



TERRORISM EXPERTS CONFERENCE

CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE DEFENCE AGAINST TERRORISM



COE-DAT



TERRORISM EXPERTS CONFERENCE

"SEARCHING FOR TRENDS IN THE AGE OF TURBULENCE: EVERYTHING, EVERYWHERE, ALL AT ONCE"

Ankara/TÜRKİYE

18-19 OCTOBER 2023

REPORT

2023

18-19 OCTOBER
ANKARA, TÜRKİYE

DISCLAIMER

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INDEX

DISCLAIMER	1
INDEX.....	2
Terrorism Experts Conference 2023 TEAM	5
Biography	6
TERRORISM EXPERTS CONFERENCE 2023	21
Introduction and Key Takeaways from TEC 2023.....	21
Opening Remarks.....	23
Col. Bülent AKDENİZ, Director of COE-DAT	23
Keynote Speaker Address	26
Mr. Gabriele GASCONI, NATO ESCD Counter Terrorism Section Head.....	26
DAY I	31
In the 100th Anniversary of Turkish Republic; Türkiye’s Strategic Contribution to Counter Terrorism in World.....	31
COL (TUR A) Ekrem Emre TÜZÜN, Chief of Defence Against Terrorism Branch TGS.....	31
Panel: Distinguished Terrorism Expert Session 1 – Round Table Discussion Recent Trends and Developments of Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism.....	34
Moderator: Prof. Haldun YALÇINKAYA TOBB University of Economics and Technology	34
Recent Trends and Developments of Terrorism: The Global Picture since 1970.....	34
Prof. Em. Alex P. SCHMID, Director of TRI, Distinguished Fellow of ICCT and Co-Editor of PT	34
Terrorism in the late 2020s: Is it a post-DAESH World?	36
Dr. Richard OUTZEN, Atlantic Council Türkiye	36
Mr. Zeeshan AMIN, Senior Programme Management Officer at the UNOCT, and Head of Office of the UNOCT Programme Office in Baghdad, Iraq.....	36

Discussion.....	38
Key Threats Posed by Terrorists vis a vis Emerging Technology Project.....	40
Ms. Susan Sim, The Soufan Group, Vice President-Asia.....	40
Discussion.....	41
DAY II	44
SOF a Tactical Tool in the Fight Against Terrorism with Strategic Implications.....	44
Dr. Heather GREGG, George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies	44
Discussion.....	47
Panel: Distinguished Terrorism Expert Session 2 Terrorism from a Regional Perspective	49
What Terrorists Tell Us about the Fighters from Central Asia.....	49
Moderator & Panelist: Dr. Afzal ASHRAF, LOUGHBOROUGH University	49
The Changing Landscape of Terrorism in Africa	51
Prof. Jonathan GITHENS-MAZER, Institute for Arab and Islamic Studies (IAIS)	51
The Evolving Nature of Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism in Europe	53
Ms. Emily WINTERBOTHAM, RUSI, Director of the Terrorism and Conflict Research Group.....	53
Discussion.....	56
Strategic Level Terrorism Exercise Scenario Development Project.....	57
Assoc. Prof. Zuhar YENİÇERİ, Başkent University	57
COE-DAT Border Security in Contested Environment Project.....	60
Prof. Cem KARADELİ, Ufuk University	60
Gender, Climate Change, and Terrorism in Africa	64
Ms. Nazanine MOSHIRI, Crisis Group Senior Analyst.....	64
Discussion.....	65

Multi Domain Operation - Implications for NATO's approach to Counter Terrorism 66

 CDR Philip GOULD (CAN-N), ACT CT Branch 66

 Discussion..... 70

Closing Remarks 71

 Col. Bülent AKDENİZ, Director of COE-DAT 71

Conclusion for TEC 2023 72

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GABRIELE CASCONE

NATO HQ BRUSSELS, Head of Counter-Terrorism Section, Emerging Security Challenges Division



Biography

Mr. Gabriele Cascone spent the first part of his career as an officer in the Carabinieri Corps. This included two tours of duty in Bosnia and Herzegovina with IFOR/SFOR in 1996 and 1997. In 1998, he joined the NATO International Staff, where he still works, having served in three divisions (NATO Office of Security, Political Affairs and Emerging Security Challenges).

The focus of his twenty-year career at NATO, has been mostly on the Western Balkans and the Middle East and North Africa. Since July 2019 he is the Head of the Counterterrorism Section in the Emerging Security Challenges Division (ESCD).

Mr. Cascone holds a B.A. in Law from the University of Parma (Italy) and a M.A. in International Relations from the Université Libre de Bruxelles (Belgium).

COL (TUR A) Ekrem Emre TÜZÜN



Biography

Colonel Emre TÜZÜN, is the Chief of Defence Against Terrorism Branch, Turkish General Staff.

Colonel TÜZÜN graduated from the Turkish Military Academy as an Infantry Officer in 2001. He served as a Platoon and Team leader, Battalion S3, Battalion Commander and Brigade G3 in various units prior to his assignment at TGS.

He also served in various crisis zones in the Middle East, Balkans, and Central Asia.

Colonel TÜZÜN is a graduate of the Turkish War Collage. He was also a fellow of the International Administration and Conflict Management MA programme of the University of Konstanz, Germany between 2012-2014.

Colonel TÜZÜN is the proud father of Sarper and Melisa TÜZÜN.

PROF. DR. HALDUN YALÇINKAYA



Biography

Professor Yalçinkaya has been conducting research on Foreign Terrorist Fighters of DAESH and Countering Violent Extremism since 2014 and serving as an academic advisor for the different activities of the NATO Center of Excellence Defence Against Terrorism since 2019.

He graduated from Kuleli Military High School and later Turkish Military Academy. During his military service as an officer, he completed his post-graduate studies in International Relations at İstanbul University. Dr. Yalçinkaya studied “peacekeeping” at MA level and “transformation of war” at Ph.D. level. After earning his Ph.D. degree, he had post-doctoral Research and joined the Changing Character of War Project in Oxford University between 2009-2010. Furthermore, during his military service, he served in Afghanistan in 2005.

He published four books on war and terrorism issues and several academic articles/book chapters on International Security issues focusing on new actors of the battlefields as well as terrorism. After serving more than ten years at Turkish Military Academy, he has been Professor in International Relations at TOBB University of Economics and Technology since 2013.

PROF. EM. ALEX P. SCHMID



Biography

Prof. em. Alex P. Schmid is a Distinguished Fellow at the International Centre for Counter-Terrorism (ICCT) and Director of the Terrorism Research Initiative (TRI), an international network of scholars who seek to enhance human security through collaborative research.

Between 1978 and 2018 he was, for various periods of time, working in different capacities at Leiden University. In addition, he was Extraordinary Professor for Conflict Resolution at Erasmus University in Rotterdam and later held a Chair in International Relations at the University of St. Andrews, where he was also Director of the Centre for the Study of Terrorism and Political Violence (CSTPV).

Prof. em. Alex P. Schmid has also held various other positions, including, for nearly seven years, Officer-in-Charge of the Terrorism Prevention Branch of UNODC in Vienna in the rank of a Senior Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Officer. His latest book is his Handbook of Terrorism Prevention and Preparedness, which features contributions from leading experts in the field and aims to be an authoritative resource on counter-terrorism. You can read the Handbook in full [here](#).

Prof. em. Schmid has over 225 publications in ten languages to his name, including an award-winning handbook on terrorism (1984, 1988, 2005, 2011, 2013). Until 2009 he was co-editor of the journal Terrorism and Political Violence. Between 2009 and 2022 he was Editor-in-Chief of Perspectives on Terrorism, the largest scholarly online journal in the field of Terrorism Studies. Since then, he is Co-Editor of this journal.

DR. RICHARD OUTZEN



Biography

Dr. Richard Outzen, is a nonresident senior fellow at the Atlantic Council in TÜRKİYE and a geopolitical analyst and consultant currently serving private sector clients as Dragoman LLC.

As former US Army Foreign Area Officer, he has served in a variety of staff, command, and policy support assignments in Washington, DC and overseas. His areas of expertise include defense policy and strategy, strategic culture, the Middle East, NATO and Europe, and Central Asia.

He graduated cum laude with a BA from Dartmouth College in 1989, and holds an MA in national strategic affairs from the Naval Postgraduate School as well as an MS in national security resourcing from the NDU's Eisenhower School of National Security and Resources Strategy. He also holds a PhD from George Mason University's Schar School of Policy and Government. He is a distinguished graduate of the Eisenhower School and a graduate of the US Army Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth in Kansas.

Dr. Outzen has published dozens of articles and book chapters on language, culture, strategy, and Middle Eastern affairs. Outzen speaks Turkish, Arabic, Hebrew, and German, and has spent over a decade serving in US military and diplomatic missions overseas including combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Mr ZEESHAN AMIN



Biography

Mr. Zeeshan Amin is Senior Programme Management Officer at the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT) in New York, and Head of Office of the UNOCT Programme Office in Baghdad, Iraq.

Mr. Amin is also in-charge of UNOCT's Strategic Coordination Section (SCS) with a focus on coordination and cooperation with UN agencies and partners in Iraq, capacity-building support to the Government of Iraq, and supervision of the UNOCT Global Programme on Prosecution, Rehabilitation and Reintegration (PRR) that supports Member States around the world on policies and procedures relating to foreign fighters in Iraq and Syria.

He is also in charge of supervising UNOCT's activities in the Eastern African region through the UNOCT Programme Office in Nairobi, Kenya.

Mr. Amin has a Master's degree in International Security Policy from Columbia University in New York, and a Bachelor's degree in Philosophy, Politics and Economics from the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia.

Ms SUSAN SIM



Biography

Susan Sim is Vice President for Asia of The Soufan Group, a global intelligence and security consultancy that helps clients in the public and private sectors address national and international challenges; and Senior Research Fellow with The Soufan Center in New York, an independent non-profit organization offering research, analysis, and strategic dialogue on global security challenges and foreign policy issues.

A graduate of the University of Oxford, Susan previously worked in various capacities in the Singapore government—in law enforcement, as an intelligence analyst, and as Deputy Chief of Mission at the Singapore Embassy in Washington DC. She was also a journalist based in Indonesia in the 1990s. Currently also an Adjunct Senior Fellow at the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies in Singapore, she was the Southeast Asia specialist for the Qatar International Academy for Security Studies (QIASS) Global Study on Countering Violent Extremism, and has been a speaker at the NATO Centre of Excellence Defense Against Terrorism in Ankara, Türkiye, since 2008.

Her publications include The Soufan Center's Terrorism and Counterterrorism in Southeast Asia: Emerging Trends and Dynamics (June 2021), and chapters in Good Practices in Counter Terrorism (NATO COE-DAT, 2021), and The Routledge Handbook of Asian Security Studies, 2nd ed. (Routledge, 2018). Susan is also Editor of the Home Team Journal, the flagship publication of the Singapore Ministry of Home Affairs.

DR. HEATHER GREGG



Biography

Heather S. Gregg is Professor of Irregular Warfare at the George C. Marshall Center European Center for Security Studies, Garmisch, Germany. She is also a senior fellow at the Foreign Policy Research Institute.

Dr. Gregg's academic focus is on irregular warfare, terrorism, and counterterrorism, causes of extremism, and leveraging culture in population centric conflicts, including resiliency, and repairing communities and national unity in the wake of war and political instability.

Prior to joining the Marshall Center, Dr. Gregg was a professor at the U.S. Army War College, and the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California, where she worked primarily with Special Operations Forces. She is the 2017 recipient of the NPS school-wide Hamming Award for excellence in teaching. Dr. Gregg was also an associate political scientist at the RAND Corporation from 2003-2006. She has conducted research for USASOC, OSD, TRADOC, NCTC, JIEDDO, and Department of State.

Dr. Gregg earned her PhD in Political Science in 2003 from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. She also holds a Master's degree from Harvard Divinity School, where she studied Islam, and a Bachelor's degree in Cultural Anthropology, with honors, from the University of California, Santa Cruz.

In addition to academic experience, Dr. Gregg has spent time in several regions of conflict, including Palestine/West Bank and the former Yugoslavia, in addition to working in Qatar and Japan, and studying in Hungary. From 2013-2015, she was part of teaching and engagement teams in Tajikistan. In 2016, she taught at the Indonesian Defense University on subjects relating to asymmetric warfare.

DR. AFZAL ASHRAF



Biography

Dr. Afzal Ashraf has broad experience of International Relations and security issues, both as a practitioner and as an academic.

This includes service as a senior officer in the UK Armed Forces in operations ranging from famine relief in Africa to stabilization operations in the South Atlantic, deterrence support in the Cold War and strategic aspects of conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan.

He has worked in support of diplomacy in the UK's Foreign and Commonwealth Office and in information fusion, analysis, and communication in some of UK's security-related government departments.

He has been Head of Training Management for the Royal Air Force where he had responsibility for physical fitness, combat survival and through life learning.

He has run a private security consultancy covering areas such as cyber security and countering violent extremism and was a Consultant Fellow at the UK's oldest Think Tank, the Royal United Services Institute.

ASSOCIATE PROF. JONATHAN GITHENS-MAZER



Biography

Professor Jonathan Githens-Mazer is an academic based in the Institute of Arab and Islamic Studies and the Strategy and Security Institute at the University of Exeter. He was awarded his PhD from the London School of Economics in 2005, and graduated from Swarthmore College in 1997.

