

# Appendix 1

## Deterrence as a security concept against terrorism

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### Current situation

Developments in the period 2014 to the beginning of 2015 were in keeping with the trends identified in the recently published 2014 *Global Terrorism Index*. It records a sharp rise in the number of lives lost to terrorist activity in the period 2012-2013 (+61%). Over 80% of the deaths occurred in only five countries: Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Nigeria and Syria. In 2013, a total of 17,958 people were killed in approximately 10,000 terrorist attacks. It is striking that OECD countries were relatively unaffected. In 2013, 113 people lost their lives in over 300 incidents.

The five most heavily-affected countries also reflect the terrorist organisations and networks that were most active in recent years: al-Qaeda (Iraq/Syria), the Taliban (Afghanistan), Boko Haram (Nigeria) and IS (Iraq/Syria). It must be noted that there is also permanent and in some cases increasing terrorist activity in countries other than the five referred to. This applies in particular to Yemen, Somalia/Kenya, Libya, Mali and the Central African Republic (CAR), where movements affiliated with the organisations referred to are active and sometimes even fight each other.

The current wave of terrorism is characterised by the increased prominence of religious extremism as a motivation for terrorist activity rather than political ideas or national separatism. A distinction is made in this regard between *dawa Salafism* and *jihadi Salafism*. In addition, the 'hot spots' of this terrorist activity are mainly countries or regions that are characterised by ethnic and religious differences, social and economic discrimination against certain groups and arbitrary state violence. Although there is not necessarily a direct causal link, the situation as a whole highlights the fact that regions that are characterised by instability and by fragile, authoritarian and failing states are particularly vulnerable to terrorism or are attractive locations for the organisation of terrorist activity.

Events of recent years have given this general view greater definition. First, Islamic State (IS) emerged as a 'state-based' terrorist organisation that is seeking to establish a caliphate in Syria and Iraq through violence. The organisation also has other objectives, including against the West. This development must be placed in a broader context, particularly, as emphasised in the Clingendael Strategic Monitor 2014, in terms of the MENA region's instability, which threatens to make the region a source of terrorism.

Second, as a result of the violence in Syria and the rise of IS, there has been a sharp increase in the number of foreign fighters who travel from OECD countries, Western European ones in particular, to Syria and Iraq to take part in the fighting. This development is partly the result of, and is accompanied by, the increasing radicalisation of young Muslims in Western

countries in recent years. Moreover, it is no longer only young men who travel to Syria and Iraq. Young and older women and in some cases entire families are also going. The Dutch General Intelligence and Security Service (AIVD) refers to the 'swarm dynamics' of jihadism regarding the way in which jihadists organise themselves.

Third, as a result, the risk of returning jihadists posing a threat to Dutch and other Western societies has increased. That this is not only a theoretical threat is evidenced by the recent attacks in Brussels on the Jewish museum (May 2014) and in Paris on the head office of satirical magazine Charlie Hebdo and a Jewish supermarket (beginning of January 2015). These attacks also show that a risk is posed by jihadists who have not previously travelled to conflict zones, but nevertheless carry out attacks in their own countries in the name of jihadist organisations. In keeping with a current trend, police officers and military personnel were also targeted in the attacks in addition to civilians.

Fourth, the foregoing underlines the strong relationship between external and internal security and the vulnerability of open, Western societies. This vulnerability has increased in recent years in the Netherlands and other Western countries as a result of participation in the international coalition that is fighting IS. In addition, many European countries have become more polarised on the matter of Islam and the integration of migrants. This polarisation can make radicalisation more likely and is also increasing the risk of lone wolf terrorism.

Finally, the aim of terrorists is to cause social and political disruption and create fear. They were already making greater use of social media and the internet for recruitment and propaganda purposes, among other things. The rise of IS and the practice of releasing videos of hostage executions appear to have given this tendency a new dimension. To an even greater extent than was previously the case, communication is one of the key arenas in which the battle is being fought.

## **Expectation for the coming five to ten years**

The threat level in the Netherlands has been at 'substantial' since spring 2013. Moreover, the government acknowledges that the level is rising to the upper limit within the bandwidth of this qualification. Today's society is becoming more aware of the risks and can also see that security measures are being tightened. Because of the risks, military personnel are currently not allowed to travel by public transport in uniform. To increase the level of national security, the Royal Netherlands Marechaussee has deployed additional personnel to secure and guard locations deemed to be at high risk. In addition, society is under pressure and the risk of social polarisation as a result of, on the one hand, reaction and resistance from Muslims to the strong language being used by the government and the measures being taken and, on the other, a stronger need within anti-Islamic groups to counter the 'Islamisation of the Netherlands', is very real. Indications of a continuing and possibly increasing terrorist threat to the Netherlands and other Western societies in the coming years mainly concern the MENA region's lasting instability and the spread of terrorist activity from this region to other areas, a possible development discussed in the Clingendael Monitor 2014 and the 2015 update and elsewhere. The MENA region is and will remain unstable and therefore a source of terrorism.

