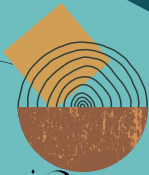# A GENERAL FRAMEWORK OF COUNTERTERRORISM IN LIGHT OF STRATEGIES

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A GENERAL FRAMEWORK OF COUNTERTERRORISM IN LIGHT OF STRATEGIES

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Over the past several years, terrorism posed, and still poses the top security issue for many countries in the 21st century. Its catastrophic consequences transcend all borders and adversely affect the whole world. Threats and suicide attacks aim to strike fear worldwide in order to accomplish their ideological and political goals on a larger scale. In recent years, the emergence of the terrorist groups has evolved into not only intimidation, destabilization of security, but to create a so called "state" by seizing portions of existing states and replace them with a new system of laws and regulations dictated by such groups that are characterized by intimidating, subjugating the population to primitive, violent rule that is out of the bounds of history and modern state).

Thus, it is evident that no country in the world, regardless of its military or technological capabilities, can fight terrorism alone. Therefore, international cooperation has become the most effective means in fighting this unpatriotic scourge.

This study aims to provide a general introduction of three points or levels that need to be well-understood in order to understand international, regional and national efforts, including the experience of the Islamic Military counter-terrorism Coalition's efforts for understanding and uprooting terrorism.

Before delving deep into these topics, it is important to define some fundamental concepts:

Terrorism:

Terrorism is a very complex phenomenon and its definition is still a debatable issue within legal and political circles. The main reason of political problems lies, in fact, not in the definition of the acts of terrorism that everybody agrees upon, but in the definition of the concept itself when it comes to the objective(s) or the parties that carry out such acts.

So, the definition of Terrorism has two parts:
- Part one, defines terrorism by its **goals**, which are linked, as some say, to political goals or politics: namely, any violent or criminal action associated with political goals.
- Part two, defines terrorism by its **overall purpose or means** (i.e., use of intimidation and violence regardless of the goal).

From a legal point of view, the international community has not yet adopted a comprehensive definition of terrorism. There are different definitions in many partial agreements, starting with the Geneva Convention for the Prevention and Punishment of Terrorism (1937) within the framework of the League of Nations, which states that terrorism is "criminal acts directed against a State intended or calculated to create a state of terror in the minds of particular persons or a group of persons or the general public". There are also numerous conventions and instruments within the framework of the **UN General Assembly** or the **UN Security Council** since 1994 and 2004. In addition, it is worth mentioning some **regional** conventions, such as the Arab Convention for the Suppression of Terrorism (1998) and the OAU Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism (1999).

In all these texts, terrorism is premised on the criteria of content rather than objective(s). For example, the Arab Convention for the Suppression of Terrorism (1998) defines terrorism as: "Any act or threat of violence, whatever its motives or purposes, that occurs in the advancement of an individual or collective criminal agenda and seeking to sow panic among people, causing fear by harming them, or placing their lives, liberty or security in danger, or seeking to cause damage to the environment or to public or private installations or property or to occupying or seizing them, or seeking to jeopardize national resources".

Many States have revised their criminal legislations to align with the provisions of the international conventions to which they are parties, and so that their legal systems can comply with the international counter-terrorism criminal policy.

Many texts define a **"terrorist act"** more than terrorism itself. Some of these definitions expand their scope to cover several acts that disrupt public order. however, most of these definitions agree in general that terrorism at its core is about striking terror among the population, destabilizing the state and national stability.

The concept of terrorism differs from other related concepts. The difficulty here lies in the fact that the concept of terrorism gets mixed up with other concepts that may appear similar on the surface but differ in substance:

▶ **Terrorism and Extremism**
The difference lies in the fact that terrorism transcends extremism by turning ideology into action. Thus, not every extremist is a terrorist, but every terrorist is an extremist. And although progressing from one phase to another must be addressed and understood early on, especially when extremism becomes violent.

Terrorism and Political Violence Crime

A terrorist act presumes an act of violence of a political nature or otherwise, yet, every violent political crime is not necessarily a terrorist act (e.g., political assassinations or violent acts resulting from elections).

