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TERRORISM: A CONTEMPORARY THREAT TO THE EXISTENCE OF PEOPLE IN THE WORLD TERRORYZM WSPÓŁCZESNYM ZAGROŻENIEM DLA PRAWIDŁOWEJ EGZYSTENCJI LUDZI NA ŚWIECIE

Abstract: Terrorism is one of the biggest threats around the world. Academics and people associated with politics as well as the media are anticipating the next movements of organisations such as Al-Qaida, Hamas and ISIS. It is important to remember that the events of 11 September 2001 revived all sorts of conversations about terrorism and its effects not only in the USA, but all over the world. The reason for such discussions was the attack on the WTC. This incident showed and made everyone realise that terrorism is not a local but a global threat.¹ Suicide bombing is somehow no longer as big a problem as it was a few years ago, and the terrorists themselves have moved with the times and started to operate by manipulating the internet and stock markets in order to crash the economy from within. Terrorism has shown that it has links with and influences politics. Terrorist organisations have no correlation whatsoever with existing international laws and regulations within a country. It can be said that terrorist activities manifest themselves through certain arrangements within a given terrorist organisation and these are most important for its members to achieve their goals.

Zarys treści: Terroryzm to jedno z największych zagrożeń na całym świecie. Naukowcy, w tym ludzie powiązani z polityką jak i mediami, oczekują kolejnych ruchów organizacji takich jak Al-Kaida czy Hamas lub ISIS. Należy pamiętać, że wydarzenia z dnia 11 września 2001 roku ożywiły wszelakie rozmowy o terroryzmie i ich skutkach nie tylko w USA ale i na całym świecie. Powodem takowych rozmów było nic innego jak zamach na WTC. Owy incydent pokazał i uświadomił wszystkim, że terroryzm to nie jest zagrożenie lokalne a globalne.² Terroryzm samobójczy przestał poniekąd być już aż tak wielkim problemem jak kilka lat temu, a sami terroryści poszli z duchem czasu i zaczęli działać poprzez manipulacje w internecie jak i na giełdach papierów wartościowych, ażeby rozbić gospodarkę od środka. Sam terroryzm ma powiązania z polityką i na nią oddziałuje. Organizacje terrorystyczne nie mają żadnych

¹ Stemplowski, R., *Transnarodowa harmonizacja bezpieczeństwa i rozwoju ograniczy transnarodowy terroryzm*, „Polski Przegląd Dyplomatyczny” 2001, vol. 1, no. 3(3), pp. 5–8.

² *Ibidem*.

korelacji z istniejącymi prawami międzynarodowymi jak i zarządzeniami wewnątrz danego kraju. Można stwierdzić, że działania terrorystyczne przejawiają się poprzez pewne ustalenia wewnątrz danej organizacji terrorystycznej i są one dla członków najważniejsze, aby osiągnąć wyznaczone cele.

Keywords: terrorism, security, threat, refugees

Słowa kluczowe: terroryzm, bezpieczeństwo, zagrożenie, uchodźcy

Terrorism and its significance

The definition of terrorism is difficult to define, but it should be mentioned here that A. Machowski stated that the word terrorism originates, in a way, from the ancient literary language of Sanskrit, where *tras* means *to tremble*, while the Greek word *tereos* has the same meaning. The modern word terrorism originated in France from the word *terreur*, and it means *anger* or *terror*.³ More than 200 different definitions of the meaning of the word terrorism can be found in the literature. Why do they differ? They have different emphasis on the motives that drive organisations to commit terrorist acts. It should be remembered that K. Jałoszyński mentioned that the object of attack is at the core of terrorist activity.⁴ In Prague, during the NATO summit in November 2002, it was accepted that terrorism is the unlawful use of force against individuals or the intimidation of governments or society to achieve religious or ideological goals.

Earlier, on 13 June 2002, the Council of the European Union⁵ drew up a list of activities that can be considered terrorist acts, the most common being:

- attacks on life;
- attacks for the purpose of deprivation of life;
- causing serious damage to government or public administration property, transport, information and IT systems and private business;
- hijacking of public transport;
- use of weapons of mass destruction, including explosives, and nuclear, biological and chemical materials;
- interruption of energy supplies, including water;
- public intimidation.

The Polish encyclopaedia PWN described terrorism as “the use of rape, cruelty to intimidate, destroy an opponent.”⁶ Terrorism expert A. Pawłowski understands by the concept of terrorism as “*the use of rape by individuals or groups of individuals, in order to influence both the government and public opinion, as well as groups*

³ Machowski, A., *Zagrożenia bioterroryzmem: dydaktyczno-prewencyjne aspekty zarządzania bezpieczeństwem społecznym*, Mysłowice 2008, p. 12.

