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Counter Terrorist Trends and Analysis

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Understanding the Radical Mindset: Factors Motivating Terrorism and Political Violence*

By Prof. Rohan Gunaratna and Orla Hennessy

Based on personal interviews, this paper explores the mindset of Ali Imron and Umar Patek, two of the masterminds behind the 2002 Bali bombing.

“My friends went to fight in the jihad because of these stories. This is what inspired international terrorism.....If they want to kill, there are verses in the Quran.” - Ali Imron

“When they kill Muslims, surely my heart is sad as to why they do it. I like to make self defence to protect them. We have to explain to the enemies of NATO, U.S. or Israel to go out of Muslim country. Without fighting, they better leave, otherwise by force, we will kick them out.” - Umar Patek

Introduction

On 12 October 2002, the terrorist group, al Jamaah al Islamiyyah (JI), planted bombs in Paddy's Bar and the Sari Club in the Bali resort of Kuta. The blasts killed 202 people from 21 countries, including 88 Australians, 38 Indonesians and 28 Britons. The attack was funded by Al Qaeda and originally planned to coincide with the anniversary of 9/11. It was the worst terrorist attack ever to take place in Southeast Asia.

One of the principal questions in terrorism studies is “what are the factors that motivate individuals to participate, advocate, and support political violence?” The above quotes by Ali Imron and Umar Patek, both involved in the Bali bombing and self-described mujahids/jihadists, provide some insight into the working of violent extremist's minds. This paper is based on personal interviews with Imron and Patek at the Police Headquarters in Jakarta in April 2012.

Al Jamaah al Islamiyyah (JI)

To understand Patek and Imron's individual motivations it is also important to understand the JI and Indonesian context. Al Jamaah al Islamiyyah

means “The Islamic Group” in Arabic. The group was loosely formed by Abu Bakar Bashir and Abdullah Sungkar in Indonesia throughout the seventies and eighties. It has its roots in Darul Islam, a radical movement that called for the establishment of Islamic law in Indonesia. Bashir and Sungkar were imprisoned for nine years in the eighties for political disobedience and it has been argued that their period of incarceration was the tipping point towards their adoption of radical Islam. This growing militancy was in parallel with the rise of other Islamic groups like the Muslim Brotherhood or the Palestinian Liberation Organization throughout this period. In 1984-1985 they also raised groups of volunteers to fight in Afghanistan. Originally, they assumed this would be good training for jihad for recruits once they returned to Indonesia. However, returning recruits in fact influenced Bashir and Sungkar to think in global terms – rather than just the regional context. Since then, the network has grown to include cells across the region, including in Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand.

Bashir and Sungkar kept up to date with the Global Salafi jihad movement through their associates in Afghanistan. By the mid to late nineties, both were talking not only about establishing a Muslim state in Indonesia, but also a *Daula Nusantara* (a regional Pan-Islamist state).

Understanding Umar Patek and Ali Imron's World View

Umar Patek was born in 1966 in Pernalang, Central Java. In the early nineties he joined JI and trained in militant camps in Afghanistan before

returning in the mid-1990s to Indonesia. As a member of JI he was known as “the demolition man” as he specialised in assembling explosives. After the Bali attack he fled to the Philippines where he joined the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) before moving to Pakistan to fight, or, in his own words, “wage jihad” against foreign forces in Afghanistan. On 25 January 2011, Patek was captured in Abbottabad, Pakistan, the same city where Osama bin Laden was hiding, although Patek has denied ever meeting him. He was extradited to Indonesia on 11 August 2011. Patek has been sentenced to 20 years of imprisonment by the West Jakarta District Court in June 2012 for his role in the Bali bombings and for his role in the bombing of nine churches in Jakarta in 2000, which killed at least 19 people. Among his charges are premeditated murder, bomb-making and illegal firearms possession.

Ali Imron was found guilty on 18 September 2003 of planning the Bali attacks and is currently serving life in prison in Indonesia. He is the younger brother of Huda bin Abdul Haq (also

known as “Mukhlas”) and Ali Amrozi bin Haji Nurhasyim, both of whom were convicted and executed for their roles in the bombing.

Throughout the interviews, it was evident that each of the men subscribed to the general JI and Al Qaeda ideologies. However, each emphasized different aspects and it was overwhelmingly evident that both had different perspectives of “the cause”.

Disillusionment with Political Process

Both, of course, referenced political grievances in varying degrees. Referring to non-Muslims Patek said,

“They kill Muslims in Palestine and in other places. About Palestine, I knew from the newspapers and radio when I was in Sada camp in Pakistan. I heard about Pattani in 1991. I met Pattani people in Sada. They came for training. They told me about the massacre of Muslims in Pattani by the Thai military. I felt sad when I heard. I did not say any-



Ali Imron (left), sentenced to life imprisonment for the 2002 Bali bombings, at the trial of Umar Patek (right), at the West Jakarta District Court in Jakarta on 22 March 2012.

Photo credit: Tatan Syuflana / AP

[:http://www.stamfordadvocate.com/news/article/Militant-denies-making-Bali-bombs-at-trial-3426394.php#ixzz250AA MEKD](http://www.stamfordadvocate.com/news/article/Militant-denies-making-Bali-bombs-at-trial-3426394.php#ixzz250AA MEKD)

thing. About Bosnia and Chechnya, I knew from the radio when I stayed in Torkham camp in Afghanistan. They did not teach in the class [at Sada]. I knew from news that Philippine military was killing Moros. When I was fighting against the Philippine military, I saw with my own eyes. Then I knew the actual suffering. JI did not send me to the Philippines, I volunteered and went. When they kill Muslims, surely my heart is sad as to why they do it. I like to perform self defence to protect them. We have to explain to the enemies - NATO, U.S. or Israel- to go out of Muslim countries. They better leave, without fighting. Otherwise, we will kick them out by force.”

Patek spoke at length on this theme and within the overall context of the interview it appeared that political grievances i.e. his perception of the global persecution of Muslims by the west (in keeping with Al Qaeda’s narrative), particularly drove him toward radicalization. Furthermore, while Patek was moved by those stories he heard, actually seeing violence in reality strengthened his commitment further. Imron, on the other hand rejected this outright saying “I am not motivated by Muslim massacres”.

Both also displayed disillusionment with the political process. For Patek, the only realistic solution to stop Muslim persecution is using force against the enemy, referring to this several times as “self-defence”. Imron is also disillusioned with political and democratic processes but, interestingly, he blames this more on the decline of Islam itself. He said “The Islamic Empire inspired the Muslims to fight for the lost glory. In the past, Islam in Europe was strong. Now it is going down.”

