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# Terrorism as a Threat to World Security in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Causes, Education

Terrorism in all its forms and manifestations remains  
a global challenge to peace and security  
*UN Counter-Terrorism Centre*

## Introduction

Terrorism is an exceptionally dynamic phenomenon. As technology develops, especially in the field of communication, terrorism takes new forms and its conceptual range expands. This phenomenon is adapting to changes in the security environment, changing the tools and methods of fighting. In this area, the 21<sup>st</sup> century showed the inexhaustible ingenuity of terrorists using for their attacks as weapons, passenger planes, motor vehicles, as well as small arms and home-made explosives, including the use of white weapons. A classic example of a new area of terrorist activity is cyberspace, used to radicalize and acquire new members and to conduct hacker attacks aimed at paralyzing sensitive IT systems that control the functioning of important areas of the economy, such as energy, banking systems, as well as state institutions and private corporations.

The current methods of combating terrorism, mainly consisting in the physical elimination of the members, of individual terrorist organizations and blocking sources of financing, turn out to be ineffective. Since President George W. Bush announced in 2001 the “Global War on Terrorism”, despite enormous efforts and determination, the phenomenon of terrorism has not decreased, but has definitely increased. Therefore, it can be argued that the international community is still focused on eliminating the effects of terrorism, still treating the neutralization of its causes as marginal, which require a comprehensive approach and a coherent and consistent policy in this area, especially countries having a key impact on shaping regional and global security. One of the conditions for successfully countering the phenomenon of terrorism is broad support for the international community “armed” with appropriate knowledge and skills. Because the main target of terrorists is still defenseless civilians, therefore we should definitely increase public awareness through systematic and continuous education in the context of terrorist threats. The well-known Chinese military strategist General Sun Tzu said that “If you know yourself, but not your enemy, for every victory you win, you will also lose”<sup>1</sup>. Therefore, decision-makers should take steps to ensure that the knowledge about one of the greatest threats of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, which is terrorism, reaches the entire society and becomes one of the key elements of education for security.

The subject of the considerations presented in this article is presentation of main reasons for the development of the phenomenon of terrorism in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the influence of the process of the broadly defined counterterrorism education on the citizens’ level of awareness in this scope and objective education as a factor ensuring resilience of various organisations against terrorist and quasi-terrorist threats.

The goal of this article is to identify the main reasons “fuelling” the development of the phenomenon of terrorism in 21<sup>st</sup> century, to define the role of counterterrorism education as a factor and tool for raising the citizens’ awareness of the terrorist threats and as an important component of operation of various organisations, including free market business entities in the modern world.

The main concerns of this work have been formulated as the following questions:

1. What are the main reasons for development of the phenomenon of terrorism in the 21<sup>st</sup> century?
2. What significance for raising citizens’ awareness of terrorist threats and for operation of institutions in the modern world does the broadly defined counterterrorism education have?
3. Can the counterterrorism education be used to ensure resilience of free market business entities in the case of exposing them to quasi-terrorist threats?

In the opinion of the authors, compilation of these three seemingly completely different issues is both necessary and justified, because implementation of a broadly defined counterterrorism education without awareness of the reasons behind the phenomenon of terrorism and its goals, methods of operation and ways to prevent these threats can result in cognitive errors in the discussed area.

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<sup>1</sup> *Best quotes from Sun Tzu*, <https://victor-mochere.com/best-quotes-from-sun-tzu> [accessed: 20.05.2020].

To answer the questions above, the authors employed the following research methods: critical review of the literature and case study<sup>2</sup>.

It is important to stress that the vast majority of publications dedicated to terrorism focuses on defining this phenomenon, describing its consequences and preventive methods, while marginalising the concepts of counterterrorism education. Another factor behind the choice of the subject of this article is the cognitive gap in the subject area – as of now there are no articles published in Poland that focus on the subject of counterterrorism education as the key factor in survivability of a free market business enterprise facing quasi-terrorist threats.

Keeping in mind the abovementioned factual situation, the authors consider the area of the broadly defined counterterrorism education, its influence on the citizens' awareness and on the operations of various institutions, including business entities, to be an area requiring further studies.

## Why are we not dealing with terrorism in the 21<sup>st</sup> century?

The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 on the Pentagon and the towers of the World Trade Center using the hijacked airliners, shocked not only the society of the United States, but also the entire world. Terrorists have managed to outsmart the entire American intelligence system operating with billions of dollars and the modern technology. The commission, which explained the circumstances of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, indicated the "failure of imagination" in the anti-terrorist community and the lack of comprehensive analysis and information exchange between agencies and institutions responsible in the USA for collecting and analyzing intelligence "(...) there was no comprehensive review of what the intelligence community knew and what it did not know, and what that meant"<sup>3</sup>. This "failure of the imagination" and unhealthy competition between American intelligence institutions resulted in the death of nearly 3 thous. people<sup>4</sup>.

Terrorist attacks against the state power, initiated a period of asymmetric conflicts, where small terrorist organizations successfully compete with state entities. After September 11, 2001, the United States, according with the doctrine of "preventive attack", granted itself the right to "preventive strike" on any country under the so-called "Global war on terrorism". This doctrine soon resulted in the two largest

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<sup>2</sup> The study referred to in the article is based on the knowledge and experience of one of the authors of this work, who served as the Central Europe Corporate Security & Resilience Manager in an international FMCG retail chain. This retailer was a subject of mass bomb threats and extortions, which may have caused critical damage to the entire company. He was responsible for ensuring safety, security and loss prevention in the entire organization during this crisis.