⁴ Jałoszyński, K., *Terroryzm czy terror kryminalny w Polsce?*, Warszawa 2001, pp. 7–8.

⁵ Council Framework Decision of 13 June 2002 on combating terrorism.

⁶ *Encyklopedia Popularna PWN*, Warszawa 1993, p. 864.

*of people and individuals.*⁷ It should also be mentioned that terrorism is a planned action that is well organised in a very precise manner.

According to S. Zalewska, terrorism has accompanied humanity for many years in the form of political struggles. The author is under the impression that it is, in a sense, a threat to national security which is detrimental to the good of every state.

Terrorism in history

As mentioned earlier, terrorism dates back to ancient Greece. According to the Greeks, a person who deprived a tyrant of his life could enjoy the title of hero. The great thinkers of the time, such as Aristotle and Plato, stated in their works that the murder of tyrants was justified because they were criminals. The philosopher Seneca the Younger believed that there was no better sacrifice for the gods than the blood of a tyrant.⁸ In ancient literature one can also find the statement that the sicarii and the zealots also resorted to terrorist means.

The Persian association, which was founded in 1090 in Persia and whose leader was the great Hassan Ben Sabah, otherwise known as the old man of the mountains, had members who believed in the right idea. Very often the members of this association became intoxicated with hashish, which made them more aggressive and which also prompted them to murder Crusaders in the Holy Land.⁹ The Persian association was so strong and recognisable that in many languages the translation came down to one word – assassins.

In the early 1990s, huge changes were taking place in the political arena in Europe. The break-up of the USSR and the collapse of people's democracy led to a great decrease in terrorist attacks. As is usually the case, the cessation of one grouping is an incendiary link for others. This was also the case here, where after communist incidents, Islamic terrorism manifested itself, which itself had its origins in Iran in 1979. According to R. Borkowski, terrorism is used in some cultural movements as well as sects with a military basis. At the end of the twentieth century, many terrorist attacks were committed to draw attention to ecology and in opposition to abortion.

The inflammatory 11 September 2001 attacks forced politicians as well as scientists to consider not only how to combat terrorism, but also how to eliminate it altogether. The terrorist attacks in Washington and New York crossed a boundary, if one can speak of any boundary in relation to terrorism, and the world and society as a whole realised how great the threat to life and health was. After the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001, NATO recorded a very wide range of assistance from member countries and beyond. There was concern in Europe about the attacks in the United States. It was considered whether the next step of Islamic terror would be in Europe,

⁷ Pawłowski, A., *Terroryzm w Europie w XIX–XX wieku*, Zielona Góra 1980, pp. 9–10.

⁸ Lucius Annaeus Seneca Minor (born c. 4 BC in Cordoba/Spain, died 65 AD); Miłkowski, T., Machcewicz, P., *Historia Hiszpanii*, Wrocław 1998, pp. 29–30.

⁹ Wasserman, J., *Templars and Assassins. Two secret orders – the Christian Templars and the Muslim Assassins*, Warsaw 2007, pp. 66–68.

if only in view of the fact that the old continent is a place of living for many millions of Muslims. It was noticed that after the 11 September attacks Muslim organisations were more active, which at the time could have been a cause for concern. Unfortunately, the predictions were wrong, as evidenced by the incidents of 11 March 2004 in Madrid and 7 July 2005 in London. Scientists and experts believe that super-terrorist attacks are to be feared, which will possibly occur through the use of means of mass destruction or by paralysing systems and networks.

Types of terrorism

All actions that can be considered terrorist boil down to brutality and the atrocious treatment of those affected. A kind of traditional terrorism can be considered:

- murders;
- use of explosives;
- kidnapping people;
- hijacking of means of transport;
- use of biological as well as chemical weapons.

However, it should be borne in mind that all terrorist acts involve a wide range of targets.¹⁰ It is also important to realise that a small group of people or a single individual can also commit terrorist acts which lead, more often than not, to disruption. Terrorist acts carried out by a small group of people are often also linked to recordings accompanied by shouting and mass hysteria, the reason for such recordings being to show the power that the terrorists have. Thus, such recordings can be expected to be followed by extremely violent acts. An example of this can be seen in the fact that Islamic terrorists very often record victims' decapitations. This causes increased media and security service interest. Terrorist acts can be aimed at humiliating a country's government. In the past, terrorist acts have mainly targeted security institutions, showing up these institution's incompetence and lack of professionalism. Terrorists thus provoked the authorities, with the result that they were forced to take preventive action. Humiliating a security institution can have negative consequences because, in this way, the support for the country's rulers can fall and can lead to the downfall of governments.