Invoking Religion to Justify Acts of Violence

In terms of religion, both men differed in their knowledge of theology and the extent to which it motivated them. Perhaps because he has greater religious knowledge of the Quran and because he was less motivated by political grievances, Imron greatly emphasized religious duty. Quoting from Verse 60 of surah Al-Anfal in the Quran, Imron argued that this was the key verse and also one of his key motivational texts. He claimed “My ideology is the laws of Islam”. Patek also referenced the Quran but far less clearly and admitted “My theology is Surah al Tawbah... I forget the verse. I did not memorize.” He explained that his limited knowledge of religion was due to his poor education. But when referring to other group members, he used their level of religious knowledge to rank them saying “Mukhlas, Ali Imron and Imam Samudra had a high level of theology, but Maulana was the same level or lower, and Heri Kuncoro is even lower [than me].”

So, although religion is important for Patek, it is not his key narrative. Nevertheless, he does selectively call upon it, using such verses as the Surah al Tawbah, to justify violence. It is also evident that one’s level of religious knowledge is important within the group itself and those with higher levels of knowledge garner greater respect. For Imron, it seems that the restoration of a strong Islam throughout Europe and the world is chief among his priorities. He believes this should be done by force but, at the same time, it should strictly adhere to the rules laid out in the Quran and the Sunnah. For Imron, the laws of Islam not only justify his use of violence but implore him to use it.

Interestingly, although both men clearly place a high value on theology both conceded that burning the Quran does not motivate them to fight, with Imron saying “We can print more Quran, when they burn al Quran we do not have to burn the people”. Considering Imron’s emphasis on

the religious narrative and his interpretation of his religious duty, this statement seems to be somewhat contradictory – something that was the case regularly throughout the interviews.

Both also differed greatly when questioned on the meaning of jihad. Umar Patek said “jihad is implementing Islamic law seriously, sternly and consistently in a place by a nation of people using force.” He added: “If Muslims can implement Islamic law in a country without fighting, that is also jihad. In the Philippines and Afghanistan, I practiced jihad musallah [armed jihad] or jihad by force by guns and other weapons.” For Patek his personal identity is important and he clearly identifies himself as a mujahid rather than a jihadi. It is very possible that for Patek, “jihad subscribes to a corrupt understanding of jihad and a mujahid performs correct jihad”. Ali Imron, however, was much more succinct. Perhaps referencing the author Faraj here, he said, “The meaning of jihad is war”, although he also admitted there was no single interpretation of the

Quran. He later added, “jihad is the responsibility to live up to Islam.”

Heroism, Glamour and Remorse

Patek raised the issue of heroism, or the expected “glamour” of joining a terrorist group, in a surprising way. Originally he had not told his wife that he was a Mujahid and she only found out on his arrest in Abbottabad in 2011. Patek assumed that on hearing this she would be impressed or love him more but was surprised to find that neither were the case. Patek also spoke of the conflict between his role as a husband and his role as a mujahid. His wife converted from Catholicism to Islam but as Patek said “She embraced Islam... but she did not understand the purpose of Islam. She said “do not go to other countries to do jihad. Just stay with your brother, uncle and with me”. He continued, “I love her, so I have to do everything and anything for her. As a husband, I have an obligation to my wife. I think sometimes, “Is jihad more important?”



People stand at the scene of a bomb blast in Kuta, Bali on 17 October 2002. Photo credit: Jonathan Drake/Reuters. http://www.usatoday.com/news/world/2008-11-08-bali-bombings_N.htm

It is interesting to compare the social pressure of the group to that of Patek's family. It would seem he was not willing to "let the group down" by refusing to play a role in the Bali attack but when his wife asked him to stay with the family and give up jihadism, he was torn.

Although both men are committed jihadists, both have said that they regret their participation in the Bali attacks, and claim they never agreed with them in the first place. While both have been quite persistent with these statements, it should be borne in mind that (at the time of the interview) Patek was undergoing trial and Imron hoping for a reduction in his 20 year sentence. At the same time however, these statements provide an interesting insight in the social dynamic of JI. Patek said "I did not agree with the Bali bombing. I told Imam Samudra: "Let us not do attacks in Bali or Jakarta." And Imron, equally, was of the same mindset saying, "I believed it was JI activity. But I never wanted to, as it is not proper jihad. I was junior to Mukhlas. I went along with it. As it was a JI program, I followed as I was a member of JI. Although in my belief, it was wrong, I went ahead." In this case, both argue that they were just following orders. The fact that they claim that they did not agree with the act, nor think it was correct jihad, did not matter. If true, it would seem that the obligation to the group superseded their own opinions. In this case it was a sense of duty to follow orders but also the need to conform and kowtow to social pressure.

Disengagement

When asked about his treatment in prison, Patek was full of praise for the system. He admitted that although he had not been expecting it, he was treated well and had formed a close bond with an officer of the Inter Services Intelligence (ISI) Colonel Zakariya whilst imprisoned in Pakistan. Patek said: "He was close to me. I saw him like a grandfather. He became very

interested in me. He was kind to me and empathized with me. I said to him, "I want [you] to meet my wife." While in prison, Imron has recanted some of his former beliefs but his views remain radical. He would like to reform JI to its original intent and position himself as its leader. He said if he gets out of prison he will continue to teach others about JI saying, "If I get out of prison, I will go to Singapore and Australia. I want to spread ideas and educate people."

Conclusion

This paper sought to explore the narratives that motivates those who commit acts of extremist violence in order to bolster knowledge of the phenomenon and to be better able to counter such motivations. When interviewed, both men expressed different reasons and motivations for joining with and fighting for JI. They also both placed emphasis on different aspects of the JI ideology and both had clearly different priorities. As mentioned earlier, it is evident that both subscribe to the Al Qaeda and JI narratives in varying degrees. Many of their statements were in line with known Al Qaeda and JI doctrines; however neither could clearly elucidate their opinions. Both would jump backwards and forwards citing political grievances or religious scripture and often contradicted themselves. The contradictory nature of their speeches seemed to dilute their motivations and it would appear that they have a superficial understanding of their own narratives and motivations. During the interview for instance, Patek admitted: "I know what ideology is. I do not know how to explain it."

