Committee: Legal Committee (GA6)

Issue: Establishing a legal framework related to persons suspected of terrorism-related crimes

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INTRODUCTION

For the past few years, acts of terrorism have increased tremendously. Many states have suffered great human losses due to violent terrorist acts. It impacts directly human rights, especially the right to life, liberty and the physical integrity of victims. The collateral damage of terrorism is huge as it can undermine governments, risk peace and security and affect negatively social and economic development. Since security is a basic human right, governments should ensure its protection.

However, certain measures adopted by states to counter terrorism have created serious problems for human rights and the rule of law. The results are that some states have returned people suspected of crimes to other states; in other words, they have used extraordinary rendition and engaged in torture and other ill-treatment practices thus violating the principle of nonrefoulement, which is a principle that prohibits states from transferring individuals to countries where human rights violations are being committed. Following up on this, justice systems have been undermined since many states introduce the use of special courts, affecting in this way the use of the regular systems.

States are obliged to conduct any transfer of suspects in a way that human rights and the rule of law are respected. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights clearly states that any deprivation of liberty should be based on procedures established by the law. They should be informed about the charges against them and the reasons for their detention and must be provided with basic legal help. Terrorists and suspected terrorists should be dealt with, but without violating any human rights. That means a fair detention and prosecution policy that respects human rights.

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DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Legal status

The state of someone defined by law, that is their respective rights and obligations with regards to specific legislation (e.g. citizenship or nonage).¹

Extraordinary Rendition

The act of sending suspects to a country where they will be in danger of human rights violations and inhuman treatment towards them.²

Principle of non-refoulement

A core principle of human rights that prohibits states from transfering individuals to countries that exercise torture and violation of the law.³

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

History of previous cases of mistreatment of suspected terrorists

To begin with, on June 26, 1995, the first case of transfer was noticed. A group of terrorists tried to kill Hosni Mubarak, the President of Egypt. The Egyptian government tried to extradite three suspects in Sudan but Egypt's request was declined.

Then, later on January 5, 1999, a successful transfer happened; two Libyan citizens suspected of the explosion of the Pan-Am flight were transferred to the Netherlands, but were prosecuted under Scottish law. One of them was sentenced to life in a prison in Scotland. On September 12, 2003, he was proven innocent after the original group of terrorists confessed.

² "Extraordinary Rendition." *Dictionary.com*, Dictionary.com, www.dictionary.com/browse/extraordinary-rendition.

^{1&}quot;LEGALSTATUS."OnlineEnglishLearningCourses,www.audioenglish.org/dictionary/legal_status.htm

 [&]quot;Non-Refoulement." Migration and Home Affairs - European Commission, 18 Sept.
 2019, ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-wedo/networks/european_migration_network/glossary_search/non-refoulement_en.

Additionally, for over 17 years, Moath al-Alwi had been imprisoned in Guantanamo Bay without charge. The authorities were unwilling to release him despite not having charged him with a crime. The absence of a policy that obliges states to follow International Law over domestic law causes many problems in national security. It is stated that sovereignty should not be undermined and the international community should intervene when there are inhuman actions taking place. This vagueness gives states the privilege of exercising domestic law over international law. This can also lead to hostility against that country, if, in the end, an agreement has not been reached.

Following the 2008 bombing in three major cities in India, the state police arrested a huge number of Muslim men, who are greatly discriminated against and labelled 'antinationals' by many Indians. All those were arbitrarily detained, tortured and greatly illtreated to get them to confess while in jail, awaiting trial. Many of them also faced unfair proceedings in court.

Those and many other examples have in common the fact that the human rights of detainees were not taken into consideration. They were not informed of their rights nor were they exercised. Such cases set the necessity to improve the legal framework.

Guantanamo Bay Detention Camp

The Guantanamo Bay detention camp is a military prison created by the United States of America (USA), located in Guantanamo Bay in Cuba. It was established by former president George W. Bush to keep Muslim militants and suspected terrorists captive by United States' forces in Afghanistan and Iraq. It is considered to be one of the major human rights violation centers by Amnesty International and has presented alleged violations of the legal rights of detainees under the Geneva Convention and have been subjected to abusive treatment and torture.

