

CSIS

Center for Strategic and International Studies

1800 K Street N.W.

Washington, DC 20006

(202) 775-3270

Updates from: CSIS.ORG, "Homeland Defense"

Comments to: Acordesman@aol.com

A New Strategy for Dealing with Terrorism in the Middle East

Working Draft

**Anthony H. Cordesman
Arleigh A. Burke Chair in Strategy**

NOVEMBER 8, 2001

It is both easy and dangerous to stereotype the problem of fighting terrorism in the Middle East. The only way that the United States can hope to approach the struggle successfully is to understand its complexity and deal with it accordingly. There are some twenty-one to twenty-three countries in the Middle East, depending upon how states wish to align themselves at any given time. They sweep across North Africa from Morocco to Egypt, cover the Levant, and then cover the Arabian Peninsula and the Northern Gulf, ending in Iran.

Some are long-standing partners and fight their own wars against terrorism and extremism. It is easy to forget this in the middle of a crisis, and blame such states for not anticipating how serious a threat terrorism could become outside their own territory and region. It seems even easier for Americans to forget that we too failed to anticipate the seriousness of the threat, and the need for joint action. Nevertheless, we do not face some clash between civilizations as much as a common problem seen from different perspectives and national interests. Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, and the UAE have all been partners in past security efforts, have shared intelligence with the US, and face a problem with internal terrorism and Islamic extremism.

Other nations have supported, hosted, or tolerated terrorism and extremism, although generally as part of the Arab struggle with Israel or the equally constant struggle between Arab states or between Iran and its neighbors. These states include such states as Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Libya, the Sudan, Syria, and Yemen. One state – Algeria – has fought a decade-long own war against its own Islamic terrorists and extremists, but the government and ruling military junta have been so much a cause of the nation's problems that Algeria must be treated as a special case.

The US cannot hope to succeed in dealing with Middle Eastern terrorism, or prevent the emergence of far more serious threats in the form of state-driven asymmetric warfare, unless it adopts a strategy of reinforcing past alliances and persuading other states to join it in reducing the threat posed by extremism. Dealing with the Middle East and Islam as if they were somehow alien or hostile would turn the “clash between civilizations” into a self-fulfilling prophecy. It would reject key allies and make it impossible to use some combination of pressure and incentives to win support from other states. In fact, it would give extremists like Bin Laden precisely the victory they have sought to win.

The “Structural” Causes of Terrorism and Extremism

At the same time, the US must recognize that far more is involved than a narrow battle against extremist movements and regimes. All of the Middle Eastern states do have some things in common. All but one – Israel – are principally Islamic. All but two – Israel and Iran – are primarily Arab. All have lagged behind most regions of the world in development, including the most wealthy oil states, whose oil income is not a substitute for a balanced and diversified economy. Most have experienced massive population growth. The population of the Middle East doubled from 1950 to 1980, rose from 174 million in 1980 to 290 million in 1999, and is projected to rise to 390 million in 2015. The net result is negligible real growth in per capita income from 1965 to the present, with the World Bank estimating an average real growth of only 0.1 percent over a 35-year period.

All have seen massive social upheavals, as largely agricultural states have become urbanized, breaking down the traditional economic structures, and forcing massive changes in family, clan, tribal, and community life. In the period from 1950 to 1980, the urbanized population grew from roughly 27 percent to 48 percent. Between 1980 and 1999 alone, the urban population grew from 84 to 169 million, and from 48 to 58 percent of the total population.

Most Middle Eastern states have very young populations. Roughly four out of ten Middle Easterners are 14-years old or younger. The result is a flood of young men and women entering the labor market, most of who have limited educational preparation for competing in a modern economy, and who are pouring into labor markets that are already saturated due to a lack of broad economic development. In many countries, formal and disguised unemployment for young men between 18 and 25 equals or surpasses 30 percent.

In many states, women face serious barriers to entering the labor market. Statistics on female unemployment are meaningless. Statistics on migration outside the region are equally meaningless, because they do not measure the number of young men and women who wish to leave or are frustrated. At least one poll of the male students in a Moroccan university, however, indicated that some 70 percent replied they would immigrate to the West if they were guaranteed a decent job.

This failure to develop, and active structural social turmoil, is compounded by the failure of secular ideologies to offer either economic or political success. Pan-Arabism, Socialism, Communism, secular nationalism, and capitalism have all failed in most of the Middle East. There has been no successor to Nasser in the Arab world, and no leader to compensate for defeat in the Arab-Israeli conflict, failed national economies, and a steady loss of status. The Iranian revolution became a symbol of conflict between the region's people and U.S.-backed oppressive leaders, but has ended in a popular backlash, symbolized by the election of President Khatami and paralyzed by power struggles between the Khatami and hard-line factions.

Other wars and civil conflicts have compounded the problem. The Arab-Israeli wars still go on in the form of a Second Intifada, and the images of Arab funerals and Israeli tanks attacking Palestinian youths have come to be symbols of U.S. support for an "oppressive" Israel. The Iran-Iraq Conflict and the Gulf War have left a lasting legacy: first, the large-scale use of weapons of mass destruction, and second, policies that many Arabs see as a U.S.-led impoverishment of the Iraqi people.

In some areas – most notably North Africa, Bahrain, Iraq, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, and Yemen -- these pressures have also increased ethnic and religious tensions. In North Africa, tribal and community feuds and rivalries have become steadily worse, as has the tension between Arab and Berber. Algeria has had a brutal and enduring civil war between its corrupt ruling junta and violent Islamic extremists, but all of the Northern African states have had at least some serious internal security problems. Similar problems have created new tensions between the majority Sunni sect of Islam and various other sects, particularly the Shi'ites of Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, and Iraq. This, in turn, has added to tensions between Iran -- the one Shi'ite-dominated state -- and those states with Shi'ite minorities. In the case of Yemen, religious tension interacts with

tribal tension, a history of decades of civil war, and the legacy of Marxist radicalism imported into Aden in the 1930s.

A Nation by Nation Tour of A Troubled Region

A successful counter-terrorism strategy tailored to the Middle East must consider a host of individual national problems and threats, as well as the interactions between them:

- *In Morocco*, growing economic and demographic problems threaten the mid- and long-term stability of the regime. The country's economy is heavily dependent on drugs; migration problems affect labor; tensions exist between Arab and Berber; and the regime has continuing problems with its Islamists.
- *Algeria* is still involved in a decade-long war that pits Islamic extremists against a corrupt military junta. While the struggle has been largely localized, there have been episodes of Islamic extremist violence in France. Some members of the most extreme groups have been affiliated with al Qaeda and other terrorist groups, and operations against the United States.
- *Tunisia* has been relatively peaceful, but only because of the government's systematic suppression of its Islamic extremists.
- *Libya* has been a source of support for terrorism, has conducted covert and proxy operations against U.S. and French targets, has some chemical weapons, and has explored the acquisition of biological weapons. This active support for terrorism has diminished sharply over the last two years, but General Muammar Qadhafi is having his own problems with Islamic extremists and hostile tribal groups in the Green Mountain area and has been extremely volatile in his political alignments.
- *Egypt* has fought its own war against terrorism for more than a decade. Some elements of its Muslim Brotherhood support violence, and the al-Jihad (a.k.a. Jihad Group, Islamic Jihad, Vanguard of Conquest, Talaa' al-Fateh) is closely associated with bin Laden. Like Islamic extremists in Algeria, these movements have broad links to terrorism outside Egypt, and al-Jihad has been associated and his attacks on the United States, and has murdered many Western tourists as well as many Egyptians. Other Egyptian terrorists have operated in the United States and have served as volunteers for the Taliban and Al Qaeda.

