

XXXVII

TECMUN

Counter-Terrorism
Committee

XXXVII TECMUN
Session Schedule

Monday, April 15th

Registration	8:00 – 9:00 h.
Opening Ceremony	9:00 – 10:00 h.
Break	10:00 – 10:30 h.
First Session	10:30 – 12:30 h.
Break	12:30 – 13:00 h.
Second Session	13:00 – 15:00 h.
Meal	15:00 – 16:00 h.
Third Session	16:00 – 18:00 h.

Tuesday, April 16th

Master Conference	8:30 – 9:30 h.
Break	9:30 – 10:00 h.
Fourth Session	10:00 – 12:30 h.
Break	12:30 – 13:00 h.
Fifth Session	13:00 – 15:00 h.
Meal	15:00 – 16:00 h.
Sixth Session	16:00 – 18:00 h.

Wednesday, April 17th

Seventh Session	8:00 – 9:30 h.
Break	9:30 – 10:00 h.
Eighth Session	10:00 – 12:00 h.
Break	12:00 – 12:30 h.
Ninth Session	12:30 – 14:40 h.
Meal	14:40 – 16:00 h.
Closing ceremony	16:00 – 18:00 h.

XXXVII TECMUN
General Agenda

Secretary General: Santiago Gutiérrez Caycedo

GENERAL COORDINATION

Subsecretary of General Coordination: Lía Naomi Mejía Vargas

*Supervisor of General Coordination for Media Content: Celic Regina Ramírez
Garduño*

*Supervisor of General Coordination for Co. Secretariat: Samuel Alejandro Herrera
Tapia*

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Subsecretary General: Monserrat Ríos Fernández

Supervisor of General Coordination: María Fernanda García Bautista

United Nations General Assembly

President: William Vázquez Hernández

- A) Measures to prevent disagreements and warlike conflicts between the nations that border the Arctic Circle coming from the militarization and exploitation of natural resources as a consequence of climate change in the region of the Arctic.
- B) Strategies to halt the violation of human rights to the Uyghur Muslim ethnic minority in the Xinjiang province in the region of the People's Republic of China with emphasis on the concentration camps referred to as vocational education centers.

Fourth Commission of Special Political and Decolonization

President: Miranda Senties Carmona

- A) Strategies to consolidate the Independence of Western Sahara after the territorial conflict with the Kingdom of Morocco, emphasizing the maintenance of peace and the protection of the human rights of civilians.
- B) Measures to assure the national security in New Caledonia due to the protests caused by the political instability, prioritizing its total sovereignty.

Sexta Comisión Jurídica

Presidente: María Sigaru Alcántara Nieva

- A)** Mecanismos para contrarrestar el uso inadecuado de inteligencia artificial en los Estados Unidos de América y el Estado de Israel con enfoque en los ataques cibernéticos Stuxnet, Equifax y Solarwinds a fin de instaurar disputas legales.
- B)** Estrategias para reforzar el sistema legal internacional con el objetivo de erradicar las redes globales de prostitución de mujeres y niñas, con énfasis en la República Federal de Nigeria y la República de Níger.

Alto Comisionado de las Naciones Unidas para los Derechos Humanos

Presidente: Gael Santiago Pérez Guzmán

- A)** Medidas para salvaguardar los derechos humanos en América Latina y el Caribe, con énfasis en las recientes protestas en la República de Nicaragua, la República de Perú, la República de Colombia, la República de Chile, la República de Honduras, los Estados Unidos Mexicanos, entre otros.
- B)** Medidas para frenar las infracciones de derechos humanos en el continente africano respecto a la mutilación genital femenina, haciendo énfasis en la región de la República Democrática Federal de Etiopía.

United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East

President: Yamir Bandala González

- A)** Strategies to prioritize the education and health of refugees in the Near East following the Israel-Palestine conflict in Gaza.
- B)** Actions to enhance the internal infrastructure for post-pandemic established refugees in Gaza and the Near East.

Liga de los Estados Árabes

Presidente: Jorge Roel Rodríguez Alcántara

- A)** Acciones para contrarrestar el aumento de secuestros y decesos en la República Democrática de Somalia debido a la presencia del grupo extremista Al-Shabaab, enfocándose en la protección de civiles.

B) Mecanismos para contrarrestar el Tráfico de Armas hacia los Hutíes con énfasis en la protección de la población de Yemen ante la aún presente Guerra civil.

Counter-Terrorism Committee

President: Aranza Rodríguez Chagoya

A) Measures to halt the growing menace of attacks with chemical components in the Middle East, focusing on the Syrian Arab Republic.

