

CUIMUN XXIII

Study Guide

DISEC

STUDY GUIDE



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Welcome to DISEC

Dear Delegates,

In the past decade, the nature of threats to global security has evolved rapidly making the world a safer place considerably more difficult. Old assumptions about security have had to be completely rethought and new possibilities have had to be considered and countered.

This has been made clearer with the recent increase in attacks around the globe using low-tech methods, run by 'lone wolves' or very disparately organised groups. Terrorists now often use methods that are practically impossible to identify to carry out their attacks, and their lack of obvious affiliation to organised networks in many cases makes them very difficult to spot beforehand using tried-and-tested conventional counterterrorism strategies.

This has taken place in tandem with the emergence of related global security issues recently. In the aftermath of the Arab Spring in 2011, several effectively ungoverned spaces have emerged across the Middle East and North Africa following drawn-out civil wars. These provide the chaos that destructive non-state actors need to grow and thrive without the state security apparatuses that can limit their activities. This committee will consider how the situation in one of these spaces, Yemen, has deteriorated considerably and what needs to be done to restore stability to the country.

These are significant problems facing the international community today, and making any progress towards solving them will not be easy. With fantastic co-chairs in Sophie Pike and Geoff Glover as well as some of the brightest young minds in the world, we are confident that we'll be able to get very far in the resolution of the issues at hand.

Thank you,

Jack, Geoff and Sophie

Introduction to DISEC

One of six sub-committees of the UN General Assembly, the Disarmament and Security committee arguably has the broadest mandate of any of them. Tasked with overseeing the commitment to peace and security laid out in the first article of the UN Charter, DISEC considers these issues in their widest senses, encompassing a wide array of areas and issues in the process.

As a result of this, the topics that could appear on the agenda of a session of DISEC are quite varied. Member states could be discussing anything from regulating the development and use of Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles to mitigate the security impacts of population flows following the consequences of Climate Change. It's a committee whose work touches on anything requiring action on the part of the international community and demonstrates how interconnected all of the challenges facing the world.

Whilst DISEC will refer to and be referred to by a wide variety of other UN organs, as well as other Non-Governmental Organisations, the most common UN organs that DISEC would engage with are the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) and the UN Security Council (UNSC). As with other General Assembly sub-committees, DISEC is consultative; resolutions are not binding in international law, and in order to enforce any action that would be an issue would have to be referred to, or referred from, the UNSC. This is very important to bear in mind both when writing resolutions and when arguing against them.

Topic A: Cooperating to Prevent Low-Technology Terror Attacks

Introduction to the Topic

Terrorism is defined as “The unlawful use of violence or threat of violence to instil fear and coerce governments or societies. Terrorism is often motivated by religious, political, or other ideological beliefs and committed in the pursuit of goals that are usually political”. Therefore, what distinguishes it from ‘regular’ criminal acts, is its purpose. Terrorism is when a crime is committed for a political purpose. This is why the US Anarchist bombings were seen as terrorist acts, because of their political goal, whereas the Somalian pirate attacks are simply seen as criminal acts because their only motivations are monetary.

In recent years, there has been an increasing trend towards the use of low-technology attacks by terrorists. This is a real issue, because of the fact that preventing low-technology terrorist attacks is much more difficult than preventing attempts that utilise more technological means such as bombs. Intelligence and law enforcement can regulate and track purchases of the materials needed to make a bomb, whereas it is impossible to control who buys a car and what they might use it for. Therefore, as attacks become less sophisticated, they are also becoming harder to prevent. After all, an attacker does not need any training or materials in order to use a vehicle as a terrorist weapon.

Attacks of this nature have escalated since the 2016 attack in France when a man drove a truck through a large crowd and caused mass casualties. ISIS has since promoted the idea of vehicle attacks, stating that “though being an essential part of modern life, very few actually comprehend the deadly and destructive capability of the motor vehicle and its capacity of reaping large numbers of casualties if used in a premeditated manner”.