Prof. Githens-Mazer's research examines nationalism, radicalization, terrorism, counter-terrorism and he has published on these issues in Ireland, North Africa, and the United Kingdom. He has received funding for this research from the British Academy, Economic and Social Research Council and the Higher Education Innovation Fund. Some of his current research is to try to understand how to use technological innovation to buttress and improve qualitative research and ethnography, and to develop methods and techniques which use qualitative and ethnographic research to calibrate analysis of very large data sets.

Prof. Githens-Mazer has worked extensively with Muslim communities in the UK and beyond, he acts as a consultant to the UK Government, MoD, DoD, NATO and the UN, and he is an Associate Fellow of the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI).

He is also Director of Doctoral Studies and Deputy Director of Research in the Strategy and Security Institute

EMILY WINTERBOTHAM



Biography

Ms. Emily Winterbotham is the Director of the Terrorism and Conflict research group at RUSI. Her research focuses on terrorism and counter terrorism, including preventing violent extremism, and international interventions in conflict and fragile states. The T&C research group encompasses teams in London, Brussels, and Nairobi and delivers research, advisory services, training and monitoring and evaluation services in the fields of Counter Terrorism and Conflict.

Ms. Winterbotham brings around 15 years of desk and field experience in an international policymaking environment. This includes over a decade of working in and on conflict, particularly in Afghanistan. In 2017 she was seconded by the UK Government to the Commonwealth Secretariat to establish the new CVE Unit. Between 2009 and 2015 she worked in Afghanistan, including as Political Adviser for the European Union Special Representative. She is also a Deployable Civilian Expert for the UK Government's Stabilization Unit.

She is the co-author of *Countering Violent Extremism: Making Gender Matter* (London, Palgrave Macmillan, 2020) and *Conflict, Violent Extremism and Development: New Challenges, New Responses* (London, Palgrave Macmillan, 2018).

ASSOCIATE PROF. ZUHAL YENIÇERİ



Biography

Zuhale Yeniçeri is an associate professor at the Department of Psychology at Başkent University. She specializes in social psychology, political psychology, and gender. Her research interests include radicalization, social psychology of terrorism, feminist movements, and VR technologies.

Zuhale is also the director of the Existential Social Psychology Laboratory (eXSPLab) and a board member of Criminal Law and Criminology Application and Research Center besides the team leader of researchers group of Strategy and Technology Application and Research Center at Başkent University.

Zuhale obtained her PhD from Middle East Technical University in Social Psychology. She holds a MA in social psychology and a BA in Political Science and International Relations. At present, she is a member of the Project Team that is developing the “Strategic Level Terrorism Exercise Scenario Development Tool” in close collaboration with COE-DAT.

PROF. CEM KARADELİ, PhD



Biography

Prof Karadeli is the head of Department of Political Science and International Relations at Ufuk University, Ankara, Türkiye. He had his bachelor and master's degrees from the Department of International Relations of the Middle East Technical University in Ankara, Türkiye, and his PhD from Centre for Slavonic and East European Studies of the Glasgow University in Glasgow, Scotland.

He worked as a full-time lecturer since 1999 at the Middle East Technical University, Çankaya University, and Ufuk University. He has been the general secretary of Çankaya University for 7 years. Professor Karadeli works on International Politics focussing mainly on political regime change, security studies, Eastern Europe since Cold War, Foreign Policy Analysis, and Globalization and Counter-Globalization.

He is a member of the international institutions ISSEI and EIRD. Professor Karadeli published three edited books, a lot of research articles and book chapters on the Cold War, Eastern European politics, and current global conflicts.

Prof Karadeli is a member of the EIRD academic committee and worked as academic advisor and book editor for NATO COE-DAT in 2023.

NAZANINE MOSHIRI



Biography

Ms. Nazanine Moshiri is Crisis Group's senior analyst for Climate, Environment & Conflict, Africa. In this role she conducts field research, provides analysis through reports and media contributions, and contributes fact-based insights for policy makers on how to best respond to climate-related security risks.

Prior to joining the International Crisis Group, Nazanine worked for two decades as a journalist, including roles at Reuters, Independent Television News and Al Jazeera English. At Reuters, she managed a large team of journalists in East Africa. At Al Jazeera English, she was part of a team recognized as news channel of the year by the Royal Television Society for their coverage of the Arab Spring. She was also a finalist for journalist of the year at the One World Media Awards of 2014.

Ms. Moshiri served as an expert on the United Nations Panel of Experts on Somalia, where she led several investigations, including on the use of improvised explosive devices in Somalia by Al-Shabaab. Nazanine obtained her Master's degree from the University of Leicester in International Security Studies, where she won an award for best dissertation of the year. She is currently finishing a Master of Laws from the University of London in International Dispute Resolution.

CDR (CAN N) PHILIP GOULD



Biography

Commander Philip Gould is a staff officer concept developer at the NATO Supreme Ally Command Transformation (ACT) directorate of Strategic Plans and Policy in Norfolk, Virginia. Commander Gould arrived at NATO from NATO HQ, working in the Canadian Joint Legation to NATO as a Senior Staff Officer, primarily focusing on the Military Committees NATO Military Strategic Policy development.

Concept Development, updated policy implementation and external Branch Concept Development support. From an MDO implementation directly involved in the MDO roadmap implementation and activities that include concept development support inter alia MDO in the Urban Environment, Cross Domain Command, and Multi-Domain Defense Framework concept. In addition, supporting SACT's Strategic Foresight, Digital Strategy and NATO Net Assessment capability development.

Before working at NATO, he was leading a digitalization effort of the Canadian Armed Forces operational tasking and personal management system, has performed the duties of strategic manager at the naval material management organization, Marine systems engineering manager at the Naval West Coast base, and completed many operational deployments with one primary focused on leading a team in counter-insurgency operations with US forces.

Cdr Gould's primary interest is in system engineering and organizational optimization, and he has a BEng and MSc and supporting Master's certificates in Project Management and Business Analysis.

TERRORISM EXPERTS CONFERENCE 2023

Introduction and Key Takeaways from TEC 2023

The Terrorism Experts Conference 2023, hosted by the Centre of Excellence Defence Against Terrorism in Ankara, Türkiye, brought together experts, policymakers, and professionals to delve into the multifaceted landscape of counterterrorism. The conference, held on October 18-19, was marked by insightful presentations and discussions, shedding light on critical aspects of the current global security environment.

The conference began with a thought-provoking exploration of the challenges in defining terrorism. Acknowledging the complexity of the concept, speakers emphasized that academic exploration offers a more accessible understanding. Terrorism was portrayed not merely as a doctrine but as a tactic, encompassing repression, war tactics, and strategies for social change.

Addressing the hybrid threats faced by nation-states and alliances, speakers underscored the importance of preserving coordination and collaboration among allies. The evolving security landscape demands increased unity and determination from NATO and its allies, particularly in the face of threats that aim to disrupt this cohesion.

A key takeaway emphasized the need to consider and train for extreme crisis scenarios. The integration of local security forces, governments, and international support before a crisis was highlighted as critical in effectively responding to emerging threats.

Technological advancements were a recurring theme, emphasizing the adaptability of terrorist groups in utilizing off-the-shelf technologies. The internet's role in spreading misinformation, livestreaming of attacks, and the link between terrorism and external support were highlighted as growing concerns.

The geographical shift in terrorism, especially in the Sahel region, and the emergence of new areas witnessing terrorist activities were emphasized. The speakers noted that terrorism continues to pose a threat, necessitating a continuous reassessment of strategies.

Climate change's potential role in triggering mass displacement and its connection to terrorism was brought to the forefront. The importance of addressing self-radicalized terrorism and the challenges in gathering evidence regarding women's roles in extremist activities were discussed.

Collaboration between experts, professionals, policymakers, and organizations was emphasized, with a call for innovative and interdisciplinary approaches to navigate emerging threats responsibly. The evolving technological landscape demands quick adaptation and continuous reassessment of strategies.

Valuable insights were shared on NATO's role in providing comprehensive training, particularly in border security practices. The significance of medical preparedness in saving lives during and after a terrorist incident was stressed.

The presenters also offered a focus on interagency cooperation, the engagement of civil society in border security management, and the imperative to prioritize the human side of counterterrorism efforts. The evolving nature of NATO towards Multi-Domain Operations (MDO) was highlighted, emphasizing the optimization of converging effects across all domains for a more effective response to contemporary challenges. The shift in mindset and culture required for this transformation was underscored, signaling NATO's commitment to staying ahead in the dynamic landscape of global security.

Opening Remarks

Col. Bülent AKDENİZ, Director of COE-DAT



Ladies and gentlemen, distinguished participants, and lecturers,

I am Colonel Bülent AKDENİZ, the Director of the Center of Excellence Defence Against Terrorism.

It is an honor and a great pleasure for me to welcome you to Ankara Türkiye for the occasion of our annual Terrorism Experts Conference.

For those of you who are not familiar with our Centre, please let me briefly introduce the center to you.

A NATO Centre of Excellence is an entity offering specialized expertise for the benefit of the Alliance, especially in support of transformation.

In 2005, COE-DAT was inaugurated as the second Centre of Excellence among the other 29 that have since been established.

We strive to be the hub of a wide community of interest, regarding Counter-Terrorism expertise for NATO. Our mission is to provide key decision-makers with a comprehensive understanding of terrorism and counter-terrorism to support NATO and Partners to meet future security challenges.

Terrorism remains a persistent threat to the Alliance and to Global Security as was addressed in the latest NATO summit in Vilnius in July 2023. The declaration says:

“We categorically reject and condemn terrorism in the strongest possible terms. Countering terrorism in all its forms and manifestations is essential to our collective defence. Terrorist organisations threaten the security of our populations, forces, and territory. They have expanded their networks, enhanced their capabilities, and invested in new technologies to improve their reach and lethality. We will continue to deter, defend, and respond to threats and challenges posed by terrorist groups, based on a combination of prevention, protection, and denial measures.”

This declaration underwrites our vision, mission, and comprehensive efforts towards supporting Alliance transformation.

In line with NATO's three core tasks of deterrence and defense, crisis prevention and management, and cooperative security, COE-DAT establishes and maintains relationships with a wide community of interest. This includes the NATO, Partnership for Peace, Gulf Cooperation, Mediterranean Dialogue, and Istanbul Cooperation Initiative, as well as other global partners.

COE-DAT also collaborates with many other institutions, such as academia, international organizations, other centres of excellence, and military academies. You will see this reflected in this conference's outstanding lineup of speakers who will be presenting their valuable perspectives.

I hope our conference will be a fruitful and beneficial forum for all present to discuss and learn the latest developments and challenges in the field of counter-terrorism.

The theme of this year's conference is "Searching for Trends in the Age of Turbulence: Everything, Everywhere, All at Once". This reflects the complex and dynamic nature of the terrorist threat that we face today, which requires us to adapt and innovate constantly.

The conference will consist of two days of presentations, panels, and discussions.

The program is designed to stimulate the exchange of views among the participants, as well as to provide practical guidance and recommendations for policy makers and practitioners. We see this event as an opportunity to share our ideas and opinions. To make us move out of our comfort zones and view things from a different angle. We have academic freedom on this venue. As will be expressed generously in our disclaimers, ideas and opinions that are expressed here belong to the speakers and not necessarily represent that of COE-DAT, NATO, or Nations.

This event is not organized to hurt anyone's feelings or to put a certain group on the spot light. We are doing our best to use the correct terminology IOT avoid misunderstandings and misperceptions. If you disagree with some of the content or have a different perspective, you will have an opportunity to express your opinions. I kindly request all our participants to remain within the scope of conference in line with our topics as much as we can.

We hope that you will find the conference informative, engaging, and useful for your work.

Before we start the first session, I would like to thank our academicians for their generous support and collaboration. I would also like to thank our staff for their hard work and dedication. And last but not the least, I would like to thank you, the participants, for your interest and enthusiasm. Without you, this conference would not be possible.

I hope you will enjoy the conference and make the most of this opportunity to learn from each other and to build new connections. I look forward to hearing your thoughts and feedback throughout the conference.

Thank you for your attention.

Keynote Speaker Address

Mr. Gabriele GASCONI, NATO ESCD Counter Terrorism Section Head

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure to be here today, to be able to deliver these remarks.

At the beginning, let me thank the Centre of Excellence for hosting and organizing this event and for inviting me to participate in it. There are three points that I would like to address today. They are the (i) evolution of the terrorist threat, (ii) NATO's role in the fight against terrorism, and (iii) a brief summary of key NATO counterterrorism initiatives underway.

Let me first start with the developments and evolution that we see in the terrorist threat. Terrorists remain a major threat, but there are three elements that I would like to bring to your attention and that would seem to point to some changes from the trade, such as we knew it in the past few years. The first is that while terrorists have long made use of readily available weapons and materials such as knives or vehicles, we now see that various terrorist groups are also seeking to misuse technology or have already done so to advance their agenda. Today, a lot of technology is easily accessible, and terrorist groups have shown their intent and ability to adapt cheap off-the-shelf technologies for their purposes. This has important implications for the development of capabilities to counter terrorism, and I will further expand on that later in the talk.

The second point is that over the last decades and years, we have seen a change in an evolution in the type of terrorist attacks. If you look at 9/11 or at the Paris attacks of November 2015 or even the Brussels attacks in March 2016, and I could quote many more, which unfortunately affected many allied countries, these were large-scale attacks, prepared and led and delivered by large terrorist cells. On the other hand, what we see in recent years is a further development of what we call the lone wolf attacks on individuals. These individuals are attracted or pledged their allegiance to an ideology, but they do not act on the basis of specific instructions from the leadership of a group, but based on their understanding of what the groups expect from them. If we look at even the events of the last few days in France and in

Brussels, you will see two cases of these lone wolf attacks on individuals that decide to carry out an attack but without any early warning, without any ability to intercept any communication between them and the directing body that is instructing them to do things. These, of course, present growing challenges for law enforcement authorities. But it also underlines the importance of obtaining, sharing, and using relevant information, including when obtained by the military. And it is another aspect on which I will be delving later on.

