating terrorism defines terrorism as: all the actions and credible threats of illegal actions that cumulatively fulfill the following essential characteristics: they are premeditated by individuals or different types of social structures, motivated by radically hostile conceptions and attitudes towards other entities, by the perception that relations with them have shaped intolerable situations and the will to act against them in extreme ways; using violent and/or destructive means and methods, programmatically accumulated and learned; directly target individuals and/or important material factors to support social life; deliberately aim at spreading anxiety, insecurity, fear and panic on a large scale, meaning that they are organized and run in such a way as to provide them with a maximum psychological impact and to induce the public to perceive the underlying aims pursued, as well as attitudes/social behaviors favorable to them; they have explicit or implicitly political objectives, aiming at ultimately the influence of an entity - most often the constituted authority - usually beyond individuals directly affected or threatened; they are conducted outside the state of war or outside the scope of the laws of war in the event of armed conflict³⁶.

Once the terrorist phenomenon has grown, and Romania has engaged with forces in the international coalition against terrorism, it has become necessary to adopt a law that will allow and combat this phenomenon. This law defines the main threats posing public danger and affecting national security and which have the following characteristics: they are committed intentionally by terrorist entities, motivated by extremist conceptions and attitudes, hostile to other entities against which they

³⁴ National Academy of Information, *10th Session of Scientific Communications "Security and Society: Challenges of the Third Millennium*, ANI Publishing House, Bucharest, 2004, p.377

³⁵ <http://www.assemblee-nationale.fr>

³⁶ *National Strategy for Preventing and Combating Terrorism*, Romanian Intelligence Service, Bucharest, 2002, p.11

act by achieving specific, political objectives; they target human and/or material factors within public authorities and institutions, the civilian population or any other segment thereof; produce conditions that have a strong psychological impact on the population, aimed at drawing attention to the pursued aims³⁷.

Since 1989, international terrorism has posed a threat to the security of the world's states. However, it seems unlikely to qualify this risk as an open threat or to exacerbate its effects. From the point of view of international politics, well-known actions such as: the wave of bomb attacks in France in 1995, the violent disorders in Germany orchestrated by the PKK, Hamas's attacks on Israel, ETA's actions in Spain, the attacks of September 11, 2001, those in London and Madrid or Mumbai and Moscow, despite having a strong echo and challenging politics - were not able to change the will of those countries, on the contrary, they helped to strengthen it.

The power of terrorism originates in the weaknesses of the target country, especially in the asymmetric value of social and political life. Terrorism itself can not really change the political will of a nation unless it is in favor of interests that tend to ignore the rights of those affected. At this stage, we are clearly confronted with the problem posed by international terrorism which, from a political perspective, is perceived as a global outcome, but its physical effects on society are limited, and those of a psychological nature tend to be quickly removed by the broad international public opinion. Therefore, the scientific analysis has been geared towards establishing the political relevance of the different types of terrorism, the causes and modalities of manifestation.

International terrorism, as an expression of indirect confrontation between governments, is more politically encouraging because it erodes international standards through attacks that do not distinguish between regular militaries and innocent civilian. However, it may be more efficient, because the state infrastructure can be discovered and hit by any means.

Currently, the crucial point at the strategic level lies less in the current human and material costs of international terrorism than in its possible solutions, the same as those of guerrilla battles: deregulation and delocalisation. The deregulation of terrorism includes its individualization, intensification of links with criminal organizations, especially at local level, and its extension as a practice of these organizations. Delocalization is synonymous with globalization, with international expansion. These features have posed a direct problem to states about the diffusion of power, a special case being the possession of weapons of mass destruction.

Terrorist groups

American terrorism has had as its emergence point the social movements of the 60s and 70s, especially those concerning the citizens' rights of the black population and against the Vietnam War. These social upheavals have awakened harsh reactions from conservative political forces. The terrorist activities associated with civil rights movements began with bombings, ambushes, robberies organized by Black Panthers, The Black Liberation Army, and Ku-Klux-Klan.