While the Egyptian government has largely won its internal security battle against terrorism, the basic social, economic, and political problems that have generated an Islamic extremist reaction remain. Egypt is experiencing steadily greater problems in terms of public resentment of U.S. ties to Israel and popular blame of the United States for the plight of the Iraqi people.

- *Israel and the Occupied Territories* are the scene of what may be a prolonged low-intensity conflict between Israel and the Palestinians. Islamic extremist movements like

the Palestinian Islamic Jihad and Hamas have long committed violent acts of terrorism against Israeli civilians. The Second Intifada is, however, generating equally extreme elements within the militias of the Palestinian Authority; and the Hezbollah of Lebanon has strengthened its ties to extremist groups in the West Bank and Gaza. These groups have concentrated largely on Israeli targets in the past, but have had elements associated with broader terrorist groups like al Qaeda. They blame the United States for much of Israel's conduct and present a growing risk that the Intifada could turn on U.S. targets as well as Israeli ones. More generally, the Arab and Islamic world blame the United States for both much of the Second Intifada and Israel's ability to maintain its occupation of the West Bank and Gaza. Bin Laden has used TV coverage of the Second Intifada as a key element in his propaganda and training films, and Arab and Islamic media routinely blame the United States in their coverage, exacerbating the resentment of Islamic extremists throughout the Arab and Islamic world.

- *The Palestinian Authority*: There is no formal Palestinian state as yet, but Palestine is a proto-state, and one where secularism and a commitment to development could easily falter and give way to Islamic extremist and a lasting commitment to conflict with Israel and broader Islamic violence.
- *Lebanon* is no longer occupied by Israel, but it does have large Palestinian refugee camps, and the Hezbollah and Amal Shi'ite forces that drove Israel out of Southern Lebanon are seen by many in the Islamic and Arab worlds as models of how asymmetric warfare can defeat modern Western powers as well as Israel. The various Syrian, Hezbollah, and Hamas training camps for Islamic extremists in the Beka'a Valley have provided paramilitary and terrorist training for a broad range of groups from other countries, and some have been led by members of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards and Iranian intelligence. Syria is also able to allow Iranian operations to take place on "foreign" soil, while Iran can use the Hezbollah and Amal as cover. While such movements have not played a major role in global terrorism, these camps helped train some of the Saudi terrorists associated with the attacks on the National Guard Training Center and the U.S. military barracks at Al Khobar.
- *Syria*, and particularly Syrian Air Force Intelligence, played at least some role in encouraging the attacks on the U.S. Marine Corps barracks in Beirut in 1982. Syria has also long supported a range of Palestinian extremist and anti-peace groups, and has hosted them in Syria as long as they do not conduct operations from within the country. Syria has a history of using proxy groups in violent attacks, and has worked closely with Iranian hard-liners in supporting the Hezbollah, and violent Palestinian groups involved in the Second Intifada. It has at least tolerated the training of Gulf terrorist groups on Lebanese soil. It has extensive chemical weapons stocks, and probably some biological weapons.
- *Jordan* has fought terrorism for decades, and has generally managed to halt terrorist operations from its soil. It does, however, have strong Islamist parties, and is forced to allow some extremist groups to operate on its soil until they can be proven to be violent. Its economy was crippled before the Second Intifada and has grown steadily weaker,

while its heavily Palestinian population has become increasingly anti-Israeli and anti-American. Jordan's mid-term stability is increasingly uncertain, and its problems are compounded by the steady flow of arms across its borders with Iraq, some of which do reach the West Bank and Gaza.

- *Iraq*: Experts disagree sharply about Iraq's role in terrorism. The best evidence is that Iraq routinely uses violence against its opposition overseas, but such activity has been limited in recent years – probably both out of fear of U.S. action and the fact most Iraqi opposition groups in the West and Middle East are heavily penetrated by Iraqi intelligence. Iraq does not have a proven history of making extensive use of proxy movements to attack the United States and other targets. Some believe that Iraq was involved in both attacks on the World Trade Center, but the evidence is limited and U.S. intelligence does not agree. Iraq does have a long history of supporting violent anti-Iranian terrorist movements like the People's Mujahideen – which systematically attacked and sometimes killed U.S. military and officials in Iran before the fall of the Shah. Iraq has significant stocks of chemical and biological weapons and its leadership has sometimes taken extreme military risks. Iraq has also actively supported efforts to smuggle arms into Jordan, many of which are intended to go to the West Bank and Gaza. The Iraqi government's largely successful effort to blame the United States for the suffering of the Iraqi people as a result of UN sanctions has been a major factor in increasing Arab and Islamic extremist opposition to the United States.
- *Iran* is a Shi'ite nation that has often had tense relations with the Sunni ruling elites of its neighbors. It has supported Shi'ite extremists and terrorists from Bahrain and Saudi Arabia, and experts like former FBI director Louis Freeh and former head of the U.S. Central Command Anthony Zinni believe the previous leadership of the Iranian government had knowledge of, and supported, the attacks on Al Khobar. Iran has a long history of training, finding, and arming the Hezbollah in Lebanon and did the same with the Hazars in Afghanistan. The Khatami government has sharply reduced Iran's activity as it affects the Gulf states, but not in terms of the Arab-Israeli confrontation or Afghanistan. The government is also deeply divided and far more hard-line elements are in charge of the military and intelligence branches, and the Supreme Leader has repeatedly condemned the United States. Iran has chemical and biological weapons and is seeking nuclear weapons.
- *Saudi Arabia* is another friendly country that has fought its own internal battles against Islamic extremism. At the same time, its "oil wealth" has declined by nearly 60 percent in per capita terms since the peak oil revenues of the early 1990's, and it has failed to diversify its economy or rapidly reduce its dependence on foreign labor. Real and disguised unemployment among young Saudi males approaches 30 percent. Saudi Arabia also allowed its Islamists to contribute to Islamic charities associated with terrorism and to dominate its education system -- much of which is taught by expatriate teachers, some of which support violent Islamic extremism.

