

Understanding the effects of global terrorist attacks on citizen's well-being and vice-versa

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Terrorism is a global phenomenon (Institute for Economics & Peace, 2014) that over the last 44 years more than 140,000 terrorist events have been carried out in 207 different countries using mainly explosives, bombs, dynamite and firearms, and killing around 310,000 civilians. In addition to the devastating human cost of terrorism, in terms of lives lost or permanently altered, terrorist acts aim to destabilize governments and undermine economic and social development so addressing this threat is that much more difficult given the complex and constantly evolving dynamics of terrorist activity (UNODC, 2016). On the one hand, in the period from 1970 to 2001, the five countries most impacted by terrorist groups were Colombia, Peru, El Salvador, United Kingdom and India. On the other hand, in the period post-2001 the five countries ranked at the top of terrorist incidents were Iraq, Pakistan, Afghanistan, India and Thailand. Although terrorism has been present in social life for decades, only after the World Trade Center Attacks of September 11, 2001, did the topic gain new significance as a sociopolitical phenomenon and as a method of warfare (vos Fellman, Bar-Yam and Minai, 2015). One method for measuring in an aggregate way, how much people suffer under terrorist attacks at national level is to analyze the correlation between some well-being indicators and the number of terrorist attacks. The aim of this study is to analyze empirically the correlation between the global terrorist attacks and the countries well-being in terms of *narcotrafic, religious diversity, voice and accountability, political stability and absence of violence, government effectiveness, regulatory quality, rule of law, and control of corruption* indicators. This study is based on data from the Global Terrorism Database (GTD, 2015), the Afghanistan opium survey 2015 (UNODOC, 2015), the Religious Diversity Index (RDI, 2015) and the dataset Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI, 2015). From socio-political and governance aspects analyzed, five indicators showed a strong relationship with the number of terrorist attacks in the case of the four most attacked countries: Iraq, Pakistan, Afghanistan and India, by terrorist in the post 2001 context. These indicators were political stability and absence of violence/terrorism, government effectiveness, regulatory quality, rule of law and control of corruption. The Religious Diversity Index was analyzed for the four most attacked countries by terrorist groups in 2010 in order to determine if religion has been a driven for terrorism in such countries. In this direction, Iraq and Afghanistan as the countries most affected by terrorist attacks in the post-2001 context had the lowest value in RDI (one religion context). Contrary, in the case of India, the increasing intensity of terrorism activity was developed in a multi religion context, coexisting Christians, Muslims and Hindus. Additionally, the perceptions of the extent to which a country's citizens are able to participate in selecting their government, as well as freedom of expression, freedom of association, and a free media did not correlate with the number of terrorist incidents. Since 1963, the international community has elaborated 19 international legal instruments to prevent terrorist acts that were developed under the auspices of the United Nations and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and are open to participation by all Member States (UNODOC, 2016). Additionally, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy on 8 September 2006, as a unique global instrument to enhance national, regional and international efforts to counter terrorism, composed of four pillars: addressing the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism, measures to

prevent and combat terrorism, measures to build state's capacity to prevent and combat terrorism and to strengthen the role of the United Nations system in that regard and measures to ensure respect for human rights for all and the rule of law as the fundamentals basis for the fight against terrorism. Both international counter terrorism efforts share a common theme: the prevention of terrorism. In order to effectively prevent terrorism at global level, based on the insights of this study, we recommend that governments need to recognize the terrorism as a social phenomenon motivated by political-ideological drivers that emerge from the lowest values in political stability and absence of violence/terrorism, government effectiveness, regulatory quality, rule of law and control of corruption indicators. So, counter terrorism policymaking must be based on the improving of socio-political conditions. We consider that our findings can support the design of new strategies for preventing terrorist activities taking into account certain socio-economic-political drivers. As such drivers are complex and multifactorial, and their motivations, financing, methods of attack and choice of target are constantly changing, so the traditional counter-terrorism efforts such international efforts are infeasible to respond to collective crises generated by the terrorist attacks affecting life satisfaction in public spaces. In conclusion, it is necessary to adopt the complex adaptive system (CAS) approach to provide a new way of thinking about terrorism.

Key words: terrorist attacks; national well-being; global governance; corruption; drugs.

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