<sup>3</sup> *The 9/11 Commission Report, Final Report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States*, <https://fas.org/irp/offdocs/911comm-execsumm.pdf> [accessed: 18.04.2020].

<sup>4</sup> J. Howcroft, *The Future of Terrorism: The Practitioners' View*, <https://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/future-terrorism-practitioners-view> [accessed: 26.05.2021].

conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq, which radically changed the conditions and perception of international security.<sup>5</sup>

It soon turned out that the international community, and Europe in particular, became convinced that the attack was not an incidental action. Dozens of people were killed and dozens injured in suicide bombings in February and August 2004 on Moscow metro stations. Then, on March 11, 2004, a terrorist attack was carried out on commuter trains in Madrid. As a result of this attack, 192 people were killed, including four Poles, and almost 1,900 people were injured. In this case, the terrorists, apart from causing many casualties among the civilian population, achieved their strategic goals – Spain, fearing further attacks, withdrew its soldiers from Iraq. Less than a year later, on July 7, 2005, during the morning traffic summit in London, four young British Islamists detonated bombs carried in backpacks on three subway trains and one bus. Apart from the perpetrators, 52 people were killed – including three Polish women – and about 700 were injured. Only thanks to the vigilance of the secret services, a few days later another wave of attacks on three metro stations and a bus in London was thwarted<sup>6</sup>.

After reducing the scale of the terrorism phenomenon at the turn of the first and second decades of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, terrorists suddenly brutally attacked the European continent in 2015–2017. The perpetrators of the attacks surprised with new methods, using cars and trucks as a tool-weapon to launch attacks in Nice, Barcelona, Berlin, London, Stockholm and New York. The increase in the number of terrorist attacks in Europe during this period was mainly related to the activities of a terrorist group called the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS).

Increased activity, mainly by special forces and special services of individual countries, as well as the activities of the “Global Coalition” to combat the so-called Islamic State has led to a decline in terrorism rates over the past few years. The Global Terrorism Index (GTI), developed by the Australian Institute of Economics and Peace, has seen a 50% decrease in terrorism-related deaths in the last five years, from over 33 thousand in 2014 to less than 14 thousand in 2019<sup>7</sup>.

When reflecting on the causes of the development of the phenomenon of terrorism in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, experts most often mention religious and ethnic conflicts, poverty, the effects of failed states, internal rivalry for power, the effects of radicalization of societies, and finally globalization leading, among others, to an increase in social inequalities and contrasts. Terrorism is a system of interconnected vessels of a supranational nature. Therefore, more attention should be given to its

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<sup>5</sup> “United States will constantly strive to enlist the support of the international community in this fight against a common foe. If necessary, however, we will not hesitate to act alone, to exercise our right to self defense, including acting preemptively against terrorists to prevent them from doing harm to our people and our country”, L.S. Aggour, *The Strategy of Containment in Fighting Terrorism*, <https://www.hsdl.org/?abstract&did=235399> [accessed: 26.05.2021].

<sup>6</sup> *Najważniejsze zamachy terrorystyczne w Europie w ostatnich latach [dokumentacja]*, <https://www.gazetaprawna.pl/wiadomosci/artykuly/1048402,zamachy-terrorystyczne-w-europie-w-ostatnich-latach.html> [accessed: 20.05.2021].

<sup>7</sup> *Counterterrorism Yearbook 2021*, <https://s3-ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com/ad-aspi/2021-03/ASPI%20Counterterrorism%20YB2021-v2.pdf?qRljpA0b0aLaWsvXREMAf8yo8l.uyWxN> [accessed: 26.05.2021].

international causes and consequences. According to the authors, the main reasons that fuel the development of the phenomenon of terrorism in the last two decades of the 21<sup>st</sup> century are:

- effects of the invasion and occupation of Iraq in 2003–2011;
- passivity of the international community in 2011–2014 in the context of ISIS terrorist activities;
- still unresolved “Palestinian case”;
- massive use of the Internet and social media by terrorist groups;
- progressive radicalization of the Muslim minority as well as liberalism and the so-called “political correctness” in the treatment of Islamic extremism in the Western European countries.

The decisions of Paul Bremer, the Head of the Coalition Provisional Authority in Iraq of May 2003, related to the dissolution of the key Iraqi state institutions related to security, including the Iraqi armed forces, police and security services, resulted in leaving about 700,000 soldiers and policemen and the immediate collapse of most government offices, and the marginalization of the Sunni population, which fueled the emerging Sunni militant movement. General Colin Powell, Secretary of State in the George W. Bush administration, later identified these unemployed officials, soldiers and policemen as “(...) prime recruits for insurgency”<sup>8</sup>. The rule in Iraq was taken over by a provisional government, however, mostly composed of immigrants who had little understanding of the current situation in the country. The head of the government was Prime Minister Ijad Alawi, who had been in exile in Great Britain since 1971<sup>9</sup>. On the other hand, makeshift prisons where tens of thousands of Iraqis were imprisoned, such as the Bucca camp, became a “breeding ground for terrorists” where imprisoned jihadists radicalized new recruits on a massive scale. One of the American officers stated after a few years that, “Many of us at Camp Bucca were concerned that instead of just holding detainees, we had created a pressure cooker for extremism (...)”<sup>10</sup>. These fateful decisions led the country to chaos and destabilized the entire region, the effects of which are also felt by Europe<sup>11</sup>.