Overwhelmingly, it is acknowledged that there is no single, "one size fits all" reason for turning to terrorism and so the differences between both men's opinions are hardly unexpected. But it is still surprising that neither detainee had a succinct, clear idea or message. In terms of individual differences, although both spoke of political grievances, Patek's view seemed less highly developed than Imron's as he spoke of particu-

lar scenes he had witnessed, whether in the field or on the TV or Internet. Witnessing the actual persecution of Muslim communities galvanized him and this is arguably one of his key motivational narratives. His understanding and knowledge of theology was limited and so while religion plays a role in his decision making it appears he uses it selectively to justify his cause. The Islamic writer Abdullah Azzam's influence can also be seen when Patek speaks of reclaiming "lost" Muslim lands and ejecting infidels. It seems likely that Patek subscribes to Azzam's more traditional form of jihad, and this was perhaps also demonstrated by his reluctance to take part in the Bali bombing.

In contrast to Patek, Imron prioritized the restoration of Islam to the glory days of the middle ages. Religious duty and knowledge of the Quran are extremely important to him. The fact that neither man mentioned economic incentives is also interesting. Over the course of the interview neither mentioned salaries or payments or any kind of financial incentives while operating with JI. This would indicate that political/religious and moral motivations were far greater priorities for both men as opposed to financial incentives.

It was also interesting to see the human/mundane side of Patek – when he discussed his wife. While the same was not the case for Imron, did not have these circumstances, the importance of family is clearly evident and one that could be utilized when attempting to implement de-radicalization or counter-narrative programmes. Another point to note is how both men's opinions on the Bali attacks themselves have changed since their incarceration and they have perhaps become clearer and more vocal in their opposition to the attacks.

This provides a window of opportunity to persuade both to completely disengage from violence and join the mainstream. However countering a person's ingrained narratives is not an easy task, and the individual's personal motiva-

tions should be a key tool when informing any attempts to counter violent extremist narratives.

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“What is that Buzz?” The rise of Drone Warfare

By Ahmed S. Hashim and Grégoire Patte

This article highlights the limits of the constant increase of the use of drones by the militaries or the homeland security forces.

These days the last sound a terrorist often hears is a distinctive buzz of an armed drone above him before it fires the missile that kills him — and many unfortunate civilians. “Drones” or Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) as they are officially and more accurately named have emerged as one of the most important military systems of early 21st century warfare. They are being extensively used in the so-called Global War on Terror (GWOT) by the United States which is also considering using them in domestic law enforcement and border security. However, the U.S. is not the only possessor and user of UAVs; according to the *Military Balance* of the prestigious International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) 50 countries have acquired drones and many have used them in conflict situations; especially for reconnaissance and surveillance, maritime and border patrol as well as for targeted killings. Two prominent examples include Israel – a pioneer in UAV development and Australia which has acquired reconnaissance drones from Israel for use in Afghanistan. The small Indian Ocean island nation of Sri Lanka used drones effectively in the final phases of the war against the formidable insurgent group, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam between 2006 and 2009.

It is the U.S., however, which has the largest inventory of different types of UAVs – both armed and unarmed. The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and the U.S. armed forces have used these machines most extensively in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Somalia, and Yemen. In 2002, the U.S. military spent around USD550 million on drones. In 2011, the figure was nearly USD5 billion. The emergence of the drone as an instrument of warfare has generated a tremendous amount of controversy over the past few years concerning the evolving nature of Western warfare in the 21st

century, the legality of such warfare, and the risks associated with the extensive use of these instruments for targeted killings.

The rise of machine warfare

The West has been particularly intrigued and seduced by the notion of unmanned machine warfare. Several decades ago at the end of World War II, U.S. Army Air Force General Henry “Hap” Arnold said what at that time seemed to be a fanciful prediction:

“We have just won a war with lots of heroes flying around in planes. The next war may be fought by airplanes with no men in them at all... Take everything you’ve learned about aviation in war, throw it out of the window, and let’s go to work on tomorrow’s aviation. It will be different from anything the world has ever seen.”

The general would have been truly amazed if he were alive today to see the stunning evolution of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs). Drones, or UAVs in the arcane language of the military, are remotely-piloted vehicles (RPV). Equipped with sophisticated sensors, they are used for intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) and attack on personnel and infrastructure. When armed, drones are referred to as Unmanned Combat Aerial Vehicles (UCAVs). Drone crews usually consist of a team of at least three operators — a mission chief, a pilot and an intelligence analyst, without mentioning the technical teams to install radio station to transmit and receive information from the drone and in some case the catapult station. Those crews can view a target for hours or days in advance of a strike, they can identify terrorists more accurately than ground

troops or conventional pilots whose time on target is limited by the constraints of the human body (fatigue) and the constraints of their aircraft. UAVs remove a pilot from danger. In addition, drones have much longer flying times, or “loiter” time, than manned aircraft; some are able to operate continuously for more than 24 hours. This loiter time provides militaries with the ability to stay above and thus observe the battlefield continuously.

Already, more U.S. armed forces personnel are being trained as drone operators than air force pilots. Currently, about 33% of the total aircraft in the U.S. military inventory are unmanned aerial vehicles; this represents a dramatic increase from 2005 when they constituted only 5% of the total. What is also astounding is that UAVs account for around 10% of the total budget allocated for military aircraft of all kinds. At a price tag of \$10.5 million, an armed Predator drone is significantly cheaper than a manned jet. For example, a single F-22 Raptor fighter jet cost as much as 14 drones. Drones are clearly a cost-effective instrument of war. For many strategic analysts as well as military technology enthusiasts the future of air war belongs to drones, remote-controlled UAVs equipped with even more sensitive reconnaissance electronics and powerful precision weapons.

The U.S. was the first country to engage in research and development (R&D) into UAVs; these efforts began in 1917. During World War II, both the U.S. Navy and U.S. Army engaged in extensive research to develop combat drones; but the efforts were not consummated by the end of the war in 1945. U.S. use of drones came decades later during the Vietnam War when the AQM-34 *Firebee* was used as an intelligence-gathering vehicle.



U.S. Drone AQM-34. Photo credit: Headless Fighters: USAF Reconnaissance-UAVs over Vietnam.

In the 1970s Israel began R&D into UAVs. During the 1982 war in Lebanon it used unarmed drones to get information on Palestinian and Syrian forces. Israel’s early lead in this small inexpensive military platform was due to three things: a strong culture of scientific and technological innovation, sustained combat experience, and an operational environment that allows it to put a military system into immediate use and then modify it almost immediately based on lessons learned. The John Lehman, the then Secretary of the U.S. Navy, was very impressed by the Israeli’s operational use of UAVs in Lebanon and impressed upon the Reagan Administration the need for the U.S. to devote resources to the development of UAVs for future contingencies.