Although the terrorist threat, particularly as posed by foreign fighters, currently seems to be related mainly to the fighting in Iraq and Syria, the threat is real to the Netherlands as well. It must not be forgotten that there are clear links between jihadist, al-Qaeda-like groups

in the Middle East, North Africa, East Africa, the Sahel region and South Asia. The risk of terrorist activity spreading to other unstable countries or regions is therefore considerable, also because of the possibility of jihadist fighters travelling to other hot spots from all parts of the world. The situation is further complicated by the rivalry between groups (in Syria, for example) and the use of groups by external powers as proxies to fight their conflicts, which increases the risk of unrest in, and the involvement of, other neighbouring countries.

Given the interests of Europe and the West that are at stake, particularly in terms of the external-internal security nexus, it will be necessary for Western countries, including the Netherlands, to remain involved in the MENA region and its hot spots, in whatever way (ad hoc, EU, UN and so on). This involvement, in combination with domestic radicalisation and polarisation, means that for the coming years the Netherlands will remain a potential target of attacks, either launched and organised from the outside or from within.

As regards the nature of the terrorist threat, trends that have been going on for some time will probably become more pronounced. These trends include the fusion of terrorism and criminal activity as a way of funding terrorist action, the use of social media and the internet for recruitment purposes, among other things, and responding to feelings of frustration and dissatisfaction, particularly among young Muslims in the West and in the region itself. Of particular influence is also the acquisition by an essentially non-state terrorist movement of a more state-like character (IS, Boko Haram) and the control exercised by this movement over large parts of a state's territory. This phenomenon may gain momentum in the future.

Sowing fear remains a key objective of terrorists. The increasing use of communication as a means of conducting the fight must be taken into account. In addition to sowing fear, setting population groups within Western societies against each other will be an important objective. The extent to which these movements succeed in achieving these objectives will depend strongly on the resilience of Western societies and the ability of their political establishments and governments to find adequate responses to such attempts made to undermine society.

The foregoing underlines the conclusions of the analysis in the Strategic Monitor 2014. The terrorist threat is and will remain diffuse and therefore unpredictable. Differences in root causes, motives, methods of communication and operation and the different levels at which this phenomenon manifests itself - national, regional and international - make it difficult to formulate a targeted policy, especially in terms of deterrence measures.

## The relevance of deterrence as a security concept

In the literature, most authors do not consider deterrence to be an effective instrument against terrorism. It is asserted that terrorists are not affected by deterrence.<sup>1</sup> As an instrument, deterrence is known primarily in terms of the way in which it worked effectively during the Cold War in that two nuclear power blocs successfully prevented each other from carrying out nuclear strikes by threatening to carry out nuclear counterattacks. The risk of catastrophic destruction was deemed to be so high that neither of the power blocs used

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1 "After September 11, many observers dismissed the applicability of traditional concepts of deterrence to non-state actors. They pointed to the difficulties of finding effective threats both against individual terrorists who may care more about heavenly than earthly rewards and are willing to commit suicide for their cause, and against terrorist organizations that lack a 'return address' against which to retaliate.", in Jeffery W. Knopf, 'The Fourth Wave in Deterrence Research', in *Contemporary Security Policy*, 31 (2010) 1.

nuclear weapons. This traditional interpretation of deterrence clearly does not apply in much the same way to the considerations made by terrorists, and it is indeed possible to argue that deterrence in its entirety is ineffective in the context of terrorism. At the same time, however, it is useful to analyse in greater depth the different aspects of deterrence and the way in which this instrument can be used, and to examine it against the objectives and working methods of terrorists and terrorist organisations. It is important to make a distinction between deterrence as a means of preventing terrorism and deterrence as a means of reducing the probability of success of a terrorist attack or its impact. Especially with respect to the latter category, it can be concluded that certain forms of deterrence can be effective. If one calculates the risk of a terrorist attack as the probability of it happening times the effect that it can achieve, reducing these elements provides a frame of reference for deterrence as an instrument against terrorism.

When carrying out an attack, terrorists, whether operating alone or as part of an organisation, always seek to achieve the greatest possible effect in terms of physical damage (victims and the destruction of buildings and infrastructure), economic damage and the creation of fear and social unrest in a society. Reducing the probability of attacks and the impact of attacks that do occur are key objectives of counterterrorism policy.

Terrorists carry out attacks to draw attention to their political message and consider attacks necessary to achieve their political aims. Furthermore, terrorist activity may be motivated by extremist religious ideology or extreme left or right political ideology, or may be separatist in nature. Unlike most state actors, when forming their battle plans, terrorists do not rationally assess whether the sacrifices required are worth it in relation to the expected results. Extremist jihadist fighters, for example, are more willing to die because they believe that Paradise awaits them. At the same time, the mere threat of an attack or a relatively minor attack is sometimes enough to disrupt a society. In other words, from the terrorist perspective, an optimal result can at times be achieved with very few resources. Based on these characteristics, many authors assert that deterrence is ineffective. It can even have the opposite effect. Deterrence measures aimed at the support environment of terrorist organisations may actually serve to unite the people in that environment against a common enemy, resulting in further radicalisation. This problem is occurring in Pakistan and Yemen, for example, as a result of drone strikes.