After the withdrawal of the United States from Iraq, the group – known as the so-called Islamic State in Iraq (ISI) – joined the rebellion against President Assad in Syria, where it found a safe haven and easy access to weapons. Only the later expansion of ISIS into areas controlled by the Kurdish minority in Iraq and the killing of thousands

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<sup>8</sup> *Blowback: How ISIS Was Created by the U.S. Invasion of Iraq*, <https://theintercept.com/2018/01/29/isis-iraq-war-islamic-state-blowback> [accessed: 24.02.2020], see also: P. Łukasiewicz, „Budowa instytucji państwa irackiego w czasie interwencji amerykańskiej (2003–2011)”, *Krakowskie Studia Międzynarodowe*, vol. XV, 2018, no 3, p. 200–201.

<sup>9</sup> M. Makiela, *Amerykańska polityka wobec konfliktu zbrojnego w Iraku*, [in:] *Irak – dylematy amerykańskiej interwencji*, eds. W. Dzielski, W. Michnik, Kraków 2007, p. 95–96.

<sup>10</sup> *Blowback: How ISIS Was Created...*, *op. cit.* [accessed: 24.05.2021].

<sup>11</sup> Ethnic and sectarian conflicts continue in Iraq, and a fragile democracy remains weakened by insurgent attacks. Over a quarter of the population live in extreme poverty. More than 1/3 of Iraqis are unemployed. Less than half of the population has access to drinking water. In the latest Transparency International corruption perception ranking, Iraq ranks 175th, ex aequo with Haiti, out of 183 countries classified, A. Przybył, *Wycofanie wojsk amerykańskich z Iraku – konsekwencje*, <https://sea.org.pl/wycofanie-wojsk-amerykanskich-z-iraku-konsekwencje> [accessed: 25.05.2021].

of members of the Yazidi religious group prompted the United States to launch air strikes on ISIS positions in Iraq in August 2014<sup>12</sup>.

Also, the unresolved "Palestinian issue" should be seen as one of the main factors generating and fueling the phenomenon of terrorism. Practically since the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948 and the lack of such a decision in relation to the Palestinian people, this situation has been the source of constant conflicts in the Middle East. As a result of this conflict, terrorist organizations such as Hamas and the Hezbollah emerged, which have the destruction of the state of Israel and the creation of the Palestinian state as one of their strategic goals. Israeli settlement expansion in the West Bank, with the passive attitude of the international community, or the transfer of the Israeli capital from Tel-Aviv to Jerusalem, as well as the controversial "Peace Plan" for this region presented by Donald Trump at the beginning of 2020, certainly do not help to resolve this conflict<sup>13</sup>.

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, with the galloping digitization of all sectors of our life, we note the massive use of the Internet and social media by terrorist groups. Popular social messaging services such as Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp or YouTube are used by terrorist organizations to post and promote terrorist ideas on the Internet and to conduct the radicalization and training process. Effective propaganda of terrorists in social media is often a source of inspiration for such activities by the so-called "Lone wolves". The ease of masking one's activities on the Internet is a huge challenge for secret services in this area<sup>14</sup>.

European society, together with its message of openness and tolerance, is an attractive place for Islamic radicalism to conduct its activities and is a fertile ground for the development of the jihadist ideology. Radical Muslims living in Europe are difficult to identify due to their excellent orientation in the surrounding environment. Western governments, in the name of political correctness, did not take much interest in the content of mosques and Koranic schools. It turned out that, for example, in Great Britain, mosques were the main place for transmitting radical content and meeting members of extremist groups. In Italy, the most important center of Islamic extremism was the Institute of Islamic Culture in Milan<sup>15</sup>. In 2010, as a result of the ruling of the European Court of Human Rights in several Western European countries, the police lost the ability to detain and search any person that would raise suspicion. In its justification, the Tribunal pointed to the violation of human rights by such police proceedings. Thus, the police lost another tool to effectively fight terrorism and extremism in the name of "political correctness".

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<sup>12</sup> *Islamic State and the crisis in Iraq and Syria in maps*, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-27838034> [accessed: 26.05.2021].

<sup>13</sup> M. Wojnarowicz, S. Nowacka, S. Zaręba, *Konflikt izraelsko-palestyński 2020. Rok złego przełomu*, Raport PISM, [https://www.pism.pl/publikacje/Konflikt\\_izraelskopalestyński\\_2020\\_Rok\\_złego\\_przełomu](https://www.pism.pl/publikacje/Konflikt_izraelskopalestyński_2020_Rok_złego_przełomu) [accessed: 24.05.2021].

<sup>14</sup> P. Wójcik, „Środki masowego przekazu jako instrument wspierający działalność terrorystyczną”, *Securo*, vol. 3: *Współczesny terroryzm*, ed. A. Zięba, 2016, p. 113–118.

<sup>15</sup> According to research in Great Britain, about 100,000 people convert to Islam each year, and according to a study by the British daily *The Sun*, about 20% of Muslims – English citizens, declare sympathy with jihadists, T. Michalczak, *Europa w obliczu islamskiego terroryzmu*, Warszawa 2019, p. 158–161.