Third, geographically, we are seeing a continuation of terrorist acts, especially in the South and especially in the Sahel region, which according to the Global Terrorism Index 2023 accounted for 43% of global terrorism death. Therefore, while terrorism is not disappearing as a threat from the regions where it has manifested itself in the past years, we see, unfortunately, new regions, new countries, new areas where terrorist groups are manifesting themselves and starting to conduct terrorist attacks. What does this mean to us? It underlines the importance of working with our partners to support them in building their capacities.

Now moving to the second part of my talk, which is NATO's role in the fight against terrorism. NATO, of course, sees and has recognized terrorism as a major threat. In the 2022 strategic concept, terrorism has for the first time been identified as the most direct asymmetric threat to the Alliance. Counterterrorism is seen as an area that cuts across the three core tasks of NATO: collective defense, crisis management, and cooperative security, and supports all of them. This was reaffirmed at the Vilnius Summit earlier this year, where Allied Heads of State and Government committed to continue to deter, defend, and respond to threats and challenges posed by terrorist groups based on the combination of prevention, protection, and denial measures.

The recent appointment by the NATO Secretary General of his Special Coordinator for Counter-Terrorism, which was announced in the margins of the last Defence Ministers' meeting, further demonstrates that the Alliance takes this threat seriously. The Special Coordinator will ensure an effective and coherent NATO response to terrorism and represent the Secretary General in key fora such as the Global Coalition to Defeat DAESH.

In Vilnius, our leaders also tasked the update of the two key NATO documents on countering terrorism, which are the policy guidelines, the overarching NATO

document on countering terrorism, and the action plan, which is, as the name says, a more action-oriented document with specific items and specific areas of effort and which is normally regularly updated every couple of years, while the policy guidelines have not changed since 2012.

What is it that the policy guidelines tell us? The policy guidelines, first of all, underscore the main principles to which the alliance adheres in the fight against terrorism: compliance with international law, support Allies, and non-duplication and complementarity. They also underscore that terrorism remains primarily a national responsibility. And they stress that NATO's role is in contributing to the global effort against terrorism in the areas where the organization has expertise and competence to bring to the table.

The policy guidelines also identified the key areas in which NATO can meaningfully contribute to international counterterrorism efforts as of now. Based on the 2012 document, these three areas were *awareness*, which was better understanding the terrorist threat to the exchange of information, intelligence between allies and with partners. *Capabilities*, which is about the development of counterterrorism capabilities for our Allies and *engagement* with partner countries and other international organizations. Let me also add as a final word that international cooperation is key to addressing a transnational threat such as terrorism. I would stress again while terrorism remains primarily a national responsibility.

Let me now briefly highlight a few key NATO initiatives in the domain of counterterrorism. First, talking about the area of capabilities, developing capabilities for our Allies, and building on what I said earlier on the potential or actual misuse of technology by terrorist groups. One of the areas where NATO has conducted substantial and significant work is that of countering unmanned aerial systems, especially the commercially modified ones that terrorists use to conduct attacks. This is a well-known example of how terrorist groups have been systematically seeking to exploit commercially available drones.

While cryptocurrencies and 3D printing require more sophisticated capabilities, terrorists are seeking to make use of these means as well. For instance, the perpetrator of the October 2019 attack in Halle, Germany, used a homemade gun to execute his attack, including 3D printed components and using freely available online

PDF manuals. Some groups are also running cryptocurrency fundraising through websites, through communication channels, such as Telegram. So, we need to consider how terrorists are abusing or might abuse technology, and we also should never forget their inherent ability to be flexible and exploit any opportunity to pursue their goals. Coming then to another area that for us is of specific importance, I want to underline our efforts on battlefield evidence and technical exploitation. We are still in the area of capabilities there and as I said before, the ability to pre-empt terrorist attacks is also closely related to the ability to share information, data and material that proves that certain individuals are part of or connected with terrorist groups. And the work that we conducted on technical exploitation and battlefield evidence is specifically on how can Allies and partners in an operation make use of the information that they collected on the battlefield. Both for what we call mission success purposes, so military purposes, intelligence targeting, force protection. But also, to support the work of law enforcement agencies in bringing terrorists to justice with the help of battlefield evidence.

Also, we should never lose track that there is a lot that we can learn from our partners in terms of responding to terrorist attacks and the changes in the modus operandi of terrorists. As I said earlier on, a second important pillar of NATO CT efforts is support to partners in the development of their own CT capacities. NATO is supporting CT capacity building with several partner countries such as Jordan through joint projects and training in areas such as border security and awareness, developing a whole of government approach which in plain terms means in particular developing interagency cooperation, especially between the military and law enforcement. In the field of countering terrorism we have also held several CT terrorist dialogues with our partners to reflect on their needs and on the key areas of cooperation. To these dialogues, partners are invited to engage with NATO and share their lessons learned on CT related efforts. We also regularly engage with international and regional organizations to ensure that added value and complementarity of our efforts.

When I see our work on capabilities for Allies and capacity building for partners as the backbone of our counterterrorism efforts, we should not lose sight of a number of enabling and ongoing strands of work. These include the continuous need to monitor the evolution of the terrorist threat, keeping an eye on emerging issues such as new

technologies, the role of private military companies, or the connection between climate security and the development of terrorist groups. Sharing intelligence is an important aspect of this as are conferences such as this one, where we can exchange our latest analysis of the threat.

So, as you can see, NATO seeks to contribute to the fight against terrorism on many fronts, keeping in mind the evolution in the terrorist threat and focusing on the areas where we can provide added value. Capabilities for Allies and capacity building support for partners are core areas of our CT engagement. And I imagine that the future policy guidelines will continue to reaffirm the danger that terrorism poses as a major threat and the key areas of NATO CT efforts. With this, I would like to thank you for your attention and I wish all of you a good and fruitful discussion.

DAY I

In the 100th Anniversary of Turkish Republic; Türkiye's Strategic Contribution to Counter Terrorism in World

COL (TUR A) Ekrem Emre TÜZÜN, Chief of Defence Against Terrorism Branch TGS

Colonel (TUR A) Ekrem Emre TÜZÜN delivered a speech titled "In the 100th Anniversary of Turkish Republic; Türkiye's Strategic Contribution to Counter Terrorism in the World." The speech covered various aspects of global security perceptions, historical events, the complexity of countering terrorism, Türkiye's efforts in combating terrorism, and its contributions to the fight against terrorism. This report provides an overview of the key points addressed in the speech.

Colonel TÜZÜN discussed the transformation of global security perceptions and referred to David C. Rapoport's four waves of modern terrorism theory which reflects anarchist, anti-colonial, new-leftist wave, and religiously-motivated terrorism waves. Notably, he highlighted Türkiye's experience in dealing with all these waves since its establishment. The presentation mentioned into the historical turning point events, including World War I, World War II, the Korean War, and the Cold War Era, and their impact on global security. Furthermore, Colonel TÜZÜN pointed out the significance of Türkiye's NATO membership in 1952 and its role in the evolving global security landscape.

In his presentation, Colonel TÜZÜN stated that the 9/11 attacks were a turning point that brought about a lack of consensus in the understanding of terrorism. Emphasizing that terrorism is linked to external support, the speaker states that terrorists rely on financial, legal, political, military, and other forms of external support to survive. A relevant observation is that some states have established partnerships with terrorist organizations, which raises ethical and legal issues. The detection of terrorist organizations and the necessity of legal and ethical issues in partnership are evaluated as a must in countering terrorism. Turning his focus to the fight against

terrorism, the presenter argues that it involves a complex interaction of hard and soft power elements. The nuanced nature of counter-terrorism efforts requires not just hard power but also a transformation of mindset that involves comprehensive and sustained efforts. This nuanced approach recognizes the complexity inherent in addressing the multifaceted challenges posed by terrorism.

The speech extensively covered Türkiye's ongoing efforts to counter terrorism, with a particular focus on the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK). Colonel TÜZÜN discussed the PKK's evolving strategies and the impact of external support. Additionally, he briefly mentioned other terrorist organizations.

Colonel TÜZÜN highlighted Türkiye's bilateral and multilateral initiatives aimed at combating terrorism. He mentioned Türkiye's involvement in the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and its active participation in countering terrorism in different parts of the world.

In his concluding remarks, Colonel TÜZÜN stressed the importance of fostering a shared agenda and encouraging international cooperation to effectively combat terrorism. He underlined the need for a united front to tackle this global challenge and emphasized the spirit of alliance in the fight against terrorism.

During the question-and-answer session, the discussion primarily focused on Türkiye's efforts in radicalization and de-radicalization. Various ministries, including internal, education, finance, foreign affairs, and defense, were identified as core agencies implementing relevant policies. Emphasis was placed on the importance of disrupting the financing of radical groups. The impact of external support on the effectiveness and development of such groups was explored, with a caution against prematurely defining an organization as a partner, as perspectives on threats can vary among partner countries. The Village Protectors initiative and experiences from the 2015 HENDEK Operations were shared, highlighting the struggle against ideology and mindset. The speaker also touched upon Türkiye's involvement in building capacity in Somalia, clarifying that Türkiye provides training and education rather than supplying weapons, and discussed the challenge of controlling equipment provided to the countries in the conflict zones. The role of media and education in supporting counterterrorism efforts in the context of Syria and Iraq was raised, drawing parallels with political resolutions in cases like ETA and IRA.

The complexity of external support and changing agendas in the fight against terrorism was acknowledged considering the geography, history, conflicting national interests, with a skeptical view that terrorism, thus counterterrorism efforts could completely end in the region. Colonel Tüzün summed up his presentation by stating that Türkiye's individual success against any sort/kind/means of terrorism would directly, and positively affect Euro-Atlantic security. Contrarily, any deviation or counter action against Türkiye's Counter Terrorism effort, would serve the terrorist groups' objectives, hence hamper Global Security.

Panel: Distinguished Terrorism Expert Session 1 – Round Table Discussion Recent Trends and Developments of Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism

Moderator: Prof. Haldun YALÇINKAYA TOBB University of Economics and Technology

Recent Trends and Developments of Terrorism: The Global Picture since 1970

Prof. Em. Alex P. SCHMID, Director of TRI, Distinguished Fellow of ICCT and Co-Editor of PT

Professor Alex P. Schmid explored the complex and multifaceted nature of terrorism, highlighting the inherent difficulty in providing a clear and universally accepted definition of the term. While acknowledging the challenges in defining terrorism, the speaker pointed out that academic exploration of the concept is comparatively more accessible. Terrorism was presented not only as a doctrine but also as a tactic, encompassing repression, war tactics, and strategies for social change.

Professor Schmid explained the evolution of terrorism since the 1970s, referencing the Global Terrorism Database (GTD) which was launched at the University of Maryland. Non-state terrorism was examined using data from the US State Department Report 2021, revealing an expansion of tactics like kidnapping and hostage-taking. Regional breakdowns highlighted that only 5% of terrorist attacks occurred in NATO countries, with a particular focus on the dire situation in the Sahel region.

The presenter revealed that the number of lives lost to terrorism has nearly tripled, with the MENA region experiencing even higher rates. Sub-Saharan Africa is on the verge of surpassing MENA in terms of lives lost to terrorism. Data from the Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP) Calculations and Terrorism Tracker indicated an overall increase in terrorism severity, excluding Colombia.

Professor Schmid used the specific statistics for 2023, focusing on Al Qaeda and DAESH. While acknowledging the limitations of the Global Terrorism Index (GTI) findings, the speaker emphasized the dynamic nature of terrorism trends.

Recent developments impacting terrorism were elaborated, including the use of modified drones, paragliders, an uptick in lone actor attacks, increased utilization of 3D weapons, and a rise in primitive tactics such as stabbings and vehicle ramming. The speaker offered eight insightful observations:

1. The threshold for becoming a terrorist has been lowered by online radicalization of vulnerable young people (mostly males) who can now access weapons by 3-D printing. Detection of lone actor terrorists is more difficult than detecting members of a cell or an organization.
2. The internet is full of misinformation and disinformation from which conspiracy theories and new ideologies are constructed.
3. Far-right extremism is on the rise.
4. Livestreaming of terrorist attacks is a growing concern.
5. Far-right extremism from mainstream populist movements is considered more dangerous than religiously-motivated terrorism.
6. The likelihood of new refugee flows is high with terrorist groups gaining state power.
7. Climate change might trigger regional mass displacement.
8. Interstate conflict prevention is also recognized as a form of terrorism prevention.

The presentation concluded on a thought-provoking note, emphasizing that violence serves as a form of communication. The speaker advocated for the creation of improved counter-narratives and the prevention of black propaganda, suggesting that developing more effective and detailed methods beyond kinetic responses is crucial in addressing the intricate challenges posed by terrorism. Overall, the presentation provided a comprehensive and insightful exploration of the evolving landscape of terrorism and the complex factors influencing its trajectory.

Terrorism in the late 2020s: Is it a post-DAESH World?

Dr. Richard OUTZEN, Atlantic Council Türkiye

Dr. Outzen evaluated the post-9/11 era that displayed a significant shift in risk and threat perception, likely referring to how the perception of security threats evolved after the September 11, 2001 attacks. Terrorism was described as a downstream effect of bad policies, suggesting that poorly managed policies can contribute to the rise of terrorism. The concept of mutually shared grievances was introduced, highlighting that some terrorist organizations and their supporters share common grievances. The speaker mentioned serving in the Middle East from 1990 to 2019, including Afghanistan and Syria, indicating a background in regions with significant terrorism-related challenges.