Prior to looking at the different deterrence instruments and their effectiveness in countering terrorism, it is important to recognise the different actors and their respective roles within an organisation, as well as their tactics and working methods. Generally speaking, large, global terrorist networks are well organised. Different actors each play a role within the organisation. In addition, these actors each have different motives and convictions with respect to their willingness to die. There is an upper echelon, where strategy is formulated and from where an infrastructure is rolled out, a middle echelon, the foot soldiers and the support network. Moreover, certain terrorist organisations are more *ruthless* than others. The willingness to make what are disproportionate personal sacrifices in the eyes of ordinary civilians or states therefore differs per organisation, but also per category of actor within a network. It is important to recognise these differences when considering the potential effectiveness of the various deterrence instruments available.

These instruments can be aimed at the network that supports a terrorist organisation in a broad sense by supporting its objectives and working methods. Fighters are also recruited from this group of followers. Deterrence instruments can also be aimed at the ‘facilities

service providers', the infrastructure and the supply routes for weapons and explosives, and at the technical and financial support provided. The deterrence instruments that can be effective against this group differ from those that can be effective against the first group. A tailored approach to deterrence also applies to the actual fighters and those in the upper echelon.

In addition, the tactics and working methods of terrorist organisations and the targets selected mean that deterrence instruments must be used in a targeted way to be effective. In terms of working methods and types of attacks, there are suicide bombings, the use of improvised explosive devices (possibly carried by vehicles which are driven into buildings or crowds), shootings, hijackings, kidnappings, beheadings, bomb attacks and so on. These methods are often accompanied by social disruption and a sense of threat and fear among the population. Terrorist organisations or individual terrorists use media campaigns and a variety of communications strategies designed to exacerbate the situation and make the threat and fear more acute. Some tactics are used mostly to make political demands or secure payments. To ensure maximum effectiveness, it is not only important to determine which deterrence instruments should be used against which parties, but also when to use them. Clearly, for example, if an individual is already on an aircraft with an explosive and with the intention of blowing up the aircraft, deterrence will no longer have any effect.

Deterrence used against terrorism does not necessarily have to be military or repressive in nature. Glenn Snyder makes a distinction between deterrence on the gains side (*deterrence by denial*) and deterrence on the costs side (*deterrence by punishment*). The priority regarding the latter is to increase the 'costs' of an attack to such a level that they are no longer justified by the potential gains. This classification corresponds in part with the definition of terms as used in the general chapter of this study. Where deterrence on the costs side concerns retaliation or criminal prosecution, for example, one can also refer to a direct form of deterrence on the costs side in accordance with the categorisation used in this study. This is a strategy propagated particularly by Israel, though it is generally not supported in the literature or by policymakers in other countries. The problem is that this kind of deterrence involves retaliating against the families or communities of the terrorists and is based on a need to make the countermeasures taken seem excessive and disproportionate in order to convince the hard-core terrorists that their analysis of costs and gains is misguided.

Deterrence on the gains side concerns measures aimed at discouraging potential perpetrators by reducing the probability of success, i.e. the potential gains, or by convincing them that there are other ways of achieving their political objectives. According to Davis and Jenkins, even the most hardened terrorists tend to want to avoid operational risks, and increasing both the level of uncertainty regarding the success of an attack and the risks of early detection has a deterrent effect. The latest method as introduced by Knopf can also be included in this category of deterrence. This method is aimed at invalidating the justification used by extremist organisations for the use of violence by means of counterpropaganda.

James Smith and Brent Talbot make a distinction between the different levels at which deterrence on the gains side is used. They refer to the tactical level, the operational level and the strategic level. At the tactical level, deterrence is aimed mainly at reducing the opportunity to carry out an attack by increasing security measures and the operational risks that terrorists must contend with prior to an attack. According to the categorisation used in this study, such measures could also be seen as constituting a form of indirect deterrence on the costs side aimed at increasing the prior investment required for an attack.

The category also includes measures aimed at cutting off logistical support and financial flows. Smith and Talbot place these measures in the operational level category, since they are aimed at reducing capabilities. Such measures can be taken together with deterrence measures on the costs side, such as criminal prosecution, for example. In this context, Knopf also refers to indirect deterrence if the measures are aimed at the support group. At strategic level, deterrence is aimed at reducing the intended objective. Dutter and Seliktar believe that this is the most important level for the use of deterrence. Efforts at this level include convincing the target audience that the terrorist methods will never achieve the political objectives, preventing overreaction on the part of governments, increasing societal resilience to prevent panic through, among other methods, fear management and increasing the level of acceptance of danger as a part of life. Deterrence at this level can be considered to have been successful if the community concerned no longer supports the terrorists.

In some cases, deterrence methods overlap. A policy which clearly states that no ransom will be paid for the release of hostages and which is adhered to practice, for example, is a combination of reducing the intended objective and increasing the prior investment required.

In view of the current emphasis on dealing with jihadism and the problem of foreign fighters, it is important to assess deterrence measures, either taken or planned, in terms of the extent to which they can be expected to effectively contribute to a reconsideration on the part of a terrorist who is planning an attack or to reducing the risk of this attack taking place, or to reducing an attack's impact on society.

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