The MQ-1 Predator drone was developed by a Defense Advanced Projects Research Agency (DARPA) team led by an Israeli air force engineer. An unarmed reconnaissance version entered into service in 1994 and saw action in 1995 and 1999 against Serbian forces. The recon and surveillance drones were distantly piloted for the Central Intelligence Agency by the Eleventh Reconnaissance Squadron operating from Nellis Air Force base in Nevada. The Predators were able to loiter for hours providing NATO with real-time monitoring of Serbian forces they were not equipped to fire at potentially hostile forces.

Even before the 9/11 attacks, the U.S. was already extensively looking for Bin Laden and was already using drones to do so. However, while

the drones may have been able to find him – and indeed, on one or two occasions they allegedly did spot him, an unarmed drone could not do anything except report the information back to its handler. By the time any military mission could be mounted by Special Forces or cruise missiles the target would have moved miles away from his original location. The “kill chain” had to be shortened and the best, indeed, the most logical way to do this was to arm the instrument which could spot and locate the intended target and destroy the target. The decision was taken in 2000 to innovate and begin the process of arming the Predator so that it could become an offensive weapon in the global war on terror. Although Bin Ladin was killed by members of U.S. Navy Seal Team 6, armed drones have been used with deadly effect against terrorist personnel beginning “experimentally” with the George W. Bush Administration; however, it was under the administration of Barack Obama that drone warfare in the shape of war-time targeted killings increased.



MQ-1 Predator. Photo credit: AP/Kirsty Wigglesworth.

Indeed, the Obama administration has developed a new doctrine of warfare against terrorists; and the use of UAVs figures very prominently in this doctrine. The “National Strategy on Counterterrorism,” commits the country to “disrupt, dismantle, and eventually defeat Al Qaeda affiliates and adherents” in any part of the world. In places like Pakistan and Yemen, drone warfare has moved from being on the secret fringes to the very center of the White House’s strategy. President Obama, himself has taken a direct and personal interest in the evolution of his administration’s aggressive and hard-hitting counter-terrorism strategy which can be referred to as Militarized Counter-Terrorism (MCT) this eschews boots on the ground in a major way in a conflict zone and instead prefers

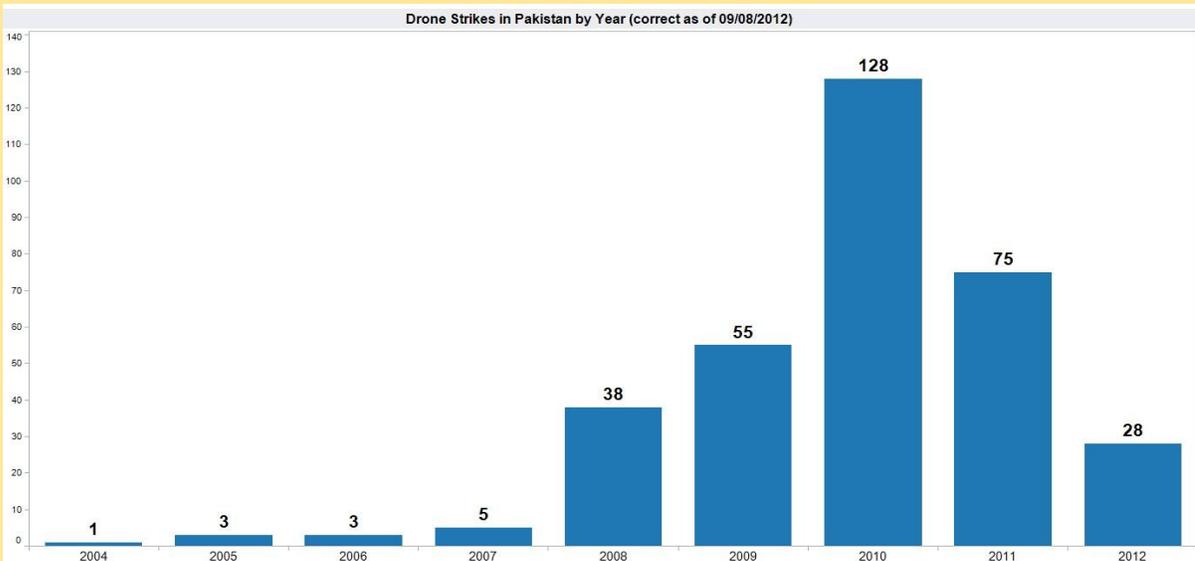


Figure 1: Drone strike in Pakistan by Year. Source: The Bureau of Investigative Journalism. <http://www.thebureauinvestigates.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/Strikes-Per-Year-Dash8.jpg>

long distance targeted killings of terrorist leaders and operational personnel by special operations forces and armed drones. Critics argue that the Obama administration's love affair with targeted killings has allowed it to avoid the complications of taking Al Qaeda personnel as detainees and then agonizing over their legal status pending trial. The preferred policy is to take out high value targets (HVTs) instead of capturing them.

Hundreds of militants have died in attacks launched by UAVs such as the Predator over the course of this war. Eleven of the top twenty Al Qaeda leaders who have been eliminated have been killed by drone strikes such as Anwar al-Awlaki, a U.S. born Al Qaeda figure and a leading Islamist propagandist who was killed in Yemen in September 2011. Also on the list are well-known terrorist leaders associated with or sympathetic to Al Qaeda, such as Baitullah Mehsud of the *Tehrik-i-Taliban-i-Pakistan*. According to the New America Foundation, between 1,424 and 2,184 militants have been killed in Pakistan since 2004; this is an average of 5 militants killed per drone strike.

The drone attacks have pressured Al Qaeda and associated groups and forced them to focus more on their survival than on recruitment and operations. Peter Bergen and Katherine Tiedemann, noted that there was a decrease in the output of the Al Qaeda propaganda journal *As Sahab* during 2008, a time which coincided with an increase in drone strikes. Drone strikes were used relatively sparingly during the campaign's early years - only nine drone strikes were recorded between 2004 and 2007. The 34 air-strikes conducted by U.S. drones in 2008 nearly quadrupled the total number of previous drone strikes during the entire history of the war. The U.S. further escalated the drone war in 2009 and 2010, conducting 53 drone strikes in 2009 and 118 in 2010 respectively. There were 70 drone strikes in 2011.

