[Current global terrorism dimensions and failure of world leaders](https://nation.com.pk/22-May-2019/current-global-terrorism-dimensions-and-failure-of-world-leaders%22%20%5Ct%20%22_new)

Senator Rehman Malik May 22, 2019

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We are living in a world where the threat perception with different dimensions is increasing day by day and the international community has so far failed to come up with collective response to these growing serious threats. Today, world is less peaceful than the past and becoming more dangerous with every passing day. We see every day some incident of violation happen anywhere in the world.

The word “terrorism” has become a symbol of more “terror” and it has now assumed more dreadful role than its simple original definition.

It is unfortunate that “terrorism” is now being used to achieve political and ideological goals. The history of terrorism from Japan to Germany in the past was at a limited scale and now its magnitude is increased and it has appeared as a monster in the form of syndicates and well organised crime. It is now international fact that wars bring miseries and bread terrorism which has stood established since the end of the World War -II.

USSR invaded Afghanistan and this act of USSR planted the seeds of violence through religious militancy duly supported by CIA. In fact CIA recruited thousands of disgruntled Muslim elements and criminals from Europe and Canada and launched them with full military training in Afghanistan via Pakistan for their own goals and objectives. These militants / Jehahadis with the support of Americans defeated USSR and towards the end of this war it contributed in disintegrating USSR and gave birth to Russia and central Asian states.

I am an eye witness of Afghan war as director FIA, then DG FIA and most importantly as Federal Interior Minister of Pakistan for 5 years and the thrice elected senator and currently watching overseeing the reports as the Chairman of Senate Standing Committee on Interior. The Afghan issue and Kashmir issue are very serious which have endangered the regional and international peace.

I remember, when I identified OBL through his links with Yousef Ramsey (First bomber of world trade centre and maternal uncle of Zahid ul Shiekh and Khalid Ul Shiekh) and their activities were against Saudi Arabia and Pakistan. The potential of terrorism exists even today by associates of OBL now in the form of Daesh/ISIS and Al-Qaeda. This high level trained force of Afghan and Afro- Arab Jihadis were left alone and they lost their jobs and hence their retaliation was natural in the form consolidation of their own militant groups.

This abrupt and sudden ditch by USA was not accepted by these militants and almost the entire force emerged as Taliban on both sides of Pakistan and Afghanistan. I witness Mullah Umer becoming the leader of Taliban and other groups went with Engineer Gulbuddin Hekmatyar who was trained by CIA and later he joined OBL and spent most of his time in Iran till his joining of government of President Hamid Karzai.

These militants were subsequently adopted by OBL for his group Al-Qaeda with the help of Ayman al-Zawahiri, the second in command of Al Qaeda.

I, in the capacity of then Director FIA Peshawar region had interrogated many associates of OBL and al-Zawahiri and based on my background information, I can say with authority that the birth of Taliban and Al Qaeda would have not been evolved if USA had not left these remnants of militants jobless in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

The emergence of Taliban government became nursery of militants and terrorists and their growth was unprecedented. They used terror as weapon and they introduced suicide jacket as a new weapon and they have been using it successfully till now.

I named Taliban as Zaliman (The Cruel) after witnessing their brutalities and their dreadful acts of terrorism against innocent people. The terrorist act of 9 /11 changed the economic and political face of the world and the birth of various new terrorist outfits including Daesh. We have entered into terrorism ridden domain of fears from the terrorist outfits from the various regions of the world. The emergence of Daesh has shaken the whole world and its creation in Iraq is no more a secret.

I have discussed the background of its creation in detail and then its growth from Iraq to entire Middle East, then Turkey and Afghanistan. I had pointed out three years back its presence in South Asia and its ingress-to Sri Lanka via India. The soil of India has been used for its training and launching terrorism in Sri Lanka and in Pakistan. We should never forget that the vast majority of terrorist attacks take place in developing countries and Muslim areas. The recent attacks in New Zealand and Sri Lanka have shaken the world. This growth and uncontrolled acts of terrorism has brought an acute perception of insecurity and endless fear among all the communities which is a big challenge for the international community. The concept of interfaith harmony is vaporising and world leaders are not playing their rightful role towards elimination of terrorism.

The international community is confused and divided, while terrorism thrives on divisions. Terrorism is fundamentally the denial and destruction of human rights. The fight against terrorism will never succeed by perpetuating the same denial and destruction. We must relentlessly fight terrorism to protect human rights and make our generations safe with collective efforts. We will not be able to counter the menace of terrorism unless international community moves with collective counter measures and common strategy. I have always advocated for a common counter-terrorism strategy against the common enemy means terrorists.