Saudi royal intelligence has estimated that some 12,000-25,000 young Saudis have had some kind of training or experience with paramilitary groups and Islamist extremist

groups since the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Some Saudi Shi'ites have also been trained in Iranian paramilitary and terrorist training camps in Lebanon and Iran. While these pressures do not threaten the regime in the near term, they help explain why Saudi Arabia has been a source of volunteers for terrorist acts and has played a major role in al Qaeda. The Saudi regime does not seem to face any near-term threat of overthrow, and it is tightening its restrictions on Saudi extremists. At the same time, its five year plan projects a continued deterioration in the economic conditions that help breed terrorism, and Saudi extremists have used attacks on the United States and the West as a proxy for attacks on the Saudi regime since the days of Nasser.

- *Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE)* have their own problems and instabilities, and the Omani government has had to take increasingly strong measures against a small group of Islamic extremists. Bahrain's Sunni ruling elite is making progress in dealing with its Shi'ites, however, and Qatar and the UAE are more concerned about the problems of controlling a foreign labor force that approaches 60 percent of the population than terrorism per se.
- *Yemen* has made faltering but important strides toward the rule of law and a more democratic government since South Yemen disintegrated following decades of civil war between various Marxist extremists in 1990. Its present regime did, however, use Islamic extremists in its battle against South Yemeni secessionists in the mid-1990s, and Yemen has a long history of hosting extreme Arab-national movements and of tolerating extremists that do not conduct anti-regime operations on Yemeni soil. It has deported many non-Yemeni extremists since the bombings of the US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania and the attack on the USS Cole, but many Yemeni extremists can still operate from its soil.

The Present Threat From Major Extremist and Terrorist Movements

Given this background, it is hardly surprising that many of the region's people have turned back to religion for security and hope. In broad terms, this shift has been stabilizing, allowing people throughout the region to cope with economic and social pressures within the traditional tenants of Islam. The failure of secularism and the rise of Islam have, however, led to the rise of a wide range of extremist movements within virtually every state in the region that advocate violence, regime overthrow, and terrorist opposition to secularism and the West. While these movements represent a small minority in every country, they are a key source of terrorism and they interact with the various civil wars and tensions or conflicts between states.

These movements are constantly evolving in character, strength, ideology, and the level of violence they are prepared to use inside and outside of the region. So far, only Al Qaeda and its closest associates have become "global terrorists" in the sense of focusing on targets outside the Middle East. Nevertheless, the U.S. State Department's list of known and well-established movements is still a warning that the United States and its allies may face a wide range of threats in the future and that a number of Middle East-based organizations have links to groups in Central and South Asia.

These movements are constantly evolving in character, strength, ideology, and the level of violence they are prepared to use inside and outside of the region. So far, only Al Qaida and its closest associates have become "global terrorists" in the sense of focusing on targets outside the Middle East. Nevertheless, the US State Department list of known and well-established movements is still a warning that the US, the West, and its Middle Eastern allies face a wide range of potential threats from movements inside the region and on its periphery:

- *Abu Nidal organization (ANO) a.k.a. Fatah Revolutionary Council, Arab Revolutionary Council, Arab Revolutionary Brigades, Black September, and Revolutionary Organization of Socialist Muslims International:* This is a terrorist organization led by Sabri al-Banna. Split from PLO in 1974. Made up of various functional committees, including political, military, and financial. Has carried out terrorist attacks in 20 countries, killing or injuring almost 900 persons. Targets include the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Israel, moderate Palestinians, the PLO, and various Arab countries. Major attacks included the Rome and Vienna airports in December 1985, the Neve Shalom synagogue in Istanbul and the Pan Am Flight 73 hijacking in Karachi in September 1986, and the City of Poros day-excursion ship attack in July 1988 in Greece. Suspected of assassinating PLO deputy chief Abu Iyad and PLO security chief Abu Hul in Tunis in January 1991. ANO assassinated a Jordanian diplomat in Lebanon in January 1994 and has been linked to the killing of the PLO representative there. Has not attacked Western targets since the late 1980s. Has received considerable support, including safehaven, training, logistic assistance, and financial aid from Iraq, Libya, and Syria (until 1987), in addition to close support for selected operations.
- *Armed Islamic Group (GIA):* An Islamic extremist group, the GIA aims to overthrow the secular Algerian regime and replace it with an Islamic state. The GIA began its violent activities in early 1992 after Algiers voided the victory of the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS)--the largest Islamic party--in the first round of legislative elections in December 1991. Frequent attacks against civilians, journalists, and foreign residents. In the last several years the GIA has conducted a terrorist campaign of civilian massacres, sometimes wiping out entire villages in its area of operations and frequently killing hundreds of civilians. Since announcing its terrorist campaign against foreigners living in Algeria in September 1993, the GIA has killed more than 100 expatriate men and women--mostly Europeans--in the country. Uses assassinations and bombings, including car bombs, and it is known to favor kidnapping victims and slitting their throats. The GIA hijacked an Air France flight to Algiers in December 1994, and suspicions centered on the group for a series of bombings in France in 1995. Algerian expatriates and GIA members abroad, many of whom reside in Western Europe, provide some financial and logistic support. In addition, the Algerian Government has accused Iran and Sudan of supporting Algerian extremists and severed diplomatic relations with Iran in March 1993.
- *Bin Ladin, Usama and Al Qaida:* The bombings of the US Embassies in Nairobi, Kenya, and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania on 7 August 1998 underscored the global reach of Usama Bin Ladin--a long-time sponsor and financier of Sunni Islamic extremist causes--and his network. A series of public threats to drive the United States and its allies out of Muslim countries foreshadowed the attacks. The foremost threat was presented as a Muslim religious decree and published on 23 February 1998 by Bin Ladin and allied groups under the name "World

Islamic Front for Jihad Against the Jews and Crusaders." The statement asserted that it was a religious duty for all Muslims to wage war on US citizens, military and civilian, anywhere in the world.

Bin Laden leads a broad-based, versatile organization called al-Qaida: Established by Usama Bin Laden about 1990 to bring together Arabs who fought in Afghanistan against the Soviet invasion. Helped finance, recruit, transport, and train Sunni Islamic extremists for the Afghan resistance. Current goal is to "reestablish the Muslim State" throughout the world. Works with allied Islamic extremist groups to overthrow regimes it deems "non-Islamic" and remove Westerners from Muslim countries. Issued statement under banner of "The World Islamic Front for Jihad Against The Jews and Crusaders" in February 1998, saying it was the duty of all Muslims to kill US citizens, civilian or military, and their allies everywhere.

Bin Laden and Al Qaida (Qaeda, Quaida) attacked the US long before the strikes on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. It conducted the bombings of the US Embassies in Nairobi, Kenya and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, on 7 August that killed at least 301 persons and injured more than 5,000 others. Claims to have shot down US helicopters and killed US servicemen in Somalia in 1993 and to have conducted three bombings targeted against the US troop presence in Aden, Yemen in December 1992. Linked to plans for attempted terrorist operations, including the assassination of the Pope during his visit to Manila in late 1994; simultaneous bombings of the US and Israeli Embassies in Manila and other Asian capitals in late 1994; the midair bombing of a dozen US trans-Pacific flights in 1995; and a plan to kill President Clinton during a visit to the Philippines in early 1995.

