

BUILDING SOCIAL RESILIENCE TO COUNTER TERRORISM

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Building Social Resilience to Counter Terrorism

Introduction

Countering terrorism is not solely the business of law enforcement agencies. It should be rather the business of the entire society.

Indeed, the most frequent – but not the sole - targets of terrorist actors are the *crowds*, i.e. individual civilians going about their daily business and which happen to be gathered in one place, but who frequently share - or supposedly share - common political, religious, ideological, racial, social identification and belief traits that make them culprits in the eyes of terrorist actors¹, and thus prey to their violent aggressive actions.

Identifying Terrorist Actors

Terrorist Activists

Activism can be defined by the practice of using vigorous campaigning to bring about political or social change², “[...] in support of or opposition to one side of a controversial issue”³. Activism addresses public policy, and is frequently linked to civil society, political/religious parties, grassroots associations, and generally non-governmental organizations. Activists are mostly volunteers, but also paid members of these communities. They have demands and goals to pursue, and frequently organize themselves in lobbying groups and networks to advance their cause, promoting or blocking social, political, economic, or environmental change. They are usually outside official governmental circles, notwithstanding the fact that some government-linked persons could be also sympathizers or even backers of their cause. Their actions are normally peaceful, democratic forms of expressing protest or pressing for change, and can “[...] range from writing letters to newspapers or politicians, political campaigning, economic activism such as boycotts or preferentially patronizing businesses, rallies, street marches, strikes, sit-ins, and hunger strikes”⁴. More particularly, nowadays activists use massive electronic networking through social media (*Twitter, Facebook, Google+, YouTube, LinkedIn, Instagram, Tumblr, ...*) in order to draw the attention of the public to a specific topic, raise public awareness about it, and promote collective action to reach a particular objective in relation with it.

Activists are qualified as *terrorist* whenever they begin *systematically* using violent criminal acts to draw public attention and disseminate fear as means to assert themselves and impose their own ideological political, religious, or social agenda on non-cooperative official authorities and/or on dissenting citizens. Predator attitudes seek to weaken or destroy the political will and determination of the targeted individuals or communities by offending their physical and psychological integrity, thus exposing their *vulnerability* to their attacks.

Terrorist activists adhere to Machiavelli’s Prince⁵’s philosophy: the End justifies the Means, that is: *the ideological ultimate goal translated into an idealized future (the ultimate Good)* justifies resorting to a *systematic use of violent criminal actions*. Put simply, they would like to convey the message that the ultimate goal is so valued that any means of achieving it would be *acceptable*. The present paper is nonetheless based on the hypothesis that *hatred* is primary to any other consideration, and that activists tend to adopt extremist ideologies to *justify* – for some

reason or another - their using of a rather hateful violent stance toward a given community, a nation, or even the whole world.

By way of illustration, one could mention the systematic violent and inhumane practices exercised by the Al Qaeda *Salafi Jihadist* offshoot *Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL)* which swarmed multiple cities within very large swathes of territory in Iraq and Syria, slaughtering massive numbers of Iraqi and Syrian civilians and military personnel. More particularly, ISIL expelled and drove out of their homelands thousands of members of Christian and Yazidi religious minority communities, killing, throat cutting, beheading, crucifying and allegedly live burying young and adult men, and abducting, sex enslaving and raping many Christian and Yazidi women and children. The Al-Qaeda Strategist Abu Bakr NAJI's *Management of Savagery* manual⁶ - from which this radical Islamist organization is most probably drawing its subversive strategy toward non ISIL members and non-sympathizers - presents and details the *terror dissemination policy* to be used by Al Qaeda affiliated organizations to restore the Islamic Caliphate and establish *Shariah* Law. Islamic extremist ideology is generally very hostile toward non-Muslim communities, but particularly hateful of Shi'a Muslims which are qualified by Sunni extremists by the term *Rāfidha*, rejectors of the first two Caliphs of the Muslim Community Abu Bakr and Omar⁷, as well as of Sunni Muslims who fight ISIL⁸ and do not adopt their own strict and rigid literal interpretation of Islamic Law. Islamist extremists like ISIL pick out Qoranic verses from a number of *Surats*⁹, as well as stories related to Islamic historical literature (particularly the Wars of Apostasy, or *Ridda*¹⁰) to justify their violent and aggressive behaviour and their hatred of others, more particularly:

Toward the People of the Book: § *O you who have believed, do not take the Jews and the Christians as allies. They are [in fact] allies of one another. And whoever is an ally to them among you - then indeed, he is [one] of them. Indeed, Allah guides not the wrongdoing people* § (5: 51);

Toward Unbelievers, Polytheists, and the People of the Book: § *Fight those who do not believe in Allah or in the Last Day and who do not consider unlawful what Allah and His Messenger have made unlawful and who do not adopt the religion of truth from those who were given the Scripture - [fight] until they give the jizyah (tribute) willingly while they are humbled* § (9: 29);

Toward Unbelievers and Muslim Hypocrites and Apostates: § *O Prophet, fight against the disbelievers and the hypocrites and be harsh upon them. And their refuge is Hell, and wretched is the destination* § (9: 73); § *And obey not the disbelievers and the hypocrites, and harm them not (till you are ordered) [...]* § (33: 48).