B) Strategies to control attacks caused by cybernetic interventions in the Middle East, with an emphasis on the Islamic Republic of Iran.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

Subsecretary General: Catherine Romina Espinoza Mora

Supervisor of General Coordination: Emilio Guillen López

Entidad de las Naciones Unidas para la Igualdad de Género y el Empoderamiento de las Mujeres

Presidente: Mariana Carolina Guerrero Zárate

A) Estrategias para frenar la mutilación de genitales a niñas y mujeres de África Occidental a causa de la creencia de salvaguardar su castidad y reprimir su deseo sexual con énfasis en la República Democrática de Somalia y la República de Mali.

B) Medidas para erradicar cualquier sistema de tortura a las mujeres en el Medio Oriente con un énfasis en el Reino Hachemita de Jordania.

Commission on Narcotic Drugs

President: Sofía Juanico Ocegüera

A) Measurements to manage the production of narcotic drugs and alteration of fentanyl-based medication in the United Mexican States, with distribution to the United States of America.

B) Actions to eradicate drug trafficking in the Middle East to minimize the misuse of drugs for medical and recreational purposes.

Consortio Internacional contra los Delitos de la Vida Silvestre

Presidente: Laura Mariana González Beltrán

A) Estrategias para frenar la caza furtiva del elefante africano y el comercio ilegal de marfil en la Sabana africana, con énfasis en la promoción del desarrollo económico y social en las comunidades colindantes.

B) Acciones para frenar el comercio ilegal de especies en los Estados Unidos de América y Latinoamérica, haciendo hincapié en las especies de aves, reptiles y anfibios que habitan la región del Pacífico y la Amazonia.

Department of Peace Operations

President: Paulette Mayen Álvarez

Unique Topic) Measurements to counteract violence towards the civilians from the Republic of Cambodia to safeguard them from the communist regime.

United Nations Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

President: Frida Michelle Valadez García

A) Measures to improve access to humanitarian aid for the communities of Ituri and North Kivu following the rising wave of violence caused by armed groups in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

B) Actions to optimize humanitarian aid intervention during epidemics in developing African countries with emphasis on the cholera infection.

Organización para la Cooperación y el Desarrollo Económicos

Presidente: Yésika Pamela García Trejo

A) Acciones para mantener el nivel de empleo y el desarrollo de las fábricas automotrices de la Unión Europea reduciendo la emisión de carbono.

B) Medidas para regular la competencia laboral enfocado en la brecha de género situada en la República de Turquía y en los Estados Unidos Mexicanos.

Comité de Expertos en Transporte de Mercancías Peligrosas y en el Sistema Globalmente Armonizado de Clasificación y Etiquetado de Productos Químicos

Presidente: Valeria Arroyo Jerez

A) Medidas para moderar el uso de las sustancias perfluoroalquiladas y polifluoroalquiladas en las industrias Europeas debido a su impacto negativo en el medio ambiente y la salud humana.

B) Estrategias para prevenir los accidentes ferroviarios y carreteros de transporte de mercancías peligrosas con énfasis en los Estados Unidos de América.

Historical Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice

President: Paulo Souto Núñez

A) Strategies to mitigate tensions between the extremist group Al Qaeda and the United States of America, following the onslaughts held against the United States of America, emphasizing on the prevention of crime through terrorist attacks. (1998 - 2001).

B) Measures to eradicate the extremist criminal behavior of the Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA), addressing the attacks of the organization inside the territory of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. (2000 - 2011).

SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND REGIONAL ORGANISMS

Subsecretary General: Bruno Ramírez Barcelata

Supervisor of General Coordination: Brenda Noreña Mejía

Comunidad Caribeña

Presidente: María José Parra Meza

A) Medidas para contrarrestar la violencia y salvaguardar los derechos humanos de los habitantes de la República de Haití, con énfasis en el tráfico de armas, tráfico de narcóticos y corrupción en la región del Caribe.

B) Estrategias para frenar el reclutamiento de menores para el turismo sexual con énfasis en la región del Caribe.

North Atlantic Treaty Organization

President: Regina Covarrubias Rosales

A) Fostering defense capacity programmes for NATO's partners, such as the Republic of Moldova, emphasizing on Transnistria's occupation by Russian forces regarding the Ukrainian conflict.

B) Perspectives on reinforcement for seabed warfare, undersea infrastructure and security, ensuring NATO's members safeguard regarding the damage made to Finland-Estonia submarine pipeline.

Conseil de l'Europe

Président: Sofía Dominique Morin Anguiano

A) Renforcement des mesures de prévention du trafic humain concernant la route du Nigeria vers l'Europe Occidentale.

B) Actions pour arrêter le blanchiment des moyens financiers en Europe.

Organización de las Naciones Unidas para Asuntos del Espacio Ultraterrestre

Presidente: Abril Victoria Rodríguez Aguirre

A) Acciones para responder al cambio de paradigma y sistema internacional en materia de los tratados de no proliferación del armamento espacial con énfasis en las normas y regulaciones de estos con el fin de prevenir la militarización del espacio y desarrollo e implementación de armamento en el mismo.