Risk of technological transfer and intelligence loss

In 2011, the U.S. lost two drones in rapid succession. The first one is now in the hands of the Iranians, the second one crashed in the island nation of the Seychelles. The latter crashed on its return to the airport, few minute after its take-off, because of a "technical failure." The *MQ-9 Reaper* drones are used in the Seychelles to monitor piracy in the Indian Ocean and in the maritime areas off the Horn of Africa. The drone was unarmed, it crashed on a secured airport, and there were no casualties. But if one pays attention to the global picture, some of the crashes are far more worrying. According to the Drone Crash Database of the Drone Wars U.K., 25 crashes have occurred so far this year, and more than 90 since 2007.



Iranian officers in a TV broadcast next to the U.S. RQ-170 Sentinel drone. Photo credit: AFP/ Iranian TV.

On December 4, 2011, Iran claimed to have downed an *RQ-170 Sentinel* run by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). The Iranian TV broadcast

pictures of the CIA drone, apparently undamaged, being inspected by soldiers of the IRGC. Brig General Amir-Ali Hajizadeh, head of the IRGC Aerospace Unit claimed that his unit had been able to "electronically hijack" the drone. The U.S. claims that "technical failure" led to the downing of the drone. If the Iranian claim is accurate, the consequences are serious for the U.S.: its enemies could manipulate target coordinates, jam communication between the drone and its ground control station (GCS), or simply capture more drones. Apart from the diplomatic "flap" of a CIA drone flying over Iran, this event highlights the risk of losing a high intelligence value vector on enemy territory. Furthermore,

China and Russia – two of America’s top technological competitors – have already expressed interest in inspecting the drone. It is highly probable that those countries will soon develop new drone capabilities based on the U.S. technology within the RQ-170.

On February 8, 2011 a U.S. *Predator* crashed near the town of Loder, Yemen. Soon after the crash, the Yemeni police collected the debris, but was attacked on its way back by Al Qaeda members, who hijacked the wreckage. The *Predator* is both a reconnaissance and attack drone and carries Hellfire missiles. Afghanistan is the main crash zone, as the majority of drones are engaged to support the operation Enduring Freedom. According to the Drone Wars UK website, more than 30 drones crashed in Afghanistan and most of them are Predators. The causes of the crashing drones may be diverse: mechanical failure, pilot failure, and weather conditions. But the consequences are always the same: loss of intelligence, loss of sophisticated and sensitive technology to terrorist groups or other enemies.

The risk of collateral damage

There are also risks associated with the *successful use* of drones: they kill civilians. There is an ongoing debate over this issue. Some claim that the majority of the casualties are civilians, others dispute that assertion. According to a *New York Times* in February 2006 that drone strikes to date had killed some 700 civilians for a total of 14 militants killed. This worked out to 50 civilians for every militant killed, a hit of 2 percent. The Israeli-Hamas war of December 2008 and January 2009, also witnessed the extensive use of drones by the Israeli Defense Forces. According to Human Rights Watch, Israel used a total of 42 drones which killed 87 civilians. Bill Roggio, the editor of the *Long War Journal*, estimated, however, that civilians casualties were around 10 percent of the total casualties. Another, more recent, study conducted in 2009 by

Peter Bergen and Katherine Tiedemann, calculated that since 2006 the number of civilians killed was between 31 to 33 percent of the total casualties.

In a so-called “surgical war,” the death of civilians from allied nations is simply turning out to be unacceptable and has caused a significant spike in anti-American sentiment among Pakistanis and Afghans. A Gallop poll published in August 2009 revealed that only 9 percent of the Pakistanis favoured the strikes, while two-thirds opposed them. One issue that bedevils the Obama administration is the fact that it has adopted a disputed method for counting civilian casualties. In effect, it counts all military-age males in a strike zone as combatants. Counterterrorism officials insist this approach is one of simple logic: people in an area of known terrorist activity or in close proximity to Al-Qaeda operatives, are deemed to be “up to no good.” This seems to be the Israeli approach as well. In the incidents investigated by Human Rights Watch, Israeli forces either failed to take all feasible precautions to verify that the targets were combatants, apparently setting an unacceptably low threshold for conducting attacks, or they failed to distinguish between combatants and civilians and to target only the former.

Overall, the drone strikes present strategic, operational and tactical problems. First, some commentators argue that the U.S. drone campaign is illegal under international law and violates both the sovereignty of states and the military rules of engagement which prohibit strikes when civilian casualties are highly probable. Second, in Pakistan the militant groups are now moving into central provinces that are heavily populated to avoid being targeted. The result is to expose a greater part of the Pakistani population to the risk of terrorist attacks, thus potentially weakening the fragile Pakistani government or worsening relations with it. But what is the alternative to the militarized counterterrorism that the U.S. is currently engaged in?

The U.S. cannot just walk away and leave its national security in the hands of third parties. Nor should it continue to maintain boots on the ground in the Global South in any large numbers. Third, the drones are just a tool in the tactics against terrorism; they are not counter-terrorism's ultimate panacea. Making drone warfare the ultimate counter-terrorism solution will create the illusion of risk-free war for Western powers.

In the Western Just War tradition, a ruler or a state is supposed to wage war as a last resort. But there is a fear that the relative "low-cost" of drone warfare lowers the threshold; and that drone warfare has become a default strategy to be used anywhere in the world against "bad guys" and so-called "recalcitrants". With no soldiers on the field, without any state-borders to respect, Western governments and populations will automatically be disconnected from the realities of war; the state of "permanent war," will become their reality and they will be trapped in the "forever war." This seems to apply to Yemen where the debate focuses on whether the use of drones in that theatre of operations where civil-

ians have also died as a result has enlarged support for AQ among the local populace. Some say it has; but they merely quote media or Yemeni government sources who assert – somewhat unscientifically that this form of warfare encourages militancy. Others say it has not and argue that the structural environment (weak state institutions and lack of government legitimacy or effective rule over the population) is what encourages the breeding of militancy, not drone strikes. The jury is still out. But what is clear is that drones like machine-guns, submarines, aircraft and nuclear weapons before them have generated and will continue to generate considerable discussion for a long time to come.

CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

The CTTA: Counter Terrorist Trends and Analysis is now open for contributions from researchers and practitioners in the field of terrorism research, security, and other related fields.

Topical areas of interest are terrorism and political violence, organized crime, homeland security, religion and violence, internal conflicts and all other areas of security broadly defined.

Article length could be anywhere between 1,000 to 2,000 words. Submissions must be made before the 15th of every month for editing purposes and for inclusion in the next month's edition. Please refer to the [guidelines](#).

