

The Basic Situation and Strategy
of the International Fight Against Terrorism
in Post-Bin Laden Era



后拉登时代国际反恐斗争的 基本态势和战略

下

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The basic situation and strategy of the international fight against terrorism in post osama bin laden era

*Bingsong He**

Part I. The Basic Situation of the International Fight against Terrorism in Post-Bin Laden Era

1.What does the Post Osama Bin Laden Era mean?

A person's death is neither possible can be the end of an era nor can create a new era. However, Osama Bin Laden's death is occurring in a transitional period of world. The tremendous social, political, economical and cultural changes of this period will inevitably cause great changes in the international fight against terrorism. The international fight against terrorism entered a new historical period, but the post Osama Bin Laden era just is a distinctive sign of this new historical period.

2.What is the essence of transitional period of the world?

The essence of the transitional period of the world is transforming from "morden" or "moder time" to the globalization era. Now, we are at the beginning of the globalizaiton era, which is the essence of the transitional period of the world. The most important result of the process of modernization which begins from the

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Enlightenment, establishes the world's ruthless rule by Western European countries with two superpowers (the sun-never-set British Empire and the United States which was called "super-superpower" by the former French Foreign Minister Hubert Vedrine) as the representatives. The inevitable result of the globalization era is the gradual decline and the ending of this rule. The globalization era is the era of man for the true master of this period is the unprecedentedly wakeful people who not only recognize their inherent and inalienable rights clearly but also realize the great strength of their force and they will not bear the existence of exploitation and oppression. The fundamental world transformation has already begun, but it is just the beginning for it needs a whole era to end it.

3. The characteristics of nowadays world transformational period

The National Intelligence Council of US compiled four reports as *the Global Tendency of 2010*, *the Global Tendency of 2015*, *the Global Tendency of 2020* and *the Global Tendency of 2025*, which have a long-term prediction for the transitional period of the global tendency. The National Intelligence Council of US thoughts from 2015 to 2020, this period is one of the most significant historical turning points for many elements will matter...will have critical effects on future trends. Its characteristics are:

(1) With the emerging of China, India and other countries, a multipolar system is manifesting itself.

(2) Comparative power of wealth and economy is shifting to the East from the West.

(3) America, though being the most powerful nation in the world, is declining in terms of dominant position.

(4) Until the year 2025, the increased 1.2 billion people will add to energy, food and water pressures.

(5) Afghan, Nigeria, Pakistan and other countries will still struggle in stability and upheaval if most young people in such counties keep unemployed.

(6) The rapid changes and proliferation of deadly weapons in some areas of Middle East will increase the possibility of conflicts.

These analysis are basically correct but there are something else need to be mentioned specially the following:

(1) The United States has begun to decline, and the era of his domination of the

world will come to an end with the process of its declination. The declination of US has not only deepened the crisis in western countries, but showed the increase of the internal contradiction inside the western capitalism, which is clearly proved by the big chaos happened in UK this August, the Wall Street Occupy Movement began in October and the US Occupy Movement. They have illustrated the bankrupt on the other perspective.

(2) The contradiction, especially the contradiction of ideology between the Muslim World and the US World as well as other western countries is increasing. The Muslim world has had a glorious time. From 16th century to early 17th century, they had established three empires: the Mughal Empire, the Safavid Empire and the Ottoman Empire, all of which had a large territory and prosperous economy. The government range of Ottoman Empire even covered the East Europe, Egypt and the North Africa. All the three empires also created the glorious Islam civilization. Reviving the glory of Islam civilization has become a lasting pursue for them. Long time of opposition and confliction between the two kinds of civilization caused by the world conquer of the western countries is another hot point of the contradiction of the world today.

4. Analysis of the tendency of the international terrorism in the transitional period

The overview of US National Intelligence Council is that “terrorism will not vanish in 2025”. But there are two possibilities. One is that: if the Middle East economy continues to develop and the problem of youth unemployment can be alleviated, the attractiveness of terrorism may decrease. Economic opportunity and more political pluralism will discourage the young from joining terrorism. It appears that the support for the terrorist networks is falling. More and more people kicked against the civilian casualties especially Muslims casualties caused by terrorism. Some governments may expand domestic security forces, enhance monitoring ability and employ Special Action Units to fight against the problems caused terrorism which are more and more serious. Another is that: the lack of employment opportunities and legal political expression means can deteriorate into dissatisfactions and extremism and make the young turn to terrorism. Extremism in the future may be aggravated by global communication and mass media. It gathers people who live with a grievance, who is oppressed and who lose their civil rights into new communities which resort to violence to achieve their ends. The globalization of biotechnology industry increase terrorists’ access to biological