B) Medidas para facilitar el acceso equitativo y sostenible al espacio y sus recursos con énfasis en garantizar la inclusión de las naciones y el aprovechamiento de los recursos y la tecnología por medio de prácticas sostenibles.

Security Council

President: Aranza Michelle Castro Rivero

A) Actions to stop armed attacks on civilians in the Gaza Strip due to the conflict between the State of Israel and the State of Palestine.

B) Measures to avoid the indiscriminate use of weapons, violent clashes and reincorporation of armed groups in the region of Tripoli after the civil conflict in the State of Libya.

Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary General for Children in Armed Conflict

President: Arantza González de la Peña

A) Strategies to cease the recruitment of children in armed forces in the Syrian Arab Republic as a consequence of the civil warlike conflict, as well as ensure the fulfillment of the human rights of the affected children residing in the country.

B) Actions to put an end to the exploitation and abuse of children in the Democratic Republic of the Congo due to the ongoing conflict and state of anarchy in the country, while ensuring the fulfillment of their human rights and basic needs.

United Nations Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect

President: Sara Sofía Govantes Cruz

A) Strategies to curb incitement of genocide and inter-ethnic violence by armed groups, due to the multifaceted crisis in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

B) Measures to slow down genocidal practices towards the Uyghur community in the People's Republic of China, along with the repercussions it brings.

Corte Africana de Derechos Humanos y Personas

Presidente: Beatriz Mena Torres

A) Dominick Damian v. República Unida de Tanzania.

B) Samia Zorgati v. República de Túnez.

Background

The Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC) was established following the tragic events of September 11, 2001, in the United States of America, leading to the establishment of the committee formed as a branch of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). Its primary objective lies in bolstering the political and institutional capabilities of each Member-State to combat terrorist activities on national, regional, and global scales. This committee operates in alignment with the four key principles in the United Nations Global Strategy, focusing on: curtailing activities that promote terrorism, preventing and combating it As enhancing Member-States capacity to counter extremism, and reinforcing the United Nations system in the fight against violent extremism while upholding Human Rights and the rule of law. terrorism.

Faculties

The CTC revolves around fostering collaboration among Member States, empowering governments to thwart any signs of terrorist escalation right from their onset.

- Criminalize financing directed towards terrorist groups, and freezing funds associated with individuals or organizations involved in acts of terrorism.
- Reject any financial aid provided to terrorist groups, and banning the provision of shelter or any form of support to insurgents;
- Collaborate by sharing gathered information to investigate, identify, apprehend, extradite, and prosecute individuals engaged in radical activities;

- Imposing sanctions on any active or passive assistance rendered to individuals conducting terrorist attacks.

Topic A

Measures to halt the growing menace of attacks with chemical components in the Middle East, focusing on the Syrian Arab Republic

By: Aranza Rodríguez Chagoya, Lessia Emilia Sho Luna, Natalia Forcada Nava, and Mariana Pineda Pérez

Introduction

According to the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) “Chemical Weapon is a chemical used to cause intentional death or harm through its toxic properties. Munitions, devices and other equipment specifically designed to weaponize toxic chemicals also fall under the definition of chemical weapons”. These substances include poisonous gasses, nerve and asphyxiating¹ agents, among others. In the same way, its use was prohibited and established in the Chemical Weapons Convention, entering into force in 1997, and gave the OPCW the proposal to eradicate the scourge of these arms of mass destruction. The modern use of chemical weapons had its peak during the Great War, when both sides of the conflict used chemicals such as chlorine, phosgene, which is an asphyxiating agent, and mustard gas, which causes painful burns on the skin, this with the objective of generating a considerable number of casualties on the battlefield. As a result of public outrage over this situation, the Geneva Protocol was signed in 1925, prohibiting the use of chemical weapons in war. However, during World War II poison gasses were used in Nazi concentration camps and in Asia, although chemical weapons were not used on the battlefields of Europe.

Moving to the Middle East, which is a term that involves different regions, such as the Eastern Mediterranean and even North Africa. There is also another denomination that gives more inclusive designation, Middle East and North Africa (MENA), that adds at least Israel, Turkey, and Iran to the engloving territory. To comprise the Middle East there are 18 countries including Egypt, Iraq and Syria. Moreover, it is well known that this area deals with various terrorist groups like the Taliban, Al Qaeda, Islamic State of Iran and Syria (ISIS), Boko Haram, Daesh, among others. Related to, there have been more than 300 cases of

¹ **Asphyxiating:** the condition of not getting enough oxygen in the body, usually leading to unconsciousness or death. (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.)

terrorist attacks that involve Chemical Weapons (CW) by 2012 that have been documented by reports from the OPCW. Moreover, CW arms have been used in the Middle East as a tool for different conflicts. An example of this is between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Republic of Iraq battle in the 1980s to the conflict in Islamic Republic of Syria and terrorist activities. In the Iran-Iraq war both sides used chemical weapons like sarin and mustard gas, wreaking havoc ²on soldiers and civilians. In Syria, several of these attacks have been attributed to its government managed by Bashar al-Assad. Furthermore, terrorist groups such as the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria have been accused of using these weapons in their actions. The presence of the extremist group has caused a conflict across the region, but especially in Syria.