Electronic copies of the articles (MS Word format) may be submitted to the Associate Editor, Uday Ravi at the following address:
isuravi@ntu.edu.sg

Challenges to the Evolution of a National Counter-Terrorism Policy in Pakistan

By Abdul Basit

In the absence of an elaborate and threat-specific counter-terrorism policy, Pakistan's successes against militants in its tribal regions remain fragile and reversible. The political narrative in Islamabad that the withdrawal of US forces from Afghanistan will lead to reduction in terrorist violence in Pakistan is flawed and misplaced. Without developing a national-level counter-terrorism policy, the country will continue to suffer at the hands of home grown terrorists.

Despite suffering a decade-long spate of terrorism, after the 9/11 incidents, Pakistan still lacks a coherent and effective national counter terrorism policy. Even though in the last two years terrorist incidents have declined considerably in Pakistan, still the problem remains serious.

Since 2009 Pakistan has made significant gains against the terrorist networks in Malakand Division of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) province and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA). However, in the absence of an elaborate and threat-specific counter-terror policy these gains remain fragile and reversible. The government continues to rely almost exclusively on military solutions to internal security challenges instead of developing long-term institutional responses which also factors in political, development and ideological responses.

Various components of current counter-terrorism strategy of "clear, hold and build" are not complementing each other. In the face of a military offensive, terrorists' tactical retreat enables the security forces to clear an area in quick time. However, the hold stage prolongs as militants start pouring back into the area as soon as the military operation finishes off. With the exception of Malakand Division this pattern can be found in the entire tribal belt of Pakistan where military operations have been conducted. Coupled with this slow reconstruction of conflict-hit areas, less than impressive rehabilitation of internally displaced person (IDPs) and lackadaisical performance of civil institutions have also undermined the gains made in the fight against militancy.

The current counter-terrorism approach in Pakistan is geared towards containment of violence in peripheral tribal region rather than its elimination.



A cloud of smoke from the building of Islamabad's Marriot Hotel, located close to Pakistan's parliament, which was completely destroyed in a suicide bombing in 2008

Source: Jihad Watch
<http://www.jihadwatch.org/2008/09/pakistan-al-qaeda-behind-marriott-attack.html>

Impediments to National Counter-Terrorism Policy

A number of factors hinder the progress on evolution of a national counter-terrorism policy:

Selective Counter-Terrorism

The “good Taliban” vs “bad Taliban” debate lies at the heart of this issue. Being hard on some terrorist outfits while totally ignoring and overlooking the others groups has eluded the efforts to develop a comprehensive national level counter-terrorism policy based on the principle of zero tolerance for terrorism. Despite enormous pressure from the US and international community Pakistan’s refusal to destroy the sanctuaries of the Haqqani Network in North Waziristan and allowing certain terrorist groups to use its soil to carry out attacks against the international coalition forces in Afghanistan underscores this dilemma.

Appeasing some groups like the anti-Shia sectarian outfits Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ) and Ahl-e-Sunnat Wal Jamaat (ASWJ), formerly known as Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan (SSP), and the Kashmiri jihadi outfits has raised eye-brows about the

sincerity of current counter-terrorism approach in Pakistan. Despite open admission by the LeJ of its involvement in massacre of ethnic Hazara Shia community in the Balochistan province, no effective measures have been taken against the group.

Questions also remain about the effectiveness of military operations conducted in Malakand Division and tribal areas. With the exception of very few notable commanders like Sufi Muhammad, the head of the banned Tehrik-e-Nifaz-e-Shariat-e-Muhammadi (TNSM), and Muslim Khan the former spokesperson of TTP Swat chapter, no high profile terrorists have been killed or captured in these military operations. No trials have been initiated against the arrested ones.

Ownership Dilemma

Lack of political consensus among various stakeholders is a major stumbling block in efforts to evolve an effective counter-terrorism policy. Two kinds of opinions exist among the political parties. Firstly, the religious-political parties believe that the Pakistani security forces are fighting American war in FATA. Despite los-



A protest rally of Defence Council of Pakistan, an alliance of 40 religious-political parties and jihadi groups, organized to oppose the reopening of NATO supply routes through Pakistan. Photo credit: Chowrangi <http://www.chowrangi.com/the-defence-of-pakistan-phenomena-a-bitter-factsheet.html>

ing around 30,000 civilians and 5,000 security personnel in home grown militancy, they believe terrorism is not Pakistan's indigenous issue. According to them, terrorism in Pakistan is a by-product of US invasion of Afghanistan. The US-led drone strikes in the tribal areas and Pakistan army's decision to deploy troops in the semi-autonomous tribal regions for the first time ever in country's history, on American behest has generated a lot of anger in these areas. They argue that the current wave of terrorism will subside as soon as Pakistan distances itself from the U.S..

Second, the centrist parties like Imran Khan led Pakistan Tehrike Insaf (PTI) and the Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N), a major opposition party in the center and ruling party in the Punjab province, believe that the issue of militancy and terrorism has its roots in FATA and the terrorist incidents happening on mainland are a spillover effect of the same.

In an environment of such divided political opinions on grave internal security challenges hinder the evolution of a national counter-terrorism policy. A bipartisan approach - a must for realization of such a policy hardly exists in Pakistan.

Poor Functioning of Anti Terrorism Courts (ATCs)

Deficiencies in the judicial system also remain one of the most pressing challenges in developing a national-level counter-terrorism policy. Institutional weakness in the judicial system often results in ineffective protection leading to the release of arrested terror suspects.

Many high profile terrorists have been acquitted by the Anti Terrorism Courts (ATCs) despite compelling evidence against them. Acquittal of Malik Ishaq and Akram Lahori, founding members of the banned sectarian terrorist group Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, in 45 cases because of poor prosecution, are examples of a weak criminal

justice system.

Neither the judiciary nor the executive is satisfied with the existing anti-terrorism laws and the performance of the anti-terrorism courts. The former Prime Minister of Pakistan Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani admitted in the National Assembly that anti-terrorism laws needed to be tightened and was concerned that terrorists apprehended by the law-enforcement agencies had been bailed out and that they again indulged in terrorist activities. Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry has also shown his dissatisfaction with the poor functioning of anti-terrorism courts (ATCs).