Unfortunately, to some extent, the effect of broadly understood tolerance and political correctness is the progressive radicalization of the Muslim minority in Western European countries. In 2017, MI5 informed that there were about 3,000 people on the list of persons suspected of terrorist activity, while a further 20,000 were under surveillance. However, in Germany, according to Office for the Protection of the Constitution, approx. 9 thousand Muslims belong to Salafi-Wahhabi groups that deny all the values on which the socio-political order in Europe is built. Also in Sweden, after receiving approx. 160 thousand refugees in 2015, crime increased dramatically in the following years. One of the least safe cities is Malmö, where the police have more and more problems with ensuring safety<sup>16</sup>.

It should also be noted that the mass influx of immigrants leads to an increase the radical and xenophobic moods among local communities. This is the main reason why in Europe there has also been an increase the activity of extreme-right groups and anti-immigrants established in order to maintain the so-called "host country identities against foreign cultures and religions". Research has shown that between 2013 and 2018, the West – including Europe – saw a 320% increase in far-right terrorist incidents<sup>17</sup>.

The fact that thousands of young Europeans join ISIS, as well as the disturbing results of research among the European Muslim minority and the progressive radicalism, should be a warning signal and an impulse for a more decisive and comprehensive fight against terrorism.

## Anti-terrorist education as an element of the fight against terrorism

One of the elements of the broad front of the fight against terrorism should be education. The role of education in countering terrorism can be seen, at least in two aspects:

- Education understood as an element of preventing the sources of terrorism (radicalization and extremism);
- Education used as a "tool" facilitating the understanding of threats and counteracting the effects of terrorist attacks<sup>18</sup>.

Until two decades ago, researchers and politicians focused primarily on physical security measures to prevent terrorism-related incidents. It was only since the beginning of this century that the concepts of violent extremism and radicalism began

<sup>16</sup> *Ibidem*, s. 158–163, see also: P.R. Neumann, *Radicalized. New Jihadists and the threat to the West*, London 2016, p. 56–78.

<sup>17</sup> S.G. Jones, C. Doxsee, N. Harrington, *The Right-wing terrorism threat in Europe*, <https://www.csis.org/analysis/right-wing-terrorism-threat-europe> [accessed: 10.06.2021].

<sup>18</sup> Anti-terrorist education – "education that can contribute to reducing the terrorist threat and minimizing both the direct consequences of terrorist events as well as their long-term social consequences" K. Maniszewska, *Zagrożenie terroryzmem w Europie światło badań opinii publicznej. Edukacja jako element systemu działań antyterrorystycznych*, [in:] *Polska ustawa antyterrorystyczna – odpowiedź na zagrożenia współczesnym terroryzmem*, ed. W. Zubrzycki, K. Jałoszyński, A. Babiński, Szczytno 2016.



to appear more often in debates about terrorism. In addition, more and more attention has been paid to actions aimed at preventing radicalism among specific risk groups<sup>19</sup>. Following the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001, there was an assumption that the focus on people actively planning terrorist acts was insufficient, and it was therefore necessary to include in counter-terrorism strategies those who may be involved in violent crimes (acts of terror) in the future. Veldhuis and Staun concluded that radicalization could be defined in a broad and narrow context<sup>20</sup>. In a broad sense, radicalization can be considered as “the social and psychological process of gradually experienced involvement in an extremist political or religious ideology”<sup>21</sup>. In a narrower sense, one can refer to violent radicalization, in which the use of force is allowed to achieve the indicated goals.

The key role of education was first time reaffirmed by the Secretary-General of the United Nations at the launch of the “Action Plan to Prevent Violent Extremism” in January 2016<sup>22</sup>. The plan presents a comprehensive approach to the issue of violent extremism and provides for the use of systematic preventive measures, in addition to existing counter-terrorism activities. The plan involves the participation of ‘the whole of society’, ‘all governments of states’ and ‘the entire UN system’. According to the assumptions of the plan, proper education is seen as one of the ways to deal with the factors of radicalization<sup>23</sup>. In addition, the UN Security Council, in Resolutions 2178<sup>24</sup> and 2250<sup>25</sup>, stressed the role and need for adequate (high-quality) education<sup>26</sup> in countering violent extremism. It is worth noting that the leadership of UNESCO has published a position in which it emphasizes the importance of education as a tool for preventing violent extremism and terrorism, genocide, racial and religious intolerance, and crimes against humanity. Adequate education is believed to be essential to improve processes of social engagement and prevent violent extremism, whether provided by school systems, social clubs and associations, or at home<sup>27</sup>.

<sup>19</sup> A. Macaluso, “From countering to preventing radicalization through education: Limits and opportunities”, *Hague Inst. Glob. Justice Work. Pap.*, vol. 18, 2016, p. 1–15.

<sup>20</sup> T. Veldhuis, J. Staun, *Islamist Radicalisation: A Root Cause Model*; Netherlands Institute of International Relations Clingendael, The Hague 2009.

<sup>21</sup> J. Horgan, *Walking Away from Terrorism: Accounts of Disengagement from Radical and Extremist Movements*; Routledge: Abingdon, UK, 2009, p. 152.