Terrorism and Organized Crime

Terrorist and organized crimes have certain similarities, chief among them is the secretive organization. Both crimes operate transnationally and at the organizational level. Both pose serious threats to national and international security, stability, violate human rights and timeless human values. The **difference**, however, lies in the fact that organized crime is not a single **criminal** activity, but rather a criminal enterprise covering several criminal activities such as drug trafficking, human trafficking, smuggling of illegal migrants, and money-laundering, while terrorism is associated to a single criminal activity. Organized crime usually aims to gain huge illicit funds and profits, while terrorism in general aims to seize power or at least destabilize the existing government or intimidate citizens for various reasons, including the imposition of certain beliefs.

Terrorism and Armed Resistance

Armed resistance is defined as combat operations carried out by national elements, different from members of the regular armed forces, to defend national interests against foreign powers.

Hence, there are certain similarities between terrorist operations and armed resistance, terrorist operations **resemble** armed resistance in the use of force and violence to achieve the desired objective, besides the panic and fear resulting from the use or threat of the use of force. Yet, the legal characterization of the **differences** between the two seems challenging at times. Armed resistance is characterized by legality and legitimacy, since its ultimate goal is to defend and liberate the homeland, which explains the legitimacy of the resistance under international law. On the other hand, terrorism aims to destabilize, threaten international peace, security, and violates all international norms and humanitarian law. Hence, it is difficult to define terrorism, which explains why there is no general international agreement regarding terrorism or its definition. This is due to the disagreement of the international community on having a unified understanding of terrorism for historical and political reasons.

Vis-à-vis the national liberation organizations in their struggle against colonialism, some countries consider that this struggle amounts to terrorist acts that should be held accountable legally and security-wise. While others consider them as national liberation operations that deserve assistance and support. The UN practice highlights the difficulty of defining the concept of terrorism, by prohibiting the use of force under the UN charter, under the UN Charter, but exempts the violence of national liberation movements under the right of peoples to self-determination and the struggle against colonialism.

There are side issues regarding the optimal counter-terrorism strategy, in particular, the relationship between **terrorism and religion**.

- Many media outlets and politicians, particularly in Western countries, see a link between religion, Islam in particular, and terrorism. Some also think that the term "jihad" is synonymous with violence and terrorism. The answer to this Islamophobia seems pretty simple: Terrorism is as old as time, and existed independently from Islam and even in non-Muslim countries. In the 17th and 18th centuries during the French Revolution in particular, the Reign of Terror (1793–1794) was one of the main features of that bloody period. The Bolshevik Revolution (1905–1917) was known for the same violence for seizing and maintaining power. The same trend is noticed in several countries, such as Japan, where the concept "kamikaze" of suicide attacks was introduced. The revolutions of national liberation have experienced the same attitude, where colonial powers in Africa and Asia considered national liberation fighters as terrorists. Therefore, Islam existed in all these cases, while no one talked about terrorism in Muslim countries until recently.

- Terrorism and Poverty

According to some theories, there is a causal link between terrorism and poverty. Thus, poverty eradication can get rid of terrorism. This theory is far from

the truth. It is true that terrorism usually thrives in fragile, poor and marginalized communities. But there is no causal or inherent relationship between terrorism and poverty for to two reasons:

There are extremely impoverished societies in terms of per capita income and GDP, but there is no widespread terrorism, or at least, terrorism is very rare or exceptional.

On the other hand, terrorism grows and spreads in rich countries, where many terrorists were born and raised in well-to-do families.

In fact, one can say that terrorism is an ideology above all. It has nothing to do with religion and socio-economic conditions.

So, how can we fight, counter and uproot this scourge?

It is important to remember that the fighting terrorism by military and security means is necessary but not enough on its own. This is what happened almost twenty years ago, especially since the 9/11 attacks. Terrorism was almost limited to certain areas. Ever since 9/11, it has spread in almost all countries in parallel with with the rise of terrorist organizations and their affiliates, honing of their methods, and their dangerous influence, especially on the minds of young people and new segments of society.

In fact, and objectively, it can be asserted that the international community has failed somehow to fight terrorism. According to a significant number of experts, the reason for this failure is due to the sole reliance on the military solution to the problem. Thus, since terrorism is an ideology, fighting it must be based on a multifaceted strategy. In this regard, since the outbreak of terrorism, the international community has had worked on several counter-terrorism strategies at three levels: global, regional and national.

Comparative Counter-Terrorism Strategies

Before delving into the topic, we should first define the concept of "strategy" because it helps in better understanding it.