The significance of policy decisions was emphasized, indicating that terrorism can be a consequence of poorly managed processes. The speech touched on the interplay between terrorism, great power competition, and regional rivalry, showing the complex dynamics involved. The relationship between globalization and terrorism was briefly discussed, possibly referring to the trend of globalized terrorism. The need to consider multiple perspectives was highlighted, potentially suggesting that understanding terrorism requires a multifaceted approach. The instrumental use of violence against third parties was brought up, indicating that terrorism is sometimes employed as a tool in conflicts.

Various aspects of terrorist organizations, such as different factions and objectives, were discussed. Question of when a group should be designated as a terrorist organization, particularly when it has multiple facets, was posed. The concept of “*terror entrepreneurs*” was introduced, referring to individuals or groups that exploit terrorism for various purposes.

Mr. Zeeshan AMIN, Senior Programme Management Officer at the UNOCT, and Head of Office of the UNOCT Programme Office in Baghdad, Iraq.

Mr. Zeeshan Amin brought to light the imperative to prioritize the human side of counterterrorism efforts, emphasizing the need for a nuanced, context-specific, and

dynamic approach. Terrorism, viewed as a complex issue with broad implications, extends its influence across various domains.

Mr. Amin underscored the role of xenophobia and white supremacy in contributing to the genesis of terrorist activities. Recognizing the context-specific nature of terrorism, Mr. Amin touched upon how these organizations emerge within specific socio-political contexts. The dynamic tactics employed by terrorist organizations were highlighted, emphasizing their continuous evolution and adaptation to new skills, including digital assets and cryptocurrencies. The speaker advocated for a proactive and reactive stance in countering terrorism, stressing the importance of understanding how these groups renew themselves and adapt to changing conditions.

Political instability in the Sahel region was identified as a facilitator for organizations like DEASH, with coup attempts impacting coastal states such as Ghana, Ivory Coast, Togo, and Benin. However, the delayed and insufficient support provided to these countries was recognized as a significant challenge.

Narrative creation was identified as a crucial aspect of counterterrorism efforts, acknowledging the intensive work of institutions to reduce the impact of terrorism. However, the concept of “refueling,” particularly in the context of the Middle East, posed a challenge to these efforts.

The importance of adherence to international law, humanitarian law, and human rights principles was emphasized, with a call to hold countries accountable for undermining global counterterrorism efforts by not complying with these standards.

Addressing grievances was presented as a key strategy, advocating for inclusivity and the protection of minorities, women, and children. The United Nations’ commitment to prioritizing these aspects in their approach to counterterrorism was acknowledged.

In conclusion, Mr. Amin highlighted the multi-dimensional nature of counterterrorism, urging a holistic understanding that goes beyond tactical responses. Consensus-building on terrorism and counterterrorism emerged as a central theme, emphasizing the collaborative efforts needed to address the intricate challenges posed by terrorism in the contemporary global landscape.

Discussion

This session was moderated by Professor Haldun Yalçinkaya. The question-and-answer session covered the evolving landscape of terrorism, addressing a myriad of aspects related to definition, tactics, global trends, and counterterrorism efforts. The conversation started by acknowledging that it is hard to clearly define terrorism. Instead, there is a trend toward using terms like extremism more often in recent times.

The multifaceted nature of terrorism emerged as a central theme, characterized both as a doctrine and tactic. The discussion encapsulated its various manifestations, ranging from repressive measures and war tactics to strategies aimed at social change. This detailed understanding set the stage for grasping the various weapons used by terrorists, especially highlighting recent advancements like modified drones, paragliders, and the growing use of 3-D weapons.

The role of intelligence agencies, exemplified by the Dutch Intelligence Services (AIVD), was underscored, notably in the context of target selection by religious motivated terrorists in Europe during the period from 2004 to 2018. The conversation then shifted temporally, examining how terrorism has transformed since the 1970s, drawing insights from the Global Terrorism Database (GTD). Non-state terrorism, elucidated through the lens of the US State Department Report 2021, revealed a shifting landscape, encompassing activities such as kidnapping and hostage-taking.

The regional breakdowns gave a serious view, focusing on how terrorism affects NATO countries and the critical situation in the Sahel region. Alarming numbers showed an increase in casualties in Sub-Saharan Africa, urging a reconsideration of the need for better counterterrorism measures. IEP Calculations and the Terrorism Tracker provided stats (except for Colombia) where terrorism violence went up.

A look at the 2023 Scorecard Statistics revealed the current situation of groups like Al-Qaeda and DAESH, highlighting the ever-changing nature of global terrorism. Recent developments, from advanced technologies like modified drones to more lone actor attacks, were discussed. Some key observations pointed out trends, like a lower bar for becoming a terrorist, a rise in far-right extremism, and the potential impact of climate change on displacements.

The session concluded with a reflection on violence as a form of communication, emphasizing the critical need for effective counter-narratives to combat terrorism. The call for a more nuanced, collaborative, and adaptable approach to counterterrorism resonated throughout the discussion, underscoring the complex and evolving nature of this global challenge.

Key Threats Posed by Terrorists vis-à-vis Emerging Technology Project

Ms. Susan SIM, The Soufan Group, Vice President-Asia

Ms. Sim began her presentation by describing the research project jointly commissioned by NATO COE-DAT and the US Army War College Strategic Studies Institute to examine the key terrorist threats facing North and South America vis-à-vis emerging technologies. Drawing on the work of experts in nanotechnology, biosecurity, cybersecurity, artificial intelligence, augmented reality and autonomous unmanned systems, her presentation discussed four threat scenarios forecast by the experts in the next 5-10 years.

The **first** scenario she described raises the possibility of malevolent actors creating nano weapons capable of attacking the DNA of selective targets with programmable future outcomes. Dubbing this the “invisible extinction threat” scenario, she explained how advances in nanotechnology could be weaponized to create nano-sized robots that are not visible to the naked eye, capable of attacking human DNA to manipulate body and mind, or to disrupt or destroy critical animal or plant species. Such nano weapons could be programmed to attack months or years later, and yet remain undetected, making it challenging to identify attackers and prevent their actions. The **second** emerging threat scenario involves the rise of unmanned killing machines, especially with drones becoming cheaper, smaller, and capable of longer flights while carrying heavier loads. Their widespread use raises the risk of their being hacked and repurposed for attack without the need for significant resources by state and non-state actors, with potential uses ranging from targeting infrastructure to assassinations to poisoning crop fields.

The **third** emerging threat is the malicious use of artificial intelligence, with terrorists exploiting people’s biometrics, such as facial features, retinas, or voice patterns to hack into secure systems or to create deep fake videos. Chatbots can also be employed to identify and recruit vulnerable individuals and plan attacks. Ms. Sim highlighted the potential use of virtual reality by extremists for propaganda, recruitment, and training, especially when augmented reality tools will make it easier for terrorists to make “personal connections” with their recruits without crossing

physical borders. The **fourth** emerging threat she examined was biosecurity, where technological advances will make it easier to produce hazardous biological materials. Additionally, extremists may acquire more sophisticated biological weapons, making detection more challenging.

Mitigation strategies were emphasized, with a call for a comprehensive approach involving both technological and human factors. Acknowledging the psychological aspect of dealing with these technologies and the uncertainty surrounding their effects was underscored. The importance of understanding the potential impacts, especially with the rise of augmented reality, was emphasized.

The threat of generative artificial intelligence (AI) was highlighted, questioning the balance between what is possible and what is probable. The evolving landscape of technology access, which both eases the application of violence and provides widespread access to potentially harmful technologies, was a recurring theme. While various scenarios hinge on acquiring these technologies, the discussion acknowledged the lack of clear answers. In conclusion, Ms. Sim cited the work of the NATO Science for Peace and Security Program and its commitment to addressing the challenges posed by emerging threats.

Discussion

The interactive question session unfolded as a comprehensive exploration of the new challenges posed by emerging threats, with a specific focus on advanced technologies. The speaker initiated the discourse by shedding light on the complicated challenge of addressing the misuse of generative AI. The potential to use individualized recruitment narratives through this technology was emphasized, underlining its transformative impact on the landscape of modern threats.

A significant point in the discussion emerged regarding the accessibility of advanced technology, which has made tools facilitating violence more available. Ms. Susan Sim highlighted instances where technology could be misused, raising concerns about the urgency of developing countermeasures. The need for a complex understanding of the balance between what is possible and what is probable was a recurrent theme, pushing the audience to notice the importance of the ethical dimensions of technological advancements.

The subsequent question-and-answer session dwelt on policy considerations and the development of ethical guidelines. The audience raised queries about the motivation behind emerging threats, prompting reflections on whether a shift in focus from weapons to motivations could be a more effective approach. The consensus leaned towards acknowledging the profound societal transformations triggered by technological advancements.

Collaboration between experts, professionals, and policymakers was discussed and the necessity of innovative and interdisciplinary approaches to navigate the complexities of emerging threats responsibly was raised. The session concluded with a call for quick adaptation to the evolving technological landscape, emphasizing the importance of continuous reassessment of strategies in the face of emerging challenges.

DAY II

SOF a Tactical Tool in the Fight Against Terrorism with Strategic Implications

Dr. Heather GREGG, George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies

This presentation focuses on the roles Special Operations Forces (SOF) could play in crisis responses to terrorist incidents. It provides an overview of a workshop that took place in May 2023, and was a collaborative effort between NATO Center of Excellence Defence Against Terrorism (COE-DAT) and NATO Special Operations Forces Headquarters (NSHQ-Currently SOFCOM). The workshop had three primary goals:

- Engage NATO SOF allies, partner nations, and emerging partner nations to facilitate cooperation and discussion.
- Provide an opportunity for these nations to network and build relationships, recognizing the importance of partnerships in responding to transnational crises, especially terrorist incidents.
- Share best practices in crisis response to terrorist incidents and exploring the role that SOF could play in such responses.

Dr. Heather Gregg's presentation focused on specific case studies, starting with a terrorist attack on the 2013 **In Amenas** oil facility in Algeria. This attack involved perpetrators threatening to blow up the facility, taking over 100 hostages from various countries, and the murder of at least 39 hostages before the crisis ended. Dr. Gregg emphasized three key takeaways from this case study: **first**, it is crucial to "red team" and challenge assumptions regarding vulnerabilities and force protection of a facility, to call out those assumptions and be able to think about how they might be wrong. The **second** takeaway was the need to consider and train for extreme crisis scenarios. The terrorist failed in detonating any bombs and there was no complex fire. However, when we consider if they had succeeded, the results could have been

devastating. The **third** takeaway was the importance of building relationships with the local population to create a potential early warning to a terrorist incident. Post facto analysis concluded that the local population most likely knew that they had strangers amongst them, but did not say anything because there was no relationship between the oil facility, which was foreign owned, and the population. **Third**, the Algerian government had no legal mechanism to allow foreign forces to come in and help put down the crisis. International SOF elements were standing by to assist with the crisis, but the Algerian government had no legal authorities in place to allow for them to enter the country. Dr. Gregg noted that allowing foreign troops into a country is very sensitive because it involves a nation's sovereignty; but thinking about this beforehand is important for considering a range of crisis response options.

The SOF Crisis Response workshop also included a counterfactual scenario exercise to consider what could have been done to prevent the In Amenas attack in Algeria. This scenario exercise resulted in several key recommendations, including the need for red teaming, improved intelligence-sharing, enhanced vertical integration between forces on the ground and higher authorities, the prioritization of objectives during a crisis, and the importance of strategic communication planning.

The second case scrutinized during the workshop was the 2016 **Ouagadougou Attack** in Burkina Faso, in which a group of terrorists launched a coordinated assault on a café and an international hotel. The attack resulted in a 13-hour siege, necessitating the intervention of French SOF to end the crisis. Thirty individuals from 11 different countries lost their lives in the attack. Dr. Gregg underlined, **first**, that this case demonstrated that it is crucial to think fast in responding to a crisis, but it is also crucial to think well. The longer a terrorist incident prolongs, the more likely casualties increase, making quick and intelligent decision-making imperative.

The **second key takeaway** was that it is critically important to integrate local security forces with government level decision-making, and possibly international forces and other supporting assets before a crisis begins. Establishing contact, coordination, and training beforehand can significantly enhance the effectiveness of the response.

Third, the Ouagadougou attack highlighted the necessity for robust tactical and operational medical capabilities as part of the crisis response plan. Dr. Gregg underscored the importance of adequate medical preparedness for saving lives

during and after a terrorist incident and a medical response should be part of any crisis response plan. In the Ouagadougou attack, the lack of adequate medical preparedness caused numerous individuals to die when they might otherwise have been saved. This underscores the importance of medical readiness in dealing with terrorist crises.

As the third case, the workshop examined **Operation Euphrates Shield** implemented by Turkish Special Operations Forces (SOF) in 2016-2017 to counteract DAESH attacks originating from Syria into Türkiye. The operation commenced in Rai, Azez, and Dabiq, culminating in El Bab. Its primary objectives included neutralizing DAESH's rocket attacks into Türkiye, dismantling its information operations, and sealing Türkiye's border.

The operation demonstrated the following **four** key takeaways: **First**, the importance of recognizing the human domain as a significant aspect of warfighting within Multi Domain Operations. **Second**, challenges posed in Urban Operations, specifically the complexities and difficulties in securing urban areas, which often pose chaotic and challenging environments. **Third**, the necessity for effective interagency cooperation, better training, and collaboration between conventional and special operation forces to address hybrid threats, in addition to utilizing conventional forces alongside Special Operations Forces (SOF) in a joint operation necessitates the maintenance of a distinct training phase. **Fourth**, the critical importance of establishing and maintaining an Operational Headquarters for efficient coordination at strategic, operational, and tactical levels.

