

## Quantitative aspects of the phenomenon

On a global scale there is a worsening of the terrorism situation in the world, with a growing number of countries experiencing record levels of terrorist attacks. The total number of deaths per terrorism in the world, an approximate figure due to the difficulty of accurately defining cases of terrorist attacks from other forms of conflict of other nature, is around 30,000 people. There are five countries, Iraq, Afghanistan, Nigeria, Pakistan and Syria, which alone account for about two-thirds of the total of the victims. The active terrorist groups that have carried out deadly attacks in the last years are around 150, but only four groups are responsible for more than 70% of the dead. In descending order of lethality they are: ISIL, Boko Haram, Taliban, Al-Qaeda.

Much of the responsibility for this new boom of terrorism is due to the emergence of ISIL, which with an unprecedented formula of creating a terrorist proto-state created a global network of jihadist movements, managing to become the first terrorist movement in the world, surpassing Boko Haram which, in the meantime, has been militarily confronted and reduced, provoking an decrease in the number of victims attributed to them.

In 2015, ISIL attacked over 250 cities in 28 different countries, causing more than 6,000 deaths. A real record in the panorama of terrorist movements for geographic diversification of goals, planning capabilities, and lethality of operations. Much of the success of this global jihadist terrorist network is related to the fact that at least half of the ISIL operations were conducted by terrorists who, while affiliated with the global project carried out by the Islamic State, did not have direct contact with the ISIL core.

In 2015, there were 9 major episodes of terrorism that resulted in more than 150 victims, producing a total of about 1900 deaths; of these, 800 are attributable to ISIL.

*Countries with a death toll of more than 150 in 2015 (source Global Terrorism Index 2016)*

Country	Place	Terrorist Group	Number of victims
Iraq	Qaim	ISIL	300
Siria	Palmyra	ISIL	280
Afghanistan	Kunduz	Taleban	340
Niger	Karamga island	Boko Haram	230
Egypt	North Sinai	ISIL Sinai	224
Syria	Ishtabraq	Ansar al Din	200
Nigeria	Kukuwa-Gari	Boko Haram	174
Kenya	Garissa	Al-Shabaab	154
Total			1.902

Particularly worrying is the extension of terrorism more and more towards the Western countries. In 2015 OECD countries saw a 650% increase in terrorist activities. Here too, ISIL is largely responsible for this upsurge: in 2015, Western nations saw a total of 67 attacks with over 300 deaths. It represents an innovative trend as it breaks the classic correlations of terrorism with civil wars, social and economic backwardness, and the use of state-sponsored forms of terror.

Traditionally, the vast majority of terrorist attacks took place within internal conflicts that saw a high level of violence and the use by the state of extrajudicial killings, widespread use of torture and other forms of abuse and ill treatment inside prison systems.

The reduction in the global death toll in 2015, was largely attributable to the decrease in deaths caused by Boko Haram and those occurring in Iraq at the hands of ISIL or other terrorist groups, there is an increase in the number of countries experiencing a high level of terrorist attacks. Commonly, the threshold that indicate a severe terrorist attack is measured with a number of victims (deaths) above 25. In 2015, the number of countries that had at least one terrorist attack with more than 25 victims rose to 34, including France. In this group, Turkey has also seen a substantial increase in the number of victims of terrorism in the country.

*Percentage of deaths for terrorism in 2015 and in the period 2000 – 2015 (source: Global Terrorism Index 2016)*

Country	Percentage of deaths for terrorism on the world terrorist casualties in 2015	Number of total deaths for terrorist attacks between 2000 – and 2015	Population mln	Trend 2015/2014
Iraq	23,7	50.000	37,2	Diminution
Afghanistan	18,1	22.000	34,6	Increase
Nigeria	16,8	17.000	186	Diminution
Syria	9,4	6.370	18,4	Increase
Yemen	5,2	3.600	27,5	Increase
Pakistan	3,7	15.000	193	Diminution
Egypt	2,3	1.200	95	Increase
Somalia	2,2	3.700	14,3	Diminution
Niger	2,2	n.a	20	n.a
Cameroon	1,9	n.a	23	n.a
Rest of the world	14,6		-	

Of course, assessing the risk of terrorism does not only mean assessing the number of deaths produced in a particular country but also observing the spread of attacks even at lower intensity that do not produce a large number of deaths but still allow terrorist movements to put in place a process erosive of the control of the territory to the detriment of the central state monopoly on the use of force and their legitimacy. If we consider the frequency and intensity of the attacks and not their lethality it includes countries such as India (7% of global attacks), the Philippines (4%), the Bangladesh (4%) and Libya (3%).

### **The transformational processes of terrorism and its expansion in the OECD area**

It is evident that since several years, and especially since the last five years, we are witnessing deep transformational processes of the terrorism. A phenomenon that is increasing in Western and European societies that are more and more inter-connected with the global world; a very complex and sensitive topic also from the point of view of the psychological management of the phenomenon and strictly connected with the growing multicultural characters of many European societies. One topic of concern is certainly the widening of the number of countries affected by terrorist attacks: if in 2015 we witnessed a clear decrease in the number of total deaths in the most affected countries (those with more than 500 deaths) we experienced at the same time a surge in the number of countries that are reporting more than 50 deaths.