The collapse of the USSR has also, in a way, contributed to the development of terrorism. With Russia's unjustified attack on Ukraine, we can safely call it a terrorist country that wants to pursue at all costs the unrealistic ideology of being both the greatest military and economic power in the world. This kind of act of barbarism can safely be called international terrorism. This is, above all, actions that are directed against various countries in the world.

In addition to international terrorism, criminal terrorism can also be distinguished. This is overly violent and rarely used. Criminal terrorism can include:

¹⁰ Piątkowski, P., *Terroryzm. Nowe wyzwanie dla bezpieczeństwa*, Warszawa 1996, pp. 5–7.

- sex offenders;
- criminals who kidnap mainly for ransom.

The use of terrorist acts can be mainly motivated by the satisfaction of one's imaginary needs. In times of crisis, this can also be likened to a lack of livelihood as well as mental disorders.

Local terrorism focuses on a particular place and on fighting the local authorities. It is mainly aimed at intimidating citizens in a given district. This is to oppose, in a sense, the decisions taken in the region.

Individual terrorism is focused on a well-defined person in order to carry out a given specific act, e.g. murder or abduction of a politically connected person.¹¹ According to J. Muszyński, the following types of terrorism can be distinguished:¹²

- legal terrorism – this is used in regime countries such as North Korea. It involves subjugating an entire population to a ruling person or ruling party and forcing the population to obey;
- illegal terrorism – used by groups to gain power and influence society; this illegality is due to the lack of legal approval for the existence of an official organisation.

On the other hand, according to K. Jałoszyński, terrorism can be divided by its basis of action such as:¹³

- nationalist – which expresses itself both socially and politically by postulating the rightness and supremacy of its intentions;
- separatist – seeks the separation of a national group and the creation of its own independent state;
- fundamentalist – mainly concentrates people who consider themselves fanatics of a particular religion and want it to be the main faith in a country by supplanting other faiths;
- racist – this is linked to expressions of contempt towards people of a different skin colour or religion.

Terrorist groups do not have a lot of resources both to sustain their activities and to create all sorts of public incidents. However, they do happen to have huge monetary resources. Where do these funds come from? In the main, they come from the sale of pirated software, computer games, films, hacking, the manufacture and sale of counterfeit white goods and household appliances. It can therefore be concluded that wealthy terrorist organisations are very technically skilled. This is evidenced by the fact that many well-educated university graduates return to their country to share their knowledge, which also leads to the development of cyber-terrorism.

¹¹ Dietl, W., Hirschmann, K., Tophoven, R., *Terrorism*, Warsaw 2009, pp. 340–341.

¹² Muszyński, J., *Istota terroryzmu politycznego*, [in:] *Terroryzm polityczny*, J. Muszyński (ed.), Warszawa 1981, p. 23.

¹³ Jałoszyński, K., *Współczesny wymiar antyterroryzmu*, Wydawnictwo Trio, Warszawa 2008, p. 37.

How are terrorist groups organised?

Terrorist groups are always very organised and structured. Their structure is usually hierarchical and can be compared to a kind of intelligence agency when viewed as an organisation. As in an army, the highest position is occupied by the leadership, which usually includes the people who initially created the organisation. Their main task is to raise funds for the proper functioning of the organisation, and very often these funds come from illegal sources. Some members of the command are very careful, making it impossible for any security service to expose them. The overriding responsibility of commanders in terrorist organisations is to analyse and carry out attacks on designated targets as well as giving direct orders.

Terrorist organisations always act in a deliberate manner and have their own information-gathering teams, so they can be called in a certain sense an intelligence agency. The people who make up the information-gathering teams are the second most important core after the command. It is thanks to them that the commanders of terrorist organisations can take precise and well-considered steps regarding potential attacks. Intelligence activities also include the recruitment of new members, who are subjected to very thorough checks, not only in terms of their education and skills, but mainly in terms of their suitability and loyalty to the organisation.

Another part of terrorist organisations is the support group. Their tasks are no less important than the intelligence group. These include reconnoitring and analysing the terrain in search of suitable hiding places, ambush sites and shelters. They are also in charge of preparing resources for the purchase of equipment, without which the organisation could not exist. Colloquially speaking, they are a kind of accounting department.

Who then is responsible for carrying out the attacks? This is the so-called tactical group. It is always the most numerous group and its members are people who have been trained for many years to carry out all kinds of tasks. Various psychological forms have been used during training. Training includes weapons training, vehicle driving and, above all, the preparation of bombs of various designs. The training of terrorist groups can be compared to the activities of the special services, and these can include:¹⁴

- conspiracy of action;
- ensuring the legality of documents;
- obtaining information linked to terrorist organisations from intelligence services;
- training in countries that support the terrorist organisation concerned;
- intimidation of groups of people in order to gain adequate publicity;
- analysis of the political-economic situation in the world.