Carl Von Clausewitz, the most famous theorist of the art of war,[1] says that "Tactics is the art of using troops in battle; strategy is the art of using battles to win the war". Strategy is one of the oldest concepts known to mankind. It first emerged in the military domain, and has been associated with military victories or failures in wars for years. However, with the pursuit of human development and the growth of international and economic capacities, this concept has been further expanded into several areas, most importantly, the political and social fields, then in all human fields and activities.

▶ **Narrow definition of 'Strategy'**

The word "strategy" comes from the Greek strategos, which combines stratos (i.e., army) and agein (i.e., to lead), meaning the art of leading military operations. This narrow definition is restricted to the military domain. The term "strategy" was first introduced in ancient Chinese texts, such as The Art of War by Sun Tzu in the early 5th century BC. Then it was defined by Carl von Clauswitz as "the use of the engagement to attain the object of war or use of conflict to impose the political objective". In Oxford dictionary, strategy is "the skill of planning the movements of armies in a battle". Thus, all previous definitions agree that military strategy is the art of operating in battle and using wars to achieve political goals of all sorts. It is notable, then, that military strategy is linked to political interests, and is used as means for planning and manifesting future political objectives. However, with human evolution and development of political and international goals, "strategy" has also developed to be used in further fields.

▶ **Broad definition of 'Strategy'**

In the 20th century, the use of the term "strategy" expanded from the military domain to almost all other domains, starting with the political, economic and social domains, to all disciplines.

strategic thinking was introduced to all fields for achieving predetermined goals. Several modern definitions of the term "strategy" emerged, such as "a set of decisions and actions resulting in formu-

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1. Carl von Clausewitz (1780–1831) witnessed several European wars, and was known for his book, Vom Kriege, and quote: "Politics is a continuation of war by other means."

lation and implementation of strategies designed to achieve the objective of an organization". Another definition is "the science and art of using the means and capabilities available in an integrated process under plan and preparation, with the aim of creating a degree of freedom of action that helps decision-makers to achieve their higher policy objectives in times of peace and war".

Thus, we conclude that strategy, as previously defined, is more than just planning or tactics. Strategy is an art of a better utilization of available means to achieve certain objective(s). In a broader sense, it is the planning of available ideological, physical, and social elements with the aim of achieving specific well-thought out objectives in a certain field or in fulfilment of a state policy.

In conclusion, "Strategy" is a two-pronged approach:
- First, is the specialized approach or strategy that represents strategic thinking related to the examination of the objectives of a particular action of the State's sub-actions, such as education, security, and economy.

- Second, is a comprehensive approach that is based on a strategy aiming to achieve political objectives in general in times of peace and war.

The latter part is our focus in this article. Strategy shall be examined in a broader and more comprehensive sense. This article explores IMCTC's strategy in comparison with the comprehensive national, regional or international comparative strategies that could be used in countering terrorism. Yet, the concept of strategy must be clarified in light of other related concepts.

Strategy differs from several relevant concepts, such as the concept of foreign policy, which seems more comprehensive than strategy in that foreign policy is a tool of strategy. In the same vein, strategy is different from planning, where planning represents a theoretical framework that combines the State's objectives, which considers strategy broader and more comprehensive than the plan. Strategy may include more than one plan in one domain or more. However, there is a complementary relationship between the two, so planning needs a strategy for tangible results. On the other hand, a strategy

requires prior planning that represents the theoretical framework that shall guide the intended action, to avoid improvisation and confusion.

Strategy is also different from tactics. Tactics encompasses the art of organizing and employing fighting forces on or near the battlefield. When it comes to tactics, we are dealing with operations carried out to keep soldiers on the battlefield. Tactics here is manifested in camouflage and maneuver in defense and surprise attack. The term "tactic" is used generally to refer to a short-term vision. While "strategy" is concerned with the general conduct of war. It defines a comprehensive plan and process flows that must be carried out over the **long term** to achieve the desired objective.

1. Global strategies

One of global strategies that deserve be addressed:

▶ UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy:

In 2006, the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy was published in the form of a resolution and action plan (A/RES/60/288), which aims to continue to strengthen the UN capacities in areas such as conflict prevention, negotiation support, mediation, conciliation of international relations, judicial settlement, the rule of law, and peacekeeping in order to contribute to the success of proposed solutions to disputes while preventing the outbreak of conflict.