The conflict in Syria has generated a diversity of challenges. Primarily, politically by involving extremist factions such as the ISIS, the Syrian government and multiple international actors like the United States of America, Russian Federation, the Islamic Republic of Iran and the State of Israel: "Since Syria's civil war began seven years ago, there has been interference from foreign powers, but experts fear this will change to more direct and committed action on the ground" (BBC, 2018). Additionally, there are ethnic and religious tensions between different groups, such as Kurds, Sunni Arabs and religious minorities like the Christians and Druze. These discords have exacerbated the political situation and have contributed to the complexity of the conflict, leading to strong political instability that caused the resignation of multiple officials like Hosni Mubarak in Egypt and Ben Ali in Tunisia. These problems have turned the country into a volatile³ terrain marked by territorial disputes, power struggles, along with ethnic and religious tensions. Economically,

² **Havoc:** Confusion and lack of order, especially causing damage or trouble. (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.)

³ **Volatile:** likely to change suddenly and unexpectedly, especially by getting worse. (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.)

the conflict has devastated part of the infrastructure, sinking the country into a deep economic and humanitarian crisis. Consequently, this has caused massive displacements inside and outside of the country, 6,8 million of internally displaced people and 5,2 of Syrian refugees in neighboring countries such as the Republic of Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq and the Arab Republic of Egypt as the The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) mentioned. The growing threat of chemical attacks in the Middle East, specifically in the Syrian Arab Republic represents one of the most serious problems related to terrorism nowadays.

Background

The conflict in Syria began in March 2011, initially as a series of peaceful protests against the Syrian government of President Bashar al-Assad, inspired by the Arab Spring. These protests were repressed by the government, leading to an increase in violence and the radicalization of some opposition groups. Over time, the situation escalated into an armed conflict as various rebel groups. Later on, the conflict became a highly complex political scenario. This confrontation involves the government of Bashar al-Assad, terrorist groups, and the intervention of foreign powers with divergent agendas. The effects of these factors generated the Syrian Civil War. Resulting in an economic havoc, production has been reduced and shortages of food, water and basic services have caused displacements of people, fueling a regional refugee crisis. At the social level, the conflict has exacerbated previous ethnic and sectarian divisions, creating tensions between groups in Syrian society. In summary, the conflict in Syria has generated an intersection of political, economic and social problems that have plunged the country into a complex situation, deeply affecting the lives of its citizens and defying any attempt at a peaceful resolution.

Protests continued into 2012 and as civil unrest grew, the extremist group Islamic State of Iraq and Syria emerged as a faction of the terrorist group *Al-Qaeda* in Iraq, later it grew stronger during the United States occupation of Iraq in 2003, and consolidated itself as an extremist and violent group after the civil war in Syria in 2011. The organization took advantage of the chaos and instability in the region to expand, and proclaiming in 2014 the creation of caliphate⁴, with *Raqqa* as its capital. This led to the military intervention of an international coalition⁵ against the Islamic State Of Iraq and *al-Sham*, which was guided by the United States who intervened out of concern about the threat posed by the advance and brutality of ISIS in the region. The presence of this group represented a threat to the stability of the Middle East, but was also considered a threat to international security and the interests of the United States and its allies. The interventions focused on combating and containing the expansion of ISIS in Iraq and Syria. The alliance resulted in the destruction of *Raqqa* and other areas, where between 70% and 80% of the city was destroyed by airstrikes as the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) mentioned in the regional analysis of Syria in 2014.

Measures used by the terrorist groups to obtain chemical weapons.

For many years, national chemical weapons programs in the Russian Federation and the United States during the Cold War generated neurotoxic⁶ substances as the OPCW established. There is a possibility that terrorist groups could circumvent technological limitations to create these agents in clandestine laboratories using commercially available equipment such as cooking utensils. Although the extreme toxicity of these compounds

⁴ **Caliphate:** An Islamic state, especially one ruled by a single religious and political leader. (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.)

⁵ **Coalition:** the joining together of different governments for a particular purpose, usually for a limited time (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.)

⁶ **Neurotoxic:** poisonous to nerve tissue, as to the brain or spinal cord. (Dictionary, n.d.)

represents a significant risk to the manufacturer. An alternative to the direct production of these nerve agents is the creation of certain chemicals that, when combined, react to form the desired nerve agent. These chemical combinations are known as binary chemical weapons.