On November 4, 1999 indictments were returned in the US District Court for the Southern District of New York in connection with the two US Embassy bombings in Africa. Charged in the indictment were: Usama Bin Laden, his military commander Muhammad Atef, and Wadih El Hage, Fazul Abdullah Mohammed, Mohammed Sadeek Odeh, and Mohamed Rashed Daoud al-Owhali, all members of al-Qaida. Two of these suspects, Odeh and al-Owhali, were turned over to US authorities in Kenya and brought to the United States to stand trial. Another suspect, Mamdouh Mahmud Salim, was arrested in Germany and extradited to the United States in December. On 16 December five others were indicted for their role in the Dar es Salaam Embassy bombing: Mustafa Mohammed Fadhil, Khalfan Khamis Mohamed, Ahmed Khalfan Ghailani, Fahid Mohammed Ally Msalam, and Sheikh Ahmed Salim Swedan.

The suspects named in the wake of the Embassy bombings--four Egyptians, one Comoran, one Jordanian, three Saudis, one US citizen, one or possibly two Kenyan citizens, and one Tanzanian--reflect the range of al-Qaida operatives. The diverse groups under his umbrella afford Bin Laden resources beyond those of the people directly loyal to him. With his own inherited wealth, business interests, contributions from sympathizers in various countries, and support from close allies like the Egyptian and South Asian groups that signed his so-called fatwa, he funds, trains, and offers logistic help to extremists not directly affiliated with his organization.

Bin Laden and Al Qaida (Qaeda, Quaida) continue to train, finance, and provide logistic support to terrorist groups that support these goals. Al Qaida may have from several hundred

to several thousand members. Also serves as the core of a loose umbrella organization that includes many Sunni Islamic extremist groups, including factions of the Egyptian Islamic Jihad, the Gama'at al-Islamiyya, and the Harakat ul-Mujahidin. The Embassy bombings in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam underscore al-Qaida's global reach. Bin Ladin and his key lieutenants reside in Afghanistan, and the group maintains terrorist training camps there. Bin Ladin, son of a billionaire Saudi family, is said to have inherited around \$300 million that he uses to finance the group. Al-Qaida also maintains money-making businesses, collects donations from like-minded supporters, and illicitly siphons funds from donations to Muslim charitable organizations.

The diverse groups under Al Qaida's umbrella give Bin Laden resources beyond those of the people directly loyal to him. With his own inherited wealth, business interests, contributions from sympathizers in various countries, and support from close allies like the Egyptian and South Asian groups that signed his fatwa, he funds, trains, and offers logistic help to extremists not directly affiliated with his organization. He seeks to aid those who support his primary goals—driving U.S. forces from the Arabian Peninsula, removing the Saudi ruling family from power, and “liberating Palestine”—or his secondary goals of removing Western military forces and overthrowing what he calls corrupt, Western-oriented governments in predominantly Muslim countries.

Bin Ladin seeks to aid those who support his primary goal—driving US forces from the Arabian Peninsula, removing the Saudi ruling family from power, and "liberating Palestine"—or his secondary goals of removing Western military forces and overthrowing what he calls corrupt, Western-oriented governments in predominantly Muslim countries. To these ends, his organization has sent trainers throughout Afghanistan as well as to Tajikistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Chechnya, Somalia, Sudan, and Yemen, and has trained fighters from numerous other countries, including the Philippines, Egypt, Libya, Pakistan, and Eritrea. Using the ties al-Qaida has developed, Bin Ladin believes he can call upon individuals and groups virtually worldwide to conduct terrorist attacks. His Egyptian and South Asian allies, for example, publicly threatened US interests in the latter half of 1998. Bin Ladin's own public remarks underscore his expanding interests, including a desire to obtain a capability to deploy weapons of mass destruction.

- *Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP)*: Marxist-Leninist organization founded in 1969 when it split from the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP). Believes Palestinian national goals can be achieved only through revolution of the masses. In early 1980s occupied political stance midway between Arafat and the rejectionists. Split into two factions in 1991; Nayif Hawatmah leads the majority and more hard-line faction, which continues to dominate the group. Joined with other rejectionist groups to form the Alliance of Palestinian Forces (APF) to oppose the Declaration of Principles signed in 1993. Broke from the APF—along with the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP)—over ideological differences. Has made limited moves toward merging with the PFLP since the mid-1990s. In the 1970s conducted numerous small bombings and minor assaults and some more spectacular operations in Israel and the occupied territories, concentrating on Israeli targets. Involved only in border raids since 1988, but continues to oppose the Israel-PLO peace agreement. Conducts occasional guerrilla operations in southern Lebanon. Receives limited financial and military aid from Syria.

- *al-Gama'at al-Islamiyya (Islamic Group, IG)*: The group issued a cease-fire in March 1999 and has not conducted an attack inside Egypt since August 1998. Signed Usama Bin Ladin's fatwa in February 1998 calling for attacks against US civilians but publicly has denied that it supports Bin Ladin. Shaykh Umar Abd al-Rahman is al-Gama'at's preeminent spiritual leader, and the group publicly has threatened to retaliate against US interests for his incarceration. Primary goal is to overthrow the Egyptian Government and replace it with an Islamic state. Armed attacks against Egyptian security and other government officials, Coptic Christians, and Egyptian opponents of Islamic extremism. Al-Gama'at has launched attacks on tourists in Egypt since 1992, most notably the attack in November 1997 at Luxor that killed 58 foreign tourists. Also claimed responsibility for the attempt in June 1995 to assassinate Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The Gama'at has never specifically attacked a US citizen or facility but has threatened US interests.
- *HAMAS (Islamic Resistance Movement)*: Formed in late 1987 as an outgrowth of the Palestinian branch of the Muslim Brotherhood. Various HAMAS elements have used both political and violent means, including terrorism, to pursue the goal of establishing an Islamic Palestinian state in place of Israel. Loosely structured, with some elements working clandestinely and others working openly through mosques and social service institutions to recruit members, raise money, organize activities, and distribute propaganda. HAMAS's strength is concentrated in the Gaza Strip and a few areas of the West Bank. Also has engaged in peaceful political activity, such as running candidates in West Bank Chamber of Commerce elections. In August 1999, Jordanian authorities closed the group's Political Bureau offices in Amman, arrested its leaders, and prohibited the group from operating on Jordanian territory. Receives funding from Palestinian expatriates, Iran, and private benefactors in Saudi Arabia and other moderate Arab states. Some fundraising and propaganda activity take place in Western Europe and North America.
- *Harakat ul-Mujahidin (HUM)*: Formerly the Harakat ul-Ansar, which was designated a foreign terrorist organization in October 1997. HUM is an Islamic militant group based in Pakistan that operates primarily in Kashmir. Leader Fazlur Rehman Khalil has been linked to Bin Ladin and signed his fatwa in February 1998 calling for attacks on US and Western interests. Operates terrorist training camps in eastern Afghanistan and suffered casualties in the US missile strikes on Bin Ladin-associated training camps in Khowst in August 1998. Fazlur Rehman Khalil subsequently said that HUM would take revenge on the United States. Has conducted a number of operations against Indian troops and civilian targets in Kashmir. Linked to the Kashmiri militant group al-Faran that kidnapped five Western tourists in Kashmir in July 1995; one was killed in August 1995, and the other four reportedly were killed in December of the same year. Has several thousand armed supporters located in Azad Kashmir, Pakistan, and India's southern Kashmir and Doda regions. Supporters are mostly Pakistanis and Kashmiris, and also include Afghans and Arab veterans of the Afghan war. Uses light and heavy machineguns, assault rifles, mortars, explosives, and rockets. Based in Muzaffarabad, Pakistan, but members conduct insurgent and terrorist activities primarily in Kashmir. The HUM trains its militants in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Collects donations from Saudi Arabia and other Gulf and Islamic states and from Pakistanis and Kashmiris. The source and amount of HUA's military funding are unknown.