The world is entangled with geo-political frictions and in many ways the world leadership is responsible for growth of terrorism due to unwise and wrong decisions and destroying the concept of interfaith and international brotherhood. Earlier support of Taliban by USA, covert Arab spring strategy and others covert operations in the region created unrest in Middle East. The involvement of Prince Irk of infamous black water in state affairs and indulgence in Afghanistan and Africa, attacks on Iraq and disbanding the Iraqi Army, attack on Syria through Al Qaeda and Daesh, mistake in Iraq to divide the Muslim into Shia and Sunni and inciting clashes among them, massacre of Fallujah Iraq, non-resolved issues of Palestine and Kashmir and noncompliance of UNO resolutions, invasion of Afghanistan by USA on the pattern of USSR and American fight with the local Tribes and self- created Taliban, all these added fuel to unrest in the region and terror across the world.

American conflict with Iran and internal rifts within Middle East and also the Saudia - Iran ongoing conflict is now a emerging a situation of Cold War between USA and China which will not be good for the whole world peace and economy and USA - Russia conflict and this Cold War is visible and increasing day by day.

In addition above conflicts there is real danger of nuclear conflict in South Asia as there are four major nuclear players Russia, China, Pakistan and India. These all disputes have polarised the world leaving the room for the terrorists to grow and act and they can play any bloody dangerous game and could be used by any party. In fact we have noticed that the wheelers and dealers of this world create small groups for some geo political interests but with the passage of time the same group turn into monsters like Al Qaeda, Boko Haram and Daesh.

These major terrorist outfits have recruited huge number of youth from USA, Europe and other parts of world including Russia and China. World needs to have a global interfaith forum to come with international stringent laws in view of the growing dangers. The world players has to withdraw their motivated regional geo - political interests in various parts of the world and to ensure to dry the funds and weapons supplies to these terrorist outfits. These terrorists organisations are establishing their roots in poverty ridden areas and communities particularly in under developing counties. The respective governments need to take strong appropriate measures to stop this exploitations by terrorists by launch effective counter measures.

Internet and social media has now become a big source for their communication, recruitment, disseminating violent extremist propaganda and also fund raising. The recruitment of violent extremists through social media is continuing and presently being used by Daesh’s outfit works wide. The radicalisation of youth is the real serious issue and terrorists are advocating violation and militancy. The mode of violence varies from country to country. The masterminds of terrorism draw strength from resentment, humiliation, lack of education and mainly poverty. Pakistan and Afghanistan have witnessed some parents even sold their young teen aged children to Taliban to be used as suicide bomber.

The De-radicalisation is the answer at state level. The threat of growing terrorism is real and it would be a mistake to assume that military operations alone will eradicate terrorism. In fact we need to change the mindset of the terrorists and potential victims among the youth. That is why a smart and comprehensive doable global counter-terrorism strategy is required for addressing the root causes of violent extremism.

I would like to suggest few key counter-terrorism priorities, and main is to develop respect for human rights and the rule of law to secure long-term benefits in the fight against it. We need much stronger international cooperation on counter-terrorism by sharing intelligence and fixing counter terrorism as the top priority. A common counter-terrorism strategy under the flag of United Nations under which it shall be made obligatory to be implemented by every member state. Our strong resolve should therefore be international unity, solidarity and collaboration. There is an urgent need for governments and security agencies to collaborate far more effectively in fighting terror with the global partners. There is still no consensus on a comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism. But there are 19 different international conventions and many regional instruments in this field that make it easier to prosecute terrorists, enhance protection, and cooperate in other key areas where as we need a solid a single convention on it. They are true manifestation of the international rule of law. Signing them and ratifying them is not enough unless it become international law to become mandatory by each member state. One major reason for this is lack of opportunity so jobs, education and vocational training for young people must be an absolute priority in national development plans and in international development cooperation. Young people are an overwhelmingly positive asset to our societies. We must invest in them and empower them enable them to get involved in positive activities.

In the end, I would like to share our experience in Pakistan as we fought this war on terror to show our resolve to the international community and even today we are in state of war against terrorism. We jumped in this war despite our meagre resources and we sacrificed more than 70 thousands innocent Pakistanis and 10 thousands soldiers with a huge devastation to our infrastructure which was loss of billions of dollars. The war on terror and our support to USA brought reduction in growth rate and the investors left Pakistan because of uncertain security situation as terrorists are still targeting Pakistan because of our support to USA in war on terror. Let me say our economy has deteriorated to the present undesirable level and “our participation in war on terror” is the major among other factors. This has destroyed our economy as instead of relying our home grown economic growth, we have been now relying on borrowing funding by IMF.

Unfortunately west still views us with doubts in the context of our efforts against terrorism. USA has always been insisting on “do more Pakistan”. In two separate meetings with then US President George W. Bush and then US President Barak Obama, I told why always Pakistan to do more and why not to have a common strategy to combat our common enemy - terrorists but unfortunately both had no answer. And, whereas Ms. Condoleezza Rice the then US Secretary State in the same meeting with President Bush confirmed that USA does not have common strategy to fight this common enemy. I had the similar arguments with Secretary Hillary Clinton and Secretary John Kerry but the situation did not improve and US couldn’t work to formulate a common strategy to combat the common enemy- terrorists. I wish the present dialogue between USA and Afghan Taliban succeed.

Full transcript of a speech delivered

by Senator Rehman Malik

in Oxford University on 21st May, 2019