In February of 2012, the head of the Defense Intelligence Agency of the United States reported a growing concern about attempts by terrorist organizations to acquire and use chemical, biological and radiological materials. Nevertheless, some experts, like Dennis C. Blair, point out the difficulty that terrorist groups would face when attempting to use chemical agents as weapons of mass destruction. On the other hand, the possibility of such agents being used as weapons of terror is raised due to the required quantity of chemicals in confined environments, allowing the use of such weapons to generate fear and have more impact regardless of the number of victims, increasing the effect of the attack.

According to the Director of National Intelligence of the United States, between the 2006-2007 attacks in Iraq, chlorine bombs, which are conventional explosives combined with chlorine gas, were used. "*underscored terrorists'* interest in using easily accessible toxic industrial substances as chemical weapons." (Blair, D., 2009). On the other hand, the industrial availability of some asphyxiating agents such as chlorine, of which the United States produces approximately one billion pounds a year. This allows for the possibility of acquiring and using potentially huge volumes of such agents. In addition, experts such as the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments have pointed out potential vulnerabilities in tank cars filled with chlorine, their primary method of transportation.

Uses of chemical weapons in Syria

Since 2012, the Syrian government publicly acknowledged that it possesses chemical weapons, for example, blister agents such as mustard gas, and nerve agents such as sarin. The Syrian Foreign Ministry spokesman, Jihad Makdissi, confirmed this, stating that these

weapons would never be used against the Syrian people, but only against external aggression, meaning only in case of a foreign attack against the country. During the years that year to 2013, several incidents involving the use of nuclear weapons by Syria, were denounced by different governments of different countries, including the USA. These were investigated by the United Nations, but nothing was confirmed until the UN Secretary-General of that period, Ban Ki-moon, announced the organization will conduct an investigation on the possible use of chemical weapons in Syria, in conjunction with the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. Prior to the announcement, the French Republic and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland sent letters to the Secretary-General, calling for investigations of the use of chemical weapons in Syria.

The statement further notes that, as attested by the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) database, a total of 222 chemical weapons attacks have been documented in Syria since the first documented use of chemical weapons in December 2012, until August 2023. “Approximately 98 percent of all these attacks have been carried out by Syrian regime forces, while approximately 2 percent were by ISIS [ISIL],”(SNHR⁷), while approximately two percent were by ISIS. The statement adds that 217 chemical weapons attacks carried out by the Syrian regime, resulted in the casualties of 1,514 individuals, including 214 children and 262 women, 94 armed opposition fighters, and seven Syrian regime troops who were being held in armed opposition prisons. The chemical weapons attacks carried out by the Syrian regime also injured 11,080 individuals, including five regime troops who were being held in armed opposition prisons.

⁷ SNHR: Syrian Network of Human Rights. (SNHR, n.d.)

Despite the territorial eradication of ISIL⁸ facilitated by the US-led coalition, the extremist group persistently poses an ongoing threat on the use of CW in terrorist attacks across multiple regions. Although it no longer exercises control over specific territories, ISIS persists in carrying out terrorist continuous attacks, causing massive displacements of people, as has been evidenced by UNHCR, those refugees migrate to places such as the *al-Hawl* refugee camp. This situation has prompted government officials comprising the International Syria Support Group, Syria International Non-government Organization Regional Forum (SIRF), and community members to consider the human legacies of ISIL, seeking to use dialogue language that highlights the human dimension of these complex issues.

International response

Against the chemical attacks on the Syrian Arab Republic, the United States of America and the European Union, specifically France and the United Kingdom, condemned the use of CW. They endeavored to persuade the Assad regime to stop employing them and exerted considerable pressure regarding the potential consequences of their utilization, particularly concerning a prospective intervention. However, with the collaboration of the Russian Federation, the Syrian government obstructed the fulfillment of the Occidental Countries⁹ objective by declaring that the country will not accept the interruption of CW before the UN examines the utilization the Syrian regime gives them. In order to, the UN and the OPCW started to work together in 2013, to prove that the government of al-Ásad was using CW. Due to the situation, the United States of America provided their help in the destruction of the chemical armament in 2014, through the Security Council of the UN, nonetheless, the local countries did not agree with the localization of the company in the mediterranean ocean.

⁸ ISIL: The Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant. (BBC, 2015)

⁹ **Occidental Countries:** relating to the western part of the world, especially the countries of Europe

On April 4th, 2017 the city of Duma got a chemical attack, the victims accused the Syrian government of throwing chemical agents, including chlorine and sarin gas. So the United States of America (USA) with the support of the Republic of France and United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland launched the military action in response to the alleged use of CW. The offensive was announced by the president of the USA, Donald Trump, he ensured that there were “precision strikes against targets related to Bashar al-Assad’s chemical weapons capabilities.” (BBC, 2018) Previously, the Russian Federation had warned of a war with the United States of America if any attacks happened, so when Russian president, Vladimir Putin discovered the bombings immediately solicited a meeting with the Security Council of the United Nations. Despite international condemnation and resolutions adopted by the UN Security Council to ban these weapons and hold perpetrators, the complexity of the conflict has hampered efforts to stop their use and protect civilians, posing an urgent challenge in terms of global security.