Counter-terrorism is defined as “actions are taken directly against terrorist networks and indirectly to influence and render global and regional environments inhospitable to terrorist networks”. Therefore, it does not just involve military actions taken against terrorism, which on their own would not work to prevent any possible attacks; counter-terrorism also must address the civilian side of the problem. This is about trying to ensure that the region is inhospitable to terrorists. In order to prevent low-technology terrorist attacks, countering the ideologies behind terrorism is vital. After all, whilst installing barriers and bollards in busy public areas to prevent vehicles driving through crowds may work, but it would be physically impossible to close off whole cities in this way. Therefore, the best response that officials have mustered is to tackle the root cause of these terrorist attacks. They have turned to schools, doctors, faith centres and charities to divert people from extremism.

Timeline of Events

July 2016 – attack in Nice, France.

On the 14th July 2016, a cargo truck was deliberately driven into crowds celebrating Bastille day, resulting in 86 deaths and 458 injuries. The attacker was then shot by police.



December 2016 - Berlin attack.

On 19 December 2016, a truck was driven into a Christmas market in Berlin, killing 12 and injuring 56.

March 2017 – the Westminster attack in London.

A man drove onto the pavement on Westminster Bridge, injuring over 50 people and killing 4. He then crashed outside Parliament and attempted to get in with a knife, killing a police officer, before being shot and killed by armed police.

April 2017 – Stockholm attack.

On 7 April 2017, a hijacked truck was deliberately driven into crowds along a street, before crashing through a department store.

June 2017 – the London Bridge attack in London.

This was quite similar to the previous attack in London; several men used a van as a weapon to run over civilians, before exiting in Borough market and attacking people with knives. 8 people were killed, and 48 injured.

Discussion

The UN has developed the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy (UNGCTS), but there has not yet been any official strategy devised specifically for combating low-technology terrorist attacks. However, a lot of the UNGCTS can be applied to these situations. For example, it speaks about preventative measures designed to counter the root causes of terrorism, as well as the importance of intelligence cooperation. Both of these aspects of the strategy can also be applied to low-technology terrorism.

However, one of the main problems with just utilising the general UNGCTS is that low-technology terrorism is much more difficult to prevent through intelligence gathering since a terrorist using a car is much harder to track than those that can be found through their purchases of bomb materials. Therefore, how can these terrorists be found before they commit an attack?

Therefore, there may be a need for a slightly different strategy to be created specifically to tackle low-technology terrorism, or at least for the creation of several new principles that can be applied to prevent this type of attack.

The use of bollards and other barriers in busy public areas is one of the main tactics that states have implemented as a response to the various vehicle attacks. For example, in the wake of the London Bridge attack, bollards and other barriers were immediately introduced to prevent another car from trying to copy the previous attack by driving onto the pavement,



However, there is also an understanding among the global community that this cannot solve the problem on its own. After all, it would be physically impossible to guard all public areas with barriers. Yet what further steps ought to be taken to prevent low-technology terror attacks? Should surveillance and other preventative measures be increased on potential terrorists? Also, how can the root causes of domestic terrorism be eliminated? For example, what extent should other parties such as faith centres be involved in preventing extremism?

Bloc Positions

There is a consensus among states concerned about the threat posed by low-technology terror attacks in terms of the use of bollards and other barriers.

The main differences in opinion arise from the additional measures various states already take to combat terrorism. States especially differ in their views when it comes to intelligence gathering on citizens with suspected radical views.

In 1948, the UK and US signed the bilateral UKUSA Agreement, which was later widened to include Canada, Australia and New Zealand, alongside cooperation with several ‘third party’ states. This became the key to Western intelligence gathering.

The US passed sweeping legislation to allow counterterrorism surveillance after 9/11. The 2001 Patriot Act, in particular, gave the government more power to collect the private information of citizens in order to uncover and prevent possible terrorist plots. US intelligence collects and analyses information about millions of US citizens, many of whom have not been accused of any crime.