- *Hizbollah (Party of God); a.k.a. Islamic Jihad, Revolutionary Justice Organization, Organization of the Oppressed on Earth, and Islamic Jihad for the Liberation of Palestine*: A radical Shia group formed in Lebanon; dedicated to creation of Iranian-style Islamic republic in Lebanon and removal of all non-Islamic influences from the area. Strongly anti-West and anti-Israel. Closely allied with, and often directed by, Iran but may have conducted operations that were not approved by Tehran. Known or suspected to have been involved in numerous anti-US terrorist attacks, including the suicide truck bombing of the US Embassy and US Marine barracks in Beirut in October 1983 and the US Embassy annex in Beirut in September 1984. Elements of the group were responsible for the kidnapping and detention of US and other Western hostages in Lebanon. The group also attacked the Israeli Embassy in Argentina in 1992. Operates in the Bekaa Valley, the southern suburbs of Beirut, and southern Lebanon. Has established cells in Europe, Africa, South America, North America, and elsewhere. Receives substantial amounts of financial, training, weapons, explosives, political, diplomatic, and organizational aid from Iran and Syria.
- *Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU)*: Coalition of Islamic militants from Uzbekistan and other Central Asian states opposed to Uzbekistani President Islom Karimov's secular regime. Goal is establishment of Islamic state in Uzbekistan. Recent propaganda also includes anti-Western and anti-Israeli rhetoric. Believed to be responsible for five car bombs in Tashkent in February. Instigated two hostage crises in Kyrgyzstan in the fall, including a two-and-one-half-month crisis in which IMU militants kidnapped four Japanese and eight Kyrgyzstanis. Militants probably number in the thousands. Most militants believed to be in Afghanistan in the winter (1999-2000), though some may have remained in Tajikistan. Area of operations includes Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Afghanistan, and Iran. Support from other Islamic extremist groups in Central Asia. IMU leadership broadcasts statements over Iranian radio.
- *Jamaat ul-Fuqra*: Islamic sect that seeks to purify Islam through violence. Led by Pakistani cleric Shaykh Mubarik Ali Gilani, who established the organization in the early 1980s. Gilani now resides in Pakistan, but most cells are located in North America and the Caribbean. Members have purchased isolated rural compounds in North America to live communally, practice their faith, and insulate themselves from Western culture. Fuqra members have attacked a variety of targets that they view as enemies of Islam, including Muslims they regards as heretics and Hindus. Attacks during the 1980s included assassinations and firebombings across the United States. Fuqra members in the United States have been convicted of criminal violations, including murder and fraud. Operates in North America and Pakistan.
- *al-Jihad; a.k.a. Jihad Group, Islamic Jihad, Vanguard of Conquest, Talaa' al-Fateh*: An Egyptian Islamic extremist group active since the late 1970s. This group appears to be divided into two factions: one led by Ayman al-Zawahiri--who currently is in Afghanistan and is a key leader in terrorist financier Usama Bin Ladin's new World Islamic Front--and the Vanguard of Conquest (Talaa' al-Fateh) led by Ahmad Husayn Agiza. Abbud al-Zumar, leader of the original Jihad, is imprisoned in Egypt and recently joined the group's jailed spiritual leader, Shaykh Umar Abd al-Rahman, in a call for a "peaceful front." Primary goal is to overthrow the Egyptian Government and replace it with an Islamic state. Increasingly willing to target US interests in Egypt. Specializes in armed attacks against high-level

Egyptian Government officials. The original Jihad was responsible for the assassination in 1981 of Egyptian President Anwar Sadat. Appears to concentrate on high-level, high-profile Egyptian Government officials, including cabinet ministers. Claimed responsibility for the attempted assassinations of Interior Minister Hassan al-Alfi in August 1993 and Prime Minister Atef Sedky in November 1993. Has not conducted an attack inside Egypt since 1993 and never has targeted foreign tourists there. Has threatened to retaliate against the United States, however, for its incarceration of Shaykh Umar Abd al-Rahman and, more recently, for the arrests of its members in Albania, Azerbaijan, and the United Kingdom. The Egyptian Government claims that Iran, Sudan, and militant Islamic groups in Afghanistan--including Usama Bin Ladin--support the Jihad factions. Also may obtain some funding through various Islamic nongovernmental organizations.

- *Kach and Kahane Chai*: The stated goal is to restore the biblical state of Israel. Kach (founded by radical Israeli-American rabbi Meir Kahane) and its offshoot Kahane Chai, which means "Kahane Lives," (founded by Meir Kahane's son Binyamin following his father's assassination in the United States) were declared to be terrorist organizations in March 1994 by the Israeli Cabinet under the 1948 Terrorism Law. This followed the groups' statements in support of Dr. Baruch Goldstein's attack in February 1994 on the al-Ibrahimi Mosque--Goldstein was affiliated with Kach--and their verbal attacks on the Israeli Government. Have threatened to attack Arabs, Palestinians, and Israeli Government officials. Claimed responsibility for several shootings of West Bank Palestinians that killed four persons and wounded two in 1993. Receives support from sympathizers in the United States and Europe.
- *Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK)*: Established in 1974 as a Marxist-Leninist insurgent group primarily composed of Turkish Kurds. In recent years has moved beyond rural-based insurgent activities to include urban terrorism. Seeks to establish an independent Kurdish state in southeastern Turkey, where the population is predominantly Kurdish. Primary targets are Turkish Government security forces in Turkey but the PKK has bombed tourist sites and hotels and kidnapped foreign tourists. Operates in Turkey, Europe, the Middle East, and Asia. Has received safehaven and modest aid from Syria, Iraq, and Iran. The Syrian Government claims to have expelled the PKK from its territory in October 1998.
- *Mujahedin-e Khalq Organization (MEK or MKO)*: a.k.a. *The National Liberation Army of Iran (NLA, the militant wing of the MEK), the People's Mujahidin of Iran (PMOI), National Council of Resistance (NCR), Muslim Iranian Student's Society (front organization used to garner financial support)*. Formed in the 1960s by the college-educated children of Iranian merchants, the MEK sought to counter what it perceived as excessive Western influence in the Shah's regime. Following a philosophy that mixes Marxism and Islam, has developed into the largest and most active armed Iranian dissident group. Its history is studded with anti-Western activity, and, most recently, attacks on the interests of the clerical regime in Iran and abroad. Worldwide campaign against the Iranian Government stresses propaganda and occasionally uses terrorist violence. During the 1970s the MEK staged terrorist attacks inside Iran and killed several US military personnel and civilians working on defense projects in Tehran. Supported the takeover in 1979 of the US Embassy in Tehran. In April 1992 conducted attacks on Iranian embassies in 13 different countries, demonstrating the group's ability to mount large-scale operations overseas. Recent attacks in Iran include three