Finally, Operation Euphrates Shield underscores the value of international partnerships, reevaluating assumptions, and rigorous training in crisis response, with a focus on the role of Special Operations Forces in addressing transnational crises, such as terrorist incidents.

In conclusion, Dr. Gregg's presentation encapsulated the key insights derived from a comprehensive workshop addressing three impactful case studies: the In Amenas Attack, the Ouagadougou Attack, and Operation Euphrates Shield. The workshop emphasized the imperative to prepare for extreme crisis scenarios, underlining the unpredictability and complexity of potential threats. Integrating command and control mechanisms among security forces emerged as a critical factor, underscoring the

significance of seamless coordination in crisis management. The notion of creating a “short loop” for swift decision-making was another essential element, particularly acknowledging the time-sensitive nature of crisis responses. Furthermore, the importance of clearly defining operational objectives and measuring success was underscored, advocating for a mission statement to guide counter-terrorism efforts. The workshop also highlighted the necessity of considering the broader strategic context of terrorist motivations. Finally, the nuanced discussion on the sensitivity surrounding the involvement of foreign troops in a country spotlighted the need for open dialogue and strategic considerations in multinational efforts. Overall, these takeaways provide a valuable framework for enhancing crisis preparedness, cooperation, and strategic planning in counter-terrorism endeavors.

Discussion

In the Q&A session following Dr. Gregg’s presentation, she was asked whether terrorism is a national or international issue. In this context, the question was raised about whether NATO, by primarily viewing terrorism as a national issue, might create confusion. Dr. Gregg expressed that irregular warfare, or, in other words, hybrid threats, have become internationalized beyond national borders. She went further to emphasize the transnational dimension of these threats. Dr. Gregg noted that hybrid threats not only target nation-states but also aim to undermine cohesion within alliances, attempting to disrupt the effectiveness of the collective response to the threat. Dr. Gregg highlighted the need for NATO to protect itself against threats with this mentality, stating that the security environment is so complex right now. She added that she believes these problems cannot be solved individually by states without collaboration.

It was noted that the case studies examined by Dr. Gregg were considered almost textbook examples. In this context, she was asked about what tactically differentiated the Operation Euphrates Shield, specifically whether this difference originated from the process, execution, or the threat scale of the operation. As a follow up comment by the participant, it was emphasized that the Turkish Armed Forces learned a great deal during this operation., It was underscored that the role of Special Operations Forces (SOF) in this operation was not a textbook example in the fundamental sense;

rather, it transcended traditional operations. In the Operation Euphrates Shield, the role of Turkish Special Forces was more focused on engaging with local elements and the indigenous population. This experience highlighted the importance of local collaboration with SOF elements in facing a common threat.

Dr. Gregg was asked, “What challenges do Special Operations Forces (SOF) face in balancing tactical effectiveness when achieving strategic objectives in the fight against terrorism?” In response, she expressed the prevailing belief in the CT units that if the best planning is always done, it could act as a deterrent, leading to fewer terrorist attacks. However, she added that this notion is not always reflected in practice. Dr. Gregg emphasized that training together, working on interoperability, and simultaneously considering authorities and doctrines would contribute to better coordination in the fight against terrorism.

Panel: Distinguished Terrorism Expert Session 2

Terrorism from a Regional Perspective

What Terrorists Tell Us about the Fighters from Central Asia

Moderator & Panelist: Dr. Afzal ASHRAF, LOUGHBOROUGH University

Dr. Ashraf delves into the intriguing dynamics of Central Asia, a region that holds historical significance as part of old Islamic Empires. After Saudi Arabia and Iran, Central Asia boasts some of the oldest Islamic seminaries. During the Russian imperial era, the region was under the control of the Russian Empire. Notably, Catherine the Great played a pivotal role in establishing the muftiate, a patriarchal institution that sought to unite the diverse sects of Islam. This move was considered a success in addressing the challenges posed by the absence of a traditional clergy in Islam.

Today, remnants of the muftiate persist in the region, and each state, including Kyrgyzstan, has its own government ministries of religion. However, since gaining independence and the fall of the Soviet Empire, these institutions have been influenced by external groups. Dr. Ashraf notes the intriguing case of Kyrgyzstan, where the muftiate has been shaped by external religious groups since independence. This external influence on religious ministries is a recurring theme in other Central Asian states, mirroring the complexities and challenges faced by these nations in shaping their religious institutions post-Soviet era.

Dr. Afzal Ashraf's presentation discusses a case study related to research funded by the European Union. The research involved interviewing 38 foreign terrorist fighters who were imprisoned. This is a remarkable achievement, considering the initial expectation was to interview only five out of a total of 43 such individuals, with five of them refusing to participate in the interviews. These were terrorists affiliated to Jamaat al-Nusra or DAESH.

The main question of the research was to understand why and how individuals become involved in terrorist activities. Dr. Ashraf and his team conducted interviews with terrorists and their families. The methodology employed in the research included the use of ORBIT (an interview technique) and Grounded Theory (a data analysis

approach). The presentation hints at a multidisciplinary approach, with the involvement of psychologists and translators in the research team. Dr. Ashraf also mentions that interviews were conducted not only with the foreign terrorist fighters but also with their families, stakeholders, civil society experts, and government members to gain a comprehensive understanding of the subject.

The process begins with the observation of building-based interpersonal interview techniques. In simpler terms, it involves talking to other human beings in a way that encourages them to share more than they would in an interrogation. The key approach in these interviews is based on principles such as **acceptance**, which means offering unconditional positive regard for the person being interviewed. It is essential to note that acceptance does not imply agreement with what they say. **Empathy** is another crucial aspect, involving the ability to show understanding without necessarily agreeing. **Adoption** refers to the interviewer's capacity to adapt to the responses during the interview, making it a fluid and integrated conversation without interruptions but with a skillful ability to move it forward. Lastly, **application** is emphasized, indicating the ability to draw out the interviewee's beliefs and views effectively. The principle of **autonomy** is highlighted as crucial in the interview process. Emphasizing the right to choose to speak, giving individuals control, and treating them like human beings encourages them to share more willingly. This approach recognizes the importance of acknowledging their agency, especially considering that they may not have been treated as human beings for a significant part of their experiences. Additionally, the significance of preparation and the choice of locations in the interview process is underscored. Proper preparation ensures that the interviewer is well-equipped for the conversation, and the choice of location is a key consideration that can impact the dynamics of the interaction.

Dr. Ashraf sheds light on the experiences of individuals who joined terrorist organizations, with these individuals describing their experiences as "cruel," "neglected," "pressured," and "disillusioned." Despite the religious motivations of the groups they joined, when asked how they pacified themselves during moments of fear in conflict, none of them mentioned praying or their belief in Allah. This insight offers a nuanced understanding of the complex and often non-religious coping mechanisms employed by individuals involved in terrorism. There is a noticeable

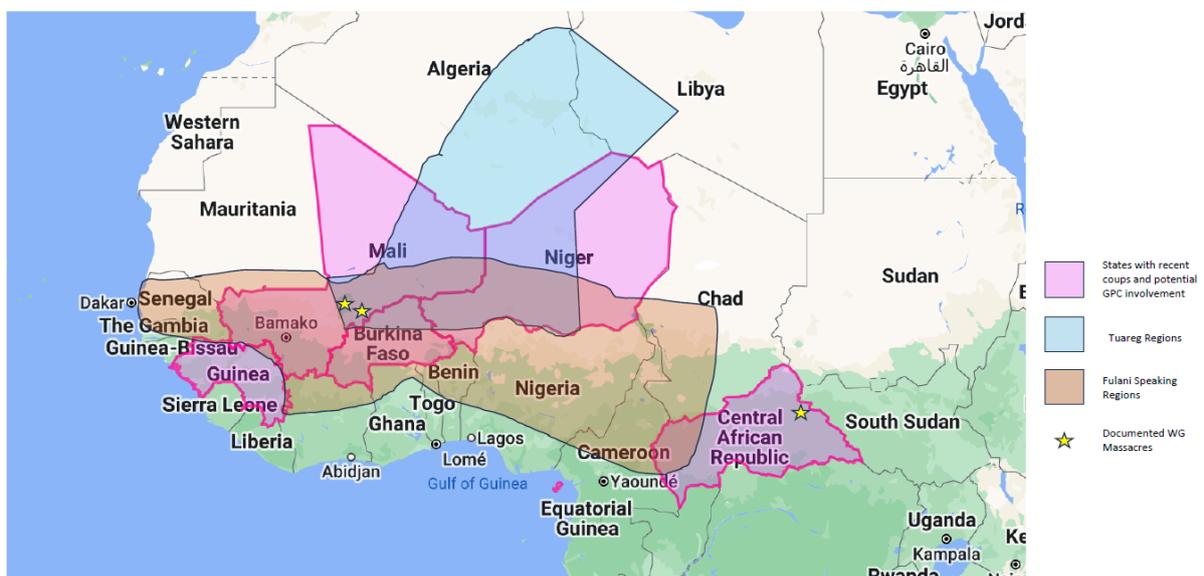
interplay between local situations and global factors in individuals joining terrorist organizations.

In conclusion, Dr. Ashraf’s exploration of the case study on foreign terrorist fighters adds a critical dimension to the research, showcasing the complexities in understanding the motivations of individuals engaged in terrorism. The multidisciplinary approach, involving interviews with terrorists, their families, and various stakeholders, underscores the depth of the research.

The Changing Landscape of Terrorism in Africa

Prof. Jonathan GITHENS-MAZER, Institute for Arab and Islamic Studies (IAIS)

Prof. Githens-Mazer emphasizes his focus on the Sahel region while expressing reservations about the nomenclature “Sahel.” He highlights the shift from a phase of prevention to one of response in addressing regional challenges.



Prof. Githens-Mazer casts light on the landscape of terrorism in Africa, with a focus on mapping out the key areas of concern. He underlines that the instability in this region stems not only from great-power competition and Russian intervention but also from ethnic and local factors. When discussing these regions, he notes the frequent use of the concept of “**ungoverned space**,” highlighting its relevance in understanding the challenges and complexities associated with these areas. Prof.

Githens-Mazer critiques the term ungoverned space, asserting that there are no truly ungoverned areas in the world, but rather regions governed in unconventional ways that may not resemble traditional state governance. He emphasizes the complexity of political environments and notes the historical imposition of colonial borders on Africa, which may not align with local ethnic, tribal, and cultural divisions that we evaluate from a nation-state's understanding.

Professor Jonathan Githens-Mazer examines the period when instability intensified in Africa, focusing on the collapse of the Arab Spring and Libya as a starting point. He highlights that Türkiye and Qatar played an important role in the challenging situation within Libya and took responsibility for re-establishing stability. The collapse of Libya had repercussions in many parameters for other African countries. It created space for militia groups to thrive, leading to instability and insecurity spreading across a significant portion of the continent. Ethnic groups already in search of power saw opportunities to advance their goals through organizations such as Al-Qaeda and DAESH that sought to exploit the instability and expand their influence in the region.

Professor touches upon the key role he sees in the fight against terrorism in Africa, specifically referencing **Operation Barkhane**. He characterizes it not as a success story but rather as a disaster. Despite not achieving its objectives precisely, Operation Barkhane represented a presence in the region. With the absence of that presence, he notes a resurgence in strength and emerging confidence among terrorist groups in the region. The implication is that the withdrawal or discontinuation of such operations can create opportunities for terrorist organizations to gain ground and pose increased threats.

Russia's discourse over Africa is seen by some as contributing to a concept of a new form of neo-antique colonialism, building somewhat on the narrative of the Cold War. It is intriguing to note that the contemporary Russian state, according to Prof. Githens-Mazer, while disavowing itself from the Soviet Union, still seeks to leverage some historical credibility associated with helping oppressed nations globally. This stance aligns with a new anti-colonial narrative. Additionally, on a global scale, there is competition, raising questions about European energy security, particularly in terms of natural gas. The competition for influence extends to regions like Nigeria and Algeria, where pipelines play a significant role.

In the realm of great power competition, strategic considerations are evident, not solely in energy dynamics but also in the broader geopolitical landscape. Migration becomes a crucial aspect, especially triggering the concerns of and its NATO allies. The issue of migration from this region is viewed as a complex challenge, intertwined with broader themes such as climate change. Furthermore, migration is observed to be instrumentalized in some cases, serving as a tool for destabilization and influencing the close partnerships among NATO allies.

At the conclusion of the presentation, a separate emphasis is placed on Russia, specifically addressing how Russia's and Wagner's counter-terrorism policies in Africa may be inadvertently pushing individuals towards radical groups. Professor stresses concerns that Russia's disproportionate and brutal counterterrorism (CT) strategies are making individuals feel more aligned with religiously motivated groups. The perception is that, in the face of Russia's harsh policies, individuals believe they have no other option but to turn towards these radical groups. The analysis suggests a complex interplay between counterterrorism approaches and the unintended consequences of pushing individuals towards extremism.

In summary, Prof. Jonathan Githens-Mazer's presentation appears to focus on the challenges and complexities of governance, identity, and political dynamics in the Sahel region, with a specific emphasis on the aftermath of the Arab Spring and the collapse of Libya. His presentation encourages a critical reevaluation of established concepts and labels in the region.