In the UK, state surveillance has been part of the public since the 19th century. The Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 gave certain public bodies the ability to carry out surveillance and investigation without a warrant. Yet the UK is also subject to EU privacy laws. However, in response to the recent series of low-technology terror attacks in Europe, the 2016 Investigatory Powers Act was created to extend the reach of state surveillance. The Home Secretary stated that “at a time of heightened security threat, it is essential our law enforcement and security and intelligence services have the power they need to keep people safe”. The role of the Internet in providing new opportunities for terrorists was also directly mentioned.

Many other countries have also increased their surveillance of suspected terrorists. Those rated as the worst ‘endemic surveillance societies’ with fewer privacy safeguards include China, Malaysia, Russia, Singapore, the UK, Taiwan, Thailand and the US.

In the European Union, the right to privacy is a highly developed area of law. However, widespread changes have recently occurred in counter-terror laws across Europe, enacted in response to the series of ISIS-inspired attacks. According to Amnesty International, mass surveillance powers have recently been granted or otherwise expanded in the UK, France, Germany, Poland, Hungary, Austria, Belgium, and the Netherlands, among others. Targeted surveillance has also been massively expanded; for example, Poland’s 2016 Counter-terrorism Law allows surveillance measures targeting foreign nationals including the monitoring of their communications. Amnesty stated that “counter-terror measures [are] focusing ever more on prevention”. Therefore, governments have invested in ‘pre-crime’ initiatives and control orders to restrict the movements of those suspected of terrorist leanings.

China utilises mass surveillance on all its population, not just targeting those suspected of terrorism. The Great Firewall of China is the means that they use to filter and monitor the internet. Monitoring is also built into social networks and chat services. China is one of the 5 countries on Reporters Without Borders’ 2013 list of ‘State Enemies of the Internet’, which is states whose governments are involved in intrusive surveillance of news providers. The other 4 countries are Iran, Syria, Vietnam and

India created the 2000 Information Technology Act, which gives the government power to tap all communications without a court order or warrant for national security purposes, which would include counterterrorism efforts.

Russia also allows the complete monitoring of any communication by state agencies without a warrant. These laws are called the SORM and SORM-2 laws. In 2016, President Putin introduced

a new Federal Law No. 374, known as the ‘Yarovaya law’, which aims to counter terrorism. This law expands the rights of the intelligence and secret services in monitoring private communications, along with several other requirements for network providers to preserve data for a certain amount of time.

Conclusion – Key Issues

The main question that must be answered in any resolution is how we can effectively prevent future low-technology terror attacks. There are several key issues that arise in attempting to answer this question.

Firstly, how can bollards and other barrier be most effectively implemented in public areas in order to prevent a vehicle attack? How many barriers ought to be erected within a town or city, or how many are feasible?

Secondly, what measures ought intelligence communities to take in order to watch and restrict potential terrorists? Should the rights of those only suspected of terrorism be limited in order to protect the public, or is that immoral if they have not actually committed any illegal acts?

Thirdly, to what extent should other parties such as faith centres, charities, schools and other public bodies be involved in trying to dissuade people from radical views?

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Topic B: Securing Ungoverned Spaces in Yemen

Introduction to the Topic

The term “ungoverned spaces” is more complex than would initially seem. In the broadest possible terms, it refers to areas that remain outside of state control. The reasons for this vary case-by-case, but generally, it is understood to be a result of the state being unable to enforce its presence in a region mired in conflict, or due to geographical reasons. The most notable examples are the Sahel region in Africa, the tribal regions in the mountainous areas in Pakistan, and of course in Yemen, particularly in the east of the country.

Historically, Yemen has not existed as a single state, only unifying in 1990 when the People’s Democratic Republic of Yemen and the Yemen Arab Republic were merged. Consequently, the state never had the opportunity to develop robust institutions as it became quickly entangled with secessionist movements and insurgencies. Thus, much of the country remains ungoverned to this day. However, this does not imply a state of anarchy. Rather, control rests with local power brokers rather than the central government. Consequently, however, ungoverned regions are known to be security concerns to the international community as they are generally permissive of non-state actors operating within. Delegates are encouraged to research the wider causes and implications of this issue. It should prove to be an engaging topic that forces a re-examination of what constitutes a modern security issue.

