

Committee: Disarmament and International Security

Issue: The issue of terrorism by states and non-state actors in relation to energy issues

Student Officer: Joanna Politi

Position: Co-Chair

INTRODUCTION

Terrorist attacks are an issue that plagues the world, especially nowadays, as we are experiencing one of the worst periods in terms of terrorist activity. In the last years, fatality rates linked to terrorist attacks and terrorist activity itself have risen at an alarming rate. A high percentage of these terrorist attacks have been linked to energy issues. Organizations that are linked to terrorist activity often target oil and gas facilities, striking active sites such as pipelines, tankers and oil fields. Often the goals behind such attacks are either to disrupt the stability of the regimes that they are fighting, or deliver an economic blow to the foreign powers that have invested in such facilities in their region. Such attacks in the past never received much attention, but after the large-scale attacks on the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon, countries such as the USA have started to draw their attention towards such activities. The terrorist attack of 9/11 marked a new era, signaling the start of the “War on Terror”.

Now more than ever, people have been focusing on trying to protect people from terrorist activities, especially in places that are rich in oil and gas, and thus the dangers of such activities are countless. With increased security systems making attacks on federal bases and government installations more difficult than before, oil facilities are deemed a perfect target from terrorist organizations such as “Al Qaeda”, which want to weaken their economically dependent enemies such as the USA, whose economy is largely based upon the oil industry.

Another target of energy related terrorism is the electric power delivery system. The electric power delivery system delivers electricity from the central generators to their customers. Such delivery systems are very vulnerable and can be easily and severely damaged by attacks. Such attacks lack drama, but if they are carried out carefully and correctly could

be very effective. Through such attacks, a relatively small number of people die immediately but they could result in a large region losing its power for weeks or even months. Such action could result in the creation of an atmosphere of fear and turmoil that could be easily manipulated by terrorists. An attack on a power delivery system, if planned meticulously, could result in hundreds of billions of dollar losses for the government and serious economic consequences. This kind of attack is used generally when looking to inflict more extensive damage, with huge consequences, rather than the adopting the dramatic approach. Both aspects of terrorism related with energy sources are issues that are of the utmost importance. Thus, it is imperative that solutions be found that offer more security and protection for all.

DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Non-State Actors

Non-state actors are all organizations which are not directly associated with or funded by the government.

Terrorism

The use of violence fueled by the want to project a certain political objective that results in the creation of an atmosphere of terror.

Renewable Energy Resources

Types of renewable energy resources are: wind energy, hydroelectric power, solar power, biomass, hydrogen and fuel cells and geothermal.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

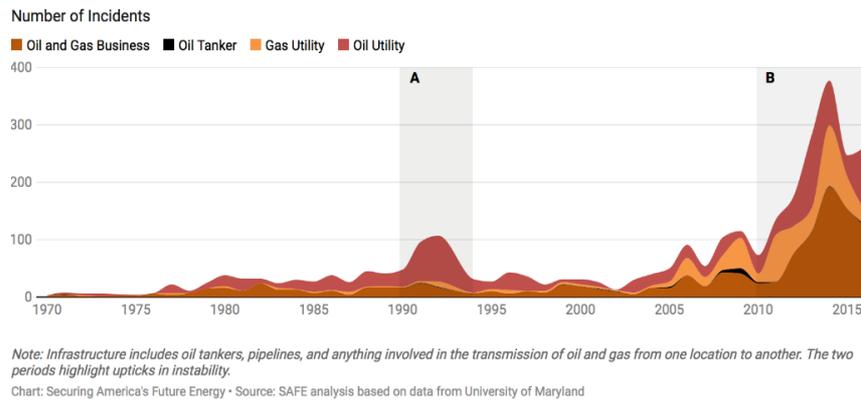
Terrorism in relation with oil

There has always been a history between terrorism and oil-related facilities. Organizations such as Al Qaeda and ISIS have been known to target oil facilities in oil rich countries such as the Gulf States. These types of attacks have brought fear and terror to many people and are the cause of struggle for many. Generally, organizations target oil facilities because it achieves many goals simultaneously. Usually, the political beliefs of the

organizations that conduct such attacks, are not in line with the governments, thus, through targeting oil facilities, they simultaneously create the desired atmosphere of chaos that they can manipulate, undermine the government and its plans, but also deliver an economic blow to countries whose economies are primarily based on oil and gas related transactions.