The Evolving Nature of Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism in Europe

Ms. Emily WINTERBOTHAM, RUSI, Director of the Terrorism and Conflict Research Group

Ms. Emily Winterbotham, Director of the Terrorism and Conflict Research Group at RUSI, discusses the evolving nature of the terrorist threat in Europe and its various dimensions. Ms. Winterbotham emphasized that we have been witnessing rapid changes in terrorism in the context of Europe for the last ten years and it is important not to overstate the significance of new threats. The threats directed from al-Qaeda and DAESH do still have an impact on the European security. According to Ms. Winterbotham, security units in Europe should particularly monitor religiously-

motivated extremist movements carefully and take proactive measures. This type of extremism has been a primary focus of EU intelligence services since 9/11 and continues to be a prominent concern. Furthermore, politically inspired extremism, single-issue terrorism, issues related to kind of ecoterrorism, etc. have been around for decades, she adds. In recent times in Europe, the issue that authorities have been most concerned about monitoring is self-radicalized terrorism, which presents particular challenges from a monitoring perspective – individuals are less networked, less visible and may radicalize quickly.

In relation to religiously inspired terrorism, there are unresolved issues that serve as sources of radicalization. In particular, the failure to resolve the situation of DAESH fighters and family members in prisons in NE Syria. The concern extends beyond the camps themselves and their conditions; it involves the potential exploitation of narratives and conditions by groups like DAESH to recruit more individuals. The return of individuals from these camps, predominantly women and children at the moment, poses security challenges. These challenges include sentencing difficulties, concerns about trials becoming sources of propaganda, and the management of returnees in prisons.

Ms. Winterbotham highlights that while the majority of returning individuals are women, there has been less attention on the management of women in European prisons due to the positive security bias. Ms. Winterbotham explains that there is a tendency to downplay the threat that women can present. Unfortunately, there is a lack of awareness about the threat that women can pose in prisons. She notes the challenges in gathering evidence regarding women's roles and capabilities in extremist activities. She also discusses concerns about risk assessments in prisons and the need for gender-sensitive and age-specific assessments.

Prison infrastructures are often ill-equipped to handle female foreign terrorist fighters, potentially limiting access to specialized disengagement programs. Ms. Winterbotham recommends that CT authorities must strive to understand the capabilities that women have developed within DAESH in Syria / Iraq. It is crucial to comprehend the original reasons behind their involvement in such a vicious group. Beyond that, it becomes even more challenging to perceive the roles of women within these organizations, which is a task more complex than identifying root causes.

Women may not be as visible – i.e. in fighting roles on behalf of the organization, making it difficult for us to grasp the roles they execute in the background.

On the other hand, Ms. Emily Winterbotham emphasizes the importance of de-radicalization and disengagement programs concerning young individuals involved in violence. She points out that the challenges officials may face in reintegrating these individuals into society can be formidable. Most disengagement programs are designed to target older male individuals, posing a potential limitation in addressing the unique needs of a diverse group involved in violence.

In conclusion, the speaker expresses ongoing concern about the situation in Syria and Iraq, particularly emphasizing the issue of managing the return of foreign terrorist fighters and the challenges associated with it. The mention of terrorist trials and the potential benefits of coalition-produced videos is highlighted as a means of upholding accountability.

In relation to newer forms of extremism, particularly those named as ‘Mixed, Unclear, Unstable’ or ‘hybrid threats,’ the speaker questions the effectiveness of traditional prevention responses based on countering ideas by dismantling ideological belief systems, suggesting that current assessments may no longer capture the evolving landscape of extremism. In this context, the speaker emphasizes that the motivation behind extremist actions cannot always be definitively determined. This underscores the complexity of understanding the underlying factors that drive individuals towards extremism, highlighting the challenges in identifying and addressing the diverse and often elusive motivations that contribute to radicalization and terrorist activities.

The need for collaboration between agencies is stressed. The speaker challenges the rigid definitions of extremist groups and suggests a more flexible, nuanced approach at the European government level. Additionally, the need for a comprehensive engagement strategy that integrates non-securitized preventive actions with targeted prevention activities is underscored. The speaker argues for a response designed to address emerging threats emphasizing the importance of robust democratic systems to counter the aim of undermining democracy and social cohesion shared by various extremist entities.

Discussion

Prof. Jonathan Githens-Mazer was asked about his assessment of China's role in Africa. The question addressed China's approaches to terrorism and security issues on the continent, and additionally inquired about China's potential future role at a strategic level. Prof. Githens-Mazer conveyed dissatisfaction expressed by experts in Algeria, where China has a longstanding presence. According to him, these experts criticized China for building roads and infrastructure, taking what serves their interests, and then showing less interest in the country. Similar criticisms were reportedly voiced by Sudanese officials, particularly before 2019. He emphasized that these officials highlighted China's lack of concern for security and instability issues, stating that their focus was solely on extracting natural resources and commercially processing them. Furthermore, Prof. Githens-Mazer pointed out that China's use of illegal mining techniques, especially in gold extraction, further complicated local dynamics in the region and added that the Chinese are much more business-focused.

Dr. Ashraf was asked about the counter-terrorism challenges in Central Asia, the focus of his study, and whether he could derive counter-strategies from it. Particularly, the inquiry revolved around what could be done regarding the situation of foreign terrorist fighters returning from conflict zones. Dr. Ashraf expressed that, compared to other conflict zones, Central Asia is less troubled. Many countries in this region are governed by dictators, and these leaders tend to be obsessed with national security. Due to their securitization of most issues, their perception of threats and response mechanisms differ. Additionally, this region has received significant investment in countering violent extremism, which has had a considerable impact on combating terrorism. The challenge lies in understanding the global terrorism phenomenon, described as the "elephant in the room."

Strategic Level Terrorism Exercise Scenario Development Project

Assoc. Prof. Zuhal YENİÇERİ, Başkent University

Assoc. Prof. Zuhal Yeniçeri from the Başkent University introduces a groundbreaking initiative—the Strategic Level Terrorism Exercise Scenario Development Project—aimed at creating a new course to identify key indicators of terrorism and their repercussions on counter-terrorism efforts.

The project unfolds in four comprehensive phases:

1. Designing the Training System:

Conducting an extensive literature review spanning from 1956 to 2023 to define the main indicators of terrorism. The process involves preparing abstracts for selected articles, analyzing Shannon’s Entropy Difference (with 1,126,722-word tokens), and obtaining scores for leading keywords (9,456 words). This phase also includes clustering keyword pairs into expert-common usage subgroups and evaluating each subgroup. Expert-Common Usage groups are categorized into nine main topics, further broken down into sub-topics when necessary. These main topics cover a range of critical areas, such as Trends, Global terrorism, and violence, Terrorism and illicit global integration networks, Global terrorism, military intervention, and counter-terrorism, Dynamics and Society, Economic and financial aspects, psychological dynamics, Context and strategies, Law and governance, and Media/communication.

2. Modeling the Training System:

Execution of workshops (WSs) to scrutinize the main findings of Stage 1 with the Advisory Team and Subject Matter Experts (SMEs), categorizing them under the identified main topics and sub-topics. This crucial step lays the groundwork for the subsequent phases, providing a structured framework for the development of the training system.

3. Simulation Development:

Building on the insights gained from the preceding phases, this step involves crafting a comprehensive course program. The course is meticulously designed to cover the identified main topics and sub-topics, offering a robust foundation for understanding the multifaceted dynamics of terrorism and its global impacts.

4. Feedback & Train the Trainers:

This final phase involves receiving feedback on the developed simulation and course program. Additionally, a 'Train the Trainers' component ensures that educators and professionals are equipped to deliver the course effectively, disseminating valuable knowledge on terrorism indicators and counter-terrorism strategies.

The conceptual network of the project revealed seven main topics under the overarching theme of "Psychological Dynamics of Terrorism." These topics include polarization, absolutism, threat orientation, hate, wireless discrimination, education, fear, and the emergence of great cycles of physical damage.

Since Assoc. Prof. Yeniçeri is a social-psychologist, the presentation focused the significance of the psychological aspect in understanding terrorism, delving into social psychology, personality traits, and the formation of identity. Asst. Prof. YENİÇERİ KÖKDEMİR highlights the role of social influence theories and the importance of social identity in the context of terrorism. The presentation concludes with a profound exploration of existential threats, immortality seeking, and the intricate interplay between individual identity and collective ideologies.

Assoc. Prof. Yeniçeri recalled that research on the psychological reasons behind radicalization and extremism, considered as the initial steps leading to terrorism, was not sufficiently explored until the 2000s. In terms of their studies, she emphasizes that psychologists also bear responsibilities in the counter-terrorism (CT) process regarding the concepts mentioned above. She notes that most individuals joining terrorist organizations do not exhibit a psychopathological pattern or a predisposition to violence as a personal trait. In other words, she points out that whether terrorist group members have psychopathology or a predisposition to violence does not present a generalizable finding. Therefore, she underscores the importance of not

separating the analysis from the political and societal context when integrating psychology with CT studies. At this stage, she also refers to the Social Identity Theory (SIT).

According to SIT, individuals define their identities based on specific groups, their roles within these groups, and their positions within the group. To establish themselves, they create in-groups and out-groups. While seeking answers to the questions “Who am I?” and searching for a community to belong to, individuals may be exposed to the propaganda of these organizations, taking advantage of vulnerabilities. At this stage, it would not be entirely wrong to state that terrorist organizations offer this opportunity to individuals in search of identity. The social identity can be so powerful that an individual, instead of their personal “I” identity, may surrender their fundamental rights by embracing the “we” identity within the organization. This is precisely what we observe in individuals, particularly those who carry out suicide attacks, today.

In summary, Assoc. Professor Zuhale Yeniçeri introduces the Strategic Level Terrorism Exercise Scenario Development Project, a pioneering initiative focused on identifying key indicators of terrorism and their impact on counter-terrorism efforts. The project unfolds through four phases: designing the training system, modeling the training system, simulation development, and feedback & train the trainers. It encompasses a comprehensive exploration of critical topics related to terrorism, providing a structured framework for understanding its dynamics.

The conceptual network of the project, centered around the “Psychological Dynamics of Terrorism,” reveals seven main topics, emphasizing the role of social psychology, personality traits, and identity formation. Assoc. Professor Yeniçeri underscores the significance of social influence theories and social identity, delving into their relevance in the context of terrorism. The presentation concludes with an exploration of existential threats, immortality seeking, and the intricate interplay between individual identity and collective ideologies.

COE-DAT Border Security in Contested Environment Project

Prof. Cem KARADELİ, Ufuk University

Prof. Dr. Cem Karadeli's speech on Border Security in a Contested Environment starts by talking about the transformative events in the world since the end of the Cold War. From the collapse of the Soviet system to the rise of the Russian Federation, establishment of new nation-states in Eurasia, the formation of the European Union and the Schengen Area, to various conflicts and geopolitical shifts, these changes have significantly impacted how states perceive and manage their borders, national security, and counterterrorism measures.

The Schengen Area, despite facilitating the movement of people and goods among its member states, has posed challenges related to security concerns, such as irregular immigration and trafficking within the EU territory. These developments have given rise to new security concerns, including destabilization, conflicts, mass migrations, organized crime, drug trafficking, human smuggling, epidemics, and pandemics.

In response to these challenges, states have employed various methods to protect their borders, territories, and citizens. The establishment of border walls has become a notable trend, with around 80 new walls constructed by nation-states since 1989. However, Prof. Karadeli emphasizes that border walls alone are not a comprehensive solution, as they cannot prevent issues like irregular immigration, terrorist attacks, or illicit goods trafficking. Moreover, the construction of border walls exacerbates inter-ethnic security dilemmas and can lead to population insecurities.

The speech underscores that creating a distinction between "us" and "them" and erecting border walls is not a viable solution. Military options are costly, a multidimensional approach is time-consuming, and violating human rights is not acceptable. Instead, Prof. Karadeli advocates for an integrated approach to border security, specifically integrated border management. This approach involves cooperation among neighboring states, relevant agencies, and shared databases to enhance border control and surveillance.

The European Union's Integrated Border Management system serves as a model for this approach, featuring four pillars: forward displacement strategy, consistent service-oriented security checks at external borders, cross-border cooperation with third countries, and a consistent increase in detection risk within EU member states' territory. This integrated approach aims to balance security concerns with the need for free movement, emphasizing cooperation, and harmonization in addressing contemporary challenges related to border security.

In furtherance of the efforts initiated in the 2020 workshop, NATO COE-DAT organized another workshop from June 14-16, 2023, in Ankara. The 2023 COE-DAT conference commenced with a broad discussion and delved into the analysis of irregular migration from the Mediterranean region to Europe, with a specific focus on the role of EU organs combating irregular migration. The conference explored EU procedures and institutions related to migration, refugees, and border security. A presentation on humanitarian border management in conjunction with the standard operating procedures of the International Organization for Migration emphasized the importance of preparedness.

The workshop featured case studies highlighting that border security issues extend beyond the EU or the US. One chapter examined the situation in Rwanda, addressing border security challenges in the North Kivu Region and the ability of terrorist organizations to operate across the Rwanda–Democratic Republic of Congo border. Another chapter delved into the Tskhinvali Region in Georgia, exploring the reimagined concepts of Borderisation and Passportisation.

The diverse subjects discussed during the workshop, coupled with expert perspectives, provided new insights into border security issues. As a result of these discussions and considerations of NATO Good Practices proposed in 2020, an e-book project was initiated with six workshop experts. The authors concluded that UN Good Practices, while extensive, might not be entirely suitable for application in NATO member and partner countries. Consequently, the proposed NATO Good Practices for border management were suggested to be less complicated, in a more limited number, and with a focus on specific points.

The newly proposed good practices for NATO and its partner states were deemed applicable in real-life situations and economically feasible for host countries.