Background

The Yemeni Civil War often referred to as “the forgotten war”, is an ongoing conflict on the southern Arabian Peninsula. The current war is an escalation of the low-level insurgency between Ansar Allah (also known as the Houthis) and the government of Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi that first started in 2004 in the northern Sa’dah Governorate. The conflict regularly flared up between 2004 and 2011, notably in 2009 when neighbouring Saudi Arabia was drawn into the fighting. This resulted in a brief peace agreement which was later discarded. However, the current situation is a direct result of the 2011 Arab Spring. Revolutions and uprisings occurred across the entirety of the Middle East, including in Yemen, and the region has yet to emerge from the chaos that has been unleashed.

In the early stages of the Yemeni Revolution, Ansar Allah leader Abdul-Malik al-Houthi joined the protestors in calling on President Ali Abdullah Saleh to resign. The protests were triggered in large part due to high rates of unemployment and longstanding corruption issues in the Yemeni government.

Saleh left office a year later, and thereafter the Houthis boycotted the single-candidate election in 2012 that was designed to give the now internationally recognised Abdrabbuh Mansur Hadi a two-year term. The fallout was a prelude to the events that followed in 2014 as the Houthis refused to endorse an accord that would lengthen Hadi's mandate for another year.

The longstanding conflict between the Houthis and other Sunni tribes had spread to neighbouring governorates by mid-2014. Eventually, the Yemeni Army and the Houthis became embroiled in a battle, and after only a few days, the Yemeni Army was defeated and the Houthis seized the capital city, Sana'a in September. This led to a forced negotiation to end hostilities and an unprecedented level of influence for the Houthis within the state's institutions.

In January 2015, the Houthi seizure of power was completed after the capture of the presidential compound in Sana'a, prompting Hadi and his ministers to resign. They soon dissolved the parliament and formed a Revolutionary Committee to govern the state on 6th February 2015. A month later, Hadi, then under *de facto* house arrest, slipped out of the capital and fled to Aden. In a televised address, he rejected the Houthi takeover as illegitimate and declared himself as the legitimate President. Thereafter, the Committee mobilised its forces to overthrow Hadi. An offensive into the Lahj governorate began the next day and ended on 25th March when the region fell. Hadi fled the country the same day.