In carrying out an analysis of terrorism, it is possible to distinguish three groups at which attacks are directed, and the attacks themselves have a related goal:

¹⁴ Mroziewicz, K., *Moc, niemoc, przemoc*, Bydgoszcz–Warszawa 2005, pp. 398–399.

- government authorities – the aim of attacks is to force the government and governing authorities to change their views, to force changes in policy and to force authorities to release imprisoned terrorists in exchange for sensitive/secret/classified information;
- the military and the police – forcing the families of police and military officers to cooperate with terrorist organisations, making reparations for attacks carried out against terrorist organisations, and ridiculing the police and the military;
- business – terrorising business people is aimed at raising funds for the organisation's activities, terrorising business people because of their links with the authorities of a particular state.

Combating terrorism

The Republic of Poland, as well as other countries around the world, is striving to combat terrorism and prevent it from spreading across national territory. The question that needs to be asked is whether the Republic of Poland is in any way threatened by terrorism? The answer is very simple, because the threat of terrorist attacks on Polish territory is negligible, so we should not fear that this will change in the near future. According to E. Szafrńska, the possibility of terrorist attacks exists, but their actual occurrence is negligible. Potential causes of terrorist threats which may occur on the territory of the Republic of Poland include:¹⁵

- alliance with the United States of America;
- membership of anti-terrorist groups;
- the participation of the Republic of Poland in peacekeeping missions;
- NATO membership;
- Schengen membership;
- Iraq's poor stabilisation;
- an increase in the number of people of Chechen origin on the territory of the Republic of Poland – Chechens are considered to be one of the most violent nationalities in the whole world;
- increase in the number of Caucasian refugees.

What could be the result of more attacks? The spark and encouragement of terrorists may have been a wider opening of the borders. During the war in Ukraine, which began on 24 February 2022, refugees from the east entered the Republic of Poland to obtain shelter and assistance. It can therefore be presumed that there may have been people among them who are a potential threat, but it is difficult to determine whether this was/will be the case.

¹⁵ Szafrńska, E., *Bezpieczeństwo państwa w kontekście zagrożeń terrorystycznych*, [in:] *Wojna z terroryzmem w XXI wieku*, B. Hołyst, K. Jałoszyński, A. Letkiewicz (eds.), Szczytno 2009, pp. 156–162.

Analysing the situation in various countries where there are very great restrictions on personal freedom and freedom of speech, the citizens of these countries are forced to flee their homeland. From the point of view of the security of the Republic of Poland, it is also important to look at refugees not only from Ukraine, but also from other countries which are considered to be regimes in which freedom of speech or of the media is restricted. Such countries include Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, China, North Korea and Belarus. Refugees from these countries are fleeing because they want to live a normal life in a country that will not persecute them for their faith, sexual orientation or membership of any kind of organisation. Terrorist organisations can exploit this because their members can pretend to be refugees, making it all the more difficult to find them.

Conclusions

In conclusion, it can be said that terrorism has grown enormously since the collapse of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in 1991. Not only has the number of members of a given terrorist organisation increased, but most of them have decided to move with the times and have increased in professionalism as well. It has been known for a long time that quality is followed by results. This is something that all countries, regardless of their political system or orientation, should be aware of. The opening up of borders has led to an increasingly rapid spread of terrorists, and finding and combating them is becoming increasingly difficult. In relation to the situation that is taking place in the east of our country, we need to be careful who we allow into the Republic of Poland, as not every person who has refugee status is one. Terrorist organisations will do anything to achieve their aims, be they military, political or dangerous.

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Legal acts

Council Framework Decision of 13 June 2002 on combating terrorism.

Summary

Terrorism is one of the greatest threats worldwide. Scientists, including people associated with politics and the media, anticipate the next moves of organisations such as Al-Qaeda, Hamas and ISIS. It should be remembered that the events of 11 September 2001 revived all kinds of talk about terrorism and its effects not only in the USA, but also around the world. The reason for such talk was the attack on the WTC. This attack showed and made everyone aware that terrorism is not a local but a global threat. Suicide bombing has ceased to be such a big problem as it was a few years ago, and terrorists have changed with the times and act through manipulation on the Internet and on the stock exchanges to break the economies from the inside.

Terrorism has shown that it has links with politics and political influence. Terrorist organisations have no correlation with existing international laws and ordinances within a given country. It can be said that terrorist activities are undertaken through certain arrangements within a given terrorist organisation, and these are the most important for members to achieve their goals.