Taking into consideration that the above mentioned Qoranic verses were revealed in very specific prophetic war circumstances, many would argue suggesting that such verses are being selected *out of context* by these fundamentalist *Salafi Jihadists*¹¹, whereas other verses which call for Justice, Kindness and Equity toward people who do not fight Muslims, and toward the People of the Book, namely, the Christians/*Nasāra*, the Jews and the *Magi/Zoroastrians*, as well as verses which urge to make peace and forgive in the name of Allah the most Merciful, are rather neglected and dropped by Islamist extremists.

Yet, from their own perspective, Salafi Jihadists see themselves in a state of a *global Holy War*, a global *jihad* against Jews and "Crusaders"¹², but more importantly in the case of ISIL, against all "Heretic"¹³ or Apostate Muslims who do not sympathize with them or with their cause, namely the Shi'a community and non ISIL sympathizers Sunnis. Anything that happens in the world is perceived and interpreted by them through their extremist ideological lenses and sectorial rhetoric.

Why did ISIL's fighters come to resort to such repulsive violent actions to promote their cause?

ISIL's history is in fact rooted in the bitterness and animosities of the Iraqi bloody civil war between 2003 and 2007 during which Sunni Iraqis were forced out and "extirpated" from power by Shia Iraqis, high ranking Sunni officials rooted out from the Army, and Sunni inhabitants submitted to sectarian cleansing in many areas of Baghdad by Shia militias, allies of Western "Crusader" invaders and occupiers of Iraq, perpetrators, among other scandals, of Abu Ghraib and other prisons humiliations endured by the anti-occupation (mostly Sunni) resistance fighters. Among these Shia militias, the pro-Iranian *Badr* Organization, infamous for infiltrating Iraqi Security Forces and committing extended abuses of Human Rights¹⁴, torturing and executing hundreds of Sunni Muslims¹⁵ - again in response to the explosive laden vehicles against Shia population perpetrated by Sunni insurgents, the past bloody abuses of the Baath party against Iraqi Shia religious leaders and community during Saddam Hussein's authoritarian rule and the latter's bloody crackdown of the Shia uprising of 1999 after the murder of the Shia opposition leader Grand Ayatollah Mohammad Mohammad Sadeq Al-Sadr.

As well, battle-hardened Syrian Sunnis who fought, on Iraqi soil, the US & British occupying forces and their Shia "allies", mostly within Abu Musab Al-Zarqawi's *Al Qaeda in Iraq (AQI)*¹⁶ circles, came back to Syria's western and eastern hinterland and brought with them their extremist ideology¹⁷ to fight Bashar el-Assad's authoritarian regime. For fear of being overwhelmed and toppled like his Arab predecessors the Tunisian Ben Ali, the Yemeni Abdallah Saleh, and particularly the Egyptian Mubarak and the Libyan Qaddafi, by an emboldened - though mostly pacific - Syrian opposition demonstrators and activists calling for freedom and for the release of political prisoners in the streets of many Syrian cities and villages, in the wave of the so-called *Arab Spring*, Assad used the same brutal methods used against the Syrian *Muslim Brotherhood* activists by his father Hafez el-Assad in the city of Hama during 1981, accusing protesters and demonstrators, lay and islamists alike - who began mostly using legitimate campaigning and activism practices - of being "a bunch of terrorists".

It is worth noting though that even when they are not extremists in nature, the *vast majority of political armed groups and militias* come at a certain point in time during their struggle to use *terrorist* methods against a typical kind of population in response to previous violent actions committed by the "Enemy" against them, or to even the balance during asymmetric wars when they are not sufficiently strong or do not have the means to fight in more *conventional* methods.

Terrorist States

Terrorism is however not limited to non-governmental activists. Terrorist acts are systematically practiced by authoritarian regimes and/or by government affiliated subversive groups to terrorize, and thus neutralize opinion leaders, activists and the community of sympathizers opposed to the dictatorial regimes' rule and behaviours. This State's terrorist behaviour stems from the fear of losing grip and control of subdued communities, who are seen as a major threat to their authority in case they get the freedom to protest. These acts practically range from intimidations, oral threats, blackmails, judicial file fabrications, martial courts judgment rendering, to physical aggressions and bashings, repressive crackdowns, illegal detentions, abductions, physical and psychological torture, assassinations, collective punishments, etc.

Most of the times, the major players of international politics - the States themselves – both the authoritarian but also, though indirectly, the democratic States - train, harbour, finance and arm subversive terrorist organizations in order to battle, weaken, put the pressure on and reduce the influence of adversary countries, to advance their pawns on the grand chessboard, and have a say on the international playground.

The Real Issue behind Violent Behaviours

Throughout History, *terrorism* – or the systematic use of violent criminal actions in public policy - has been resorted to as a way of drawing attention and imposing oneself on others. Thus, it is inherently associated with the concepts of *authority* and *recognition*.

Recurrent violent behaviours stem in fact from deep-rooted *Exclusionist Cultures* which regard those who do not belong to the same community, herald differing views from the acceptable established opinion within a community, or have the courage to challenge any authority within a given community - as *Enemies*. These are *enemies* because their thoughts and actions are considered *illegitimate* and *subversive*, as they constitute a *threat to the established order*. Consequently, such individuals or groups of individuals should be *punished* unless they *repent*, or should simply be eliminated or tortured to discourage others from taking, or from even *thinking* of taking, similar postures. For exclusionist cultures, the “Enemy” should be sooner or later subdued, humiliated, enslaved, killed or eradicated from the surface of the earth... unless he/she totally converts or yields to one’s own political or religious ideological views.

Punishment is what both terrorist Activists and terrorist Rulers are after using violent actions.