Such activity has now spread widely in the Middle East and North Africa, which contain roughly 60% of oil reserves in the world. Through such attacks in the MENA (Middle East and North America) region, the US economy is extremely vulnerable. For instance, after the ISIS advances in Iraq, oil barrel prices shot up to \$115 a barrel, which was combated by the US economy lowering the price back to \$30, but it is an accurate example of how easily such terrorist activity can influence the economies of other countries. While attacks can often involve acts of violence and tend to cause more civil commotion, there are other methods of terrorism that target the oil industry. For example, a very common practice among such organizations is to kidnap oil workers demanding ransom in return, something that has often been recorded in countries such as Colombia, Nigeria, Algeria and Libya. Another common method of terrorism targeting oil facilities is the sabotage of the infrastructure installations, so as to harm both consumers and producers. In addition, there is also a big concern around state sponsors of terrorism. Countries such as Sudan, Iran and Syria are all labeled as “sponsors of terrorism”, by the US. These three countries are significant participants in the oil industry and are directly linked to the support of terrorism. Terrorist groups such as ISIS not only attack oil reserves to hurt countries which they believe are their enemies, but also benefit economically from such activity. Through engaging in illegal oil trade, ISIS has become one of the richest terrorist groups, earning roughly \$ 3 million a day. It controls 60% of Syria’s oil reserves, and thus benefits greatly through the profits that come from the roughly 8 million people who live in ISIS territories and are desperate to gain access to such amenities. Consequently, through combatting oil terrorism around the world better, we will not only protect states and their people, but also harm economically such organizations, lowering the terrorist activity even more. Thus, we can see how concern has risen around the issue of terrorism related to energy resources, especially oil. Due to its long history, attacks on oil and gas facilities have been a top priority for many countries who are actively trying to ensure the safety of their citizens and the state. If such security is desired by states, the issue of terrorism specifically linked with oil reserves should be prioritized and combated as it is a large part of the terrorist activity that is currently plaguing the world. We have seen many actions in the past which were a start towards combating such terrorism, but there are still many points which need to be further examined.

Terrorist Attacks on Oil and Gas Facilities, 1970 to 2016



Graph showing the rise in terrorist activity in relation to oil and gas facilities from 1970 to 2016.

Terrorism and the electric power delivery system

Terrorism activity regarding the electric power delivery system is a phenomenon that has been observed when an organization wants to impact a region directly. Nowadays, electric power is produced in large installations, which then increase the voltage to distribute it to other locations, to provide electricity to houses and facilities. This delivery system operates differently to others in the sense that it needs to abide by the physical laws of nature regarding the flow of energy. Thus, it is a very vulnerable system as many imbalances can occur and if they are not fixed immediately great damage can follow. The transmission lines span hundreds of miles, and the key facilities of the systems usually remain unguarded. Thus, through having these facilities unguarded and having the transmission lines span across a large expanse of land, it is all the more difficult to protect the system from potential breaches. Furthermore, the recent introduction of competitor bulk energy systems has **uprooted** and disorganized the electric power delivery system, and, as a result, many transmission networks have not been able to keep up with ever-changing needs. Such attacks can deny power to large scale regions, resulting in terrible conditions, fear and the creation of turmoil. Such attacks are generally split into two categories: physical and cyber-attacks. Regarding physical attacks, this could involve anything that would physically prohibit the delivery of electricity to consumers, such as the disruption of transmission lines and particularly the damage of large high-voltage transformers which take a substantial amount of time to be repaired and delivered. Also, the attack of any key facility could seriously harm the electric power delivery system. When it comes to cyber-attacks, the supervisory control and data acquisition (SCADA) systems are key. The SCADA systems collect data and measurements and send out signals to automated equipment, essentially taking in information and, based on that, send signals to