explosions in Tehran in June 1998 that killed three persons and the assassination of Asadollah Lajevardi, the former director of the Evin Prison. Recent attacks in Iran include three explosions in Tehran in June 1998 that killed three persons and the assassination in August 1998 of Asadollah Lajevardi, the former director of the Evin Prison. In April 1999, Brigadier General Ali Sayyad Shirazi, the deputy joint chief of staff of Iran's armed forces, was killed in Tehran by a MEK operative. In the 1980s the MEK's leaders were forced by Iranian security forces to flee to France. Most resettled in Iraq by 1987. In the mid-1980s did not mount terrorist operations in Iran at a level similar to its activities in the 1970s. In recent years has claimed credit for a number of operations in Iran. Beyond support from Iraq, the MEK uses front organizations to solicit contributions from expatriate Iranian communities.

- *The Palestine Islamic Jihad (PIJ)*: Originated among militant Palestinians in the Gaza Strip during the 1970s; a series of loosely affiliated factions rather than a cohesive group. Committed to the creation of an Islamic Palestinian state and the destruction of Israel through holy war. Because of its strong support for Israel, the United States has been identified as an enemy of the PIJ. Also opposes moderate Arab governments that it believes have been tainted by Western secularism. Has threatened to retaliate against Israel and the United States for the murder of PIJ leader Fathi Shaqaqi in Malta in October 1995. Conducted suicide bombings against Israeli targets in the West Bank, Gaza Strip, and Israel. Has threatened to attack US interests in Jordan. Receives financial assistance from Iran and limited assistance from Syria.
- *Palestine Liberation Front (PLF)*: Broke away from the PFLP-GC in mid-1970s. Later split again into pro-PLO, pro-Syrian, and pro-Libyan factions. Pro-PLO faction led by Muhammad Abbas (Abu Abbas), who became member of PLO Executive Committee in 1984 but left it in 1991. The Abu Abbas-led faction has conducted attacks against Israel. Abbas's group also was responsible for the attack in 1985 on the cruise ship Achille Lauro and the murder of US citizen Leon Klinghoffer. A warrant for Abu Abbas's arrest is outstanding in Italy. Receives support mainly from Iraq. Has received support from Libya in the past.
- *The Party of Democratic Kampuchea (Khmer Rouge)*: Communist insurgency trying to overthrow the Cambodian Government. Under Pol Pot's leadership, conducted a campaign of genocide, killing more than 1 million persons during its four years in power in the late 1970s. Defections starting in 1996 and accelerating in spring 1998 appear to have shattered the Khmer Rouge as a military force, but hard-line remnants still may pose a threat in remote areas. Virtually has disintegrated as a viable insurgent organization because of defections, but hard-line remnants continue low-level attacks against government troops in isolated areas. Some small groups may have turned to banditry. Also targets Cambodian and ethnic Vietnamese villagers and occasionally has kidnapped and killed foreigners traveling in remote rural areas.
- *Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP)*: Marxist-Leninist group founded in 1967 by George Habash as a member of the PLO: Joined the Alliance of Palestinian Forces (APF) to oppose the Declaration of Principles signed in 1993 and has suspended participation in the PLO. Broke away from the APF, along with the DFLP, in 1996 over ideological differences. Has made limited moves toward merging with the DFLP since the mid-1990s.

Committed numerous international terrorist attacks during the 1970s. Since 1978 has conducted numerous attacks against Israeli or moderate Arab targets, including killing a settler and her son in December 1996. Receives most of its financial and military assistance from Syria and Libya.

- *Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command (PFLP-GC)*: Split from the PFLP in 1968, claiming it wanted to focus more on fighting and less on politics. Violently opposed to Arafat's PLO. Led by Ahmad Jabril, a former captain in the Syrian Army. Closely tied to both Syria and Iran. Has conducted numerous cross-border terrorist attacks into Israel using unusual means, such as hot-air balloons and motorized hang gliders. Headquartered in Damascus with bases in Lebanon and cells in Europe. Receives logistic and military support from Syria and financial support from Iran.
- *Qibla and People Against Gangsterism and Drugs (PAGAD)*: Qibla is a small radical Islamic group led by Achmad Cassiem, who was inspired by Iran's Ayatollah Khomeini. Cassiem founded Qibla in the 1980s, seeking to establish an Islamic state in South Africa. PAGAD began in 1996 as a community anticrime group fighting drug lords in Cape Town's Cape Flats section. PAGAD now shares Qibla's anti-Western stance as well as some members and leadership. Though distinct, the media often treat the two groups as one. Qibla routinely protests US policies toward the Muslim world and uses radio station 786 to promote its message and mobilize Muslims. PAGAD is suspected of conducting 170 bombings and 18 other violent actions in 1998 alone. Qibla and PAGAD may have masterminded the bombing on 15 August of the Cape Town Planet Hollywood. Often use the front names Muslims Against Global Oppression (MAGO) and Muslims Against Illegitimate Leaders (MAIL) when anti-Western campaigns are launched. Qibla is estimated at 250 members. Police estimate there are at least 50 gunmen in PAGAD, and the size of PAGAD-organized demonstrations suggests it has considerably more adherents than Qibla. Operate mainly in the Cape Town area, South Africa's foremost tourist venue. Probably have ties to Islamic extremists in the Middle East.

The Potential Threat from Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear Weapons

While no group on the current State Department list is associated with a serious effort to acquire weapons of mass destruction except for Aum Shinrikyo, some have conducted large-scale conventional attacks on Americans, and foreign terrorism (a) poses a continuing risk to the American homeland and (b) is linked to state actors in ways that could both lead to the transfer of weapons of mass destruction and make it difficult to assign the blame for attacks. More recent reporting by the Department of Defense has also made it clear that at least one major terrorist group hostile to the US has sought weapons of mass destruction:¹

...The Usama Bin Laden network's reported interest in NBC materials is a key concern in terms of possible future threats to U.S. interests. The network's interest in NBC materials has been noted since the early 1990s and, in 1999, Usama Bin Laden made public statements defending the right of the Muslim community to pursue NBC capabilities. The bombings of the U.S. Embassies in Nairobi, Kenya, and in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, on 7 August 1998 under-scored the global reach of Usama Bin Laden

—a longtime sponsor and financier of extremist causes —and brought to full public awareness his transition from sponsor to terrorist. A series of public threats to drive the United States and its allies out of Muslim countries foreshadowed the attacks, including what was presented as a fatwa (Muslim legal opinion) published on 23 February 1998 by Bin Laden and allied groups under the name “World Islamic Front for Jihad Against the Jews and Crusaders.” The statement asserted it was a religious duty for all Muslims to wage war on U.S. citizens, military and civilian, anywhere in the world.