Rulers use terrorism toward the authors of what they perceive as a *non-legitimate challenge* to their own well-established authority.

As for Activists, and on the question of asking why, despite all the international aid programs set up to make young people steer away from violence, particularly through providing decent employment and jobs, youth are still more inclined to join militant Islamist groups like ISIL, Somali *Al-Shabab* and the Pakistani *Taliban*, Sharon MORRIS, peace researcher and Jennings Randolph Senior Fellow at the United States Institute of Peace (USIP), proposes the following answer: similarly to the teenagers who gathered in Tahrir Square or occupied Wall Street, they want “[...] to tell an older generation that *they have had enough*. They want to *change the world*, to *fight injustice*, to *earn respect*, and, maybe most of all, to *challenge the status quo*”. Young people definitely need decent jobs, but they are looking above all for a *cause to believe in*¹⁸, and for which they would become *activists*. Young people are *militants* in nature, and what they really seek is an *idealized purpose* which gives *meaning* and *direction* to their life.

But why some of these youth are attracted to *violent* militancy movements, while others join peaceful activism organizations?

Most probably, what *terrorist Activists* really seek is *Revenge* toward past individual and/or collective events perceived by them as particularly *painful and humiliating*. Their violent behaviour would be in response to previous traumatic events they experienced or witnessed in their life.

Based upon the above, one could perceive that the real problem behind the violent attitude of terrorist actors is *relational* rather than ideological. The apparent supreme goal for them to

achieve is in fact an *expiatory excuse* justifying their adoption of aggressive fighting lifestyles – *Holy Jihadism*, for instance - which give them the opportunity to have the upper hand over whom they consider as “enemies”, and all the latitude, in the name of God and/or for the sake of an ultimate goal, to take revenge, and thus, to judge them, condemn them, subjugate them, torture them at will, and murder them in a ruthless manner.

In this regard, and from a *Strategic* point of view, *Transactional Analysis* conveys a very interesting interpretation grid to deal effectively with terrorist actors¹⁹.

On a more *Tactical* level, the subject of this paper is limited to activists’ terrorism, but could encompass all forms of violent actions and behaviours aiming at imposing one’s own views on other dissenting people. To combat such violent actions and behaviours, *Social Resilience* is key. In this regard, it is incumbent upon every social community and upon every individual person to acquire the minimum capacities and skills to prevent, whenever possible, and confront and mitigate, as much as possible, deliberate terrorist/violent actions targeting civilians and aiming to induce or deter social change.

Building Social Resilience

*"All that is necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing"*²⁰. In other words, it is incumbent upon good men to *act* in order to stop evil men from prevailing.

Resilience is “the ability to become strong, healthy, or successful again after something bad happens”, and “to recover from or adjust easily to misfortune or change”²¹ “[...] from difficulties and toughness”²².

Social resilience can be defined as “the timely *capacity* of individuals and groups – family, community, country, and enterprise – to be more generative²³ during times of stability, and to *adapt, reorganize, and grow* in response to disruption”²⁴.

According to a study carried out in 2013 by Markus KECK and Patrick SAKDAPOLRAK, and which comprises a critical review of previous literature on the topic, *Social Resilience* encompasses three dimensions: 1) *Coping capacities*: Social Actors are capable of coping with and overcoming all kinds of adversities; 2) *Adaptive capacities*: Social Actors are capable of learning from past experiences and of adjusting themselves to pressing new challenges and risks in their everyday lives; 3) *Transformative capacities*: Social Actors are capable of crafting institutions which foster individual welfare and sustainable societal robustness in the event of present and future crises.²⁵

Society is formed by individual persons who constitute its single units. Thus, building *social resilience* begins by building *individual* resilience. Individual resilience can be achieved through autonomization and self-defence learning.

Autonomization and Self-Defense Learning Mainstreaming

Perhaps the biggest mistake modern citizens make today is leaving - wrongly - the responsibility for their own *individual safety* to law enforcement officers. In a more and more unsecure world, delegating this vital individual survival issue to law enforcement agents is totally irrelevant and

extremely dangerous for one's own safety, and leaves a person defenceless, vulnerable and totally exposed to violent aggressors.

The fact is that law enforcement officers' role is to ensure social order and stability by enforcing law. Their tasks include discovering, deterring, rehabilitating and/or punishing persons who violate the laws of any given society²⁶. They have the monopoly of the legitimate use of force to reinstate order, to lead criminal investigations and apprehend perpetrators, to record citizen complaints, to secure citizens in public crowded places, to secure vital infrastructures, etc.

However, there can be no law enforcement agents in the whole world able to push back threats to anyone's safety at the very moment they occur, that is "on the spot", when constables are not present on the assault scene. Police forces are not ubiquitous, and their limited numbers within any given population do not make it possible for them to act as every citizen's personal bodyguards. The time someone is able to contact police for rescue against any assault, the crime would have already taken place or well on its way. Police officers can only manage to come after the assault has occurred, mostly to wipe off the crime scene, identify any potential witnesses, collect whatever evidence they would be able to find, including from street surveillance cameras in the vicinity, and begin their investigation.

Physical security and personal safety are among the *most basic needs* of human beings. People can and should be able, for their own survival, and to a certain extent, to thwart and foil any bare hands or edged weapons assaults, or even deal with and protect themselves - as much as possible - from firearms attacks on the street, at home, in buses, in public places, or in any other location. This can be done through technical, physical and psychological skills, acquired through self-defence training.