the equipment on what to do. These are important because these delivery system heavily rely on automated equipment and high-speed communication. Thus, a vulnerable point could be the SCADA systems as a disruption in it could cause severe damage to the system. If hackers got access to the SCADA system, they could easily cause damage to the energy flow, resulting in outages of power and could also affect the protective systems of facilities, leaving them open to even more damage. A leading example of such attacks that disrupt the delivery system is in Columbia. In Columbia, hundreds of such attacks have been attempted, and mostly successfully dealt with due to the capture and imprisonment of the most senior leaders of such organizations. Thus, we can conclude that such terrorist activity is incredibly dangerous for the well-being of citizens as there is the possibility of a large-scale power outage that could result in turmoil. Security has proven to be a weak spot for such delivery systems and needs to be improved in order to achieve safety and security in the electric power delivery system.

MAJOR COUNTRIES AND ORGANISATIONS INVOLVED

The United States of America

The USA is a major **protagonist** in the oil industry and is often a target for organizations such as ISIS and Al-Qaeda. Because of its economic position and the magnitude of its impact, it is a common target for terrorist organizations wanting to cause a large amount of damage. More recently, it has followed some policies and initiatives that have sparked even more controversy, and make it an even more enticing target for such activity. As it is heavily vested in the oil industry, it has **much** influence on the areas that have high percentages of oil and has often been a target for such terrorist activities and harmed by many attacks of that nature. The USA and its economy are particularly vulnerable to attacks on the oil industry as it produces only 3% of the world's oil, but consumes approximately 25%. Approximately 20% of its imports derive from the MENA region, thus damage in such regions could very easily have a large negative impact on US and its economy. Thus, while the US is adopting many measures to stabilize its internal infrastructure, the main source of vulnerability comes from their foreign oil sources and trade relations, where it has no jurisdiction to intervene and can only encourage such states to maximize their security.

Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia is home to 18% of the world's oil reserves and is ranked as the 2nd largest producer in the world. Consequently, it is in a very vulnerable position, and subjected to threats that target the large oil reserves that it houses. As seen by recent attacks on pipelines and oil facilities, Saudi Arabia has started acting against terrorism in relation to energy issues and has taken measures to prevent the recurrence of such events, as it is one of the leading countries in the international alliance against ISIS. Furthermore, committees have been established to monitor the illegal money laundering that helps fund terrorist organizations. Measures to combat such illegal funding include not only the committees that have been established, but also through cooperating with international partners and taking measures. What is more, the Saudi Arabian Monetary Authority (SAMA) has made efforts to combat the problem at its root by creating and distributing guidebooks to all Saudi banks so as to help them combat money laundering. There is also a legal framework that has been established in Saudi Arabia that has been proven to be effective in restricting money laundering and the illegal funding of terrorist organizations as evident by Saudi Arabia's Mutual Evaluation Report on Anti-Money Laundering and Combating Financing Terrorism and Proliferation, which is issued by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF). Despite its efforts, due to its geopolitical position, it is still very open and vulnerable to such terrorist activity and thus is an active member of this debate.

Pakistan

Pakistan, a valuable asset in the war against terrorism in relation to energy issues, has been reported to be heavily involved with both ISIS and Al Qaeda; two of the main terrorist organizations that target energy installations. As a result, it is immensely influential in the terrorist activity of the region. Cooperation between the US and Pakistan, involving activities such as air strikes coordinated to prevent terrorist activity in nearby regions has been recorded. Due to its geopolitical position, Pakistan is a powerful contender in the fight against terrorism and could be of profound importance. Although Pakistan has had a history of terrorist attacks launched against India, none of them have been directly connected with energy issues.

Gulf States

Oil rich Gulf states such as Kuwait, Qatar and the UAE are subject daily to terrorist attacks with regard to energy issues, particularly oil. They suffer immensely due to such

terrorist activity, and it is an issue that affects them directly and immensely. Recorded attacks on such states are of very high number, the most recent being 13th June of 2019, when two oil tankers were attacked in the Gulf of Oman. Such events are a very common occurrence in the Gulf States, as they are oil-rich and in a vulnerable position. Another reason why these states are of high importance when talking about oil related terrorism is because they are major sponsors of organizations that actively carry out such attacks. For example, countries such as Kuwait and Qatar have been recorded to fund ISIS organizations generously, accounting for a lion's share of the organizations' funding. This is important as the funding that goes towards such organizations could be re-channeled to enhance security measures that help combat oil-based terrorism. Secondly, cutting the funding results in such organizations being substantially harmed and weakened economically. Thus, such oil-rich Gulf States are not only very vulnerable and subject to such terrorist activity but are also a key factor in the defeat of organizations that actively carry out such activities.