pathogenic agent. The spread of the advanced tactical weapons such as radiological weapon and chemical weapon may also use by terrorists to inflict mass casualties. It indicates that the internal contradictions within the western capitalism can also trigger terrorism and pluralism of terrorism will become a new trend which also proves the necessity and the importance to enhance international cooperation of antiterrorism. In general, various racial contradictions in international society dictates there is still a rough, long road to go to fight against terrorism. Before the year 2025, we confront with the severe situation of antiterrorism; there is no possibility that the fight against terrorism will end.

Part II. International Antiterrorism Strategy in Post-Bin Laden Era

1.UN's international antiterrorism strategy

International activities are one of the main means of antiterrorism: “plotted in place; implemented in another.” Especially after the 9 • 11 event, Osama bin Laden and his base became the anchor of international terrorism, with tangible and intangible network established among the terroristic organization holding the same idea. This sever situation is pressing the international society to come together for antiterrorism organization. However, bilateral and regional organization of anti-terrorism is not without limitations and only global antiterrorism can be the ideal mechanism. Before the 9 • 11 event, the UN had made great effort in eliminating terrorism and passed 12 individual international treaties and related implementations against terrorism. After the tragedy happened, the position of the UN in fighting against terrorism has kept rising ever since. Up to 1373 resolutions by the United Nations Security Council request all the nation members to freeze and cut out capital source for terrorists and the Council also has set up terrorism committee to facilitate members to carry out the resolutions mentioned above. For years, great accomplishments have been achieved by the UN, especially in the cooperation between national members concerning information share and exchange in person flow, capital monitoring, thereby greatly enhancing the effectiveness and preventing major terrorist activities from happening. It can be concluded that global antiterrorism mechanism can be effectively, impartially and thoroughly established through the facilitation of the UN. On September, 2006 nation members of the UN passed *United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy*, which

was the first agreement achieved among the 192 nation members, symbolizing the growing coordination of the UN.

The member of the United Nations passes the Global Anti-terrorism Strategy of the United Nations on September 8th, 2009. It is the first time that all the 192 member countries reach the consensus on the global strategy of fighting against the terrorism, marking that a substantial and decisive step has been made in the years of efforts made by the United Nations in arranging and strengthening the fight against terrorism by different countries. It also lays down the foundation of further actions on the anti-terrorism cooperation and arrangement in the international society. Therefore, this document is of great importance. The Strategy includes a resolution and the attached action plan, which lays down the foundation of concrete actions plans since it: diminishes the conditions which might be of advantage to the spreading of terrorism, prevents and combats terrorism, takes actions to establish powers for combating terrorism in different countries, strengthening the power of the United Nations in combating terrorism, ensures that the human rights are still respected irrespective of the fights against terrorism. However, it is a pity that a consensus has not been reached in the definition of terrorism which is the major barrier affecting the global cooperation of anti-terrorism. It is only emphasized in the resolution of the Global Anti-terrorism Strategy that the unsolved questions shall be solved with all efforts for the purpose of the reach of the final convention, and the legal definition of terrorism shall be included in those questions. The following strategic policies and principles are clearly promulgated in the resolution and relevant documents of the United Nations:

Terrorism of all forms and demonstrations shall become the serious threats on the peace and security. Terrorism of all forms and demonstrations shall be strongly condemned irrespective of who does it, where it happens or what the action is for.

(1) strengthen the international cooperation to prevent and combat terrorism of all forms and demonstrations

(2) the fight against the global terrorism must be under the governance of the United Nations Council. The Council has general members and shall be the main governing organs to deal with the issue of global terrorism. The center role of the United Nations must be emphasized.

(3) All the measure taken by the international cooperation and member countries to prevent and combat terrorism must completely comply with the litigations they have

to take under the provisions of United Nations Charter and international laws including relevant international conventions and protocols, especially the law of human rights, the law of refugees, and the law of international humanism.

(4) The human rights and basic freedom shall be promoted and protected within the fight against the terrorism.

(5) All the member countries agree to negotiate with each other and conclude a convention on the international terrorism with all their efforts including solving the unsettled problems related to the legal definition and scope of the actions focused by the convention, for the purpose of using the convention as an effective tool of anti-terrorism.

(6) Terrorism cannot or should not be connected with any religion, nation, culture, or ethnic group.