Reliance of anti-Taliban Tribal Militias

Another factor worth mentioning in this regard is the government's reliance on anti-Taliban peace committees (locally known as *lashkars*) to fight the Islamist militancy instead of introducing a professional police force in the tribal areas. These tribal militias are effective in short term but less useful in long-term perspective of counter-terrorism. Undoubtedly, the anti-Taliban peace committees have assisted the government in curbing the militancy and maintaining peace and harmony but at the same time government's overreliance on such militias has affected efforts to look for permanent solutions. The government's overreliance and sustained support to anti-Taliban peace committees, at the cost of a regular police force, will create problems for the government to disband them once the militancy has subsided.

Deficiencies of the Civilian Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs)

Various studies of counter-insurgencies have shown that a state's police and law enforcement agencies play a critical role as the first line of defense against the threat of terrorism and insurgencies. However, Pakistan continues to rely on its military and paramilitary troops to fight the

insurgencies in FATA and the Balochistan province. Hardly any attention has been paid to police force, one of the most poorly managed organizations in the country. Pakistani police is ill-equipped, poorly trained, politicized and corrupt. The state of preparedness of the Pakistani police force can easily be gauged from the attack on Bannu Central Prison in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) province on 15 April this year. More than 100 militants mounted a multiple coordinated attack on the prison center and freed around 400 militants, including Adnan Rashid, convicted for attempted assassination of of Pervez Musharraf. Militants' job was made easier by the fact that there were only 36 poorly equipped police guards on duty instead of 150 that was necessary. None had any formal training. They quickly gave up any resistance and police reinforcements arrived only after the attackers had withdrawn.

Poor Threat Perception

The conventional approach to threat perception in Pakistan is also a major obstacle to evolution of a counter-terrorism policy. The qualitative difference in strategies to counter a tribal insurgency and urban terrorism lies at the heart of this dilemma. Pakistan's counter-terrorism responses presuppose that major internal security threats to Pakistan from the Islamist militancy have their origins in FATA. Thus, the attacks on the mainland are the handiwork of militants who travel all the way from FATA to major cities of the country. Therefore, a victory against the militants in FATA holds key to peace and stability in urban centers. This is why the threat of urban terrorism has been neglected.

Due to dissimilarity of the threat this one-size-fits-all approach will not suffice. Presently, Pakistan faces a growing threat of urban terrorism, which is inherently different from Taliban-led militancy in FATA. The Taliban insurgency has local and regional context (war in Afghanistan) while the challenge of urban terrorism in mainland Paki-

stan has its origins in the ideological, political and sectarian narratives developed by religious-political parties, jihadi groups and the state itself.

Conclusion

As the U.S. military operations in Afghanistan progressively ends, American funding for Pakistan military's counter-terrorism operations will decline in the coming years. Due to high cost, Pakistan will not be able to sustain its operations against the militants in tribal areas on its own. So instead of relying exclusively on this costly option of military operations for counter-terrorism Pakistan should invest in its civilian law enforcement agencies along with removing deficiencies in its anti-terror laws and judicial framework.

Also, contradicting political narratives which portray the indigenous issue of terrorism and militancy as a by-product of the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan should also be done away with. This thinking pre-supposes that the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan will automatically result in reduction of terrorist violence in Pakistan. However, none of the terrorists in Pakistan have mentioned giving up their attacks after American departure from Afghanistan. As a matter of fact, most of the groups are fighting the U.S. and Pakistan army because of Islamabad's siding with the U.S. forces. Pakistan will do well to revisit its current strategy to counter-terrorism and develop long-term institutional responses to terrorist threat.

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Understanding Islamic Moderation: The *Wasatiyya* Imperative

By Taufiq bin Radja Nurul Bahri

Terrorism has been and is increasingly becoming more complex. While many would equate terrorism with physical chaos, one cannot but acknowledge the existence of other elements involved in terrorism and radicalization. A basic but important component of terrorism is ideology that serves as motivation for terror acts. While the physical aspects of terrorism could be curbed through military and law and order strategies, counter-ideology entails the twofold approach of refuting radical ideology as well as the promotion of anti-extremist and moderate values in society. Scholars have recently admitted the expanding spiritual-moral role of world religions in postmodern times. Religions carry values needed for rectification of moral decay that has caused much of contemporary problems. Wasatiyyah is a virtue inherent in the Islamic tradition that needs to be highlighted.

There is no doubt that modernization, globalization and Islamophobia are major factors that affect the manner in which the international audience perceives Islam and Muslims. Demonization of Islam and Muslims has become a trend and as a result, Islam has consistently been equated to violence, intolerance, anti-democratic and anti-human.

Of late, many efforts have been initiated to correct the distorted perception about Islam in general and Muslims in particular. The Global Movement of Moderates (GMM), is an example of such attempts. The idea of the GMM was suggested in 2010 by Dato' Sri Mohd Najib Tun Razak, the Prime Minister of Malaysia at the 65th United Nations General Assembly in his speech. This was followed up at the International Conference on Global Movement of Moderates, its first conference was held on 17 January 2012. The aim of the conference was to drown the voices of extremism and reclaim the "center and moral high ground" for Islam.

One of the highlights of Kamal Hassan's "*Voice of Islamic Moderation from the Malay World*" it is a five chapter opus that covers the issues of the impact of globalization on Southeast Asia, the meaning of *wasatiyya* and its application in the Malay world. Hassan's insights on the issues of moderation and utilizing it as counter weight against extremism are precious. Aside from his academic credence, Hassan has spent much

time in the U.S.. He is also an Asian who understands and lives the culture of his people. These facts make him relatable and his suggestions practical and effective especially for the Asian context of counter-terrorism and peace building.

Understanding the term *wasatiyyah*

The term *wasatiyyah* derived from the word *wasat*, is extracted from the Qur'an and carries a deep meaning of a combination between justice and moderation between excessiveness and laxity. Muslim scholars such as asy-Syafi'e, Al-Ghazali and Ibn Taimiyah have deliberated on the issue of *wasatiyyah* emphasizing its importance in ensuring just and prosperous living. In modern Islamic literature, the term has been reintroduced in the 1970s by Muhammad Abu Zahrah and Muhammad Al-Madani who both wrote extensively on the topic. Their works have opened doors for and inspired later scholars such as Al-Qaradawi and Ghannushi.

The term *wasatiyyah* yet has not achieved a consensus in meaning and acceptance. Scholars have intermittently utilized a number of terms to refer to *wasatiyyah*. In Islamic literature, numerous terms such as *i'tidal* (fairness), *tawazun* (balance) and *insaf* (rightful) are often used to describe and represent the term *wasatiyyah*.