After the end of the Vietnam War, the American left-wing left its ideological base. Since 1980, extreme left-wing terrorism has been represented by Machteros, Weather Underground, The Sam Mcville-Jonathan Jackson Brigade, FALN, BLA, many of these clusters merging into the United Freedom Front, Armed Resistance Unit and The May 19 Communist Organization. The extreme terrorist right remained after the 1980s represented by KKK, the American Nazi Party and the National Alliance³⁸.

³⁷ Law no. 535 on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism, Romanian Official Gazette, Part I, no. 161/08.12.2004, p.2

³⁸ Anghel Andreescu, Niță Dan, *Op. cit.* p.52

Terrorism in Greece began to manifest itself in 1975, shortly after the overthrow of the military dictatorship regime.

Among the major terrorist organizations in Greece, the most popular are: Independent Left (1972), November 17 (1974), PAK and ASPIDA.

Ideology and frustration: *Third world*. In order to fully understand the contemporary terrorist phenomenon³⁹, it is not enough to analyze it solely under its insurgent strategy, which would - as we have shown - presuppose a predetermined, politically motivated plan to finally secure the takeover of power. In many situations, terrorist actions are considered to be so irrational because they seem to have no political motivation, not being determined by a tangible purpose.

Terrorism in Italy. In Italy, terrorism seems to have been defeated⁴⁰. Between 1969 and 1996, 14,569 attacks took place in Italy. These have been committed both by right-wing and left-wing terrorists, as well as by international terrorists. The record of this impressive number of attacks includes 415 dead and 1,181 injured. But the attacks reached a climax in 1979, when 2,513 took place, dropping to 30 in 1996.

The psychological and motivational dimensions of terrorism in Italy can be more easily analyzed if we are particularly concerned with left-wing terrorists who tend to extract their motivations from common sources with others. Instead, right-wing terrorists, such as the Palestinians, who carry out terrorist acts on Italian territory in order to achieve goals unrelated to the Italian political scene, are very different, have a wide variety of motivations, ideologies and goals.

"Terre d'asile": *French terrorism*. Since 1982, the French authorities have faced for the first time fierce criticism of the laxity with which they deal with the issue of international terrorism.

The French position on terrorism has its explanations. First of all, France has a long tradition of receiving refugees. Currently, over 120 different nationalities live in this country, the number of foreigners surpassing 9% of the French population. Since 1945, more than one million emigrants have received French citizenship, about 200,000 of them having a political refugee status.

The underlying causes of terrorist activities

The socio-political climate in which the terrorist organization operates is one of the causes, in the sense that it may include variables of general culture (history, tradition, literature, religion) that are assimilated differently by members of society through various social structures resulting formal ideologies.

Terrorists act through stress and uncertainty, aspects that lead to the formation of particular or hard-to-change beliefs and concepts. So, mental stress and ideological determination inherent in terrorism fosters a set of beliefs that inhibit flexibility and social openness. So, terrorists can be considered to have a rational motivation for formed beliefs, which are not usually assimilated by most members of the community.

A significant element of the belief system is representation or the formal image, both on the person's own or another person, as well as on the world. Representations are, as a rule, stereotyped, preconceived or rigid, simplifying reality. The dehumanization or deification of the enemy dominates the terrorist's thinking⁴¹.

Most left-wing revolutionaries consider themselves victims and not aggressors, considering that they are the representatives of the exploited, they are the ones who can discern the truth and not the masses, only they can identify the social danger the masses do not see. Thus for terrorists there appears to be a need

³⁹ Anghel, Andreescu, Niță, Dan, *Op. cit.* p.59

⁴⁰ *Ibidem*, p.62

⁴¹ PhD Prof. Tudor, Cearapin, *Op. cit.* p. 81

to maintain the conviction that someone else is responsible and that their actions fall within the standards of moral behavior. Once established, the belief system will resist change. In the case of human abductions, terrorists are involved in making decisions that result in immediate, rapid consequences. Not only do terrorists accept personal risk but they also involve the destiny of their organization that can be endangered.