More specifically, women and girls, who are a favoured target for street thugs, abductors, and terrorist actors, can and must be able to deter any physical aggression through technical self-defence learning. Technical skills do largely compensate for physical strength disadvantage. In developing countries, where most women tend to depend on men and delegate to male individuals the task of physically defending them, acquiring technical self-defence skills - which are much more efficient than muscular strength - gives women the possibility of becoming *autonomous* in defending themselves, especially that men cannot be present by their side 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. If women really hope to reach gender equity some day within their own countries, the first important step for them to take is to empower themselves with technical, psychological, and physical abilities to defend themselves against male aggressions.

Deterring self-defence techniques, martial arts and non-lethal weapons are widely available, highly diversified and utterly customizable. However, just like linguistic and arithmetic skills, they need to be learned and considered *seriously* by individuals, by families, by communities, by policy makers and by the *Education system*. While self-defence is of utmost importance for any human being survival, it is quite shocking how this dimension of physical safety and personality education *is not given due attention* by today's educational establishments, leaving it to sports associations to tackle the issue for very limited numbers of self-security aware young people. Instead of offering martial arts and self-defence techniques training as *extracurricular* activities, it would be more relevant, for the sake of dissemination, to integrate and mainstream them as *obligatory intra-curricular* activities inherent to physical and psychological education.

Indeed, psychological health and physical safety - which comprise the psychological and physical capacity of defending one's own body integrity - are not dispensable issues, on the contrary. They are primary to anyone's survival and as much relevant as - or even more than -

learning arithmetic and languages, since they relate to a life threatening or serious physical injury risk situations. Mere intellectual education does not preclude people from being attacked, whereas self-defence trained individuals can defend themselves against assaults or, even better, prevent assaults from occurring in the first place, for instance, by avoiding or curbing violent behaviours through *psychological management*. Self-defence is a lifelong learning which adds to anyone's self-confidence in his/her own capacities, and technical, physical and psychological exercises largely contribute to a healthier and better quality of life.

More particularly, children and young people can be taught, as from their early age, to defend themselves in case of physical or psychological aggression from their peers or from their teenage elders, or even against kidnapping attempts. It is the *responsibility of parents* to raise their children's awareness as to their physical and personal safety, and *to support them* in dealing with the issue by making them *autonomous* individuals. The *autonomization* process implies acquiring self-preservation capacities and thus, reducing dependency on others for survival. Parents can set the good example and teach their children, if such training is still not available at school, to defend themselves whenever necessary.

If parents fail to take this responsibility, and if individuals remain *wrongly dependent* on official armed forces or other martial-arts-trained civilians (who would rarely be around) for their own daily safety and survival in case they are attacked, they would have risen highly *vulnerable, psychologically and physically dependent and frail* young adults which would unavoidably become *easy preys* to predator aggressive behaviours of street thugs and potential terrorist actors.

The individual is the first unit of any given community. Countering terrorism and social violence begins by raising psychologically balanced and physically fit self-defence proficient individuals capable of preserving their own self integrity and technically skilled to deal with physical and/or psychological aggressions, individuals who have enough self-confidence, skills and maturity to find their way in their own community and change the world by other means than the primitive savagery of intellectually immature and psychologically underdeveloped human beings.

Military Service

In the same context, the other big mistake would be for the *obligatory* military service in any given country to totally give way to the professionalization of the armed forces. Military service gives young men and young women self confidence in their physical and technical abilities, and contributes to a large extent to make them *autonomous* individuals, particularly in self-defence situations.

In countries where *obligatory* military service has been cancelled, it would be relevant to reinstate it for both sexes in a different configuration that takes into account academic constraints. For instance, it could begin as from the age of 18 for one month during summer season and all the way through higher education or professional education summer seasons. In this regard, academic or religious learning should not be taken as an excuse to preclude acquiring essential capacities and skills to defend one's own self and/or to defend others, if need be.

Terrorist actors, who are mostly combat trained individuals, know quite well that civilian populations are unarmed and militarily untrained, and thus, that they are *individually and collectively* vulnerable. They target civilians because they are easy preys and situationally unaware, but also because their victimization would be relayed by all the televised and social media, thus *multiplying the effect of a terrorist attack* limited in time and in space.

When any country's citizens and communities are duly competent in defending themselves, terrorists and perpetrators will run the risk of being captured, overpowered, beaten up, and handed over to law enforcement officers by the civilian population itself.

To illustrate this point, during summer 2007 in North Lebanon, a number of radical Sunni *Fatah al-Islam* organization's members²⁷ sought refuge outside the Palestinian refugee camp of Nahr-el-Bared whereas the camp was being taken over from the militant group by the Lebanese soldiers. A number of those radical members were captured by *civilian* inhabitants, among them a *civilian woman*, from the vicinity, and handed over to the Lebanese Army. These captures have been widely relayed by the media at that time. From *predators*, terrorist militants fell *prey* not only to the Lebanese armed forces, but to all North Lebanese civilian population as well. It is worth noting that North Lebanon is a large haven and incubator for the Lebanese Armed forces, and that North Lebanese tend to have a strong individual and collective self-defence mindset and stance against aggressive outsiders and against armed groups who target the military.

Terrorism is above all a psychological war relayed by the media. As such, the response should be of the same kind, that is, a *psychological response* widely transmitted by the media, with the same dissemination and multiplying effect²⁸.