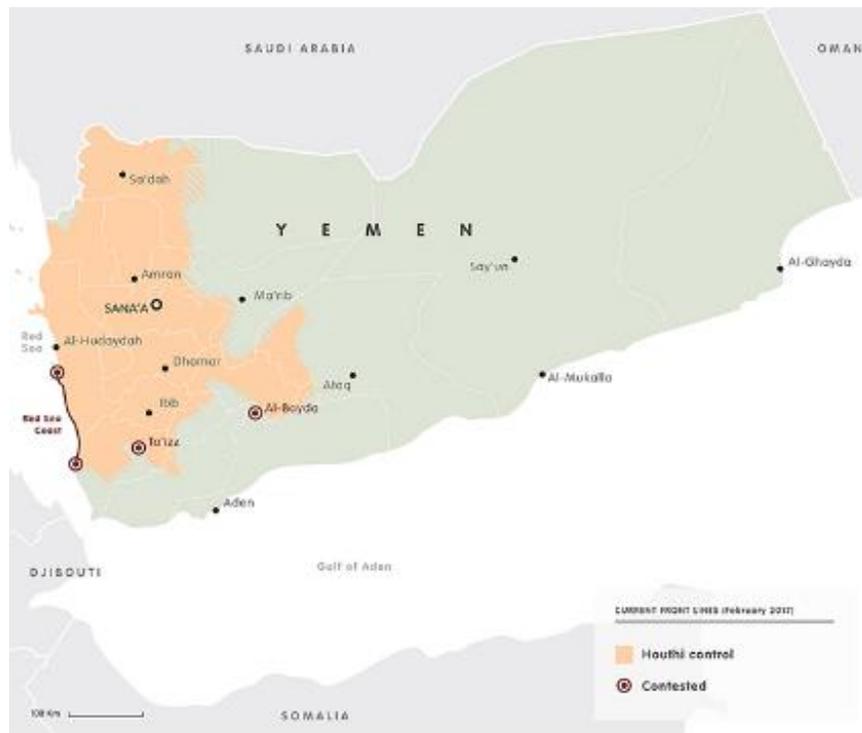
Current Situation

Currently, the Yemeni state remains divided. The Houthis maintain control over the capital of Sana'a and Hadi's government over Aden, having split the country in two. However, neither side has been able to fully exert their influence over the whole country, thus leaving many areas in a state of anarchy. This power vacuum has created spaces for non-state actors to step in and seize control. The most notable groups are the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, and Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), the latter controlling territory in the hinterlands and the coast.

However, as noted in the introduction, to call these areas "anarchic" would misrepresent the complexity of the situation on the ground. Although there is a lack of centralised power, influence has devolved to local power brokers, and notably the tribal leaders that who have exerted a significant amount of influence over the "ungoverned" regions for two decades. Even groups considered to be conducting terrorism-related activities are known to have to comply with these long-established systems in order to operate.

Currently, a campaign to restore Hadi, the currently recognised leader of Yemen, is being conducted by a Saudi-led coalition. This has primarily consisted of airstrikes to achieve this objective. They have been aided by the United States, which has provided intelligence, logistical support, and weaponry to the Yemeni government. The Pentagon, however, has stated that over

\$500,000,000 has gone missing or remains unaccounted for. Furthermore, Amnesty International alleges that the United Kingdom has also provided weaponry to the Saudi coalition. This intervention has been widely condemned as excessive and in violation of numerous human rights agreements and norms due to the heavy bombing of civilian areas. The United Nations has estimated that in the two years from March 2015 to March 2017, over 16,000 people have been killed in Yemen, including 10,000 civilians, what can only be described as a bloodbath.



Current Front Lines in the Yemeni Civil War as of February 2017

It would also be useful for delegates to be aware of the religious geography of Yemen. This plays a significant role in drawing the conflict lines.



(Source: European Council on Foreign Relations)

Timeline of Events

The Yemeni Crisis is complex and multifaceted. It is comprised of multiple “events” that have contributed to the broader instability in the Yemeni state. For the purposes of this committee, the events of the 2011 Revolution are omitted as they do not relate to the underlying issues arising from the power vacuum that the Revolution created. Below, a timeline is presented to track the events of specifically the Al-Qaeda insurgency. However, it should be noted that other groups, such as Islamic State, are known to operate in the region.

2011- The Revolution

January 8th - Armed al-Qaeda militants attack a Yemeni army checkpoint in Lahj killing 4 Yemeni soldiers.

March 6th - Suspected al-Qaeda gunmen shoot and kill 4 elite Republican Guard soldiers as they pass through a checkpoint in Marib.