Muhammad Assad, a renowned Muslim thinker, designed his theory of the "middlemost commu-

nity” as appropriate to help understand *wasatiyyah*. The “middlemost community is a community that keeps an equitable balance between extremes and is realistic in its appreciation of man’s nature and rejecting both licentiousness and exaggerated asceticism”.

Hassan coins his own term, “justly balanced” as an alternative. In “*Voice of Islamic moderation from the Malay world*”, Hassan insists that “moderation has often been equated with *al-wasatiyyah* whereas it is, in fact a part of the qualities of *al-wasatiyyah*”. In other words, *wasatiyyah* is a much broader and moderation is one of the meanings it carries aside from justice, balance and other meanings.

The need for *wasatiyyah*

Hassan theorizes that the notion of *wasatiyyah* denies the view “that there is an inherent conflict between the spirit and the flesh and a bold affirmation of the natural, God-willed unity of this twofold aspect of human life”. One of the largest problems of humanity in current times is the absence of ethics and morality as a result of a decline of religious and spiritual orders. This ethical-spiritual vacuum then is filled with ideologies of extremism and hostility that has been masked with religious fervor. In such circumstances, The need for spirituality and ethics has never been greater, *wasatiyyah* is not a mere ethical value like many would assume but a rather a fundamental imperative of understanding the nature of man and how he ought to perceive life. *Wasatiyyah* is a code of conduct that applies for the individual as well as the collective.

Wasatiyyah urges people to firstly identify the dimensions of life and then attend to its requirements and needs. The manner in which these requirements and needs are to be met must be just and appropriate. Three facets of human life as Hassan suggests are: social, economy and spiritual. Social living requires people to possess and display great moral values such as toler-

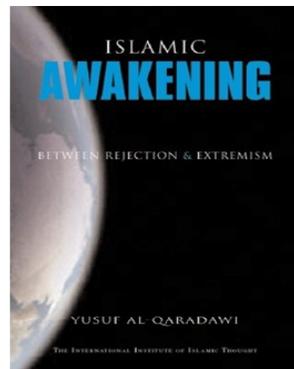


Hassan speaking at the Students' Representative Council. Photo credit: International Islamic University Malaysia.

ance, integrity and justice which are components of *wasatiyyah*. *Wasatiyyah* obligates that people should maintain peaceful relationships with others and the only reason for hostility is

in the instances of oppression and tyranny. Being devout in Islam does not in any way prohibits the pursuit of wealth. *Wasatiyyah* however emphasizes the need to keep away from wastefulness and excessiveness.

Utilizing *wasatiyyah* to combat extremism



This is an example a publication by Al Qaradawi. Photo credit: Amazon

Hassan was greatly influenced by Yusuf Al-Qaradawi who is a leading advocate of Islamic moderation and promoter of the concept of *wasatiyyah*. Al-Qaradawi has had his personal struggles with numerous strands of Muslim extremists. Al-Qaradawi has designed numerous frameworks and action

plans on how to promote the *wasatiyyah* to counter extremism of ideas, attitudes and actions.

Picking up the thread, Hassan stresses that one important transformational strategy to maintain *wasatiyyah* is through eradicating violence and extremism. “Muslims who use violence in promoting the cause of Islam are in fact violating the teachings of Islam and do great disservice to it”. Hassan emphasizes that extremism in religion is strongly prohibited by the Prophet Muhammad.

Hassan suggests that to eradicate extremism, societies need to focus on building ethical values and accountability and instilling them in the hearts of the people. The deterioration of morality, according to Hassan, is a primary cause for moral and ethical corruption and intolerance and extremism. He lists three key players that could determine the success or failure of people; educators, media and civil society. In modern times, education has been diluted and become incomprehensible due to the absence of teaching of moral values. Media on the other hand has its focus excessively set on entertainment. Even when it comes to news and journalism, religious, political and cultural prejudices and bias is evident often inhabits society from knowing the truth, fuelling confusion and conflicts. Civil society that include Non- Governmental Organizations, grassroots organizations and religious institutions play an important role in molding the society and should serve as checks and balances provided they themselves imbibe “moral values and exhibit transparency and accountability in their operations”.

Wasatiyyah is the basis of this moral revival plan. While police and military operations could erode the tactical threats of terrorism, ideological extremism tends to seep into society with the accessibility of extremist materials through print media and the internet. There is a growing understanding that counter-terrorism today must not only comprise military reactionary response but precautionary and educational empowerment that will serve as barriers against the threats of extremism and radicalization. In this respect, the concept of *wasatiyyah* as promoted by Al-Qaradawi, Hassan and others could be a role model for promoting moderation in Islam.

GLOBAL PATHFINDER

The ICPVTR Terrorism Database – Global Pathfinder - is a one-stop repository for information on the current and emerging terrorist threats. The database focuses on terrorism and political violence in the Asia-Pacific region – comprising of Southeast Asia, North Asia, South Asia, Central Asia and Oceania.

Global Pathfinder is an integrated database containing comprehensive profiles of terrorist groups, key terrorist personalities, terrorist and counter-terrorist incidents as well as terrorist training camps. It also contains specific details and analyses of significant terrorist attacks in the form of terrorist attack profiles.

For further inquiries regarding subscription and access to the Global Pathfinder database, please email Ms. Elena Ho Wei Ling at the following email address: isewlho@ntu.edu.sg

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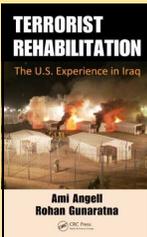
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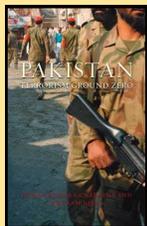
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Events and Publications



- Terrorist Rehabilitation: The US Experience in Iraq (CRC Press Taylor and Francis Group, 2011) by Dr. Ami Angell and Dr. Rohan Gunaratna

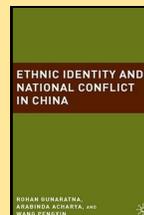


- Pakistan: Terrorism Ground Zero (Reaktion Books, 2011) by Dr. Rohan Gunaratna and Mr. Khurram Iqbal



- International Aviation and Terrorism: Evolving Threats, Evolving Security (Routledge 2009) by Dr. John Harrison

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- Ethnic Identity and National Conflict in China (Palgrave Macmillan 22 June 2010) by Dr. Rohan Gunaratna, Dr. Arabinda Acharya and Mr. Wang Pengxin



- Targeting Terrorist Financing: International Cooperation and New Regimes (Routledge 2009) by Dr. Arabinda Acharya