In 2002, the detention camp started receiving suspected members of al-Qaeda, the terrorist group responsible for the 9/11, and Taliban fighters, the organization that ruled Afghanistan from 1996 to 2001. The hundreds of suspects that were imprisoned were held without the legal means to help them with their detention and potential innocence.

In 2008, legal action was taken, and it was decided to let foreign detainees bring their detentions to the federal courts. Despite the decision of the court to release some suspects and be transferred to their home countries, they continued to be detained, because no country accepted their transfer. Humanitarian organizations, among them Amnesty International, the Human Rights Watch, as well as the European Union and the

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Organization of American States, protested against the camp for the various cases of torture during interrogations.

On January 22, 2009, former President Barack Obama campaigned for the closure of the facility in Guantanamo within one year and reviewed the ways that the detainees were transferred to safe imprisonment or trial. He demanded that the way they were interrogated should follow the U.S. Army's manual and any kind of torture should be banned. The Republicans opposed the closure, as they believed that the USA's security would be jeopardized. In January 2018, President Donald Trump signed an order which will keep the detention camp open indefinitely.

International Human Rights Law and the Rule of Law

The International Human Rights Law underlines the states' duty to protect individuals under their jurisdiction from terrorist attacks. However, it also protects suspected terrorists by allowing them to exercise their human rights and condemns unlawful practices during detention.

On the other hand, the Rule of Law, is the implementation mechanism. It ensures adherence to the principles of international law, equality before the law, accountability to the law and fairness in its application. This means that principles in human rights become reality. International Law and the Rule of Law have an indivisible and intrinsic relationship as they both promote freedom to live in dignity and forbid torture.

Despite the fact that both have power over domestic law, there is not an official framework that says which practices should be used, creating mass confusion.

Problems and Effects

The United Nations has yet to produce an official definition for the word 'terrorism', despite the many years of debate. This does not mean that the problem is not being combatted by the international community but many problems have been caused. For example, it is not clear if any action qualifies as terrorism, only actions against non-combatants and civilians, or any action with the purpose to intimidate a government or an organization. This causes problems when trying to deal with acts of terrorism or suspected terrorism as it aids the politicisation and misuse of the term 'terrorism' to curb even non-criminal activities. This leads to a lack of harmonization between national and regional law that is significant in order to counter suspected terrorism efficiently. Therefore, instead of

hindering international cooperation, we can facilitate it by improving the legal framework and finalizing a definition of 'terrorism'.

In addition, the false practices used by States cause adverse consequences in the economic and social development of states. Friendly relations are jeopardized and there is a profound impact on relations of cooperation among states. Finally, the territorial integrity of states, along with security, is also threatened which is a violation of the purpose and principles of the United Nations. It is not only a regional threat but also puts at risk international peace and security. This does not mean that they are at fault, but emphasizes the need for an improved legal framework that covers those blank areas as well.

MAJOR COUNTRIES AND ORGANISATIONS INVOLVED

United Kingdom (UK)

Following the events of 9/11 in 2001, investigations and counter-terrorism operations were being conducted into the event. In 2018, the UK Parliament's Intelligence and Security Committee published evidence that the UK took and tolerated actions that were 'inexcusable'. These actions included torture and ill-treatment of terrorist suspects, which is illegal under International Law. Suspects were sent to countries with extraordinary rendition and there was abject failure in trying to stop the abuses. Moreover, British agents were providing information to the USA on the interrogation of detainees who the Americans knew were being abused. The UK currently asserts that the protection of human rights is crucial and its response to terrorism will be based on the Rule of Law.

United States of America (USA)

In 2018, President Donald Trump, after concerted efforts by former President Barack Obama to permanently shut down the Guantanamo Bay Detention camp, announced that it will remain open indefinitely and will be used for American detainees as well. Many cases of ill-treatment and torture in that camp have been reported as well as illegal indefinite imprisonment without a trial of terrorists and suspected terrorists.