<sup>22</sup> *Plan Działań w Kwestii Zapobiegania Brutalnemu Ekstremizmowi*, <http://unic.un.org.pl/pokoj-i-bezpieczenstwo/plan-dzialan-w-kwestii-zapobiegania-brutalnemu-ekstremizmowi/2923#> [accessed: 17.06.2021].

<sup>23</sup> [https://www.un.org/sites/www.un.org.counterterrorism/files/plan\\_action.pdf](https://www.un.org/sites/www.un.org.counterterrorism/files/plan_action.pdf) [accessed: 17.06.2021].

<sup>24</sup> *Security Council Unanimously Adopts Resolution Condemning Violent Extremism, Underscoring Need to Prevent Travel, Support for Foreign Terrorist Fighters*, <https://www.un.org/press/en/2014/sc11580.doc.htm> [accessed: 19.06.2021].

<sup>25</sup> *Maintenance of international peace and security*, <http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/2250> [accessed: 19.06.2021].

<sup>26</sup> Due to the limited volume of the study, the authors omit the content, forms and methods of education recommended in counteracting radicalization and violent extremism.

<sup>27</sup> *Decisions adopted by the Executive Board at its 197<sup>th</sup> session*, <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000235180> [accessed: 19.06.2021].



Some researchers cite education as one of the direct ways to prevent terrorism. Brockhoff, Krieger and Meierrieks<sup>28</sup>, in a study conducted between 1984 and 2007, involving data from 133 countries, noted a correlation between education and terrorism. They found that lower education, especially in countries with socio-economic, political and demographic disadvantages, tends to promote terrorism, while higher education restricts terrorism in countries with more favorable socio-economic conditions.

It is worth noting that the P&Pw RAN Working Group of its publications emphasizes the importance and effectiveness of various elements, including various forms of education, in the process of rehabilitation by prison and probation services, of people convicted of extremist or terrorist activities<sup>29</sup>. These activities, which are the result of the research of the above-mentioned Working Group, are particularly important because, unlike the previously cited research projects, they are carried out in relation to terrorists and/or extremists who do not stay in their natural environment (country of origin, etc.), but who are serving prison sentences.

According to research by the P&P RAN Working Group, prisons are increasingly becoming a place of radicalization of convicts, leading to violent extremism. Therefore, education is and should be an integral part of the system of counteracting radicalization and violent extremism, regardless of the place, individuals and groups that are the object of these preventive actions.

The issue of anti-terrorist education can be considered in the praxiological-pragmatic aspect and in the educational aspect. The praxiological-pragmatic perspective focuses on the formation of practical skills and proficiency in recognizing, eliminating and avoiding terrorist attacks. The educational aspect concerns the creation of certain views and awareness about threats as well as views and attitudes towards terrorism. In this respect, rationality in the assessment of phenomena is also important, which allows for a response adequate to reality. It is significant that the individual is aware of the occurrence of a terrorist attack. Additionally a trained person should be able to recognize this threat quickly as well as be ready taking any rational action in case of emergency<sup>30</sup>.

The need to conduct social anti-terrorist education in individual countries is noticed by Sebastian Wojciechowski. He believes that it should be related to the ability to behave appropriately in the event of an attack, to quickly and professionally inform the authorities or to provide assistance to people in need. In turn, Kuba Jałoszyński believes that in the fight against terrorism, knowledge about terrorist threats is extremely important, allowing for effective face of real threats. It states that having knowledge of terrorism, we will not give in to fear and will take rational actions, minimizing terrorist threats or even avoiding them<sup>31</sup>.

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<sup>28</sup> S. Brockhoff, T. Krieger, D. Meierrieks, „Great expectations and hard times: The (nontrivial) impact of education on domestic terrorism”, *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, vol. 59 (7), 2015, p. 1186–1215.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>30</sup> K. Dąbrowska, *Wymiar wychowawczy edukacji antyterrorystycznej*, [in:] *Bezpieczeństwo antyterrorystyczne*, ed. K. Lidel, P. Piasecka, Warszawa 2017.

<sup>31</sup> *Edukacja antyterrorystyczna. Konieczność i obowiązek naszych czasów*, ed. K. Jałoszyński, A. Letkiewicz, Szczytno 2017, p. 8–9.

The Internal Security Agency (ABW) is responsible for coordinating activities aimed at recognizing, preventing and detecting combating terrorism in the Republic of Poland<sup>32</sup>. In the structure of the aforementioned service, there is the Center for Terrorist Prevention, an organizational unit dealing with broadly understood anti-terrorist prevention. The mission of CTP ABW is – “Shaping the culture of security by building anti-terrorist awareness in society”<sup>33</sup>. This organizational unit of the Internal Security Agency, as part of conducting anti-terrorist education, cooperates with other government agencies, scientific centers<sup>34</sup>, organizes trainings, and issues educational materials<sup>35</sup>. Other sources of information on terrorist threats is a guide – “Terrorism what to do in an emergency situation”, placed on the website of the Ministry of Interior and Administration<sup>36</sup>.

It is worth noting that as part of the teaching process carried out in the education system of the Republic of Poland, both in primary and secondary schools, as part of the education for safety subject, classes are carried out aimed at among others “preparing students for action in emergency situations (disasters and mass accidents)”, as well as “shaping skills in the basics of first aid”. Regardless of the efforts of government administration, local government institutions<sup>37</sup>, universities<sup>38</sup>, market institutions<sup>39</sup>, and the media<sup>40</sup> have also taken up the topic of anti-terrorist education, publishing information on how to behave in a situation of threat of a terrorist attack, or by organizing training dedicated to the threat in question.