Iraq

Iraq is the home to a large percentage of the world's terrorist activity linked to oil reserves. Home to the largest terrorist organizations, namely Al Qaeda and ISIS, it plays an important role in the fight against oil related terrorism. It has also been recorded that oil-reserves are the cause of hostile activities and military conflict between Iraq and the Islamic state, due to Iraq trying to regain some of its oil-rich regions from the Islamic State. As is evident, oil is of the utmost importance for the state of Iraq, and also a vulnerable target for any enemy forces. Thus, it is imperative that the oil related facilities are safely protected from terrorist activity and that oil reserves are secured properly from attacking forces.

Nigeria

Nigeria is the largest source of oil in the whole of Africa, and thus is subjected to multiple threats regarding its oil reserves. It has had a large history with terrorist activity regarding energy issues as it has been subjected to many instances of terrorist attacks targeting its oil reserves. Also, another aspect of Nigeria's problem with oil regarding terrorism is the terrorist activity in the Niger Delta. The Niger Delta is the region of the Niger River delta that sits between the Gulf of Guinea and the Nigerian Coast. This region has been subjected to heavy terrorism, targeting specifically its large-scale oil reserves. This activity has not received much attention from international sources, mainly because it has not been linked

to the typical terrorist organizations such as ISIS and Al Qaeda, but has significantly weakened Nigeria's economy. This terrorist activity has been specifically targeted to damage the economy of the Nigerian government and thus has managed to significantly harm its economy. This kind of activity is harming the Nigerian government, resulting in its citizens suffering as it has received many economic blows and is unable to provide for its civilians. Thus, action needs to be immediately taken with regard to the terrorist attacks targeting Nigeria, and specifically the Nigerian Delta, so as to restore the country's economy.

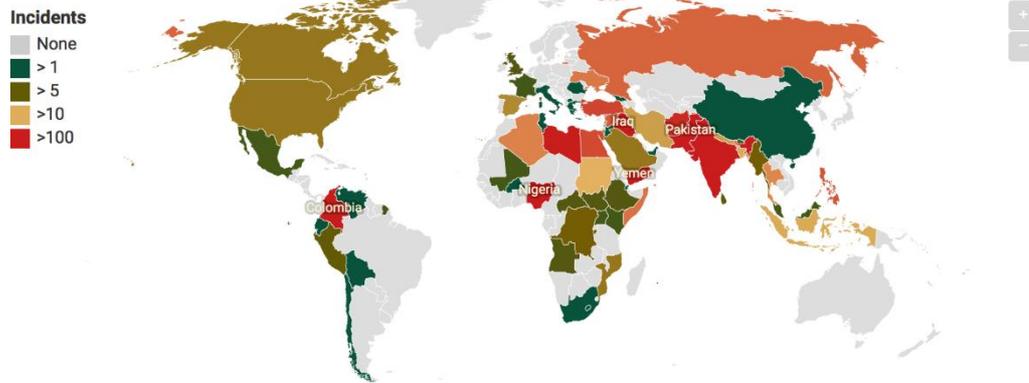
Al-Qaeda

Al-Qaeda is a multinational terrorist organization that is responsible for a large number of attacks that have been mainly focused on oil related facilities. This organization was founded during the Afghan-Soviet war and is more commonly known for its attack on the World Trade Center on 9/11/2001, which consequently brought about the start of the "War on Terror". It is one of the largest terrorist organizations in the world, along with ISIS, and is responsible for numerous attacks and casualties throughout the world.

Islamic State of Iran and Syria (ISIS)

Isis is arguably one of the largest terrorist organizations and is heavily related with oil transactions. Having planned and carried out numerous attacks that are oil related, its main source of funding comes from "oil money". This is a result of hundreds of oil reserves being taken over and manipulated to illegally sell oil. Not only that, but a large amount of their income comes from states, such as Kuwait, that are oil-rich. ISIS has generated a huge demand for illegal oil, taking over oil fields by force and then either illegally selling its product to allies that have supported it, or manipulating energy consumption because of the terrible situations that people are subject to.