The USA Bureau of Counterterrorism is aiming at promoting national security by developing coordinated strategies and approaches to defeat terrorism. However, some domestic policies go against International Law and their harmonization must be achieved.

European Union (EU)

The European Union's Policy Department for Citizens' Rights and Constitutional Affairs published, in December 2017, the EU and Member States' policies and laws on persons suspected of terrorism-related crimes. It is revised legislation to respond to the results of terrorist attacks that have affected several Member States in the last few years. It deals mostly with foreign terrorist fighters, the expansion of extradition measures and the legal aspects of travel documents and the criminalization of rendition to conflict zones.

A clear legal framework in the EU concerning persons suspected of terrorism-related crimes, the available measures for the authorities to investigate in such situations and how information on suspects of terrorism-related crimes is exchanged also exist.

Most Member States do not have a formal definition for suspects in general. However, in some countries, the terms vary according to the stages of criminal procedures. The rights granted should be the same according to each prosecution stage, as it is mentioned in the paper. The EU suggests that when considering the rights of terrorism suspects, it is mandatory to have full transparency in data and their availability.

The EU has proposed the creation of a Suspects' Right Package, which will provide an understandable definition for the term "suspects", in addition to what is protected by the UN Charter, which includes the rights to translation and interpretation, being informed on the charges and rights, legal advice and aid, "special safeguards", and measures for people with vulnerabilities, such as children.

Date	Description of Event
December 1988	Pan -Am flight is attacked by terrorists
June 26, 1995	Terrorists try to kill the President of Egypt
January 5, 1999	Libyan suspects are transferred to the Netherlands
2001	United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolution numbered 1373 along with the establishment of the counter-terrorism committee
September 12, 2003	One of the suspects is proved innocent after being sentenced to life in prison

TIMELINE OF EVENTS

2003	UNSC resolution numbered 1456 is adopted
2004	UNSC resolution numbered 1566 is adopted
13 April, 2005	Nuclear Terrorism Convention is adopted
2005	Third and Final summit declaration takes place
2012	Practical Guidance Paper on Counterterrorism and Human Rights
2014	UNSC resolution numbered 2178 is adopted
2017	UNSC resolution numbered 2396 was adopted
June 26, 2018	Latest review on the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy is made

UN INVOLVEMENT: RELEVANT RESOLUTIONS, TREATIES AND EVENTS

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights: Human Rights, Terrorism⁴

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights published Fact Sheet No. 32, focusing on terrorism and the various aspects of the problem. The purpose of the creation of this Fact Sheet was the necessity of understanding the relation of Human Rights and terrorism. It provides information on major human rights issues created by terrorist attacks and identifies the basic human rights standards which must be respected at all times and cost. It concerns mostly state authorities, national and international NGOs, institutions and individuals that are willing to ensure the promotion of the issue and how to deal with it. Part three is the most relevant to this topic since it examines the right to life and challenges concerning the transfer of individuals and the prohibition against torture.

International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism⁵

⁴ United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. "Fact Sheet No. 32, Human Rights, Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism." *Refworld*, www.refworld.org/docid/48733ebc2.html.

⁵ High Commissioner for refugees, United Nations. "International Convention on the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism." International Convention for Suppression of Acts of Nuclear

The now called 'Nuclear Terrorism Convention', is a 2005 UN treaty aimed at criminalizing acts of terrorism, and promoting judicial and police cooperation to prevent, investigate and punish those acts. It helps states cooperate by sharing information and assisting each other in criminal investigation, as well as help with post-crisis situations. Concerning suspected terrorists, it helps identify them as terrorism suspects to prevent violation of their rights, and allows interrogation up to 7 days.

Security Council resolution 1373⁶

Resolution 1373 (2001), represents the most important qualitative and quantitative approach against terrorism yet. It requires states to align domestic law with international frameworks to criminalize terrorism and its perpetrators, accomplices and financiers. It ensures that all the aforementioned are brought to justice fairly and cannot be imprisoned until a fair trial has happened.

Security Council resolution 1456⁷

Resolution 1456 (2003) is the first counter-terrorism resolution focusing on the states' responsibility to uphold and protect human rights. It also underlines the relationship between terrorists and criminal activity and that it is as punishable as drug-trafficking, money-laundering and illicit arms-trafficking.