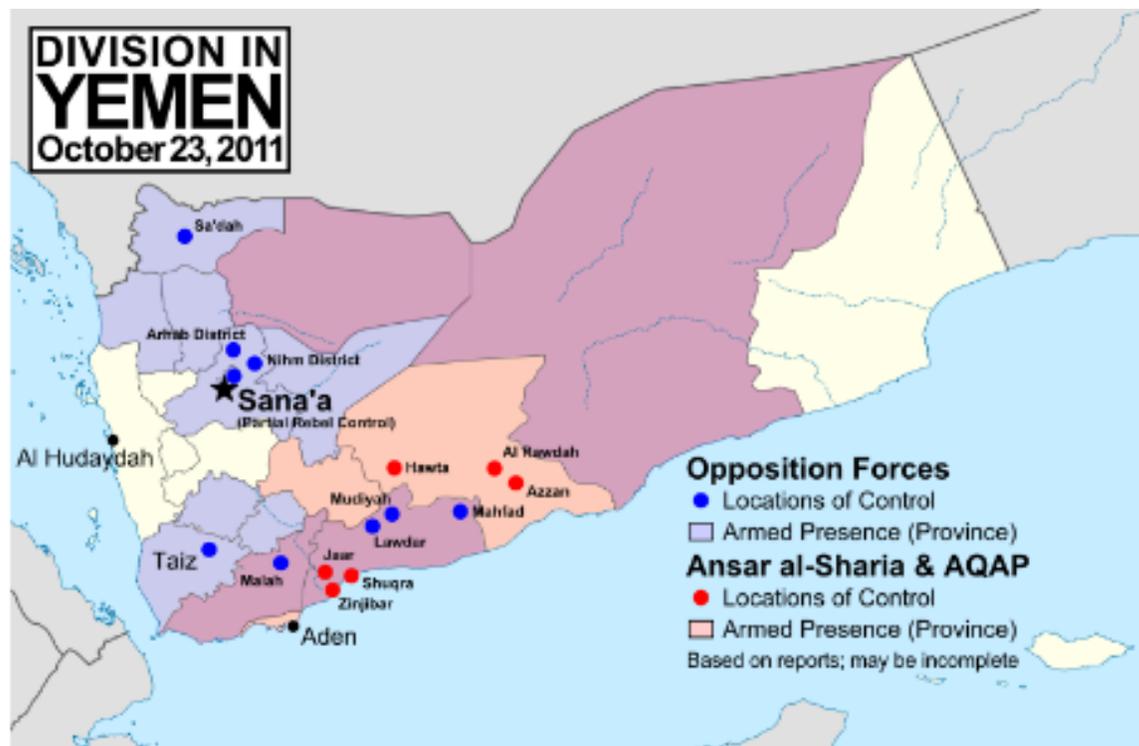
March 26th - al-Qaeda capture the town of Jaar in southern Yemen.

March 27th - al-Qaeda militants capture the town of al-Husn, the Khanfar mountain, and a weapons factory.

March 31st - al-Qaeda Emirate in Yemen is declared.

May 27th - Battle of Zinjibar: approximately 300 militants attack and capture the city of Zinjibar,

killing seven soldiers. Thereafter, the militants entrenched themselves in the city leading to bombardments and artillery strikes from the Army. By the end of the year, nearly 800 people have died with casualties believed to be around equal on both sides. The “Ansar al-Sharia” group that took responsibility are believed to be a rebranded al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula.



Source: Political Geography Now

2012

January 14th - a temporary deal between the insurgent forces and the army is reached that allows hundreds to return to their homes in Zinjibar. Militants hold the western part of the city, and the army the east.

March 31st - a large group of militants attack an Army checkpoint in Lahj Governorate, sparking a battle that leaves 20 soldiers and 4 insurgents dead. The attackers fled with heavy munitions and at least two tanks. Government forces later destroy one in an airstrike, killing its 3 occupants,

April 9th - Second Battle of Lawdar. A group of militants attack an army base near the city of Lawdar. Locals had to join the military to help expel them. Between the 9th of April and the 16th of May, nearly 400 people were killed. Over 580 Yemeni soldiers were also wounded.

May 21st - a soldier detonated a suicide bomb in a crowd of military personnel in the Sana'a, the capital of Yemen. The attack killed 96 people and wounded more than 200. This was the deadliest terrorist incident in Yemen's history.

2013

Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula attacked and destroyed Yemen's main oil pipeline, thus halting

the flow of crude oil. This created an energy shortage, worsening the already dire economic situation in the country.

2014

January 16th - Al-Qaeda militants kill 10 Yemeni soldiers in three simultaneous attacks on military locations in the Al Bayda Governorate. 8 militants are also killed.

March 24th - 20 soldiers are killed in an Al-Qaeda raid at a military checkpoint near Reida in Hadramawt province.

August 17th - 6 militants and 3 soldiers are killed die in clashes in the same province.

November 25th - Yemeni special forces with support from the United States rescue 8 hostages and kill 7 militants in a rescue operation.

December 31st - a suicide bomber kills 23 people celebrating the birth of the Prophet Muhammed.

2015

January 7th - a car bomb is detonated outside the police academy in the capital. The attack kills 30 and wounds over 90.

Mid-January - ISIL declares a branch in Yemen, bringing them into conflict with the already operational Al-Qaeda branch.