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Topic B

Strategies to control attacks caused by cybernetic interventions in the Middle East, with an emphasis on the Islamic Republic of Iran

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Introduction

Cyberterrorism is defined as any form of online terrorist activity that tends to be associated with a higher estimated probability of the threat's materialization. According to Jarvis Lee in 2016, defined in Cambridge that "unlawful attacks and threats of attack against computers, networks, and the information stored therein when done to intimidate or coerce ¹⁰a government or its people in furtherance of political or social objectives.". Furthermore, to qualify a strike as cyberterrorism, the attack should result in violence against persons or property, or at least cause enough harm to generate fear. Attacks that lead to demises or bodily injury, explosions, plane crashes, water contamination, or severe economic loss would be examples of it. Serious attacks against critical infrastructures could be cataloged as acts of cyberterrorism, depending on their impact. Assaults that disrupt nonessential services or that are mainly a costly nuisance would not. During 2008, the Computer Emergency Response Team of the National Cryptologic Center (CCN-CERT) started a deployment of an early warning system in the Applications Systems and Networks for Administrations (SARA Network) in order to proactively detect anomalies and attacks in the traffic that circulates between the different ministries and interconnected organizations.

Inquiring in the Middle East area, the growing threat of cyberattacks represents one of the main strategies employed by several countries to obtain power and knowledge, given thanks to the access obtained from the attacked system, collecting information that can work in favor. This caused an increasingly significant impact, especially among citizens and vulnerable groups. The average cost per data breach, in the region, has reached an all-time

¹⁰ **Coerce:** to persuade someone forcefully to do something that they are unwilling to do. (Cambridge, n.d.)

high of 8.07 million dollars in 2023, a notable increase from 7.46 million in 2022, surpassing the global average of \$4.45 million, according to data given by the International Business Machine Corporations (IBM). These attacks target financial institutions, businesses, government agencies and critical infrastructure, underscoring the magnitude and scope of the cyber threat. Persistent violence in the region fuels cyberwarfare, where state actors and hackers¹¹ constantly clash, making accurate attribution of attacks difficult. An example of this was when Japan's Computer Emergency Response Team Coordination Center reported that 2,000 computers from 600 companies in Japan were attacked, the company Hitachi said it was experiencing email delays and file delivery failures and suspected the cyber attack was to blame, although no ransom was demanded. Despite investments by companies and governments in cybersecurity solutions, the threat landscape remains dynamic and complex, making it difficult to effectively mitigate these attacks.

Background

Currently, the concept for cyberterrorism has been developed and covers much more, so that it can be stated that: "It is the execution of a surprise attack by a terrorist group (or person), with political objectives, using computer technology." and the Internet to paralyze or disable a nation's electronic and physical infrastructure, thereby causing the loss of critical services, such as electrical power, emergency telephone systems, telephone service, banking systems, the Internet, and many other essential services. A cyber terrorist attack is not only impacting the economy of a region or country, but amplifying the effects of a traditional physical terrorist attack causing additional confusion and panic in the general population. Cyber terrorism exists because it is in the cyber realm where they are weakest most industrialized nations. (Dan Verton, 2003).

¹¹ **Hactivist:** someone who gets into computer systems without permission in order to achieve political aims. (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.)

Cyber attacks, driven by different motives, fall into three main categories: criminal, political and personal: Criminal attacks aim to obtain financial benefits at the expense of others. Here, attackers seek profit through various tactics, from stealing money to disrupting business activities. Data theft, social engineering scams or the use of ransomware are just some of the strategies used to obtain financial gain. Extortion, in particular, has gained ground, accounting for approximately 27% of attacks, according to the X-Force Threat Intelligence Index. On the other hand, personal reasons lead individuals, such as disgruntled employees, to seek retaliation for situations perceived as unfair. Data theft, alterations to business systems or even the diversion of funds can be a result of this motivation. Meanwhile, political motivations often trigger what is known as cyberwarfare or "hacktivism." State actors often employ attacks against government institutions or critical enemy infrastructure in the context of cyberwarfare. Additionally, "hacktivists" seek more visibility for their causes, choosing to reveal their attacks publicly as a form of protest.

According to the 2020 Cybersecurity Report carried out by the European Union (EU), has led the creation of international cybersecurity capabilities since 2013 due to the global nature of the threats. Building and preserving strong alliances with third countries is crucial to preventing cyber attacks that threaten international stability and security. Furthermore, the EU continues to promote a global cyber stability model based on rights and values, such as the right to privacy and the protection of personal data, as well as the promotion of an open, free and secure space. These actions are aligned with the priorities of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the efforts for its implementation.