Security Council resolution 1566⁸

Additionally, Security Council resolution 1566 (2004) is an improved version of the 1373 UNSC resolution where it calls on States to prevent and punish:

Terrorism,2002,fas.org/irp/congress/2008_rpt/suppression.html#:~:text=%5C4%5CInternation al%20Convention%20for%20the,States%20on%20July%2026%2C%202002.

⁶ Council, Security. "Security Council Resolution." *Resolution 1373*, 2001, www.unodc.org/pdf/crime/terrorism/res_1373_english.pdf.

- ⁷ "S/RES/1456 (2003) Security Council." United Nations, United Nations, www.un.org/securitycouncil/s/res/1456-%282003%29.
- ⁸ Council, Security. "UNSC Resolution." *UNSC Resolution 1566(2004)*, 2004, www.un.org/ruleoflaw/files/n0454282.pdf.

'Criminal acts, including against civilians, committed with the intent to cause death or serious bodily injury, or taking of hostages, with the purpose to provoke a state of terror in the general public or in a group of persons or particular persons, intimidate a population or compel a government or an international organization to do or to abstain from doing an act [...] are under no circumstances justifiable by considerations of a political, philosophical, ideological, racial, ethnic, religious or other similar nature [...] (para. 3).⁷⁹

It helps categorize suspect terrorists and their crimes which creates a fairer justice system. This way they are given the opportunity to claim their rights as well.

Security Council resolution 2178¹⁰ and 2396¹¹

Furthermore, UNSC resolution 2178(2014) emphasizes that suspected terrorists must be stopped from crossing national borders, ban their funding as well as prosecute, rehabilitate and reintegrate falsely suspected terrorists. This is further emphasized in resolution 2396(2017) by strengthening judicial measures and international cooperation.

Counter-Terrorism Committee¹²

Resolution 1373, passed unanimously by the Security Council, also established the Counter-Terrorism Committee, a subsidiary organ of the Security Council, whose main purpose is to monitor compliance with the resolution. Each year, all Member States are required to submit reports on what measures they have adopted. It began its work in 2001 and obligations for all Member States to work together to isolate terrorist and terrorism have been made clear.

- ⁹ Council, Security. "UNSC Resolution." UNSC Resolution 1566(2004), 2004, www.un.org/ruleoflaw/files/n0454282.pdf.
- ¹⁰ Council, Security. "Security Council Resolution 2178." *Resolution 2178*, 2014, www.un.org/securitycouncil/s/res/2178-%282014%29.
- ¹¹ Council, Security. "Security Council Resolution 2396." Resolution 2396, 2017, www.un.org/sc/ctc/news/document/s-res-2396-2017-threats-international-peace-securitycaused-terrorist-acts-foreign-terrorist-fighters/.
- ¹² "Counter-Terrorism Committee United Nations Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee." United Nations, United Nations, www.un.org/sc/ctc/.

United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy¹³

The UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy is in the form of a resolution, (A/RES/60/288), and is based on four fundamental aspects. It examines the vast spread of terrorism, it addresses measures to combat terrorism, ways to prepare states to combat terrorism and enforce the role of United Nations in that part and most importantly ways to ensure the respect for Human Rights and the Rule of Law and these become the basis in the fight against terrorism. The UN General Assembly reviews the Strategy every two years. The last review was conducted on June 26, 2018.

UN Committee Against Torture¹⁴

The Committee Against Torture is a body composed of human rights experts that keeps an eye on the United Nations Convention against Torture. It is a part of the eight UNlinked human rights treaty bodies. Every state is obliged to submit reports concerning how they implement basic human rights. When ratifying the Convention, states have to submit this report every four years. The reports are examined and then concerns and recommendations are sent to each state as "concluding observations". Members are elected by the parties and serve for four years and can be re-elected.