It should be emphasized that the implementation of projects aimed at improving public awareness, as part of broad anti-terrorist education in Poland, is justified. This claim is determined by the fact that despite the absence of acts of terrorism in Poland, a number of events carrying quasi-terrorist threats have been recorded in our country, e.g. in recent years a huge number of (false) bomb alarms have been

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<sup>32</sup> Ustawa z dnia 24 maja 2002 r. o Agencji Bezpieczeństwa Wewnętrznego oraz Agencji Wywiadu, art. 5, Dz.U. [Journal of Laws of the Republic of Poland], 2002, no 74, item 676.

<sup>33</sup> <https://tpcoe.gov.pl/cpt/o-nas/1659, Centrum-Prewencji-Terrorystycznej-to-jednostka-Agencji-Bezpieczenstwa-Wewnetrzne.html> [accessed: 14.06.2021].

<sup>34</sup> <https://tpcoe.gov.pl/cpt/projekty-ue/1706,CPT-ABW-z-UE-na-rzecz-prewencji-terrorystycznej.html> [accessed: 6.14.2021].

<sup>35</sup> <https://tpcoe.gov.pl/cpt/materialy> [accessed: 14.06.2021].

<sup>36</sup> <https://archiwum.mswia.gov.pl/pl/bezpieczenstwo/terroryzm-co-robic-w-s/242,dok.html> [accessed: 20.06.2021].

<sup>37</sup> *Jak zachować się w przypadku zamachu terrorystycznego*, <https://www.adamowka.pl/gmina/poradnik-bezpieczenstwo-i-ja-czesc-ii-sposoby-zachowania-sie-w-przypadku-rozno-rodzaju-zagrozen/jak-zachowac-sie-w-przypadku-zamachu-terrorystycznego> [accessed: 20.06.2021].

<sup>38</sup> *Jak się zachować w razie zagrożenia atakiem terrorystycznym*, [https://www.ue.katowice.pl/uploads/media/Procedury\\_post%C4%99powania\\_w\\_przypadku\\_zagro%C5%BCenia\\_atakiem\\_terrorystycznym.pdf](https://www.ue.katowice.pl/uploads/media/Procedury_post%C4%99powania_w_przypadku_zagro%C5%BCenia_atakiem_terrorystycznym.pdf) [accessed: 20.06.2021].

<sup>39</sup> *Kongres bezpieczeństwa obiektów handlowych*, <http://pohid.pl/kongres-bezpieczenstwa-obiektow-handlowych> [accessed: 20.06.2021].

<sup>40</sup> *„Udawaj martwego”: GROM radzi, jak reagować podczas ataku terrorystycznego*, [https://noizz.pl/spoleczenstwo/co-robic-podczas-ataku-terrorystycznego-grom-radzi/dd98lz2?utm\\_source=duckduckgo.com\\_viasg\\_noizz&utm\\_medium=referral&utm\\_campaign=leo\\_automatic&src=ucs&utm\\_v=2](https://noizz.pl/spoleczenstwo/co-robic-podczas-ataku-terrorystycznego-grom-radzi/dd98lz2?utm_source=duckduckgo.com_viasg_noizz&utm_medium=referral&utm_campaign=leo_automatic&src=ucs&utm_v=2) [accessed: 20.06.2021].

recorded in Poland<sup>41</sup>. Government institutions, local governments, courts as well as free market entities were “attacked”. Among the most “attacked” organizations were retail chains – almost each of them, at least several times, was the object of the threat of detonating an explosive charge<sup>42</sup>. The described actions were preceded by demands to pay the ransom, which showed that if the expectations of the perpetrators were not met, the organization would become the target of bomb attacks. Due to the lack of reaction, the perpetrators began to send messages about the planting of explosives in the outlets of retail chains. One of the main challenges faced by the attacked organizations was to ensure the safety of employees, customers and property, while guaranteeing the conduct of day-to-day operations<sup>43</sup>.

In the reality of retail chains operating in the FMCG sector that manage networks ranging from few hundreds to few thousands stores, such a threat usually results in an evacuation (closure) of the main office and of all stores owned by the organisation. Such a reaction causes disruptions to the ongoing operations of the trade network in form of, among others:

- lack of sales in stores – all formats;
- lack of sales in retail and service outlets located in arcades of compact hypermarkets and hypermarkets as well;
- suspension of the logistic operations in distribution and reverse logistics – problems with collection of deliveries, disruption of delivery windows – especially in case of combined deliveries;
- disruption of ongoing tasks carried out by the employees in the main office of the company (purchasing processes, processing current liabilities, settlements, marketing activities etc.).

In the analysed case study, due to the fact that the threat of detonating explosives was being sent to a large number of entities<sup>44</sup> and other factors, the time it took the police officers to commence their activities was longer than usual. That fact was of key significance for the retail networks, as “extending” the period in which the stores were kept closed, cyclical nature and number of bomb alarms could result in a “breakdown of sales<sup>45</sup>”.

The subject undertakings allowed the managers of “attacked” retail networks to undertake conscious efforts in the scope of crisis management in the threatened

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<sup>41</sup> *Wielka ewakuacja w Polsce. Alarmy bombowe w całym kraju*, <https://www.infosecurity24.pl/wielka-ewakuacja-w-polsce-alarmy-bombowe-w-calym-kraju-komentarz> [accessed: 24.02.2021].