Fear Management and Transformation

As previously mentioned, the ultimate goal of terrorist actors is to draw attention to themselves, press for change, and impose their own agenda by *disseminating fear and terror* amongst the targeted population. For this purpose, they perpetrate, or threaten to perpetrate, subversive criminal acts of violence seeking to foster chaos, curb public opinion, and socially and politically dissociate the population from their own official representatives and from their legitimate governmental institutions. This is the reason why *national cohesion* among the targeted population is in this respect of utmost importance.

By way of illustration, it would be useful to consider the recent events taking place in North-Eastern Lebanon in the outskirts of the Lebanese Syrian border town of Arsal. Following the apprehension by the Lebanese Armed forces (LAF) of the fugitive Islamist Commander Imad Jumaa on Lebanese soil, Nusra and ISIL groups' fighters invaded the city of Arsal in August 2014 and attacked LAF posts in the city. Bloody confrontations between both parties followed, involving Arsal Syrian refugees in their camps who supported the Syrian Nusra Islamists, and during which an ISIL commander there was killed²⁹. At the end, the LAF stormed the north-eastern border town, and the Islamist extremists retreated to the outskirts of the city, taking along with them 32 Lebanese military and security forces as captives. From their camps outside the city, Islamist fighters threatened to kill and behead their Lebanese captives if their demands are not met: a swap exchange with Nusra and ISIS Sunni Islamist detainees in Roumieh prison, and the retreat of the Hezbollah Shia militia troops from Syria³⁰. ISIL has already beheaded 2 army troops³¹. As the Lebanese Sunni *Committee of Muslim Scholars* began negotiating with them for the release of the abducted Lebanese soldiers and security officers, and in order to show their good intentions, the Nusra Front released 5 Sunni hostages, while keeping mostly Shia, Christian, and Druze military in their own hands. However, when negotiations arrived to a deadlock, they shot in the head one Shia soldier to demonstrate the seriousness of their demands to the Lebanese authorities, and posted the killing footage over the Internet. Most importantly, they are in close contact with the families of the military hostages, reaching them directly

through intermediaries on their portable smart phones, and even welcoming some of them in their own camps to meet their captive sons, among them a Christian army soldier. They pit the captives' families against the Lebanese government and the LAF, complaining that the Lebanese government was not serious enough in dealing with them for the release of hostages. To spare the lives of their captive sons, and despite several attempts by the Lebanese Prime Minister and government officials to calm their distress, the families of hostages started blocking Northern and Eastern Lebanese international roads and burning rubber tyres to press the reluctant government into accepting the swap exchange with Sunni Islamist detainees and in starting "serious" negotiations with Nusra Front and ISIL. They called also upon the Hezbollah Shia militia to withdraw its men from Syria. At the end, and after several mediation initiatives, the hostages' families moved their protest to Beirut city centre in front of the official Prime Minister's Official Residence³². By that time, the Lebanese government has asked for the assistance of the states of Qatar and Turkey in the mediation process to settle the issue, and a Qatari intermediary has already come to the field. However, the Hezbollah militia representatives within the government are blocking the release of Nusra and ISIS affiliated Islamist prisoners involved in recent booby trapped car explosions and assaults targeting Hezbollah strongholds and the Iranian Embassy in Beirut southern suburbs, causing high numbers of casualties and destructions. Also, they have been pressing the Lebanese government to open negotiations with the Syrian Assad regime officials in order to release dozens of Syrian women prisoners instead to swap with the abducted military. In the meantime, LAF families' distrust of the government decisions is settling as to the strategy to be followed, and they are growing angrier every day from the way the issue is being tackled by the Lebanese authorities to ensure the safe release of their sons.

In fact, the Islamist fighters did not only physically abduct LAF members, but have captured their families and relatives as well, psychologically manipulating the latter's deep distress through terror threats ultimatums of captives' beheading and shooting in order to put more pressure on the Lebanese government to negotiate with them and respond to their demands. On the other hand, the refusal of the Hezbollah militia to withdraw its armed elements backing Assad regime forces from Syria, and its rejecting the release of explosions' perpetrators from Lebanese prisons as requested by the Sunni fighters, complicate the situation even further and do not help abate the daunting fears and relieve the psychological suffering of the captives' families.

Fear is an unpleasant emotion caused by the belief or a perception that someone or something is dangerous, threatening, and likely to cause pain³³. Fear generates a change in brain and organ function and a change in behaviour causing confrontation or escape from the threat (*fight-or-flight response*), or in extreme cases, a freezing response³⁴. The latter is the worst of all reactions, as it gives predator attackers all the latitude to victimize their prey at will.

People can be taught to deal with *fear* through *fear management and transformation*.

In this regard, self-defence techniques help individuals to tackle fear and change it into a more adequate *emotional response*, that is, into *anger*, which involves the desire to take the offensive and retaliate.

In the case of terrorism, *social resilience* resides in the initial public fear transformation into *public anger*, and into the desire to respond and retaliate collectively against the criminal terrorist perpetrators, thus denying them the possibility of reaching their objective by victimizing them and disrupting their daily life.

In this regard, *public and private TV media* have a major role to play in denying terrorist actors *recurrent audio-visual news broadcasting* of the bloody consequences of their terrorist criminal acts, which they keenly seek, and by encouraging people to inform community leaders and

security forces about any suspicious recruitment activities relating to any extremist activities they could be witnessing.

Moreover, setting up *street surveillance cameras* to reveal terrorist actors, and particularly their collaborators, facilitators and recruiters, would be very handy, specifically when such street cameras are disseminated over large areas and long itineraries.