April - Al-Qaeda takes advantage of the exploding conflict in the southern part of Yemen to capture the city of Mukalla. The New York Times reports that their opponents, the Houthi and the Yemeni counterterrorism forces, are too embroiled in the conflict with Saudi Arabia.

2016

February - Al-Qaeda and Saudi coalition fighters reportedly sighted fighting the Houthis in the same battle.

May 6- US military personnel are reportedly deployed to Yemen to support Arab forces fighting AQAP. This was in support of Yemeni and Emirati forces fighting to wrest Mukalla from the jihadists.

2017

April- the leader of AQAP, Qassim Al-Raymi, issues a statement that his organisation will continue fighting the “Houthi Shia” in Yemen. Furthermore, he states that AQAP is ready to make a truce with the Hadi government, with pending negotiations. Both AQAP and ISIL are still fighting Houthi forces.

Discussion of the Problem

As should be evident, the situation in Yemen is critical. The state finds itself embroiled in not just in a civil war, but also in multiple insurgencies, some longstanding, and many new.

It should be noted that one of the bigger issues in the discussion around terrorism, its definition, will not need to be examined as closely as would otherwise be expected. The debate will be centred around securing ungoverned zones, and it is broader than countering terrorism. Delegates will be expected to address at a minimum the following two issues:

What constitutes a successful counterterrorism strategy?

The United Nations's Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force is the international organ that is responsible for implementing the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy (UNGCTS). The General Assembly adopted by consensus the GCTS in 2006, and it is reviewed every two years. Most recently, it was invoked at the G7 meeting in Taormina in May 2017 just days after the Manchester Bombing. Point nine of the joint statement reaffirmed these nations' commitment to the GCTS in light of the threat of international terror. Most states have their own counterterror policies, but this agreement is used as a basis for understanding the basics of a successful cooperative counterterror policy.

The Strategy consists of four primary pillars:

Pillar I: Addressing the Conditions Conducive to the Spread of Terrorism.

This point recognises that certain conditions must be met for people to be pushed to commit terrorism, including, but not limited to prolonged conflict and economic distress. It can be summarised as a preventative measure.

Pillar II: Measures to prevent and combat terrorism.

This includes refraining from organising, instigating or otherwise facilitating the activities of terrorist organisations. It also includes provisions for mutual extradition and intelligence cooperation.

Pillar III: Measures to build states' capacity to prevent and combat terrorism and strengthen the role of the UN.

This pillar is particularly useful in our discussion. The Yemeni situation, as discussed, suffers from a lack of state capacity to combat terrorism due to the conflict. Delegates will be expected to understand how the UN might play a more active role.

Pillar IV: Ensuring Human rights and the rule of law.

This point is a complementary goal, but it is only relevant when state institutions exist to be strengthened. In the Yemeni case, Pillar IV is contingent upon a strategy to firstly establish order from the chaos, and secondly to resolve the conflict.

How should ungoverned spaces be addressed?

Ungoverned spaces are regarded as "security threats" in the international system due to the absence of a state. The state, in the sociological and political science literature, is regarded as the allocator of value, the provider of collective goods, and the holder of the legitimate monopoly on the use of force. The inability of the state to exert its authority allows for groups to operate in a more open and ambitious manner, thus creating instability. The Yemeni case is a classic example of where

instability in one region can create spillover effects in neighbouring countries; one of the main reasons Saudi Arabia finds itself embroiled in the conflict. Thus, in the absence of the state, the obvious solution is state building. However, this understanding equates the lack of government with the lack of governance, an incorrect and overly simplistic formulation. Furthermore, while these regions can pose security threats, it is not the terrorist groups that create these spaces. Taylor argues that the emergence of these groups in these spaces is a direct result of poor governance that drives the populations to divorce themselves from the state.