<sup>42</sup> *Ewakuacja sklepów Tesco w wielu miastach Polski po informacji o możliwej bombie*, <https://www.wiadomoscihandlowe.pl/artykul/ewakuacja-sklepow-tesco-w-wielu-miastach-polski-po-informacji-o-mozliwej-bombie> [accessed: 20.06.2021].

<sup>43</sup> J. Liber, *Wybrane elementy zarządzania kryzysowego w łańcuchach dostaw sektora FMCG, na przykładzie międzynarodowej organizacji*, paper presented at the International Hybrid Conference „Współczesne trendy w zarządzaniu” – 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, 25 March 2021 – publication in print.

<sup>44</sup> The bomb threats were directed to government and local government institutions and to retail networks.

<sup>45</sup> In extreme cases, police officers informed the representatives of retail networks that due to number of reports and limited amount of dogs trained to detect explosives, they will be able to inspect given commercial building in 2–3 days from the moment the threat was reported to authorities.

commercial buildings<sup>46</sup>. Combination of described activities allowed continuation of operational activities of the retail outlets and “unjamming” of the supply chain, while ensuring safety of customers, employees and property of the “attacked” organisations and their trade partners.

In the case described above, knowledge as well as practical implementation of selected elements of anti-terrorist education, including cooperation with selected government institutions, was a key factor for retail chains to survive on the market<sup>47</sup>. Bearing in mind the above-described facts, it should be stated that anti-terrorist education is important for the functioning of various organizations, not only at the time of a terrorist attack, but also in the event of other-quasi-terrorist threats.

## Conclusions

The phenomenon of terrorism is, by its very nature, a very complex problem subject to constant, dynamic changes. Often, however, instead of a long-term perspective and a comprehensive approach, methods of combating this phenomenon are chosen, calculated for the fastest possible effect. This is due to a clean political calculation, so that the ruling elites during their term of office can demonstrate concrete (measurable) effects in the fight against terrorism. It often boils down to quoting the number of terrorists liquidated, or often operating virtual amounts of funds that have not affected the alleged accounts of terrorist organizations. The truth is that the killed terrorists are replaced by the next, sometimes even more radical and unpredictable, and terrorists use new channels of transfer and new methods of cash transfer to flow financial resources.

The international community has been repeating the same mistakes for decades by focusing on combating the effects of terrorism and constantly forgetting the causes that cause these effects. Thousands of scientific articles and many reports and analyzes have been published on the subject of terrorism. Why, then, despite defining the causes, is it so difficult to find effective methods of combating terrorism? One of the main reasons for this is the conflict between the interests of world and regional powers. An example is the ongoing conflicts in Syria, Yemen, Libya, where Russia and the United States stood on opposite sides of the barricade. Unless there is a regional and global agreement “beyond divisions” in the fight against terrorism, the international community will still be overtaken and surprised by terrorist organizations.

However, there are states, such as Israel, that are much better at fighting terrorism than the rest of the international community. In this case, one of the sources of success of Israel’s counter-terrorist forces is the ability to recruit members of terrorist

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<sup>46</sup> Decisions on how to react (evacuate or refrain from evacuating) were taken on the basis of threat assessments, not in the atmosphere of uncertainty.

<sup>47</sup> It is worth noting that permanent evacuations of free market entities, in contrast to the institutions of the budgetary sphere, have a destructive impact on business – they result in disruptions in the operational activities of enterprises, and thus a decrease (lack) of turnover, which in an extreme case may result in the closure (liquidation) of the business.

organizations to cooperate. The international community, led by the United States, seems to have put too much trust in modern technologies – the inventions of the twenty-first century, and not enough possibilities in the field of so-called human intelligence. As T. Michalczak notes, "(...) technology is not a weapon that can defeat fanatical views." Without a thorough recognition of terrorist circles, their motivations, ideologies and intentions, we will not be able to effectively fight the phenomenon of terrorism.

The methods and forms of influence of state institutions on the progressive radicalization and manifestations of Islamic fundamentalism among Muslim minorities in Western Europe also require verification. Political correctness, widespread tolerance of the views proclaimed and the values of Western democracy do not go hand in hand with the effectiveness of influencing radicalism and violent extremism. The matter is not easy, because the basis for any action in this area is to move within the limits of the law while maintaining the values of Western democracies, for which our predecessors fought.

One of the most effective methods of countering radicalization and combating terrorism is education by providing the public with knowledge and skills that reduce people's vulnerability to terrorist activities. Since terrorist threats have taken on a widespread and mass character, education in this area should also be universal and multidimensional, with a cognitive and practical dimension. The cognitive dimension of counter-terrorism education should be aimed at raising citizens' awareness in this area and include knowledge of the whole spectrum of threats, symptoms and resulting effects. On the other hand, the practical dimension of anti-terrorist education should primarily develop the skills of citizens to behave in the event of threats. However, it should be remembered that anti-terrorist education may cause a permanent threat and fear effect among the trainees, therefore, it must be conducted in a skillful way by people professionally prepared for it.