This is an independent global strategy published to reinforce national, regional and international counter-terrorism efforts based on four pillars: "measures to address the situations leading to the spread of terrorism; measures to prevent and counter terrorism; measures to reinforce the available means of the State to prevent and counter terrorism and to promote the UN role in this regard; and measures to ensure respect for human rights and the rule of law as a fundamental basis for countering terrorism.

The Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy is a living document that is reviewed by the General Assembly every two years, and is designed to adapt to the priorities of the Member States in countering terrorism".

The UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy is a unique comprehensive tool designed to support national, regional and international counter-terrorism

efforts. It is adopted by consensus by all UN Member States, which, for the first time, have adopted a joint strategic and practical approach for countering terrorism. Not only does the Strategy convey a global message that terrorism in all forms is unacceptable, but also stipulates concrete measures that have to be taken nationally or internationally to prevent and counter terrorism. It includes an array of measures, such as strengthening the proactive capacity of the State to counter terrorist threats or even coordinate counter-terrorism actions within the United Nations system while supporting international cooperation.

2. Regional strategies

2.1 EU Counter-Terrorism Strategy

In March 2017, the Council of the European Union adopted a counter-terrorism strategy that reinforces rules of the EU legal framework for the prevention of terrorist attacks and addressing the phenomenon of terrorist foreign fighters. The European Commission adopted the EU 2020 Strategy published in July 24, 2020, which represents a security research strategy for 2020–2025 on counter-terrorism and organized crime, prevention detection hybrid threats, increase the resilience of the critical infrastructure, to strengthen cybersecurity, research, and innovation. It worth noting that the EU Strategy has set the necessary tools and measures for five years ahead to ensure physical, conventional and digital security. **The Strategy prioritizes four areas:**

- Protecting Europe against terrorism and organized crime: The Strategy always proclaims adopting the EU counter-terrorism agenda in parallel with ongoing action to prevent and counter extremism.
- Strengthening **institutional** work: governmental and non-governmental players in order to confront attacks on the ground and to counter cyberattacks, misinformation campaigns, fake news, and hate mongering.
- Supporting the Physical and Digital Infrastructure: this provides a range of essential services for everyday life (e.g., energy, transportation, healthcare, banking, etc.).
- Protection or Cyber Defense: protecting infrastructures, making them resilient against attacks on the ground and cyberattacks capable of disrupting services.

2.2 Arab Counter-Terrorism Strategy

AIMC adopted this strategy in 1997, aimed to promote and coordinate counter-terrorism efforts of Arab States. The AIMC INTERPOL Office is in charge of the follow-up to the implementation of the Strategy and writing a report to be submitted to AIMC at its regular session. The Strategy includes the baselines for countering terrorism in Arab States. Then, interim plans were developed and approved by AIMC to identify necessary action to achieve the objectives of the Arab Strategy.

This Strategy aims to fight terrorism and eradicate its root causes, promote the maintenance of Arab security, stability, principles of legitimacy, the rule of law, and safety of public institutions and facilities as well as the people. It also aims to strengthen cooperation among Arab States and with international counter-terrorism organizations. For proper implementation of the Strategy in each State, States must form of a National Counter-Terrorism Committee of representatives of the competent bodies, which will direct, supervise and coordinate between the various agencies involved in counter-terrorism operations. States undertake to establish a specialized unit for information gathering on terrorist acts and a special high-performance counter-terrorism unit.

3. National strategies

Here are some prominent national experiences in this regard:

▶ Saudi Strategy

Saudi Arabia has adopted a comprehensive, multi-faceted and integrated strategy to combat terrorism, that includes military and non-military means, as well as strict security counter-terrorism measures and law enforcement. This strategy is based on three pillars: (Prevention, Rehabilitation, and Aftercare).

Prevention aims to extend assistance, support to the efforts aimed at raising awareness of the risks of extremist and deviant ideologies, promoting values of moderation, tolerance, correct misconceptions,

and counter ideologies that fuel extremism.

Rehabilitation is manifested in a set of measures taken through programs of re-education, counselling, advice, and guidance. These programs branch into sub-committees, including a sub-committee on religious affairs, comprising religious leaders, scholar, and professors. They are in charge of initiating dialogues with detainees to remove any lingering doubts.

The **Aftercare**, on the other hand, aims at countering terrorism through coordination. Its efforts in this regard focus on communicating with released prisoners and their families, providing financial and moral support, enrolling into rehabilitation programs, helping them re-adapt with, resettle and reintegrate back into their Saudi communities.