Furthermore, Patrick argues that regarding these spaces as “safe havens” is furthermore unhelpful. In fact, terrorist organisations are often found operating in both busy cities where there is plentiful anonymity, and in cyberspace, which provides a space for recruitment, organisation, and fundraising. The Al-Qaeda example in the Sahel is informative. The group in this untracked region of Africa found that it was taxing, both figuratively and literally, to operate in anarchic spaces. They often found themselves at the mercy of local warlords and bandits who extorted the organisation. Thus, to address ungoverned spaces, the committee should seek to understand how local dynamics, particularly with local power holders and brokers, allow groups to operate in the region. For instance, AQAP has found success due to its policy of minimal civilian casualties.



Tribal militiamen loyal to President Hadi pose atop a tank (Source: SBS News)

Bloc Positions

The United States

The United States has carried out drone strikes and counterterror operations in support of the Hadi government. The primary goal is to limit the influence and activities of terrorist organisations in the region, such as AQAP and ISIL rather than countering the Houthis. The U.S. claims that the Houthis and the Iranians maintain close ties, though this is contested by the other

parties. However, the U.S. remains closely aligned with its Saudi and Emirati allies in the Gulf region. The country does, however, provide high levels of humanitarian assistance. As of February 2016, the U.S. has provided \$327 million through USAID and the Bureau of Population Refugees and Migrations to assist with emergency food provisions, medical treatment, obstetric services for women, and water treatment supplies to attempt to limit the spread of disease.

Arab States

Saudi Arabia, backed primarily by Egypt and the United Arab Emirates, is waging a bloody campaign in support of the Hadi regime. They view the Houthi rebels as proxies of Iran whom they see as their primary geopolitical competitor for influence over the entire Muslim world (the *ummah*). However, they also remain highly concerned over the potential damage that groups such as AQAP and ISIL may create. AQAP is notorious for their highly effective organisation and propaganda and is widely regarded as the most effective branch of Al-Qaeda. Saudi Arabia is the northern neighbour to Yemen, and thus AQAP poses a potential threat to the Saudi state. The same goes true for the Gulf monarchies and Egypt. One notable exception, however, is Oman, which has endeavoured to be a mediator between the conflicting factions, and between Iran and the other Gulf states.

Russia

Russia's policy has shifted over the course of the conflict. Vladimir Putin is keen on appearing as a more impartial mediator than the United States, which has taken an overtly pro-Saudi position. One indicator of this is Putin's acceptance of the new Yemeni Ambassador to Moscow in February 2017. Furthermore, Russia has been slowly building a relationship with the opposing factions in the civil war. The Kremlin hopes that this will allow it to pursue a more active role in seeking a cease-fire through diplomatic means, demonstrated by a February statement from the Foreign Ministry calling for the reestablishment of dialogue between the warring parties. This initiative continues to build Moscow's diplomatic capital as it continues pursuing inclusive diplomatic negotiations in Syria, Libya, and Afghanistan in order to demonstrate itself a more reliable arbiter than the United States. Putin, however, does also have interests in securing ungoverned spaces which jihadi extremists operate in. Russia has a large Muslim population, and it is keen to ensure that the toxic ideologies espoused by these groups remain firmly outside of its borders.

Conclusion: Key Issues

Yemen is a fascinating, if tragic, case of the worst possible scenario in a conflict situation. As the poorest Arab state, the country faces a host of issues. However, this committee is concerned with solving one of its most longstanding problems: ungoverned spaces. As has been discussed, ungoverned spaces are rarely created by the terrorist organisations that operate within it. However, in the Yemeni case, these groups, and AQAP especially have been exceptionally adept at manipulating the situation to their advantage.

However, it is obvious that these ungoverned spaces are merely a symptom of a problem that is at the rotten core of the previously dysfunctional, now failed, state. The challenge for delegates will firstly be to understand why there is a war happening, and importantly what drives the opposing factions to conflict. Secondly is how to alleviate these symptoms, in this case, terrorist organisations, before they metastasise fully. Finally, and most importantly, a path to a sustainable peace agreement and reconstruction must be charted. However, delegates should be aware that these issues are not mutually exclusive. In fact, they constitute a holistic package: it is doubtful if one measure alone will even marginally improve the situation. Taken together, however, there is a chance for the forgotten war to be solved.

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