Situational Awareness and Extended Space Video Surveillance

Numerous are those who would argue that if self-defence techniques could work to defend oneself against close quarters physical aggressions perpetrated by criminals and thugs, these would be totally irrelevant in case of *suicide attacks*, *explosive-laden vehicle explosions*, *abductions* or *fire-armed attacks* which take unarmed people totally by surprise. Moreover, suicide attackers do not fear death; they literally seek it to ultimately become heroes (in the case of Islamists, to enter paradise as a reward). They wilfully plan or accept to make themselves blow up to victimize others, and in order not to get caught.

The answer is that self-defence training involves taking *preventive actions* against any “would-be” terrorist actors. *Violence prevention and avoidance* through *situational awareness* is an integral part of self-defence training. Individuals can be trained to detect and identify subversive activists, and inform community leaders and local authorities to keep an eye on them, try to de-radicalize them or stop them in their tracks before their subversiveness develops into terrorism behaviour.

Holistic Penitentiary Management

Needless to say, terrorism and criminal activities are intrinsically related, and many terrorist activists have been recruited *while in prison*.

In this regard, *tackling the mental health* of violent prisoners through *psychological units* in correctional detention centres, and putting them in regular contact with *accredited religious officials* to guide them in their religious life, can help reduce the possibility of them being recruited by extremist networks and becoming terrorist activists as soon as released from prison.

On the other hand, a good *penitentiary management* should not be limited to the detention system, but should include *post-detention follow-up*. Indeed, setting up *working alternatives* to past convicted prisoners within or outside state enterprises with decent salaries would help them meet their financial needs once released and therefore stay away from criminal and terrorist entrepreneurs. *Law enforcement institutions*, and particularly, *religious authorities* have in this regard a *leading role to play*. Converted prisoners could be rewarded through *incentives* and various forms of *vocational and religious training* aiming to let them reintegrate and tackle responsibilities within new communities, and thus, regain self-esteem, hope and self-confidence in their new life outside of prison.

Conclusion

As there is no one answer to why people choose – or are forced to choose – terrorism to promote their own ideological agenda, there is no unique way to counter terrorism and prevent people from becoming terrorist actors.

Individual autonomization, self-defence learning and mainstreaming, national military service reconfiguration, fear management and transformation, violence prevention and avoidance through situational awareness and extended space video surveillance, and a holistic penitentiary management integrating psychological health tackling of violent prisoner inmates and a post detention follow-up and monitoring by law enforcement agencies and the active participation of official religious authorities, all contribute to building *social resilience* to counter terrorism and political violence.

Most importantly, the above mentioned actions mainly help *denying* terrorist organizations the *necessary human resources* to fuel their subversive tactics and their uncivilized behaviours.