The Usama Bin Laden network’s reported interest in NBC materials is a key concern in terms of possible future threats to U.S. interests. The network’s interest in NBC materials has been noted since the early 1990s and, in 1999, Usama Bin Laden made public statements defending the right of the Muslim community to pursue NBC capabilities being stolen from industrial and research facilities. In the short run, reports of nuclear theft, whether real or scams, will continue.

The rise of Osama bin Laden, al Qaeda, and many other violent movements that cloak themselves in the mantle of Islam is a natural result of the social, political and economic forces described above, and of a “clash within a civilization” that has spilled over into attacks on the United States, the West, and secular forces from outside the region. At the same time, nothing could be more dangerous in shaping a counter-terrorism strategy than to lump together the different movements and terrorist groups, or to limit any U.S. strategy to dealing with regional terrorism, rather than include the threat of asymmetric warfare by regional states against the United States and its allies. There is probably no other region in the world with so many states that might conduct covert or proxy operations against the United States, possibly with weapons of mass destruction.

A Successful U.S. Strategy: No Generalizations, No Illusions

This capsule survey of the Middle East necessarily ignores many of the complexities in each country. It also cannot begin to survey all of the extremist and terrorist groups that operate in each country or across national lines. One key problem is that extremist groups are constantly changing their leaders, names, and methods. Opportunistic coalitions and cooperation come and go with little or no warning. This why umbrella groups like al Qaeda can have ties to so many groups, and even Shi’ite and semi-secular groups with which it shares little in common in terms of religion or ideology.

At the same time, this survey should make several things clear about a U.S. strategy for dealing with terrorism:

- *First, no strategy that attempts to generalize across the entire Middle East can have any hope of success. The United States must tailor its strategy to specific countries and movements, and the strength of its bilateral efforts will largely determine its success. Moreover, it must deal with individual terrorist groups separately, and not in terms of broad labels that ignore the specific character and objectives of individual movements. It must build on past ties to Bahrain, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, and the UAE, and ongoing efforts to strengthen counterterrorism*

cooperation with each of these states while reaching out to all of the other states in the region with the exception of Iraq.

This will require a large, nuanced, tailored, and dedicated counterterrorist effort, and one that looks beyond known terrorist threats to monitor developments in each country and each extremist group. The United States cannot count on predicting future terrorist groups before they begin to act, their degree of support from regional governments, or their means of attack. The best it can do is to create dedicated interagency teams that focus on the different national threats and groups, pull together all of the necessary skills and expertise, and strengthen the teams it deploys in each country.

There are no near-term prospects that international or regional programs and agreements will be substitutes for strong bilateral, in-country counterterrorism programs. Thus, each U.S. ambassador in the Middle East should be supported by a fully staffed counterterrorism team -- including all of the assets needed to create a strong human intelligence program and an integrated CIA, FBI and attaché effort. These counterterror programs need to be supported with equally determined efforts to identify and deal with the risks of asymmetric warfare. This will require much stronger political-military teams and attaché staffs that can concentrate on their substantive mission and not representational duties. It will also require longer tours of duty, accompanied tours (meaning dependents come along) -- even if this sometimes means added risk to U.S. civilian and military personnel -- and encouraging proactive and constant contact with the nationals of the country involved, rather than a "fortress" mentality.

Second, the US must seek to create some new forum for regional cooperation. Nothing could be worse than a "clash of civilizations" approach that broadly focuses on Islam and/or the Arab world. All of our major allies in the region are already fighting their own battle against the "clash within civilizations," and any approach that deals with terrorism in terms of labels like "Islam" and "Arab" will simply strengthen the hand of the extremists we seek to defeat. There are severe limits to regional cooperation that grow as much out of the differences between Arab states as from tensions with Israel and the West. However, the United States should, seek to create a regional forum for counterterrorism that includes representation from the United States, Europe, Russia, and Israel, and that deliberately cuts across cultural differences. One key aspect of this effort must be to come to grips with the problem of legal and illegal immigration from the region -- not only from the security perspective, but also to ensure that legal Arab and Iranian visitors and immigrants get the rights and respect they deserve. Such a forum could also help to reduce the growing cultural backlash and anti-immigrant fear in Europe -- and thereby help to mitigate corresponding regional resentment and extremism.

- *Third, a strategy that deals with terrorism without considering the risk of proxy attacks by states, some with weapons of mass destruction, ignores the highest level of risk to the United States and its allies.* Counterterrorism is not an answer to the problems of the Middle East unless it is tied to a strategy for strengthening U.S. capabilities to fight asymmetric warfare, and to a broadly based and intensive counterproliferation effort that

mixes defense, offense, and arms control. As may be the case in Afghanistan, this means preparing for regime change and major regional wars, although it does not mean acting preemptively or escalating without clear cause.

Success, however, again depends on regional partnerships. It means training allied forces, and creating the capability for coalition warfare. It means recognizing that independent US operations not only sacrifice the aid of many friendly states, must make the US forces involve look like mercenaries or invaders.

- *One critical aspect of this effort must be to encourage USCENTCOM's engagement programs and counterproliferation efforts, and U.S. military efforts to deal with chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) threats not just as a matter of homeland defense but as regional security concerns.* This too requires longer tours, and more specialized training and language skills. It also means more accompanied tours and deeper involvement with foreign nationals, even if this means added risk to U.S. personnel. The United States needs a proactive military commitment to full-time partnership with the military and national security forces of friendly states in the region. It also needs to support its commanders in taking the necessary risk of exposing Americans to terrorism, rather than make every terrorist success an exercise in blaming the regional commander most directly involved.
- *At the same time, the United States should consider developing a clearly defined "Bush Doctrine" for the region -- or even the world -- that declares the United States will use military force in response to any act of asymmetric warfare by a state, or state-sponsored mass terrorism that involves the use of CBRN weapons.* This doctrine should further state the United States will not only defend its own territory by destroying the regime involved, but will also come to the aid of any state that comes under such attack. Such a declaratory strategy might be expanded to take the form of a UN Security Council Resolution, although the support of the Council is now very uncertain. There is, however, a need for a stronger and better-defined level of deterrence to such attacks, particularly in the Middle East. A clear "Bush Doctrine" would not only put extremist regimes on notice and reassure our allies, it would serve as a justification for prompt and decisive action if further attacks occur.
- *Fourth, the United States cannot impose an Arab-Israeli peace, nor should it ever try to do so purely on Palestinian or expedient terms. But, a highly visible U.S. peace effort that goes on in spite of all the frustrations involved is absolutely vital to minimizing the impact of extremism and terrorism.* There is a clear need for Presidential and Congressional leadership that puts open pressure on Israel in areas where its conduct is clearly unfair, such as the settlements issue. The United States should never abandon or weaken an ally, but domestic political expediency is a recipe for future terrorist attacks on the United States.