The obligation to disseminate knowledge about terrorist threats and ways of counteracting and shaping the ability of the public to behave in the event of a terrorist incident belongs primarily to state institutions. Anti-terrorist education should be conducted at all levels of education, in an organized and systematic manner and should include all social groups. Any knowledge received and the acquired skills in the field of anti-terrorist education will make us able not only to recognize such threats, but also to be able to help ourselves and others, which may facilitate the activities of specialized (governmental) services. Thus, as citizens, we will become a valuable partner for counter-terrorism services fighting radicalism and violent extremism.

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## *Terrorism as a Threat to World Security in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Causes, Education*

### *Abstract*

Dynamic changes in the international security environment at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, caused mainly by the increase in the number of religious and ethnic conflicts and tensions, ubiquitous globalization, technological progress and computerization of all sectors of life, made terrorism a tool to achieve strategic goals and a way to solve problems. One of the main challenges faced by states and international organizations is to effectively counter the threats related to terrorism. As the experiences from the 21<sup>st</sup> century have shown, the methods of combating terrorism that have been used so far, mainly consisting of the physical elimination of terrorist groups and blocking their sources of financing, are insufficient to defeat it. Therefore, increasing the effectiveness of the fight against terrorism requires extensive involvement and support of international institutions and a society equipped with appropriate knowledge and skills through comprehensive anti-terrorist education.

**Key words:** terrorism, violence, threat, security, counter-terrorism education

## *Terroryzm jako zagrożenie bezpieczeństwa światowego w XXI wieku – przyczyny, edukacja*

### *Streszczenie*

Dynamiczne zmiany w środowisku bezpieczeństwa międzynarodowego na początku XXI wieku, spowodowane głównie narastaniem konfliktów i napięć na tle religijnym oraz etnicznym, wszechobecna globalizacja, postęp technologiczny oraz informatyzacja wszystkich sektorów życia, spowodowały, że terroryzm stał się narzędziem do osiągnięcia strategicznych celów i sposobem na rozwiązywanie problemów. Jednym z głównych wyzwań, jakie stoją przed państwami i organizacjami międzynarodowymi, jest skuteczne przeciwstawienie się zagrożeniom związanym z terroryzmem. Jak pokazały doświadczenia z XXI wieku, dotychczasowe metody walki z terroryzmem – sprowadzające się głównie do fizycznej eliminacji grup terrorystycznych oraz blokowaniu ich źródeł finansowania – są niewystarczające do jego pokonania. Dlatego też zwiększenie efektywności walki z terroryzmem wymaga szerokiego zaangażowania i wsparcia międzynarodowych instytucji oraz społeczeństwa zaopatrzonego w odpowiednią wiedzę i umiejętności poprzez kompleksową edukację antyterrorystyczną.

**Słowa kluczowe:** terroryzm, przemoc, zagrożenie, bezpieczeństwo, edukacja antyterrorystyczna



## *Terrorismus als Bedrohung der Weltsicherheit im 21. Jahrhundert: Ursachen, Bildung Zusammenfassung*

Die dynamischen Veränderungen im internationalen Sicherheitsumfeld zu Beginn des 21. Jahrhunderts, die vor allem auf die Zunahme religiöser und ethnischer Konflikte und Spannungen, die allgegenwärtige Globalisierung, den technologischen Fortschritt und die Informatisierung aller Lebensbereiche zurückzuführen sind, haben den Terrorismus zu einem Instrument zur Erreichung strategischer Ziele und zu einem Mittel der Problemlösung gemacht. Eine der größten Herausforderungen für die Staaten und die internationalen Organisationen besteht darin, der Bedrohung durch den Terrorismus wirksam zu begegnen. Die Erfahrungen des 21. Jahrhunderts haben gezeigt, dass die bisherigen Methoden der Terrorismusbekämpfung, die sich im Wesentlichen auf das physische Ausschalten von Terrorgruppen und die Beseitigung ihrer Finanzierungsquellen beschränken, nicht ausreichen, um den Terrorismus zu besiegen. Daher ist eine Verbesserung der Effizienz der Terrorismusbekämpfung mit einem breiten Engagement und der Unterstützung internationaler Institutionen und einer Gesellschaft, die durch umfassende Maßnahmen zur Terrorismusbekämpfung über ausreichende Kenntnisse und Fähigkeiten verfügt, erforderlich.

**Schlüsselwörter:** Terrorismus, Gewalt, Gefahr, Sicherheit, Anti-Terrorismus-Erziehung

## *Терроризм как угроза мировой безопасности в XXI веке – причины, образование Резюме*

Динамичные изменения в области международной безопасности в начале XXI века (вызванные, главным образом, ростом религиозных, этнических конфликтов и напряженности), глобализация, технологический прогресс, а также компьютеризация всех сфер жизни, привели к тому, что терроризм стал инструментом для достижения стратегических целей и способом решения проблем. Одна из главных задач, стоящих перед государствами и международными организациями, заключается в поиске решения, как эффективно противостоять угрозе терроризма. Опыт XXI века показал, что для победы над ним недостаточно существующих методов борьбы с терроризмом, которые в основном сводятся к физическому уничтожению террористических групп и блокированию источников их финансирования. Поэтому повышение эффективности борьбы с терроризмом требует широкого участия и поддержки со стороны международных институтов и общества, обладающего соответствующими знаниями и навыками, путем всестороннего контртеррористического образования.

**Ключевые слова:** терроризм, насилие, угроза, безопасность, антитеррористическое образование