Attacks on Oil and Gas Facilities, 2000 to 2016



Note: Incidents include attacks on oil tankers, pipelines, and oil and gas utilities as the primary, secondary, or tertiary target.
 Map: Securing America's Future Energy • Source: SAFE analysis based on data from University of Maryland.

TIMELINE OF EVENTS

Date	Description of Event
1997	International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings
1999	International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism
11 September 2001	Terrorist attack on the World Trade Center
28 September 2001	United Nations Security Council Resolution 1373
8 September 2006	Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy
March 2017	Security Council resolution

UN INVOLVEMENT: RELEVANT RESOLUTIONS, TREATIES AND EVENTS

- International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings, 1997. This provides member states with basic guidelines as to how to combat and deal with terrorist bombings. One measure that is heavily stressed is the adoption of domestic legislature that will help mitigate the situation, and also highlights the fact that state parties shall work in full cooperation when investigating and dealing with the situation.
- International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism, 1999, in which the main terms of a situation that is considered a terrorist attack are stated, such as in articles 1 and 2. Paths of actions are also stated when confronted with such

a situation such as in Article 4 where the adjustment of a country's legislature is suggested. Furthermore, the need for the establishment of jurisdiction over such offenses is highlighted. Moreover, it is stated that the measures should differ from country to country and work according to the domestic legal principles of each state.

- United Nations Security Council Resolution 1373. This resolution generally focuses on a few main points. Firstly, measures towards preventing and suppressing the financing of terrorism. Furthermore, measures that limit the recruitment of individuals for terrorist organizations, so as to lessen the support towards such groups, whether passive or active. Lastly, measures that work towards improving the exchange of operational information regarding the movement of terrorist organizations and their members such as forged official documents, and communication methods amongst terrorist groups.
- Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, 8 September 2006. This initiative adopted by member states to enhance and improve efforts towards combating terrorism focuses on four main pillars. Firstly, it focuses on measures that address, the spread of terrorism, such as lessening the appeal of terrorism, combating and mitigating conflict, facilitating smooth discussion amongst parties, and enhancing socio-economic development. Furthermore, it highlights measures to overall combat terrorism, such as measures that regard the legal infrastructure of a country. Next, there are measures that focus on strengthening the infrastructure of the states, and the United Nation's system regarding terrorist activity. Lastly, there are measures protecting humanitarian laws, and preventing the violations of human rights, while combating terrorism.
- Security Council resolution 2341 (2017). This resolution focuses on the protection of critical infrastructure. The main points of this document are the following. Primarily, understanding the threat, and thus developing strategies appropriate for this particular matter. Furthermore, establishing criminal responsibility for terrorist activity and fostering collaboration between national agencies and member states, by exchanging information and offering assistance. And lastly, offering more specific initiatives that can be adopted according to each sector.

PREVIOUS ATTEMPTS TO SOLVE THE ISSUE

As seen by the resolution passed by the Security Council 2341 in March of 2017, many attempts have been made towards working on the protection of critical infrastructure against terrorist attacks. More specifically, a series of measures were drawn up so as to prevent such terrorist activity and protect infrastructure, such as:

1. Raising awareness of the danger and impact that these terrorist attacks have on the world, and their consequences on people.
2. For the development and improvement of basic infrastructure in countries so as to better combat terrorist activity: this can be brought about by adopting measures such as promoting interoperability in security.
3. The cooperation of Member States so as to improve readiness, mitigation and protection from terrorist activity.
4. Strengthen national and international relations with stakeholders so as to better share information and experiences to protect and prepare against such activity.
5. Developing strategies so as to better protect crucial infrastructures against terrorism.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

There are multiple approaches that could help eliminate terrorist activities throughout the world. Firstly, attempts can be made towards minimizing fuel explosions and fires through the use of polymers. Scientists have recently discovered that, by using certain polymers, they are able to minimize the impact of fuel and fire explosions that are often utilized in terrorist attacks linked to oil. Thus, if this could be further researched and applied on a larger scale, it could limit damage control that occurs after such attacks and minimize the impact of the explosions, making a basic component of such attacks less useful.