The US cannot hope to succeed in the broader battle against terrorism, or the struggle for stability in the region, unless it maintains a constant and highly visible Presidentially-led effort to negotiate a cease-fire and a peace. This does not mean compromising Israel's

security or vital interests, but it does mean building on President's Bush's recognition that the Palestinians are entitled to a real state, that adjustments to the 1967 boundaries must be kept to a minimum, that some compromise must be found to the problem created by Jerusalem, and that a peace negotiation must ultimately be underpinned by massive Western and other Arab aid to the Palestinians and Jordan. Difficult as nation-building may be, and frustrating as the search for peace is certain to be, all of the alternatives are far, far worse.

- *Fifth, the United States must act to alter the perception it is responsible for the plight of the Iraqi people with a major information warfare campaign, and by making sanctions humane in ways that focus on limiting Saddam Hussein's military build-up and capability to proliferate without crippling Iraq's economy and development.* While as of this writing Iraq does not seem to have played a role in the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, the possibility exists -- as does the risk of future Iraqi attacks on the United States and its regional friends using terrorist proxies or covert asymmetric warfare. The United States must prepare for such contingencies and make it clear to both Iraq and the world that any such aggression -- particularly using CBRN weapons -- will result in a war that will bring an end to Saddam Hussein's regime. At the same time, the United States must recognize that some states that encourage terrorism are far worse than others, make it clear that it will not tolerate military encroachments on the Kurdish security zone or Iraqi conventional military action outside its borders, and quietly work to remove Saddam's regime while finding ways to use the UN's control over much of Iraq's oil wealth to channel the flow of investment, goods, and services to aid the Iraqi people.
- *Sixth, the United States needs to clearly recognize that sanctions like the Iran Libya Sanctions Act that was renewed in the summer of 2001 are not helping the United States to deal with Iran or to moderate its conduct.* The United States needs to establish economic ties to Iran's moderates, and do what it can to move toward an official dialogue. This does not mean appeasement, or tolerance of Iran's treatment of Israel and proliferation, but it does mean the kind of engagement pioneered by our Southern Gulf allies, and which the United States found successful in dealing with the former Soviet Union and China. The United States should end its sanctions policy, with the exception of its efforts to halt the flow of arms and the equipment and technology to make weapons of mass destruction. It should adopt a policy of sustained informal and formal engagement with Iran, conduct as much dialogue with Iran's government as is possible, and make efforts to use targeted and well-defined forms of trade and investment to reach out to Iran's people. At the same time, it must make constantly clear that the United States opposes any Iranian support of terrorism and violent extremism, that Israel has a right to exist in peace and security, and that proliferation is a threat to the region and ultimately to Iran itself.
- *Seventh, counterterrorism is as much a war of ideas as a struggle for security.* The United States needs to create an ongoing public information campaign targeted at the Arab world and Iran with ample radio, TV, internet, and print resources. This program should include a major effort to ensure that U.S. views are readily available in Arabic and Farsi, but it should also include a strong Voice of America program focused on objective

reporting. It should fully engage nations like Iraq with efforts that counter lies and propaganda. And it should repeatedly underscore, through rhetoric and reporting, that the United States supports the values of Islam -- contrary to the lies and distortions spread by Islamic extremists and terrorists.

- *Eighth, the United States should create large-scale cooperative programs for training regional experts in counterterrorism, and restructure and expand programs like the International Military Education and Training (IMET) program to help train friendly experts in both the military and paramilitary aspects of counterterrorism and to cope with the regional threat of asymmetric warfare.*
- *Ninth, the United States should develop both regional and bilateral programs designed to help deal with the region's need for economic reform.* There are serious limits to what the United States can do that market forces and internal pressures for reform cannot. Middle East states and peoples must see, however, that the United States both cares about regional development and is seeking to use its own aid programs and role in international organizations to achieve it. This may well mean a more proactive role in encouraging the entry of regional states into the WTO, and working with the private sector and regional governments to ease the barriers to private investment and the expansion of trade.
- *Tenth, the United States needs to create both regional and bilateral programs to deal with the special problems of energy security from the wellhead to U.S. ports.* There are currently no technologies or other energy production options that can substantially reduce the growing dependence of the global economy on Middle Eastern energy exports for at least several decades, although improvements in energy reserves and similar measures can reduce the impact of the most probable crises.

The Saudi concept of a permanent regional organization to maintain an importer-exporter dialogue is one way to deal with the economic and political side of the issue. More broadly, however, the United States needs to systematically examine the vulnerability of the region's energy production and export facilities, the need for improved defenses against terrorism and asymmetric warfare, and to work with nations to reduce key vulnerabilities and weaknesses.

More broadly, the United States cannot afford a strategy of illusions in other regards. No Middle East Marshall Plan or any amount of U.S. aid can address the region's underlying economic problems. Only a few countries like Jordan can actually absorb economic aid efficiently and honestly, and the most unsuccessful regimes are not only the worst potential threats, they are also least able to use aid. Strongly encouraging economic reform and diversification is a different story, however. Targeted aid, trade agreements, and similar measures focused on building up the private sector and encouraging international investment can be successful if they are tailored to help those regimes who will allow their nations to help themselves.

The same is true of well-meaning slogans about democratization. The United States can and has encouraged non-governmental organizations to help in this regard, but U.S. government efforts to try to impose U.S. values and norms on virtually all of the states in this region will simply

increase anti-American, anti-Western, and anti-secular resentments. The United States must move carefully and cautiously to seek to improve the rule of law and the level of representative government, but there are severe real-world limits to what it can do to address the structural causes of terrorism. In most countries, it will take more than a decade before major progress can occur that will significantly reduce the present level of economic, demographic and social problems.

This confronts the United States with the reality that it can only succeed in the near and mid-term addressing “easy” problems like an Arab-Israeli peace settlement and the plight of the Iraqi people. Every other regional step will be mid-to long-term at best. In the interim, the United States will also have to live with the fact that many countries in the region conduct their own internal security and counterterrorism operations in ways that violate human rights and target peaceful political opposition as well as extremists. Here the United States should continue its human rights efforts, but have no illusions about the prospects for sudden change.

President Bush has emphasized that the United States will fight against terrorism for as long as it takes. When it comes to our strategy in the Middle East that will be a very long time indeed.

ⁱ Office of the Secretary of Defense, Proliferation – Threat and Response, January 2001, Washington, Department of Defense, January 2001, Internet edition, “Transnational Threats.”