Endnotes

- ¹ Since terrorism is a means to an end, and not some kind of identification or a profession, it could be more convenient to use the term “terrorist” as a qualification, not as a name. Instead of the term “terrorists”, we could use the expression “terrorist Actors” for those who practice violence against armed or non-armed citizens in order to impose their own ideological agendas.
- ² See: *Google* definition of the term *Activism*, accessed on 29th of October 2014.
- ³ See *Merriam Webster dictionary*, at: <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/activism>, accessed on 29/10/2014.
- ⁴ See *Wikipedia* definition of the term *Activism*, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Activism>, accessed on 06/10/2014.
- ⁵ Refer to: Niccolo MACHIAVELLI, *The Prince*: <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/1232/1232-h/1232-h.htm>; <https://ebooks.adelaide.edu.au/m/machiavelli/niccolo/m149p/>
- ⁶ Refer to: NAJI, Abu Bakr, *MANAGEMENT OF SAVAGERY, The Most Critical Stage Through Which the Umma Will Pass*, Translated by William McCants, John M. Olin Institute for Strategic Studies at Harvard University, 23 May 2006, at: <http://azelin.files.wordpress.com/2010/08/abu-bakr-naji-the-management-of-savagery-the-most-critical-stage-through-which-the-umma-will-pass.pdf>
- ⁷ Referring to the website of the moderate Saudi Sunni cleric Dr Safar El-HAWALI regarding the clarification of the Arabic term *Rāfidha* to designate Shi’a Muslims: <http://www.alhawali.com/index.cfm?method=home.showfahas&ftp=firak&id=2000013> (*in Arabic*)
- ⁸ Sunni Muslims hostile to ISIL are considered by the latter as Hypocrites and Apostates. Regarding the abduction and recent massacres of *Albu Nimr* Sunni Tribe members who joined the Iraqi government campaign against ISIL in Anbar eastern province, kindly refer to: “*Islamic State 'kills 322' from single Sunni tribe*”, *BBC*, 2 November 2014, last updated at 15:59 GMT: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-29871068> and “*ISIS kills 300 members of Sunni tribe, Iraqi government says*”, by Odai SADIK and Steve ALMASY, *CNN*, November 4, 2014 - Updated 1348 GMT: <http://edition.cnn.com/2014/11/03/world/meast/isis-mass-killing/>
- ⁹ For instance, but not limited to, Surat 5: The Table Spread (*Al Mā'idah*), Surat 9: Repentance (*At-Tawbah*), Surat 33: The Combined Forces (*Al-'Aḥzāb*) and Surat 60: *She that is to be examined (Al-Mumtaḥanah)*.
- ¹⁰ *Ridda wars* were waged between rebel Muslims / *Apostates* and the central Islamic authority in Mecca and Medina. Upon the death of Prophet Muhammad, the Muslim community of Mecca and Medina agreed that it would be Abu Bakr, Mohammed’s long-time friend, who would succeed him, and Abu Bakr became first Caliph of the Muslim Community. Tribe leaders began splitting apart, either following other self-declared *prophets* or refusing to pay the tribute (*zakat*) to the central Islamic Authorities. Abu Bakr launched military campaigns to punish apostates and regain control of rebellious tribes of Yemen, Oman, Nejd, and Bahrain. For more details on Ridda Wars, please refer to *Wikipedia*: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ridda>. For an in-depth examination, kindly refer to: The *Great Book of Strata (Kitāb al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kabīr)* compiled by Baghdadi historian and *Hadīth* transmitter Muḥammad ibn Sa’d (died in 230 AH/ 845 AD), and *History of Prophets and Kings (Ta’rīkh al-Rusūl wa al-Mulūk)* of the Muslim scholar Abū Ja’far Muḥammad ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī (*see Academia.net: https://www.academia.edu/1860760/A_history_of_Ibn_Sads_kitab_al-Tabaqat_al-Kabir*), author of large compendiums of early Islamic history who laid the foundations for both Qur’anic and historical sciences during the 9th century (*see Encyclopedia Britannica: http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/579654/al-Tabari*).
- ¹¹ The *Salafiyya* is a movement within Islam that refers to the Arabic term of *salaf*, which means the first Muslim ancestors or predecessors. According to Salafi Muslims, the Islamic practice of those ancestors is the one to be followed by all Muslims, on the basis of the *Hadīth* (Prophet’s oral sayings and behavior) quoting the Prophet Muhammad as saying: ‘*The best people are those of my generation, and then those who will come after them, and then those who will come after them, and then after them, there will come people whose witness will precede their oaths, and whose oaths will precede their witness.*’ (*Sahīh al-Bukhārī*, *Transl. by Dr Muhsin Khān*, Book 81, Hadith 18: <http://sunnah.com/bukhari/81/18>); *Sahīh Muslim*, *Transl. by Abdul-Hamid Siddiqui*, Book 44, Ch. 52, Book 44, Hadith 301 : <http://sunnah.com/muslim/44/301>). This oral tradition is seen as a call to Muslims to follow the living example of those first three generations. *Salafiyya* movement promotes a literal traditional and puritan interpretation of Islam inspired from the Medieval Islamic theologians and scholars *Aḥmad ibn Taymiyyah* and his student *Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya*, both representatives of *Hanbalism*, the most rigorist *madhhab* of the 4 Sunni Islamic Schools of Thought), as well as from the 18th century Arabia Islamic preacher *Mohammad bin Abdel Wahhab*, the founder of the *Wahhabi* school of thought and the 20th century – though a Muslim Brotherhood leader - Sayyed Qotb. The Salafi movement is often described as synonymous with Wahhabism, the official Islamic rite in Saudi Arabia, whereas Wahhabism is only one form of Salafism. *Salafi Jihadism* is an extremist form of Salafiyya, as *Salafi Jihadists* see themselves in and advocate global *Jihad*, Holy War, against those considered by

them as ‘the Enemies of Islam’. This militant and radical version is a rather later shift in the Salafi movement. Indeed, academics and scholars designate as Salafiyya the movement which emerged in the second half of the 19th century A.D. as an intellectual effort deployed by prominent Islamic figures like Al-Azhar University’s reformists Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, Muhammad Abduh, and Rashid Rida to respond to the dissemination within Muslim societies of colonial European ideas (see STANLEY Trevor, *Understanding the Origins of Wahhabism and Salafism*. Terrorism Monitor, Volume 3, Issue 14. July 15, 2005; Wikipedia, *Salafi Movement*: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Salafi_movement). It was a retrospective effort of reconciling Islam and Muslims with modernity by researching Islamic traditions, by demonstrating that Islam - as a religion and as civilization - carries in itself the seeds of modernity, and by promoting a new freewheeling interpretation of Islam, very different from the traditionalistic interpretation of most contemporary Salafists.

¹² ‘Crusaders’ is a term used by global Jihadists to designate Christians.

¹³ Other than Sunni Muslims

¹⁴ GEORGE, Susannah, *Breaking Badr*, in: *Foreign Policy*, Dispatch section, November 6, 2014: http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2014/11/06/breaking_badr_organization_iraq_shiite_militia_brutal_islamic_state_amiri_abadi

¹⁵ “3. [...] (S/NF) A leader of Shia armed resistance to Saddam and, until the adoption of the constitution in 2005, coalition forces, Amiri leads the Iranian-backed Badr Organization, a constituent member of the Islamic Supreme Council of Iraq (ISCI) umbrella party. Amiri is widely known to have played a leading role in organizing attacks by the Badr Corps militia (the strongest, most disciplined Shia militia at the time and precursor to the current Badr Organization) against Sunnis during the sectarian violence of 2004-2006. Sources indicate that he may have personally ordered attacks on up to 2,000 Sunnis. One of his preferred methods of killing allegedly involved using a power drill to pierce the skulls of his adversaries. [...]”, Excerpt from: *Wikileaks*, Public Library of US Diplomacy, secret section 01 of 02 Baghdad 003175, SUBJECT: *ELECTION LAW CRISIS FOSTERS SUNNI-SHIA COOPERATION*, 2009 December 9, 18:01 (Wednesday), Classified By: Ambassador Christopher R. Hill for Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d): https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09BAGHDAD3175_a.html.