2. Comments on the Anti-terrorism Strategy of the United States

President Bush announced at the night of 9-11 that the United States “shall not differentiate the terrorists from their protectors,” and “no grey zone shall exist in the war against terrorism, one either stands besides us, or in the team of the terrorists.” The party shall be decided by the anti-terrorism. At the beginning of 2002, President Bush presented the State Message, claiming that Iraq, Iran and North Korea were the “Evil Axis” and announcing that the United States would take every action that was considered to be necessary to prevent these three countries from developing mass destruction weapons. The State Council listed Cuba, Iran, Iraq, Libya, North Korea, Syria, Sudan in the Report on the Situation of Global Terrorism as countries which supported terrorism, and announced that it would take military actions towards some of them. In the Nuclear Posture Review The Department of Defense asked the United States to develop new powers to face the coming threats, and listed China, Russia and other five countries as the targets of applicable nuclear attacks. Later, Rumsfeld, the head of the Defense Department, signed the Defense Planning Guideline from 2004 to 2009, calling up on pushing forward the so-called “preemptive strategy” and taking “no-pre-alarm attack” on any enemy that threatened the United States without the limitation of time or place. This is the public announcement of the enlargement of anti-terrorism actions of the United States. By September 19th, the US published the Report of State Security Strategy, stating that the US could take preemptive actions on other countries or non-state entities and disarm other countries’ military power with military power.

It is obvious that the US wants to make its anti-terrorism strategy serve for its target of global strategy. This is the core of the Bush's doctrine.

The theory of Bush's government's global strategy is the "theory of control," namely, to seek for the controlling over the whole world depending on the power of the United States. They said: an international system whose essence is anarchy needs someone to be in charge, and the United States is the only country which is able to control the whole international system. A world under the control of the United States shall be a real free world.

When Obama came into the power, he has been modifying the anti-terrorism strategy of the United States. What should be specifically emphasized is that the State Anti-terrorism Strategy report of the Obama's government published on June 29th, 2011 explains the methods of executing anti-terrorism by the United States government and the critical ways which influence the result of this strategy.

We noticed that, this strategy, compared with the counter-terrorism strategy of Bush administration, has made undeniable progress. However, as "it is based on former made strategy and the means that the US government has always adopted", its essential strategic thought has never changed. Its basic point, as well as its fundamental mistake, is the unipolarity that has long existed in the the US. Unipolarity means that one country holds all power, and the country can play a dominant role anywhere it wishes.

Obama said when "we fight against AL-Qeada with all efforts, we need to make a strategy that in consistent with the core value of our country and our people. The belief in core value is the conerstone for the foundation of United States, ...America has to come forward to safeguard freedom, justice, equality, dignity, hope and opportunity" and respect human rights. The respect of the US for universal rights have to be demonstrated throughout its own action. Torture and inhumane interrogation not only go against American value, but impede the rule of law.

Now let us look at how the US has showed its respect for universal rights throughout its own action.

In 2001, under the rule of Saddam, prisoners in Abu Ghraib strongly called for freedom. Their voice is a reflection of human beings' pursuit for freedom. Later American troops invaded Iraq, and liberated Iraq from the situation where human rights are trampled. However, in 2004, in the same prison, American troops committed threat of violence, rape, electrocution, and unleashed dogs to attack. The war crimes

they committed irritated Muslims in Iraq, and was condemned by International Red Cross. In May, 2005, Amnesty International condemned US for its connivance at its army's trample upon human rights in Abu Ghraib and other detention centers. This kind of conduct is the contempt for law and human rights. It became a typical example of prisoner abuse, and weakened the soft power or morality rule of the US. This is not my comment, but what cited from page 168 of *World Politics: Trend and Transformation*, the book of Professor Charles W. Kegley, Jr. of international relations from South Carolina University. Now it is clear what is the US safeguard for freedom, justice, equality, dignity, hope and opportunity.

In current US, human rights is no more than a tool for pursuit of hegemony. What they have done is the downright rebellion against the Declaration of Independence drafted in June 4, 1776 by Thomas Jefferson. In fact, when discussed the adoption of the Declaration of Independence, a large paragraph which condemned slavery drafted by Jefferrson was deleted completely, and thus deprived all rights of black slaves, left a distinct mark of race discrimination and race privilege. Engels pointed out that, American Constitution that based on the Declaration of Independence, admitted human rights meanwhile confirmed slavery among colored people: class privilege was set out of protection of law, and race privilege was deified.