As far as the OECD countries are concerned, 2015 is the year with the largest number of terrorist attacks and deaths over the past fifteen years, exceeding the level that had been reached in 2004, the year of the London and Madrid attacks.

The confirmation that this trend is now a consolidated phenomenon, at least since the uprising of the Arab Spring, is demonstrated by the fact that we are now in the sixth consecutive year of the deterioration of the terrorist situation in the economically most developed and politically stable region of the planet. Of the 34 OECD countries, 21 registered at least a terrorist attack with a total of 731 attacks in the entire region (they were 592 in 2004). Turkey, France, USA, Israel, Germany, Mexico, Sweden and Australia have been the most affected countries. ISIL has been responsible, directly or as an inspiration of local actors, of almost all attacks in Europe.

*The first 10 terrorist attacks in the OCSE area in 2015 – 2016 (July). Source Global Terrorism Index 2016*

Country	Place	Year	Number of deaths	Perpetrator
France	Paris	2015	137	ISIL
Turkey	Ankara	2015	105	ISIL
Turkey	Suruc	2015	33	ISIL inspired
France	Ile-de-France	2015	20	Inspired Al-Qaeda/ISIL
France	Nizza	2016	85	Inspired ISIL
Turkey	Ankara airport	2016	50	ISIL
USA	Orlando	2016	50	Inspired ISIL
Belgium	Bruxelles	2016	35	ISIL
Turkey	Ankara	2016	34	TAK
Turkey	Ankara	2016	30	TAK

### Analysis, assessments and forecasts

Although there are insufficient in-depth studies on the new polarization trends of the terrorist phenomenon, it is clear that we have entered a phase of radical transformation of the political meaning of terrorism that is heading towards very different scenarios, redefining what was commonly believed to be a terrorist threat. It is therefore necessary to review and redefine terrorism. The need for this redefinition largely resides in the changes that have taken place in the international system, characterized by a new and unprecedented competition for territorial sovereignty, a very chaotic process since it has been enlarged to an extremely broad and diverse number of non-state actors. Terrorism in the new post-global international relations, therefore, no longer falls within the grammar of the power struggle between states, but develops into a system in which many of the legally sovereign states are progressively going through a process of destructuralisation of their Westfalian nature. This is a context that explains the boom of jihadist terrorism, which appears to transform its original connotations and motivations to become more and more an hybrid phenomenon, a form of irregular war that matures in failing states, that is halfway between insurgency, territorial ethnicity and banditry. This phenomenon, particularly relevant in the Sub-Saharan Africa, has been called gangster-jihadism, is favoured what the Syrian-origin expert of Islamic studies Bassam Tibi has defined as a parallel system of "structural globalization and cultural fragmentation".

The new type of jihadism that is emerging is increasingly characterized by the sense of a dual revolt: against western values and the western/Westphalia international order, which are perceived by many Muslim masses as the main cause of decline, impoverishment and humiliation of the Islamic world. These are the old qutbist narratives that are being revisited in a post-global environment, the new dimension of international relations where it is much easier to build transnational networks through the opportunistic collaboration of a large number of non-state actors, united in the new great game of contending territory, resources and population control to weak and "failing" states. In this particularly context of new and dangerous synergies between anti-western actors of particular concern are the growing connections between transnational organized crime and jihadist movements in the sub-Saharan Africa.

This new kind of post-statal terrorism is fed by the growing opportunities of creating proto-statal platforms (population-territory-resources) in areas without state sovereignty, where different asymmetric actors (criminals, terrorist formations and radical political Islamism) converge and interact. The synergies among these asymmetric actors is blending a new hybrid form of post-global jihadism. The goal of this new kind of terrorism directly or indirectly linked to the Islamic State is to unite - differently from al-Qaeda's, which had a more vertical hierarchy and selective strategic priorities - all its enemies in a single global battle. A battle that will strike at the same time the main global powers, the Western societies in which Islamic communities in the diaspora live as minorities, the Muslim regimes allied with the West.

The phenomenon of foreign fighters inside ISIL, the only case in the twenty-year history of Islamic jihad fighters coming from non-Muslim countries, has probably marked a point of no return in the secular history of jihadist terrorism and in the same evolution of jihadism. The existence of a Western and European dimension of jihad is now an acquired fact. European countries are now facing with an unprecedented challenge to their national security. A growing and unpredictable challenge since numerous indicators point toward a higher tendency of European Islam to radicalise compared to the ratio existing in most of the Islamic countries. Certainly, radicalization is not the same as terrorism, but the signs of an outbreak of terrorism fuelled not by poverty and political authoritarianism, but arising from the welfare and liberal societies ruled by democratic laws is a worrying alarm for European homeland security.