Recognizing the significance of training, NATO's resources and staff were highlighted as valuable assets for providing comprehensive training in border security practices. If these practices prove effective at NATO borders, they could extend to crisis interventions and training for military personnel globally, potentially setting standards for other international organizations.

As a result, the proposed set of good practices for NATO members and willing-to-adopt NATO partner states are as such:

- **Good Practice One:** Enhance intra-agency and inter-agency cooperation by coordinating NATO member military forces' efforts on border security and provide NATO-wide training to related staff to coordinate and standardize NATO members' operating procedures. Establish Border Cooperation Centres and assign border liaison officers to these centres.
- **Good Practice Two:** Develop and establish comprehensive remote border area surveillance programs as well as Border Security Management information exchange programs (based on similar existing programs that work in FRONTEX or INTERPOL), and, risk assessment and analysis units.
- **Good Practice Three:** Engage with and empower civil society, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and communities as key contributors in Border Security Management.
- **Good Practice Four:** Practice the common policy arrangement -to be determined by the North Atlantic Council- in all member countries.
- **Good Practice Five:** Establish means to achieve strategic communication so that NATO member states' strategies are clearly communicated to people both inside and outside NATO, either friendly or hostile. Security forces should be the first source of information for border security-related issues.
- **Good Practice Six:** Build the necessary infrastructure to support border security.
- **Good Practice Seven:** Develop and implement policies to provide necessary infrastructure and logistical support to the Border Management crews in pacific conditions and to provide first-responder support in times of crises.
- **Good Practice Eight:** When providing peacekeeping operations, establish strategic communication and cooperation, and coordinate with the host country military command and policy-makers. Develop policies to provide support and

logistical assistance to civil society and NGOs and local government organizations.

Gender, Climate Change, and Terrorism in Africa

Ms. Nazanine MOSHIRI, Crisis Group Senior Analyst

Ms. Nazanine Moshiri's presentation on "Gender, Climate Change, and Terrorism in Africa" highlighted the intricate connections between climate, gender dynamics, and conflict, with a focus on the challenges faced by the continent. The presentation began by recognizing international organizations' commitment to fostering global cooperation for a more peaceful world, particularly in understanding the interplay of climate, environment, gender, and conflict.

The presentation delved into the complex relationship between climate change and conflicts, emphasizing the role of climate as a risk multiplier. Anticipated challenges in the future include heightened food and water scarcity, resource competition, disruptions to livelihoods, and migration patterns, all contributing to political instability and conflict.

Ms. Moshiri drew attention to the organization's gender program, which seeks to unravel the interaction between gender dynamics and conflict. Using gender-disaggregated data, the program integrates an analytical gender lens into various channels such as publications, communications, and advocacy efforts. Special emphasis is placed on identifying the impact of gender inequalities on resilience, particularly in areas where women bear a disproportionate burden in caring for those affected by terrorism and climate hazards.

In the African context, Ms. Moshiri cited statistics revealing that 70% of the continent's food is grown by women. The presentation focused on the climate crisis in Somalia, highlighting a 16-year struggle exacerbated by consecutive failed rainy seasons, severe droughts, and territorial losses to al-Shabab. The study underscored the interplay between climate stress, economic deprivation, and the heightened risks faced by women, including forced conscription and kidnappings.

Proposed solutions underscored the necessity for a gender-responsive approach to policies addressing climate change and armed groups. This involves integrating gender considerations into mandates, collecting more targeted data, and recognizing the specific dangers women face in displacement camps, particularly concerning access to water. Ms. Moshiri advocated for the Women, Peace, and Security

framework, urging gender-sensitive mandates and sustainable financing for gender equality initiatives.

In conclusion, the presentation underscored the persistent challenges arising from the intersection of climate, gender, and conflict in Africa. The call to action was for comprehensive strategies that consider these complexities, promoting sustainable international security. Ms. Moshiri's insights contribute to a nuanced understanding of the issues and highlight the importance of addressing these challenges holistically for a more secure and equitable future

Discussion

The question-and-answer session highlighted the potential of women's empowerment and leadership in climate adaptation efforts, emphasizing their role in conflict prevention and stability. The integration of gender considerations, beyond merely increasing the number of women in positions of power, emerged as a crucial aspect. An illustrative example was provided, citing Somalia's Ministry of Environment and Climate Change, led by a woman striving to mainstream gender into climate policies.

The discussion stressed the significance of understanding the diverse roles men and women play during challenging times, such as climate shocks and conflicts fueled by terrorist organizations. Consideration of gender dynamics throughout policy-making processes was emphasized and the importance of addressing the different impacts on men and women in these situations is reflected.

Moshiri indicated the need for more evidence-based research and context-specific approaches was highlighted. She also acknowledged that solutions which are effective in one context may not necessarily apply to another. She mentioned importance of climate and environmental expertise within missions. The call for more experts with specific knowledge of different contexts and features, to contribute NATO's climate security efforts, was a notable takeaway.

In conclusion, the session offered a comprehensive understanding of the gender dynamics which is interconnected with climate crisis and conflict prevention. It also emphasized the need for tailored, context-specific approaches and increased expertise within missions to enhance the effectiveness of climate security efforts.

Multi Domain Operation - Implications for NATO's approach to Counter Terrorism

CDR Philip GOULD (CAN N), SO Concept Development at NATO ACT HQ, SPP

CDR Philip Gould delves into the critical realm of Multi-Domain Operations (MDO) and NATO's transformation into a Multi-Domain-Operations enabled Alliance. Following an MC tasking, the Bi-SC produced the **Alliance Concept for Multi-Domain Operations** in March 2023.

NATO's Heads of State and Government in Vilnius "*agreed significant measures to further enhance NATO's deterrence and defense posture in all domains*", and amongst those specifically to "*continue our work on multi-domain operations, enabled by NATO's Digital Transformation, which further drives our military and technological advantage, strengthening the Alliance's ability to operate decisively across the land, air, maritime, cyberspace and space domains.*"

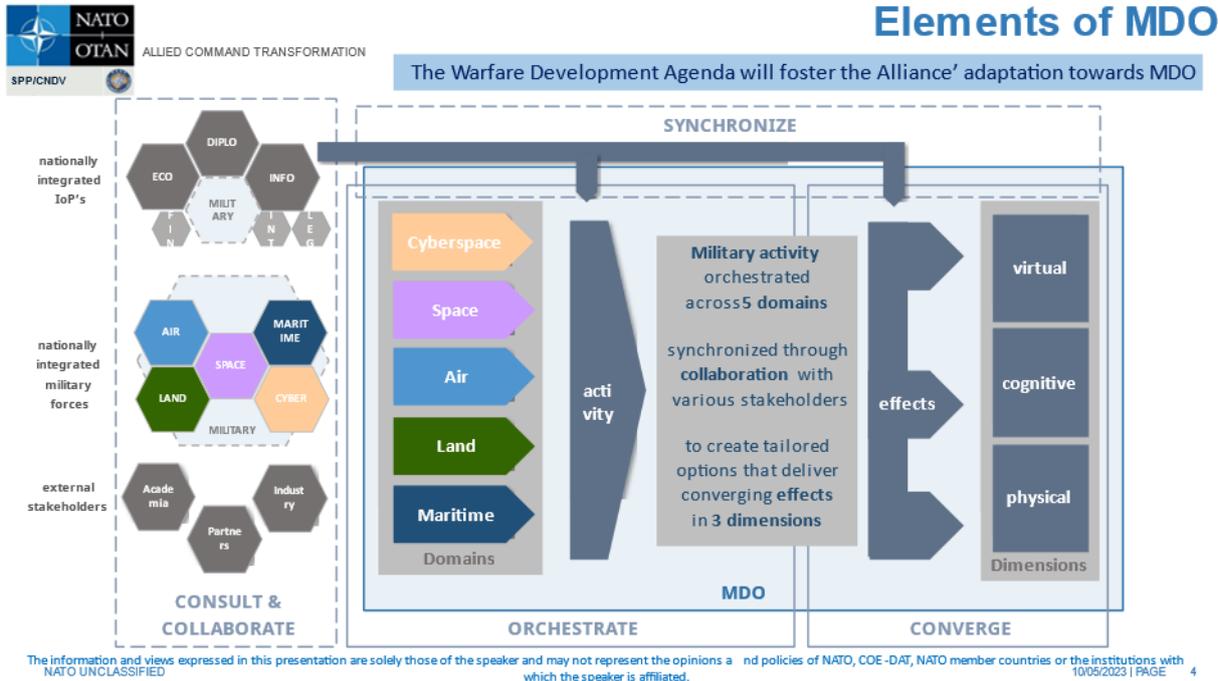
While the MDO concept was under development, the strategic context changed as Russia intervened in the Ukrainian soil; highlighting that NATO needs to evolve from a Joint mind-set to MDO. In reviewing the recent actions by terrorist groups, CDR Gould stated that they are and will be learning fast on how to incorporate capability to increase their ability to disrupt society by incorporating technology to increase their speed, range, and lethality.

The implementation of MDO is following two pathways. First, SACEUR is leveraging the MDO concept four guiding principles in the implementation of the DDA through items such as the new force model, new command systems and new strategic HQ standup. While ACT is actively supporting ACO lines of effort ACT has a future looking line of efforts that primarily composes of the development of 8 NATO WARFIGHTING CAPSTONE CONCEPT (NWCC)/ WARFARE DEVELOPMENT AGENDA (WDA)/ Lines of Delivery (LoD). These will be looking at what is next after DDA implementation first from a conceptual perspective.

CDR Gould emphasized that the Adversaries are already influencing the Alliance across different domains that include cyberspace attacks, demonstration of counter-Space capabilities; traditional military hard-power demonstrations. NATO already

operates across multiple domains; but the future requires optimization of converging effects across all domains (MDO). Improved connectivity and collaboration (including non-military capability providers) will offer decision makers more options and a chance to generate concurrent dilemmas.

NATO is transforming from a Joint approach towards MDO. Instead of focusing on traditional services, MDO is an approach where military capabilities plus contributing capabilities of non-military entities combine to deliver effects, at speed across 5 domains. This requires a change in mind-set and culture. MDO is focused on achieving military objectives in collaboration with other actors MDO is not replacing the Comprehensive Approach, which continues to drive the strategic campaign. MDO is focused on the Military Instruments of Power (MIoP) achieving military objectives, which, through collaboration, may include the support of capabilities provided by non-military entities. CDR Gould underlined the fact that NATO Digital Transformation is key to achieving the MDO vision. This must include better sharing, exploitation, exchanging and appreciation of data.



Developing a definition for MDO meant creating a common understanding for 31 Nations' approaches, some of which can conduct MDO within one service, whilst others may just bring one service into the game and have limited or no access to cyber or space capabilities. The essence of MDO is orchestrating what the military

has command and control over, and via collaboration, synchronize activities & capabilities of other actors IOT achieve military effects.

On the left are all actors that could provide capabilities that could support the MloP to achieve its objectives; much stronger interaction i.e., “collaboration” is required. The middle shows NATO’s 5 agreed domains where military activities take place; towards the right, the key outcome for MDO is delivering converging effects; these effects can occur in three dimensions: the physical (“boots-on-the-ground, bombs-on-target”), virtual (information operations or cyber effects), or cognitive (“that’s where attitudes and behaviors are influenced) dimensions.

Collaboration with non-military actors and access to supporting capabilities with synchronized effects can reduce operational risk and increase probability of mission success. MDO is NOT about the military controlling, incorporating, or driving the objectives of other Instruments of Power (IoP) or entities, and not aimed at replacing the Comprehensive Approach. MDO is about utilizing capabilities and activity from whatever source to help achieve military objectives, across the whole spectrum (i.e. shaping, contesting, fighting) by reducing risk and increasing the probability of mission success.

The slide is titled "Approved Definition & Vision" in blue text at the top right. In the top left corner, there are logos for NATO and OTAN, with the text "ALLIED COMMAND TRANSFORMATION" and "SPPICNDV" below them. The main content consists of two bullet points, each starting with a blue square icon. The first bullet point is labeled "DEFINITION" and describes the orchestration of military activities across all operational domains and environments, synchronized with non-military activities to create converging effects at the speed of relevance. The second bullet point is labeled "VISION" and describes the Alliance's approach to MDO, which will enable NATO's Military Instrument of Power to prepare, plan, orchestrate, and execute synchronized activities across all domains and environments, at scale and speed, in collaboration with other Instruments of Power, stakeholders, and actors. This vision aims to deliver tailored options at the right time and place, building advantage in shaping, contesting, and fighting, and presenting dilemmas that decisively influence the attitudes and behaviors of adversaries and relevant audiences. At the bottom left, it says "NATO UNCLASSIFIED" and at the bottom right, "12/01/2023 | PAGE 1".

Approved Definition & Vision

- **DEFINITION:** *The **orchestration of military activities**, across all operational domains and environments, **synchronized with non-military activities**, to enable the Alliance to create **converging effects** at the **speed of relevance**.*
- **VISION:** *The Alliance’s approach to MDO will **enable** NATO’s **Military Instrument of Power** to prepare, plan, orchestrate, and execute **synchronized activities**, across all domains and environments, at scale and speed, **in collaboration** with other **Instruments of Power, stakeholders and actors**.
*This delivers **tailored options**, at the **right time and place**, that **build advantage** in shaping, contesting, and fighting and **presents dilemmas** that **decisively influence** the **attitudes and behaviors** of adversaries and relevant audiences.**

NATO UNCLASSIFIED 12/01/2023 | PAGE 1

Challenge in developing NATO’s approach to MDO was that several Nations had varying definitions of what qualifies as domain or dimension and who

participates/contributed to MDO. As some Nations label information or cognitive as domains, NATO's thinking needed to be all encompassing; hence the definition reflects NATO's 5 accredited domains and leaves the door open for other interpretations by using "all domains and environments".