I have no intention to totally repudiate State counterterrorism strategy of Obama Administration, instead, I just want to pointed out that America wants to make its counter-terrorism strategy subject to and serve its global strategic goal. This has never changed. Therefore I want to emphasize that International counter-terrorism has to follow the leading of the United Nations, and strategically it has to carry out the UN global counter-terrorism strategy. And each country should revise its own counter-terrorism strategy based on the UN global counter-terrorism.

3. The conclusion of a convention on international terrorism

It is an important part of global anti-terrorism strategy to conclude a convention on international terrorism. The main obstacle of making the convention is the lack of a unified, scientific definition of terrorism. After my research I will put forward two definition as following:

(1) The definition of terrorism

Terrorism is the action made by any person, group or country to kill the innocence

and commit terrorism in order to realize their certain political goals.

(2) Definition of terrorist organization

Terrorist organization is a violent group consists of 3 people or more, which is organized and usually using terrorist means to reach their political goals.

The illustration of the two definitions can be found in the following appendix.

Appendix: The Concept of Terrorism

Part I. Contentions on the Concept of Terrorism

What is terrorism? This is not only a long-confusing major theoretical problem, but also a major practical issue that barred the human society from cooperation in combating terrorism for years. ^[1]

Terrorism has been rampant in human society for more than 2000 years, and over 200 years have passed since the term “terrorism” first appeared in official documents. Since then, the number of the works and documents on terrorism amounts by the thousands, and the definitions of “terrorism” by the hundreds. American Scholar Jessica Stern pointed out that “hundreds of definitions of terrorism are offered in the literature.”^[2] Countless meetings were held to discuss this issue; however, by far no accepted all-embracing definition of terrorism has been developed. According to the *Counter-Terrorism Strategy* adopted at the eighth United Nations General Assembly in 1990, since the United Nations began to grapple with the problem of international terrorism in 1972. The international community has failed to adopt a universally agreed definition of terrorism: This situation continues for over 30 years down to the present

[1] Please refer to United Nations General Assembly, Measures to prevent international terrorism which endangers or takes innocent human lives or jeopardizes fundamental freedoms, and study of the underlying causes of those forms of terrorism and acts of violence which lies in misery, frustration, grievance and despair and which cause some people to sacrifice human lives, including their own, in an attempt to effect radical changes in accordance with the decision taken by the Sixth Committee at its 1314 th meeting, on 27 September 1972.

[2] Jessica Stern: *《The Ultimate Terrorists》*, P.11, Harvard University Press. In addition, in 1983 American scholar Schmid quoted more than 100 definitions of terrorism only from the documents between 1936 and 1983.

day.^[1] The reasons are manifold, but the leading course is the “prejudice” based on the self-interests of individuals, groups, classes, ethnic groups and nations, for “prejudice is farther from the truth than ignorance.” American Scholar Beau Grosscup rightly pointed out the basic problem that we face in defining terrorism is that it is a politically loaded concept, a confusing concept entangled in contending political priorities, perspectives, and interests. The familiar statement that one person’s terrorist is another’s freedom fighter’ reflects this predicament. What appears to be only a problem of semantics is in essence a conflict of different ideologies, meaning that whether or not we see an event as terrorism depends on our political views.^[2] I fight for freedom, I stand for national liberation and security, and I fight against terrorism so my action of killing and destruction is just. People could make as many as a hundred or even a thousand “sacred” objectives as a reason to exclude their own acts of terror outside terrorism, or to justify their terrorist acts. In this case, how can a universally accepted definition of terrorism be developed?

It should be noted that all these allegations as well as a variety of defenses raised in history to justify terrorism are built on a ridiculous proposition: proper purpose proves proper means. Obviously this proposition is absurd because the nature of some means, due to its uniqueness, can not be changed for any purpose. Terrorism is a case in point. The essence and the core of terrorism are to cruelly harm innocent populace and arbitrarily deprive people of their precious life by using violence, which in any case is considered as an extremely savage, brutal and despicable crime. Here the right proposition should be “despicable means proves despicable goal”. Any person, no matter how sacred and correct he claimed his aim is, as long as he cruelly injures innocent residents by terror, the behavior itself is enough to prove that his aim is despicable, for

[1] The Eleventh UN Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Assembly declared in the Bangkok Declaration in 2005: “We express the hope that the ongoing negotiation of the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism will be concluded as soon as possible.” In the summit conference held in September 2005 leaders of various nations agreed to do their best to reach a consensus on a universally agreed definition of “terrorism”, and finalize the comprehensive convention on International Terrorism. The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy was adopted by Member States on 8 September 2006. It was reaffirming further that Member States determined to make every effort to reach an agreement on and conclude a comprehensive convention on international terrorism, including by resolving the outstanding issues related to the legal definition and scope of the actions covered by the convention, so that it can serve as an effective instrument to counter terrorism.