Tunisia's Strategy

In November 2016, the National Strategy on Counter Terrorism was approved in Tunisia following two strategic documents developed in 2014 and 2015. However, the two documents were never published purely for political reasons and an interest in passing the basic law that would make up for the 2003 counter-terrorism law before the strategy was published. This is due to that the strategy complements the law by constituting the juridical basis for counter-terrorism measures on the ground.

Tunisia's Strategy was developed based on a multi-dimensional approach in line with the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and several successful regional and national strategies. This approach aims to separate terrorism from its contributing factors, and to develop methods of countering terrorism not confined only to the security and military means. In addition, it focuses on ensuring balanced and clear participation of all relevant authorities and institutions to implement proactive and comprehensive measures to counter terrorist ideology. This Strategy aims to provide a broad vision among all stakeholders in line with national counter-terrorism efforts.

Morocco's Strategy

A "comprehensive approach" that is integrated, coherent, and based on promoting values of moderation, tolerance, human rights, the consolidation of the rule of law, and strengthening of the government's security. This comes in line with taking measures to fight poverty, exclusion, achieving social equality, supporting and integrating current and former extremist prisoners, and ensuring intra- and intergovernmental cooperation and coordination.

US Strategy

Several strategies were developed in the U.S. due to the fact that each administration has its own policy for countering terrorism. The latest one was published in October 4, 2018, with its primary objective to: "defeat the terrorists who threaten America's safety, prevent future attacks, and protect our national interests". The U.S. Strategy further states that it will develop "a new approach" that includes six key areas: (1) pursuit of terrorists to their source; (2) isolation of terrorists from their sources of support; (3) updating the powers of counter-terrorism authorities in the United States, integrating and modernizing its tools. (4) protection of the United States infrastructure and strengthen resilience. (5) counter terrorist radicalization and recruitment. (6) strengthening the counter-terrorism capabilities of international partners.[2]

Canada's Strategy

Canada adopted a national strategy for countering terrorism and extremism in 2018. The launch of the Strategy is an important step in Canada's approach in preventing extremism, the first step toward violence, as much as possible. This Strategy identifies the approach to be adopted by the Canadian government to prevent and counter violent extremism that leads to violence by preventing individuals from violent ideologies.

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2. On the other hand, former President Obama's National Strategy for Counter-Terrorism, published in June 28, 2011, primarily focused on global terrorist threats emanating from Al Qaeda and its affiliates. The overarching goal of this strategy was to "disrupt, dismantle, and eventually defeat Al Qaeda and its affiliates and followers". The strategy also focused on the threats posed by geographic prevalence of Al Qaeda, its affiliates, followers, and identified principles that would guide United States counter-terrorism efforts: adherence to core values, building security partnerships, and application of tools and capabilities appropriately.

Canada's strategy sets three priorities: first: building, sharing and using knowledge; second: counter radicalization leading to violence on cyberspace; third: Support of Interventions. The Canadian government continues to take all possible measures to counter terrorism that threatens the Canadian people, interests around the world, while ensuring respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

▶ **Spain's Strategy**

Spain's National Counter-terrorism Strategy is based on four key pillars: Prevention, Protection, Surveillance, and Response.

The **"prevention"** portion develops the necessary strategic lines of action for detecting and preventing the rise, development and spread of terrorism and violent extremism by addressing its root causes, protection of most vulnerable individuals and groups by strengthening coordination and cooperation among public and private institutions to enhance counter violent extremism efforts and community engagement. It also aims to support the prevention of terrorist and extremist financing, and strengthening proactive strategic communications for countering radicalism, in line with the democratic values enshrined in the Constitution that protect the interests of all players and society as a whole.

The **"protection"** portion defines the specific strategic lines of action for ensuring security and protection of society, citizens, institutions and national interests by reducing the vulnerability of potentially sensitive targets for terrorism and violent extremism, and ensuring transparency of the State's action. All that can be accomplished through the coordination of public agencies, private sector enterprises, and developing a legislative framework to enhance security against terrorism and violent extremism, while ensuring the continuity of the overall approach.

The **"Tracking"** portion defines the strategic lines of action for identifying and investigating terrorists and violent extremists to prevent the planning and execution of their actions, while also taking action against their support, logistics and finance networks and making sure they are brought to justice. This is achieved by supporting coordination between the various departments involved in the national counter-terrorism domain and international cooperation.