¹⁶ AQI is the terrorist predecessor of ISIL.

¹⁷ CROOKE Alastair, *The ISIS' 'Management of Savagery' in Iraq*, in: *Huffington Post / The World Post*, US Edition, posted: 06/30/2014 12:32 pm EDT, Updated: 08/30/2014 5:59 am EDT, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/alastair-crooke/iraq-isis-alqaeda_b_5542575.html

¹⁸ MORRIS Sharon, *Teenage Wasteland - Why do so many efforts to stop young people from joining extremist groups fail?* in: *Foreign Policy*, Nov. 4, 2014, http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2014/11/04/teenage_wasteland_youth_extremism_fail.

¹⁹ For more details on the possible contribution of *Transactional Analysis* to countering terrorism within the framework of a complementary strategy to deal and manage terrorism crises, kindly refer to: NASR Mario, *Psychological Management of the Fight Against Terrorism* (in French: *Gestion Psychologique de la Lutte Contre le Terrorisme*) published on the *International Relations and Security Network (ISN)* webpage hyperlink: <http://www.isn.ethz.ch/Digital-Library/Publications/Detail/?ots591=0c54e3b3-1e9c-be1e-2c24-a6a8c7060233&lng=en&id=184241>.

²⁰ Quote attributed to the Irish political philosopher and statesman Edmund Burke and to the English political philosopher and economist John Stuart Mill.

²¹ See *Merriam Webster dictionary*, at: <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/resilience>, accessed on 29/10/2014.

²² See: *Oxford Dictionaries* at: <http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/resilience>, accessed on 29/10/2014.

²³ According to the psychoanalyst Erik Erikson’s 9 Stages of Psychosocial Development, the 7th stage is generativity versus stagnation, the second stage of adulthood stretching between the ages of 35-64. Generativity means “a concern for establishing and guiding the next generation”. See Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Erik_Erikson#cite_note-18.

²⁴ See: *Threshold Globalworks* website: <http://www.thresholdglobalworks.com/about/social-resilience>, accessed on 29/10/2014.

²⁵ KECK, M. & SAKDAPOLRAK, P. (2013): *What Is Social Resilience? Lessons Learned and Ways Forward*, in: *Erdkunde* 67 (1), 5-18, DOI: 10.3112/erdkunde.2013.01.02: https://www.academia.edu/3110553/What_is_Social_Resilience_Lessons_Learned_and_Ways_Forward, 08/11/2014.

²⁶ *New Law Journal* - Volume 123, Part 1, 1974, p. 358

²⁷ *Fatah Al-Islam* was instituted by the Palestinian militant Shaker al-Abssi from a split from the Syrian backed *Fatah Al Intifada*, itself a split from the Palestine’s Liberation Organisation’s *Fatah* movement then led by Yasser

Arafat. The organisation battled during 3 months with the Lebanese Army in the Palestinian refugee camp of Nahr el Bared which they seized as a stronghold. The battle resulted in the death of 400 people, including civilians. Al Absi managed to flee from the refugee camp before the Lebanese Army invaded the camp. He was a close associate of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, the former leader of al-Qaeda in Iraq, which took up recently the name of *Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL)*. Absi declared that his movement is not linked to al-Qaeda, but agrees with the radical Sunni Islamist group's fighting and killing of non-Muslims. The Lebanese government linked *Fatah al-Islam* to the Syrian intelligence services, whereas Syrian officials and Fatah al-Islam deny any such link. See the article entitled: *Profile: Fatah Al Islam*, in: *British Broadcasting Corporation*: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-10979788>.

²⁸ Concerning the psychological management of counterterrorism, please refer to the study (in French): NASR Mario, *Gestion Psychologique de la Lutte Contre le Terrorisme*, published on the *International Relations and Security Network (ISN)* website hyperlink: <http://www.isn.ethz.ch/Digital-Library/Publications/Detail/?ots591=0c54e3b3-1e9c-be1e-2c24-a6a8c7060233&lng=en&id=184241>.

²⁹ *ISIS commander killed in Aرسال clashes: report*, in: *The Daily Star*, Aug. 05, 2014, 08:19 PM, Lebanon News: <http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Lebanon-News/2014/Aug-05/266148-isis-commander-killed-in-arsal-clashes-report.ashx#axzz39B6nb6Tv>

³⁰ *Captured soldiers: They will kill us, if Hezbollah remains in Syria*, in: *The Daily Star*, Aug. 23, 2014, 01:20 PM, Lebanon News: <http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Lebanon-News/2014/Aug-23/268253-captured-soldiers-they-will-kill-us-if-hezbollah-remains-in-syria.ashx#axzz3BDF3z6Ht>

³¹ *Islamic State militants behead captive Lebanese soldier*, in: *Reuters*, Sat Aug 30, 2014, 10:16pm GMT, World News, Reporting by Mariam Karouny, <http://af.reuters.com/article/worldNews/idAFKBN0GU0J420140830?sp=true>

³² See: *Families of hostages move protest to capital*, in: *The Daily Star*, Lebanese News, Oct. 09, 2014, 12:25 AM: <http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Lebanon-News/2014/Oct-09/273420-families-of-hostages-move-protest-to-capital.ashx#ixzz3GCmhp2fv>

³³ See: *Google* on 18th of October 2014

³⁴ Refer to: *Wikipedia*: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fear>, accessed on 01/11/2014.