[2] Beau Grosscup, *《The newest Explosions of Terrorism》*, p.6, 1998 published by New Herizon Press.

this contemptible means cannot be changed by any holy purpose and vice versa. On the contrary, any person who takes such a despicable and shameless means is enough to prove that his motive is depraved. Here I would like to reaffirm my point of view that human life is supreme, and any person, state, nation or group is neither entitled to deprive an innocent person of his life, nor to achieve their purpose at the expense of an innocent person's life. The self-proclaim on the sanctity of the goal is nothing more than downright hypocrisy and deceit. Terrorism can neither be evaluated for its purpose, nor for both the purpose and means, for they are often contradictory. The sole criterion for evaluation of terrorism is the means, and anyone who has taken measures to cruelly injure innocent residents in furtherance of his political purpose is terrorism. As for his political purpose, it is both valueless and meaningless to evaluate his terrorism. The brutal injury or killing of innocent people, regardless of its purpose and form, is nothing but terrorism and unpardonable crimes which must be resolutely opposed. Only a general acknowledgement of this proposition and position may contribute to a generally accepted definition of terrorism. Now let's have a brief review and examination. Now, let's have a brief review and inspection of a number of representative definitions of "terrorism".

Terrorism is in constant changes and people's understanding of objective things deepens with their development, hence the definition reflecting their essential attributes is in the process of constant changes as well.

Part II. The Origin and Evolvement of the Term "Terrorism"

The word "terrorism" itself was coined during French Revolution. hence the first entry for this term in *Oxford English Dictionary* is "govenment by intimidation as directed and carried out by the party in power in France during Revolution of 1789-94." This definition mainly refers to the state terrorism, namely the policy of terrorism implemented by the government. Thereafter, in practice, terrorism is a word gradually applied to various acts of violence by individuals and groups but there is no development in the definition of terrorism. At the turn of 20th century, wave of assassinations and other terrorist acts appeared in the international and other acts of terrorism caused the League of Nations to respond and established a committee of experts to make a special study of this problem, on the basis of which two international

conferences were held in 1937: the Prevention and the Punishment of terrorism and the establishment of an International Criminal Court. The former formulated the *Convention for the Prevention and Punishment of Terrorism* and 27 countries signed it. However, due to the outbreak of World War II, it never came into force. According to Article 1, “in the present Convention, the expression ‘acts of terrorism’ means criminal acts directed against a State and intended or calculated to create a state of terror in the minds of particular persons, or a group of persons or the general public” which is the first definition of terrorist acts in an international treaty and clearly pointed out that acts of terrorism means criminal acts directed against a State and intended to calculated to create a state of terror in the minds of particular persons, or a group of persons or the general public, however, without directly stating that terror is created by violence, neither state terrorism being mentioned. Due to the fact that the wave of assassinations was mainly directed at states and governments, distinct from the terrorism implemented by the Government during the French Revolution.

In the late 1940s and early 1950s, most terrorism is linked to the colonial conflicts with the colonies, especially Palestine, Malaya, Cyprus, Algeria and Kenya. However, they were rarely referred to as terrorists, because people have doubts about the legitimacy of colonialism, and it was controversial to apply this term to the combats against the armed uprisings. It was argued that, generally speaking, terrorism can only be applied directly to acts of violence against non-fighters.

It is noteworthy that in this period terrorism has been generally applied not only to the following acts of violence against nations but also to those of the conservative organizations such as the United States Ku Klux Klan. Given these circumstances, two definitions of terrorism have been given in the Oxford Dictionary published in 1989: (a) specifically refers to reign of terror in the French Revolution; b) policy intended to strike with terror those against whom it is adopted; the employment of methods of intimidation; the fact of terrorizing or condition of being terrorized. Definitions in other dictionaries no longer contained the special meaning of the “terrorism” during the French Revolution.

According to the Webster’s Third New International Dictionary, terrorism is (a) the systematic use of terror especially as a means of coercion; (b) a climate of threat or violence. This definition emphasizing that terrorism is systematic use of terror to create a general climate of violent and fear is correct. Terrorism must be carried out by Violence