

Responding to the Global Terrorist Threat from Al Qaeda Network and its Affiliates.

Prepared by: **Paul Wilkinson** - Professor of International Relations and Chairman of the Advisory Board of the Centre for the Study of Terrorism and Political Violence (CSTPV)

General Proposals for International Response

1. The Threat of CBRN Terrorism

- Al Qaeda and its affiliates share an absolutist ideology, and believe they are waging a total war, a violent jihad in which the end justifies the means.
- Al Qaeda does not apparently feel constrained by any moral or humanitarian limits to the lethality of their attacks. They do not distinguish between combatants and non-combatants, or between civilians and military. To the contrary, bin Laden has explicitly urged all Muslims to attack Americans and their allies, including civilians, whenever and wherever the opportunity arises
- Al Qaeda cells have planned to carry out a number of attacks involving chemical weapons and poisons on targets in Europe, which were fortunately thwarted as a result of police/intelligence cooperation. Al Qaeda planned, for example, a sarin nerve gas attack on the European Parliament in Strasbourg and a cyanide attack on the water supply to the US Embassy in Rome. Also, volumes 11 and 12 of the Encyclopaedia of the Jihad, used by the organisation, deal specifically with CBRN weapons.
- It should be emphasised that the Al Qaeda network has a presence in at least 60 countries, and has demonstrated its 'global reach' by mounting lethal attacks in North America, Europe, the Middle East, South and South West Asia, South East Asia and Africa. No country can afford to regard itself as immune from attack. Hence it is in the interests of the entire international community to combine action to combat the network.

2. Principles of a Holistic Multi-pronged, Multi-lateral Strategy to Combat the New Global Terrorism suitable for Adoption by All States in the International Community, Regardless of the Nature of their Political Systems

Sign up to and implement all UN Resolutions including conventions on Suppression of Financing of Terrorism, combating civil aviation terrorism, combating hostage-taking, combating maritime terrorism etc.

Maximise

- Enhance Political will, industry will and public support and co-operation
- Enhance high quality intelligence
- Enhance international intelligence co-operation and overall counter terrorism co-operation
- Deployment of Military/naval resources
- In appropriate conditions and
- When properly configured to tackle terrorists, and
- Under firm control of the civil authorities
- Avoid indiscriminate repression and military attacks which kill/injure innocent civilians

3. Recommendations

Priority Tasks

Maximise

- Enhance police and judicial capabilities to break up terrorist cells and bring them to justice.
- Enhance long-term efforts to win battle of ideas with leaders/mentors of new terrorism.
- Enhance public information and media campaign for public support.
- Adoption of biometric forgery-proof passports and tighter border controls
- Implement comprehensive and rigorous counter-proliferation measures to prevent acquisition of CBRN weapons materials by terrorists

Priority Tasks in the Light of Current Situation, when Al Qaeda and Affiliates are still very much in Business

- Major effort to work in partnership with moderate Muslim leaders to help ensure that Al Qaeda's claim to be 'true Islam' is totally discredited. This effort will be helped

by Al Qaeda's ruthless and deadly terrorist attacks in which scores of fellow Muslims have been killed – a huge strategic blunder by Al Qaeda.

■ Last but not least, ensure that preparedness for emergency mass-casualty terrorist attack is greatly improved. Al Qaeda is still very much in business and is capable of mass casualty attacks not only using tactic