The variety of methods is determined by the variety of beliefs. The specific circumstances of a terrorist group, isolated from society, under constant threat and danger, lacking valuable information and channels of communication and fanatical confidence in rigid pricks and inflexibility about their relationship with the world, suggest that the ability of terrorists to adapt to reality is limited.

Investigating the causes of terrorism *is not an attempt to legitimize it; on the contrary, it is meant to bring to light the germs which, in most conditions, generate it*⁴².

This is also the conclusion that emerges from UN resolution no. 3034 of December 18, 1972, which asks to investigate solutions that would eliminate the underlying causes of violence. *It seems normal to me, said Eric Suy, Chairman of the Commission of the Sixth General Assembly of the United Nations in 1972, to investigate the causes of terrorism, to study and resolve them*⁴³. The problem of failure to prevent and suppress terrorism stems from the fact that there is no clear understanding of the causes that lead to acts of terrorism. Governments and the international community are unable to reach a point of view on this phenomenon and have therefore failed to control it so far. In essence, terrorism is the radical expression of a profound conflict. It appears as a flurry of actions based on dissatisfaction, frustration, hopes, emotions and unrealized goals.

The analysis of the international terrorist phenomenon highlights other causes, which are specific for the beginning of the millennium: political and military conflicts in some states and areas of the world, dominated by contradictory interests, of which an important place is the opened or secret fight for power, undertaken by internal and external circles and forces, especially by criminal or terrorist organizations; the ever-increasing expansion of Islamic fundamentalism and the intensification of the struggle, including by terrorist means, for the removal of secular political regimes from power and the establishment of Islamic essence leaderships; the continued use of state terrorism, internally and internationally, or the "sponsorship" of terrorist organizations or groups for their own benefit by secret services or interested circles; social conflicts in various states of the world, caused by internal situations of various nuances (religious, political, economic, xenophobic, racist, extremist, nationalist, separatist, etc.); the unlimited possibilities for cooperation between terrorist organizations and groups, even of different nuances and ideologies, with structures of international organized crime; increased violence of criminal phenomena (violence, organized crime, narco-terrorism, drug and arms trafficking, illegal migration, etc.) and their increasing interference with terrorist activity; the power gap or insufficient structuring of the institutions that have attributions in the fight against serious criminal phenomena, a situation especially encountered in the former socialist countries; lack of coordination at global, regional and local level of anti-terrorism measures needed to combat this phenomenon; the more and more intense and detailed dissemination of terrorist acts through the media, which offers the desired publicity to authors and terrorist groups, and can also determine other elements to act in a similar way; the weakening of control and even its loss, by the competent bodies of the states, on the specific provision of weapons, ammunition, military equipment, and even radioactive, chemical and bacteriological materials; the disintegration of former conventional or special armies, mainly belonging to the former socialist states, which made some specialists within them to serve terrorist organizations and groups.

⁴² E., David, *Op. cit.* p.169

⁴³ <http://www.un.org>

Causes highlighted by the UN Special Committee

The Special Committee on International Terrorism, set up at the United Nations on December 18, 1972, in its Resolution 3034 of the General Assembly, was tasked with studying the causes of this phenomenon and drafting recommendations on practical measures to suppress acts of violence and terror. The Committee pointed out that the main causes of the escalation of terrorist acts are social, political, racial, fundamentalist-religious, nationalist, economic etc.

Following the establishment of these causes, the international community has drawn up a series of resolutions, conventions and protocols. Thus, UN Security Council Resolution 1269 (19 October 1999) highlighted the vital role of the UN organization in strengthening international counter-terrorism cooperation and highlighted the importance of strengthening cooperation between states, regional and international organizations.

Analysts believe that the most important causes of contemporary terrorism are ethnic nationalism and extremist ideologies (such as those in some states of Latin America or the former Soviet space), the dream of independent states (as IRA terrorists, Armenia) and, more recently, the recrudescence of religious fanaticism in the East and South Asia.