The final **"Response"** portion is aimed at minimizing the consequences of terrorist action, ensuring highest level of support for the victims, alleviate the harm caused and restore normalcy by carrying out actions and plans for a quick recovery and drawing the lessons for future response preparations.

4. IMCTC counter-terrorism strategy and its alignment with global and national strategies

IMCTC was announced and launched in 2015, followed by the meeting of the Inaugural IMCTC Defense Ministers Council and released a final communique. The final communique of the Inaugural IMCTC Defense Ministers Council comprised two key components; **first;** IMCTC objectives, which require cooperation and coordination across counter-terrorism domains among member states, in addition to its international character.

Second; it includes certain obligations, namely: the authority to appoint both IMCTC Secretary-General and Military Commander, approval of by-laws, regulations, annual budget and the processes of member countries' delegates, and forging partnerships with international organizations.

IMCTC exercises its legal and functional powers like other international organization. It comprises 42 states, while currently, 28 Member States have already sent their delegates to IMCTC headquarters, but the number is set to increase over time.

IMCTC has an international character in terms of objectives that can only be implemented through international cooperation and coordination. It receives official delegates of its Member States like all other international organizations. It establishes partnerships and signs agreements with several countries and organizations within the framework of its objectives, and works regionally and globally like all international organizations.

IMCTC is unique in terms of both at regional and globally levels. It is worth mentioning that IMCTC objectives go beyond being just a mere "military coalition", given that it adopts a multi-faceted counter-terrorism approach.

And based on available information, there is no similar experience regionally and internationally, where comparative experiences, including national experiences, address only on military aspects or exclusively focus on other relevant aspects of counter-terrorism. Since its inception, IMCTC has worked on establishing a unique strategy to counter terrorism. It functions based on a vertical approach (i.e., sectors or domains):

- ideology Domain: focuses on the universality of the message of Islam that reaffirms the Islamic principles, values of moderation, tolerance, compassion, and refuting the narrative of violent extremist ideology through presenting the true nature of Islam and creating ideological, psychological, and social impact to rectify extremist terrorist misconceptions.

- Communications Domain: Develop, produce, and disseminate factual, scholarly and engaging content on Coalition or third-party owned communications and media platforms and channels, with the aim of discrediting the appeal of violent extremism, instilling hope and optimism, and measuring the impact on mindsets and behaviors.

- Counter-Terrorism Financing Domain: In collaboration and coordination with the competent authorities in the Coalition Member Countries in CTF, it promotes best practices, advances legal, regulatory, and operational frameworks, and facilitates information sharing to further prevention, detection of terrorism financing.

- Military domain: When requested, it assists in the coordination of resourcing and planning of member countries' military operations, facilitates the secure sharing of military information, and encourages military counter terrorism capacity-building to deter aggression and violence.

These four domains intersect with international, regional, or national strategies, where each domain, except the military, necessarily includes the components of proactivity, protection, and deterrence.

Alignment between comparative strategies and IMCTC's counter-terrorism strategy

IMCTC counter-terrorism strategy	National, regional, and international strategies	Points of intersection between IMCTC strategy and comparative strategies
Ideology Domain: Preserve the universality of Islam›s eternal message, Islamic values, counter, refute terrorist ideologies and narratives a consistent and universal message of Islam that reaffirms the Islamic principles, values and rectifies terrorist misconceptions.	**Prevention:** Promote the values of moderation, correct misconceptions and counter the ideology that drive extremism.	**Prevention - protection - deterrence:** detection and prevention of the rise, spread of terrorism, violent extremism and curtail its expansion by addressing its root causes. Support and protection of most vulnerable individuals and groups by strengthening the coordination, cooperation of countering violent extremism efforts and community engagement. Ensure the highest level of security, protection of society, institutions and national interests by curbing the impact of terrorism, violent extremism, and ensuring transparency of the State's actions. Develop a legislative framework to enhance security against terrorism and violent extremism, while ensuring the continuity of counter-terrorism.