The European Union underlines that strong cyber resilience requires broad collective approaches and effective structures that promote cybersecurity and enable an effective response to cyber attacks within European Union Member States. This involves

implementing cross-cutting policy approaches with strategic autonomy to advance technology, supported by increasingly qualified experts. Furthermore, it emphasizes the importance of accompanying these advances with voluntary norms, rules and principles of States, articulated by the United Nations Group of Governmental Experts.

Cybernetic attacks in Iran

The conflict in Iran has its beginnings dating back to the Islamic Revolution of 1979, which transformed the country into a theocratic¹² republic. Since then, relations with the West countries, particularly the United States of America, have become strained. The United States embassy hostage crisis exacerbated these tensions, ushering in decades of mutual mistrust and economic sanctions. The United States imposed financial constraints on the Iranian economy, which was already reeling as a result of revolutionary chaos, but this measure magnified the negative consequences of Iran's inept and ideological management of its oil sector as well as the existential crisis precipitated by the September 1980 Iraqi invasion. Additionally, Iran has been involved in regional tensions, backing Shiite¹³ movements in neighboring countries such as the Republic of Lebanon and the Republic of Iraq, which has fueled political disputes with regional powers such as the State of Israel and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Tehran's nuclear program has been a critical issue, generating international concerns and debates about its true intentions. These tensions are compounded by internal protests, reflecting concerns about the economy, corruption and violation of human rights. This complex dynamic between a society with progressive leanings and a conservative political and religious system continues to define Iran's political and social landscape.

In October of 2021, Iran held the United States and Israel responsible for a possible cyber-attack that consisted of disrupting sales at gas stations across the country. The Iranian

¹² **Theocratic:** a government that is ruled by religious leaders. (Cambridge, n.d.)

¹³ **Shiite:** a member of an islamic religious group. (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.)

government stated that these countries disabled the gas system, allowing millions of Iranians to use government-issued cards to buy fuel at a subsidized price. After that, the Iran Primer, published an article stating that the card users reportedly received a message “cyberattack 64411” the phone number for a direct communication run by the clerical leader, Supreme Leader Ayatollah¹⁴ Ali Khamenei’s office. The Iran Primer mentioned that this event affected all of Iran’s 4,300 gas stations, and a vast amount of lines formed at gas stations and disrupted traffic in cities. The only way for many customers to buy fuel was to pay the regular rate, more than double the subsidized¹⁵ one. Digital billboards in the Iranian cities of Tehran and Isfahan were also compromised. Some displayed the message, “Khamenei! Where is our gasoline?” Others read “Free fuel in Jamaran gas station”.

Later on, the president from Iran, Ebrahim Raisi declared that the disruption of fuel sales was meant to anger people by creating disorder. “There should be serious readiness in the field of cyberwar and related bodies should not allow the enemy to follow their ominous aims” (Raisi, 2021). By October 30 of the same year, 3,200 out of 4,300 stations had been reconnected to the central distribution system, resuming subsidized sales. In addition, an obscure hacking group called Predatory Sparrow, claimed responsibility for the attack; they stated it was in “response to the cyber actions by Tehran's terrorist regime against the people in the region and around the world,” the group said in a Telegram¹⁶ post. But Brigadier General Gholamreza Jalali, the head of Iran’s Civil Defense Organization, declared that a state actor was probably responsible; “We are still unable to say forensically, but analytically I believe it was carried out by the Zionist¹⁷ regime, the Americans and their agents” . Jalali

¹⁴ **Ayatollah:** high Shia religious authority. (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.)

¹⁵ **Subsidized:** paid for partly by the government or another organization. (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.)

¹⁶ **Telegraph:** a method of sending and receiving messages by electrical or radio signals, or the special equipment used for this purpose.(Cambridge, n.d.)

¹⁷ **Zionist:** someone who belongs to or supports a political movement that had as its original aim the creation of a country for Jewish people, and that now supports the state of Israel. (Cambridge, n.d.)

added that the gas station incident resembled two other cyberattacks that Iran also attributed to Israel and the United States.

Consequences of cybernetic interventions

The cyber attacks can cause the stop of activities due to the blocking of systems or the hijacking¹⁸ of the information, and have the potential to inflict significant economic harm. The Islamic Republic of Iran had received many of them, the most recent was on December 18th, 2023 when a group of hackers named Gonjeshke Darande, made 70% of the country's gas stations got paralyzed, declares the oil minister, Javad Owji. The attacks began early and were especially grave in Tehran, so many of the gas stations have been forced to operate their pumps manually. The price of the gasoline was heavily subsidized and there were long rows to get it, in order of that, the spokesman for the Iranian gas station association, Reza Navar said there wasn't fuel shortage, but asked drivers to don't go for gas.