It is well known that the most frequently pursued elements in the analysis of a terrorist attack are: the perpetrators of the attack, the motivation, the target, the mode of operation, the response of the protection and guard systems, the number of victims, the volume of damage and, possibly, the media impact. Although the means by which an assault is committed are usually mentioned (the type of weaponry, explosive devices, trapping machines, poisons, white guns, etc.), the way they are procured, their costs and, in particular, the suppliers are, most of the times, omitted or treated with superficiality.

A good example of logistical sponsorship of terrorist activities is Somalia. In the interethnic conflict, subsequently degenerated into civil war, as well as during the intervention of the forces of the international coalition (UN peacekeeping forces), there was a very strange situation. Medium or high intensity shootings lasted invariably from Saturday morning until Thursday afternoon. On Friday, with a few exceptions, there was a total silence. What was the explanation? Friday at noon, two huge cargo planes without national signatures used to land at Mogadishu airport, from which the crates with weaponry and ammunition were quickly unloaded, various military equipment which, transferred in the trucks already waiting to be dispatched, were distributed to the parties in conflict. And, of course, the fights were starting again the next day. Who supplied this equipment? What was the method of payment? What were the sponsors goals? It is now known that during Mohamed Siad Barré's pro-Soviet rule, Somalia was one of the territories estimated to have significant uranium reserves. But the state of conflict is still ongoing, which raises new questions about motivation.

The issue of terrorism logistics is extremely complex and is carefully studied by various national and international bodies, the target being the fracturing of this "trophic chain" to support criminal organizations. Under certain circumstances, often involving diplomatic relations, transnational corporations and geopolitical or geostrategic reasons, anti-terrorist forces can not directly intervene on an organization hosted on the territory of a state, even though they know their sponsors, training bases or paths of supplying logistic support. In this situation, it is necessary to prepare a "scenario" that would allow this goal to be tackled without attracting the reproach of the international community.

In organizing terrorist activities, money generally comes from activities that are themselves serious crimes: smuggling, extortion, rewards for the release of hostages (captured specifically for this purpose), drug trafficking, tax evasion. To these are added funds obtained from members' contributions, from donations of "charitable" philanthropic societies or from private individuals interested in escalating terrorist actions.

Equally important is the procurement of the necessary logistics, their storage and preservation, sometimes even the production of weapons, explosives and other substances indispensable to

committing the terrorist act. In some cases, these are obtained by attacking military or police forces by hijacking some of their means of transport (airplanes, ships, car convoys).

In recent years, the weapon used by the many terrorist groups has diversified substantially, with today's instruments of high precision and efficacy (optical devices, electronics, laser, Semtex type non-detectable explosives, state-of-the-art rocket launchers etc. They are stored in places specially arranged in time, of maximum safety, difficult to spot by police or anti-terrorist services.

Regarding the means of transport used to carry out the attacks, they are either purchased from the market - when they are to be destroyed during or after the attack, or simply stolen - to confuse the investigators.

The population pays its apparent silence with additional financial efforts to enable the acquisition, preservation and modernization of logistics necessary for the special services involved in the fight to counteract and combat this malignant phenomenon.

Terrorism sponsored by some states

Iran has been and remains the main support of terrorism in the world, which it has publicly adopted as an instrument for the spread of Islamic fundamentalism.

By way of example, it is known that Libya has openly encouraged terrorist groups to hit the targets in the West and Israel, in order to establish a new panarabian order in the Near East, having Gadaffi as ruler. Later, he has reduced his terrorist actions to stop UN sanctions, but they are surface measures, as the entire Libyan terrorist infrastructure has remained intact.

Syria has supported some of the most extremist Palestinian terrorist groups, such as Abu Nidal, to pursue the goals of President Hafez al-Assad. The targets of terrorism were: Israel, Egypt, Jordan, modern Gulf states and Western countries. In recent years, they have reduced their aid, both because of the US warning and the changes that took place in the Near East.

North Korea provided support to left-wing (communist) foreign terrorist groups.