IMCTC counter-terrorism strategy	National, regional, and international strategies	Points of intersection between IMCTC strategy and comparative strategies
communications Domain: Develop, produce, and disseminate a factual, scholarly and engaging content on Coalition or third-party owned communications and media platforms and channels, with the aim of discrediting the appeal of violent extremism, instill hope, optimism, and measure the impact on mindsets and behaviors.	**Protection** The aftercare strategy aimed at helping families of terrorists, setting up rehabilitation programs, helping them re-adapt, resettle and reintegrate them back into their communities.	**Prevention - protection - deterrence:**
Counter-Terrorism Financing Domain (CTF): Collaborate and coordinate with the competent authorities in IMCTC Member States on CTF, facilitate information sharing to support prevention, detection, and seizure operations.	**Deterrence:** isolate terrorists from their sources of support.	**Prevention - protection - deterrence:** Support the prevention of terrorist and extremist financing, and strengthen proactive strategic communications for countering radicalism.

IMCTC counter-terrorism strategy	National, regional, and international strategies	Points of intersection between IMCTC strategy and comparative strategies
Military domain: Assist in the coordination of resourcing, planning of member countries' military operations, facilitates the secure sharing of military information, and encourages military counter terrorism capacity-building to deter aggression and violence.	**Pursuit of terrorism militarily** and security-wise. Enhance the information system.	**Deterrence (pursuit).** Pursuit of terrorists. Identify, investigate terrorists and violent extremists to prevent the planning and execution of their actions, while also taking action against their support, logistics, finance networks and making sure they are brought to justice. Minimize the consequences of terrorist action, ensure the highest level of support for the victims, alleviate the harm caused and restoring normalcy by carrying out actions, plans for a quick recovery and drawing the lessons in order to prepare future responses. enhance coordination between the various departments involved at the national counter-terrorism domain and international cooperation.

thus, there is full alignment between IMCTC's counter-terrorism strategy and the other international strategies, noting that IMCTC focuses on the important elements on which every terrorist act is premised, regardless of its source, nature and means; namely; ideology, finance, communications, as well as the military domain.

Notes and Conclusions

How consistent and relevant are all these strategies and the alignment of IMCTC's counter-terrorism strategy with the international and national counter-terrorism strategies?

First of all, there are several similarities between global and regional counter-terrorism strategies, despite the variation in crafting their recommendations, yet, they all share the same objective, namely; declaring war on terrorism and uproot it.

That is why all these strategies unanimously agreed on the necessity of countering extremism as the first step leading to terrorism, bearing in mind that extremism is the baseline for of the formation of a fragile, bigoted and violent personality that is susceptible to joining terrorist groups.

In the meantime, all global and regional counter-terrorism strategies stressed the importance of international cooperation, especially since terrorism has become a transnational phenomenon that grows particularly in countries suffering from deterioration of security, wars or revolts, where chaos and

instability prevail. In the same vein, a link has been established between terrorism and transnational organized crime, such as smuggling and drugs trafficking.

Global and regional counter-terrorism strategies have attached special attention to modern terrorism or the so-called "cyber terrorism" that created a new generation of terrorists. There are now "savvy terrorists" familiar with the latest technologies and information technology. They use the internet to recruit terrorists and plan terrorist operations making it incumbent on countries to develop counter methods.

The national strategies in various countries are shaped by global and regional strategies, and therefore do not differ much from them. Thus, national strategies are similar in their fundamental objectives of counter-terrorism, but differ in some recommendations given the difference in capabilities, backgrounds and specificity of each country.

Conclusion

Terrorism is nothing new. It can be considered a historical phenomenon that accompanied most ancient human civilizations, regardless of their economic or social standards, religion, language, culture, military or financial strength.

Hence, victory over the various terrorist groups, at the turn of the new century, is the responsibility of every one; including; states, governmental and non-governmental organizations, civil society, academics, scholars, financial institutions and journalists. The task of doing so is mostly tied to the capabilities of all such actors, since terrorism ideology can only grow in fragile communities in one way or another and requires financial resources to achieve its objectives, as well as means of communications to transmit its twisted ideological aberrations, especially among young people and vulnerable groups. This means, in particular, that security and military solutions are fundamental to fight terrorism. In addition, conventional intelligence and technology can play a key role in this regard. However, uprooting this scourge requires finding other parallel solutions that may seem difficult to achieve and implement, given that they do not bring instantly or in the short-term. Yet, this is the only way to provide long-term protection for States, communities and peoples against terrorist, extremist ideologies that lead to violent acts that sow confusion, fear, threaten the security and stability of societies and undermine the eternal human values.