Orchestration is linked to military activities and can include assets beyond what a Commander would routinely have direct control over; like a conductor of an orchestra, MDO will enable to orchestrate assets to create effects. They will likely not be able to direct non-military assets; this is where collaboration with the capability owner to synchronize activities is crucial.

In summary, Multi-Domain Operations (MDO) represents a significant departure from the Joint approach, embracing key distinctions:

- **Full Integration of Cyber and Space:** MDO treats cyber and space as complete domains rather than just enabling environments, recognizing their integral role.
- **Enhanced Interaction with Non-Military Actors:** MDO involves intensified collaboration and synchronization with non-military entities, including other Instruments of Power (IoP) and commercial entities. The collaborative use of their capabilities can mitigate risk and increase mission success probability.
- **Ubiquitous Connectivity:** MDO relies on ever-present and abundant connectivity, enabling collaboration, orchestration, and synchronization of converging effects at speed and scale. NATO's success in MDO is contingent upon its digital transformation and data-centric approach.

An MDO-enabled Alliance can orchestrate military activities and synchronize non-military activities in the persistent, simultaneous, and boundless operating environment of the future, covering all phases—shaping, contesting, and fighting. This aligns with NATO's core tasks outlined in the Strategic Concept: deterrence and defense, crisis prevention and management, and cooperative security.

Discussion

During the discussion session, a participant raised the complexity of understanding NATO's vision for multi-domain operations (MDO). Exploring the presentation by CDR Gould, the participant noted the inclusion of non-military elements in the MDO framework, emphasizing the significance of interagency cooperation in counter-terrorism (CT) operations. However, the participant highlighted that the predominant focus remains on military power and methods. Stressing the essential role of non-military elements for successful CT operations, the participant posed a crucial question: "*How mature is the MDO's interface with other instruments of power?*"

In response, CDR Gould framed CT as a form of warfare, assessing the capabilities needed to sustain such a struggle. He expanded this evaluation beyond traditional domains, considering a broad spectrum from space to the seabed. CDR Gould stressed the necessity of clearly articulating the requirements for personnel engaged in this warfare, whether it involves kinetic operations, Special Operations Forces (SOF), space assets, or UAVs. Emphasizing the need for personnel on the ground to explicitly communicate their requirements, he reminded the audience that defining the needs for this warfare is integral.

Closing Remarks

Col. Bülent AKDENİZ, Director of COE-DAT

Generals,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Dear distinguished guests and academicians,

We have come to the end of our conference. I hope you have enjoyed it as much as I have. It has been a great pleasure and privilege to host you here in Ankara.

We have had two days of fruitful discussions and exchanges on various topics related to terrorism. We have learned from the experiences and research of our speakers and panelists. We have explored the current trends and challenges in the field of counter-terrorism. We have also identified some gaps and opportunities for future cooperation and action. I am confident to say that we know more about the “unknowns” than before, and that is a good thing.

I would like to thank all the speakers and panelists for their excellent presentations and contributions. You have enriched our knowledge and understanding of terrorism. You have also provided us with valuable insights and recommendations for improving our policies and practices.

I would also like to thank all of you, the distinguished participants for your active involvement and engagement. You have brought diverse perspectives and expertise to the conference. You have also raised important questions and comments that stimulated further debate and reflection.

I hope that this conference has been beneficial for you in terms of learning new information, exchanging ideas, expanding your network, and enhancing your skills.

Before we adjourn, I would like to thank you all for being part of this conference.

I wish you all a safe journey back home. I hope to see you again next year at our next Terrorism Experts Conference.

Thank you very much.

The conference is now closed.

Conclusion for TEC 2023

The Terrorism Experts Conference 2023 in Ankara, Türkiye, held on October 18-19, featured insightful presentations and discussions on various aspects of counterterrorism. **Mr. Gabriele Gascone's** keynote speech emphasized NATO's commitment to combating terrorism by evolving its strategies, providing added value capabilities, and supporting partners in capacity building. The focus on countering the evolving terrorist threat and future policy guidelines reflects NATO's dedication to addressing terrorism as a major global threat.

Colonel Ekrem Emre Tüzün's speech highlighted Türkiye's strategic contributions to counterterrorism on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the Turkish Republic. The presentation covered global security perceptions, historical events, the complexity of countering terrorism, Türkiye's efforts in the fight against terrorism, and its significant contributions to the global counterterrorism endeavor.

The Distinguished Terrorism Expert Session 1, a roundtable discussion moderated by **Prof. Haldun Yalçinkaya**, explored recent trends and developments in terrorism and counter-terrorism. The panelists, including **Prof. Alex P. Schmid**, **Dr. Richard Outzen**, and **Mr. Zeeshan Amin**, discussed the global picture of terrorism since 1970 and examined the recent Trends and Developments of Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism. The session provided valuable insights into the current landscape of terrorism and counter-terrorism efforts.

Prof. Alex P. Schmid delved into the intricate and multifaceted nature of terrorism, acknowledging the inherent challenges in providing a clear and universally accepted definition of the term. The presentation highlighted that while defining terrorism can be difficult, academic exploration of the concept is relatively more accessible. Terrorism was framed not only as a doctrine but also as a tactic, encompassing repression, war tactics, and strategies for social change. The presentation concluded with a thought-provoking note, underlining that violence serves as a form of communication. The speaker advocated for the development of improved counter-narratives and the prevention of black propaganda.

Dr. Richard Outzen discussed the evolving landscape of terrorism in the aftermath of the post-9/11 era. He emphasized the shift in risk and threat perception and highlighted terrorism as a downstream effect of poorly managed policies. The

concept of mutually shared grievances among some terrorist organizations and their supporters was introduced. Dr. Outzen, drawing on his extensive experience in the Middle East, underscored the significance of policy decisions and their role in contributing to or mitigating terrorism. The relationship between globalization and terrorism was briefly explored, and the need for a multifaceted approach to understanding terrorism was emphasized. The instrumental use of violence in conflicts and the existence of various factions and objectives within terrorist organizations were discussed. Dr. Outzen raised the question of when to designate a group as a terrorist organization, especially when it has multiple facets, and introduced the concept of “terror entrepreneurs” who exploit terrorism for various purposes.

Mr. Zeeshan Amin emphasized the importance of prioritizing the human side of counterterrorism efforts, calling for a nuanced, context-specific, and dynamic approach. He highlighted the role of xenophobia and white supremacy in fueling terrorism and provided examples to illustrate the context-specific nature of terrorist organizations. Mr. Amin stressed the need for a proactive and reactive stance, acknowledging the continuous evolution of terrorist tactics, including their use of digital assets and cryptocurrencies. Adherence to international law, humanitarian law, and human rights principles was emphasized, along with a call to hold countries accountable for undermining global counterterrorism through non-compliance. Addressing grievances, promoting inclusivity, and protecting minorities, women, and children were presented as key strategies, with acknowledgment of the United Nations’ commitment to prioritizing these aspects in counterterrorism. Mr. Amin concluded by highlighting the multi-dimensional nature of counterterrorism, emphasizing the need for a holistic understanding and collaborative efforts to address contemporary global challenges.

Ms. Susan Sim presented a detailed analysis of emerging threat scenarios, shedding light on the evolving landscape of terrorism. Sim’s presentation highlighted four major emerging threats: “invisible extinction threats,” encompassing nano weapons that manipulate both the body and mind, posing challenges in identifying and preventing attackers; the proliferation of unmanned killing machines, emphasizing the increasing capabilities of drones and the associated risks in both physical and virtual domains; the terrorist use of virtual reality, where biometrics

could be exploited for recruitment and planning attacks; biosecurity, making the production of hazardous biological materials more accessible to extremists.

The second day began with **Dr. Heather Gregg**'s presentation on the tactical use of Special Operations Forces (SOF) in counter-terrorism, drawing lessons from impactful case studies examined in a workshop. The workshop highlighted the need for crisis preparedness, emphasizing the unpredictable and complex nature of potential threats. Seamless coordination among security forces and the creation of a short loop for swift decision-making were emphasized as critical factors. The session emphasized the importance of clearly defining operational objectives, measuring success, and maintaining a broader strategic context in understanding terrorist motivations. The involvement of foreign troops in a country was discussed with sensitivity, emphasizing the need for open dialogues and strategic considerations in multinational efforts. These takeaways provide a valuable framework for enhancing crisis preparedness, cooperation, and strategic planning in counter-terrorism endeavors.

The subsequent panel, moderated by **Dr. Afzal Ashraf**, delved into the perspectives of terrorists from Central Asia, presenting a case study derived from interviews with 38 imprisoned foreign terrorist fighters. The multidisciplinary approach, involving psychologists and translators, contributed to a comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing individuals' involvement in terrorism. Dr. Ashraf sheds light on the experiences of individuals who joined terrorist organizations, revealing coping mechanisms during moments of fear in conflict. The nuanced exploration of local and global factors influencing individuals joining terrorist groups adds depth to the research. In conclusion, the multidisciplinary approach and comprehensive interviews underscore the complexity of understanding the motivations of individuals engaged in terrorism, providing a critical dimension to the research.

Prof. Jonathan Githens-Mazer's presentation on the changing landscape of terrorism in Africa focused on the Sahel region, highlighting a shift from prevention to response in addressing regional challenges. The unintended consequences of Russia's counterterrorism policies in Africa were explored, suggesting a complex interplay between harsh policies and the potential radicalization of individuals. He critiques the term "ungoverned space," arguing that unconventional governance exists, challenging traditional state concepts imposed by colonial borders. The

instability intensification, starting with the Arab Spring's collapse, is explored, particularly its impact on Libya and subsequent repercussions across Africa. In a nutshell, the presentation encourages a critical reevaluation of governance, identity, and political dynamics in the Sahel, stressing the complexities and unintended consequences of counterterrorism approaches, migration, and great power competition in the region.

Ms. Emily Winterbotham's remarks on "The Evolving Nature of Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism in Europe" encapsulated key concerns and considerations. A notable highlight was the acknowledgment of the complexity in definitively determining the motivation behind extremist actions. This recognition emphasized the challenges in understanding the diverse and often elusive motivations contributing to radicalization and terrorist activities. The call for collaboration between agencies and a more flexible, nuanced approach to defining extremist groups at the European government level was a significant takeaway. Ms. Winterbotham advocated for a comprehensive engagement strategy integrating non-securitized preventive actions with targeted prevention activities.

Assoc. Prof. Zuhale Yeniçeri introduced the Strategic Level Terrorism Exercise Scenario Development Project, an innovative initiative aimed at identifying key indicators of terrorism and their implications for counter-terrorism efforts. The project unfolds through four phases: designing the training system, modeling the training system, simulation development, and feedback & train the trainers. It comprehensively explores critical topics related to terrorism, providing a structured framework for understanding its dynamics. The conceptual network of the project, focused on the "Psychological Dynamics of Terrorism," reveals seven main topics, emphasizing the role of social psychology, personality traits, and identity formation. The presentation underscores the significance of social influence theories and social identity, exploring their relevance in the context of terrorism. The conclusion explores existential threats, immortality seeking, and the intricate interplay between individual identity and collective ideologies.

Prof. Dr. Cem Karadeli discussed the COE-DAT Border Security in Contested Environment Project, reflecting on the 2023 COE-DAT conference. The conference examined irregular migration from the Mediterranean region to Europe, focusing on the role of EU organs combating it. Discussions included EU procedures and

institutions related to migration, refugees, and border security. Humanitarian border management, International Organization for Migration standard operating procedures, and proposed good practices for NATO and its partner states were highlighted. The importance of preparedness and comprehensive training, leveraging NATO's resources and staff, was emphasized. The practices could extend to crisis interventions and global military personnel training, potentially setting standards for international organizations.

Ms. Nazanine Moshiri highlighted the multifaceted challenges arising from the nexus of climate, gender, and conflict. The presentation underscores the role of climate change as a risk multiplier, contributing to increased food and water scarcity, resource competition, livelihood disruptions, and migration patterns, all of which heighten political instability and conflict. Solutions proposed in the conclusion stress the importance of gender-responsive policies addressing climate change and armed conflicts. This involves integrating gender considerations into mandates, collecting targeted data, and recognizing specific dangers faced by women, especially in displacement camps. The presentation advocates for the Women, Peace, and Security framework, calling for gender-sensitive mandates and sustainable financing for gender equality initiatives.

The final presentation of the conference was delivered by **CDR Philip Gould** on "Multi-Domain Operation - Implications for NATO's approach to Counter Terrorism." The concept of orchestration in Multi-Domain Operations (MDO) is highlighted, emphasizing its connection to military activities and the inclusion of assets beyond direct military control. Like a conductor of an orchestra, MDO enables the orchestration of assets to create effects. However, directing non-military assets may not be easy, underlining the crucial need for collaboration with capability owners to synchronize activities.

Key highlights include NATO's commitment to evolving strategies and supporting partners, insights into global terrorism trends, discussions on the multifaceted nature of terrorism, emerging threats, the tactical use of Special Operations Forces, perspectives of terrorists from Central Asia, and considerations on the evolving nature of terrorism in Africa and Europe. The presentations underscored the need for nuanced, context-specific, and collaborative approaches to counterterrorism, acknowledging the complexities and unintended consequences in various regions.

The conference emphasized comprehensive strategies, including gender-responsive policies and addressing the nexus of climate, gender, and conflict.



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