Cuba trained guerrilla units fighting in Honduras and Salvador, receiving funds for this purpose from the Russian Federation, but not as much as the former USSR. He helped some South American terrorist groups and sheltered the Red Army members. The Castro regime supported armed factions in Latin America, Havana supplying foreign subversive groups with weapons and ammunition.

Sudan - Although it has cooperated in US anti-terrorist efforts before September 11, 2001, there are still suspicions about the Sudanese government supporting certain terrorist groups such as Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad.

Afghanistan remained at the end of the war with the USSR with over 23 camps, where Arab, Kashmiri, Tajiks and other militants are currently preparing for many areas of the world. Most camps are located south and east of Kabul. The training in these camps focuses on tactics and techniques for leading terrorist and insurgency operations, the use of sophisticated weapons, improvised explosives. Hundreds of Afghan veterans have been involved in the violence that has hit Algeria, Egypt, the US, Bosnia, etc.

Not accidentally in 2001, after the removal of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan, through UN Security Council Resolution no. 1386, one of the largest Allied operations in the history of the North Atlantic Alliance, namely the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), was launched. Although originally a multinational force under the aegis of the United Nations limited to securing the security of the capital of Afghanistan, Kabul and its environs, NATO took command of the operation in 2003, which now extends the authority of the Afghan government throughout the country and establishes a climate security conducive to economic reconstruction and rule of law.

It is clear that the expansion of ISAF across Afghanistan has been an essential component of the strategy for this state, including provincial reconstruction teams (PRTs), with the ultimate goal of promoting stability and reforming the security sector.

In May 2003, at a meeting of the International Islamic Front held in Pakistan, a coalition of eight fundamentalist groups, headed by Osama bin Laden, unveiled an unequivocal message to the US: *We will hit American interests worldwide, to force the United States to retreat from the Gulf and lift the embargo against Iraq. We will mercilessly strike civilians and soldiers*⁴⁴.

Modern transport networks help terrorists identify new targets, the vulnerability of these means, including the possibility of escape. Modern financial systems allow for the good financing of operations. Explosives and weapons have become accessible to any state or individual; on black markets, nuclear, chemical and biological means can be obtained as well.

The situation of national minorities, the existence of instabilities or inconsistencies in internal or external politics, the exacerbation of the role of religion, the weaknesses of the institutions of some states in preventing and suppressing terrorism are factors that have a great impact on the effectiveness of terrorist actions.

The analysis of the most important terrorist actions carried out in recent years demonstrates that they have been executed on the basis of plans directed and funded by states or circles interested in destabilizing or obtaining profits of different nuances. The characteristics of current terrorism are: the invisibility of the author, the attacks being most often subsequently claimed by telephones or announcements; the unpredictability of the terrorist act; uncertainty about the target; lack of control over the effects of the attacks.

Conclusions

Concluding, it can be said that terrorism of this early millennium expresses a defective and violent mechanism of endangering democratic values, and the development of organized, native and cross-border crime can not only lead to favoring classical terrorist cores but also to generate mafia-style terrorism, with specific expression on the national territory. The traditional profile of the terrorist has changed substantially, becoming a person with a good education, often licensed. However, the psychic features of the common terrorist remain the same: a man dominated by hatred; is believed to be the avant-garde of a revolution; profoundly antidemocratic; dissatisfied with society or family; selfish, immoral; choleric, violent temperament; acting godless, but faithful in the cause for which he fights; with fixed ideas; unhappy, lonely; mentally ill, misfit⁴⁵.

Starting from the fact that international society has not reached a common understanding of the terrorist phenomenon, some authors have argued that defining the notion of terrorism is impossible, any attempt to define it failing from pure tautology. The response of the international community against terrorism encompasses the full range of actions (political, diplomatic, economic and military) focusing on both causes and impacts. The high-risk terrorist threat persists until an effective policy alignment on terrorism, trafficking of human beings, drugs and weapons, corruption, money laundering and organized crime is achieved.

⁴⁴ <http://www.state.gov>

⁴⁵ PhD Prof. Tudor, Cearapin, *Op. cit.* p.56

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