



Understanding/Context

With the capture of Osama bin Laden and the winding down of the wars of 9/11, the field of terrorism is facing an important new inflection point. Although the number of terrorism attacks against industrialized countries has decreased over the past 10 years, the number of attacks and related casualties have increased in the developing world, indicating that the frontlines of the war on terrorism have shifted. An increasing reliance on technology and drones to carry out counterterrorism operations continues to trouble relationships between the United States and Europe and their allies in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Similarly, the use of the Internet for cyber-attacks or terrorism requires new approaches from governments, civil society and businesses. Documents released by former US National Security Agency contractor Edward Snowden shone a light on the surveillance practices of national security agencies. The ensuing diplomatic storm and public outcry have prompted great debate worldwide on the uses and abuses of big data. Meanwhile, new information indicates that the civil conflicts in the Middle East are fuelling the fragmentation of extremist groups in the regime.

Shaping the Agenda

Given the shift of terrorist activity from developed nations to the global South, the Global Agenda Council on Terrorism will raise awareness of the need to keep terrorism on the agenda of policy-makers while broadening the framework for managing terrorism from a purely security-oriented approach to a more holistic, development-oriented approach. The Council will promote the notion that economic and social progress are essential components of counterterrorism efforts in developing and post-conflict countries. The Council will also continue its work of promoting greater collaboration

with civil society in counterterrorism as a means to improve preventive efforts and community-based or local initiatives to reduce the draw of terrorism. The Council will conclude a white paper on why civil society and the private sector should play a greater role in preventing terrorism, and how they may fulfil this role. In addition, the Council concluded its debate on the implications of the new inflection point in the field of terrorism, collaborating on a video released in July 2013 that dispels five common myths about terrorism.

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In the next 12 months, the Council will host a workshop to discuss the findings of its deliberations on the role of civil society in counterterrorism. The Council will also consider the impact of geopolitical events on terrorism, namely the civil war in Syria and the withdrawal of coalition troops from Afghanistan.

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