In other matters, in 2010 when the most dangerous cybernetic attack in history happened, the control systems of the Bushehr nuclear power plant, as the other industries, were affected by a virus of unprecedented power named Stuxnet. The city of Tehran confirmed that the attack had affected the computers of staff at the Bushehr plant, including its director. It was possible that the virus reached the Iranian city of Natanz, where Iran enriched uranium, and 30,000 computers through the territory. Besides that, 60% of Iran's computers could have been affected, the Buser plant, despite the intervention, held its opening schedule for November of that year. "Stuxnet's highly advanced code had been designed with a war mentality." (BBC, 2015).

Cybersecurity strategies

¹⁸ Hijacking: to take control of an aircraft or other vehicle during a journey, especially using violence. (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.)

Since 2012, the Iranian government has worked on improving cybersecurity, since cyberattacks began to become a national greater threat. The government in order to improve security began to raise awareness, however the Middle East is prompt to cyberattacks since there exists a shortage of cyber talent, presenting a challenge for cyber defense. Some possible strategies for improving cybersecurity in the Middle East include proper monitoring of the attack patterns, in order to be more proactive and aware, also the implementation of AI¹⁹ to avoid tedious and repetitive work. Iran's growth of cyber talent today represents a major cyber threat, therefore they keep their softwares up to date and prioritize patching their known exploited vulnerabilities as a strategy to strengthen operational resilience.

The Iranian state-sponsored cyber threat helped organizations prioritize certain cybersecurity measures, like the implementation of cyber performance goals; which act as a simple cybersecurity practice with known risk-reduction value; and also to encourage people to report malicious activity to the Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) or the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), as well as signing up to receive CISA's cybersecurity alerts and vulnerability scannings. A possible way to properly implement said strategies is for the Middle East to familiarize with the type of attacks and their objectives, like the popular malwares used by the actors and what it is that they focus on, whether cyberespionage or the disruption of core operations of organizations. Finally to improve cybersecurity the Middle East established a regulatory framework to regulate activities in the cyberspace.

¹⁹ IA: abbreviation for Artificial Intelligence: the use or study of computer systems or machines that have some of the qualities that the human brain has, such as the ability to interpret and produce language in a way that seems human, recognize or create images, solve problems, and learn from data supplied to them. (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.)

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XXXVII TECMUN
Glossary of Forbidden Words

Forbidden Words

Defined by the United Nations, are non diplomatic terms participants must avoid to mention during their speeches on the debate and in the writing of resolution projects.

Forbidden Words	Permitted equivalents
First world countries	Developed countries
Third world countries	Developing countries
Gay	Member of the LGBTIQ+ community
War ²⁰	Belic conflict
Rape	Sexual Harassment
Terrorist	Extremist
Kill or murder	Deprive someone of their life
Death	Casualties
Assassination	Homicide
Army	Military forces
Money	Economic resources
Poor	Lack of resources
Okay	Yes or agree
Black ²¹	African American

²⁰ The word war can be used in order to refer to historical contexts, such as the Cold War, the First World War, etc. It can only be used in the Security Council to refer to armed conflicts.

²¹ The word black, with regard to race, is not forbidden but it is recommended to limit its use and refer to this sector as African American or Afrodescendants.

XXXVII TECMUN
Glossary for Resolution Projects

Preambulatory Phrases

Preambulatory Phrases are used at the beginning of every Resolution Paper in order to give context about the resolutions made for the topic. Preambulatory Phrases must be written in italics followed by a sentence that gives said context. For each Resolution Paper there must be five sentences beginning with a Preambulatory Phrase.

Affirming	Desiring	Noting with deep concern
Alarmed by	Emphasizing	Noting with satisfaction
Approving	Expecting	Noting further
Bearing in mind	Expressing its appreciation	Observing
Believing	Fulfilling	Reaffirming
Confident	Fully aware	Realizing
Contemplating	Further deploring	Recalling
Convinced	Further recalling	Recognizing
Declaring	Guided by	Referring
Deeply concerned	Having adopted	Seeking
Deeply conscious	Having considered	Taking into consideration
Deeply convinced	Having examined	Taking note
Deeply disturbed	Having received	Viewing with appreciation
Deeply regretting	Keeping in mind	Welcoming

XXXVII TECMUN
Glossary for Resolution Projects

Operative Clauses

Operative Clauses are used at the beginning of every resolution within the Resolution Paper on the debated topic. They must be written in italics and bold.

Accepts	Endorses	Notes
Affirms	Draws the attentions	Proclaims
Approves	Emphasizes	Reaffirms
Authorizes	Encourages	Recommends
Calls	Expresses its appreciation	Regrets
Calls upon	Expresses its hope	Reminds
Condemns	Further invites	Requests
Confirms	Further proclaims	Solemnly
Congratulates	Further reminds	Affirms
Considers	Further recommends	Strongly
Declares accordingly	Further requests	condemns
Deplores	Further resolves	Supports
Designates	Has resolved	Takes note of
		Transmits
		Trusts