PREVIOUS ATTEMPTS TO SOLVE THE ISSUE

Terrorism Acts Practical Guidance Paper on Counterterrorism and Human Rights draft – Danish Institute of Human Rights¹⁵

¹⁴ "COMMITTEE AGAINST TORTURE." *OHCHR*, www.ohchr.org/en/hrbodies/cat/pages/catindex.aspx.

¹³ "UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy | Office of Counter-Terrorism." United Nations, United Nations, www.un.org/counterterrorism/un-global-counter-terrorism-strategy#:~:text=The%20UN%20Global%20Counter%2DTerrorism,operational%20approach%2 Oto%20fighting%20terrorism.

¹⁵ Terrorism Acts Practical Guidance Paper on Counterterrorism and Human Rights Draft – Danish Institute of Human Rights, file:///C:/Users/elena/Downloads/Counter-Terrorism%20and%20Human%20Rights.pdf.

From 2000 to 2015, the British Parliament passed a series of documents, called Terrorism Acts. It was influenced by the July 7th, 2001 London bombings. The documents, among many other things, defined terrorism that made it easier to set clear police rules, prosecution procedures and laws. The Terrorism Act 2000 was the one that provided information on the biggest terrorism organizations and allowed the detention of suspects for questioning up to 7 days. The most important parts of the next ten Acts are that foreigners can be detained as terrorist suspects indefinitely, the period of interrogation mentioned above is doubled, and the police is permitted to freeze the assets of terrorism suspects. However, in this way some human rights are not exercised as this goes against the International Humanitarian Law.

Summit Declaration of 2005¹⁶

This was the third and final declaration held by the heads of EU countries to promote the values of democracy and human rights, and guarantee cultural diversity when fighting terrorism.

Practical Guidance Paper on Counterterrorism and Human Rights – Danish Institute of Human Rights¹⁷

In 2012, the Danish Institute of Human Rights published this paper, because the Danish Government supports development, peace and security and wants to create a strategy to ensure that the fight against terrorism is conducted without disrespect to any human rights. The first part of the paper focuses on an assessment tool that examines weaknesses in the fight against terrorism. The second part focuses on providing practical

¹⁶ "Final Declaration of the Third Council of Europe Summit (Warsaw, 16 and 17 May 2005)." CVCE.EU by
UNI.LU,

www.cvce.eu/en/obj/final_declaration_of_the_third_council_of_europe_summit_warsaw_16 _and_17_may_2005-en-54168ce8-3e8d-435c-94f4-

efd3b3b90ca6.html#:~:text=Meeting%20in%20Warsaw%20on%2016,and%20the%20fight%20 against%20discrimination.

¹⁷ "Practical Guidance Paper on Counter-Terrorism and Human Rights." The Danish Institute for Human Rights, 23 May 2012, www.humanrights.dk/publications/practical-guidance-papercounter-terrorism-human-rights.

human rights guidelines concerning counterterrorism measures created for police, military officers and other law enforcement officials.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

First of all, delegates should focus on reviewing some fundamental documents that concern human rights and the threat they face from terrorist acts. By reviewing them, they can focus on proposing possible alterations that will define the problem of suspects and create more applicable legislation for the situation. Additionally, the General Assembly should be urged to finalize an official definition for the term 'terrorism'.

Moreover, measures concerning the treatment with compassion and respect for their dignity should be considered. There needs to be non-discrimination along with privacy and data protection. Their detention rights must also be exercised under International Law and the Rule of Law. Based on that, it must be made clear that both of these have power over domestic law and must be followed at all times.

All suspected terrorists must be informed of their rights which should be exercised throughout the legal proceedings. All must have proper legal assistance and aid, and all must be 'presumed innocent until proven guilty'. Most importantly, each detainee has the right to a fair trial.

However, there needs to be special safeguards for special cases such as children and the physically or mentally impaired. All suspected terrorists must also receive the necessary material, medical, psychological and social assistance and must be protected against intimidation and retaliation. Finally, there needs to be, when appropriate, restitution and compensation as well as reintegration into society.

Lastly, the International Criminal Court could be included in some cases for the problem to be addressed faster and examples, such as the Guantanamo case, not to be repeated in the future. It could act as a mediator, consultant or prosecutor according to each case.

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