Another aspect that could possibly work towards the protection and the state of readiness for such attacks is the development of a policy that contains operational aspects, including early-warning systems and information-sharing. Such an approach is one that could very easily benefit states and organizations, as it is a simple and forward way to prevent such activity. Through the development of such policies that could contain approaches for all aspects of the matter, an organized solution could be reached.

Furthermore, in relation to the previous suggestion a focal point network could be created and would benefit states and organizations immensely. This would entail a system which would have a checkpoint at each “focal point” that the creators deem necessary, and so closer scrutiny and better security could be offered for the better preparedness against terrorist activity. This would happen in consultation with the private sector, civil society and academia, because there needs to be an effective relationship in the trading of information and knowledge between stakeholders so as to facilitate a comprehensive approach to this matter.

Also, the creation of a specialized law enforcement attack-response structure could be a way of successfully combating terrorist activity. In combination with the creation of a focal-point system and the development of new policies regarding the preparedness, this law enforcement structure could be an effective approach towards the combating of terrorist activity. Through the new system, there would be the quick exchange of information regarding irregular activity, and so the law enforcement officers could be dispatched accordingly and deal with the commotion.

Overall, as this matter is one that consumes all aspects and spans across many sectors, I suggest the solutions proposed should be well-thought out, and should cover all aspects. The security of people and the assurance of it should be a top priority. Furthermore, the spread of terrorism and its appeal among people should be addressed through clauses, as the issue should be addressed at its root. Additionally, a factor that should be taken into account is the financing and funding of such activity, something that needs to be prohibited and suppressed through measures. Lastly, a very important point is the strengthening of a state’s infrastructure, so as to be prepared to face critical situations, and combat terrorism.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

“Al Qaeda.” *Dictionary.com*, Dictionary.com, www.dictionary.com/browse/al--qaeda.

“Attacks on Oil Infrastructure Increase as Prices Reach Multi-Year Highs.” *The Fuse*, 13 Apr. 2018, energyfuse.org/attacks-oil-infrastructure-increase-prices-reach-multi-year-highs/.

“COUNTER TERRORISM.” *United Nations*, United Nations,
www.un.org/en/counterterrorism/legal-instruments.shtml.

Jenkins, John Philip. “Terrorism.” *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 26 Oct. 2018, www.britannica.com/topic/terrorism.

Luft, Gal, et al. *Terror and Oil*, www.iags.org/n0111041.htm.

“Minimizing Fuel Explosions and Fires from Accidents and Terrorist Acts with Polymers.” *ScienceDaily*, ScienceDaily, 2 Apr. 2019,
www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2019/04/190402081539.htm.

“Non-State Actors.” *ESCR*, www.escr-net.org/resources/non-state-actors.

“Saudi Top Prosecutor: We Have Taken Many Measures against Terrorism, Money Laundering.” *Awsat*, aawsat.com/english/home/article/1601536/saudi-top-prosecutor-we-have-taken-many-measures-against-terrorism-money.

Stower, and Jeffrey J. “Vulnerability of the United States' Oil Supply to Terrorist Attack.” *Apps.dtic.mil*, apps.dtic.mil/docs/citations/ADA506988.

Taft, Nathan. “Explaining the Connections between Oil and Terrorism.” *Fuel Freedom Foundation*, 7 June 2017, www.fueelfreedom.org/oil-and-terrorism/.

“The Islamic State (Terrorist Organization).” *RAND Corporation*, www.rand.org/topics/the-islamic-state-terrorist-organization.html.

“United Nations General Assembly Adopts Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy | Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force.” *United Nations*, United Nations,
www.un.org/counterterrorism/ctitf/en/united-nations-general-assembly-adopts-global-counter-terrorism-strategy.

“United Nations Security Council Resolution 1373 (2001) - United Nations Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee.” *United Nations*, United Nations,
www.un.org/sc/ctc/resources/databases/recommended-international-practices-codes-and-standards/united-nations-security-council-resolution-1373-2001/.