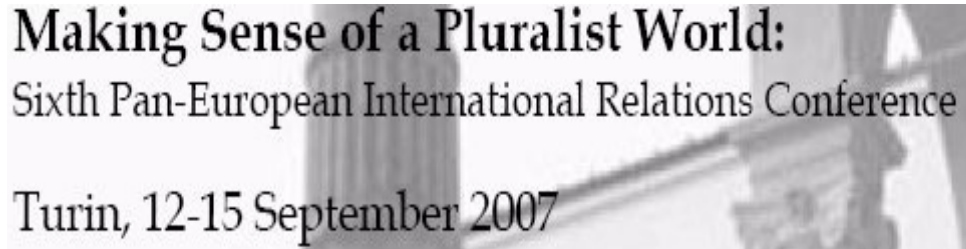


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**Section 5-25: Transnational Networks and Terrorism “*Violence beyond the State*”**

**TRANSNATIONAL TERRORISM: AUTHORITY BEYOND THE STATE?**

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## **TRANSNATIONAL TERRORISM: AUTHORITY BEYOND THE STATE?**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Transnational terrorist networks are among the actors that challenges the state authority. This paper underlines the concept of power in its first section because without independent and self sufficient capabilities, terrorists would not be able to transcend the power of the state and challenge it in many aspects. In contrast to its predecessors, such as state-sponsored international terrorism, transnational terrorism does not depend on the capabilities provided states. Transnational terrorist organizations are self-sufficient in terms of capabilities and thereby independent in terms of defining their own political agenda. Al Qaeda represents characteristics of transnational terrorism by its successful matching its transnational political agenda with its organizational, financial, technological and military capabilities. In the first place, this study analyzes political, organizational, financial, technological and military sources of transnational terrorist organizations' self-sufficient power benefiting from the case of *al Qaeda*. In the second place, the focus is the operating environments within terrorist organizations operate because conditions and characteristics of political structures influence terrorist organizations' chances of evolving into more capable and independent actors. It is argued that authorities' lack of political will and capability, at the national level, and the absence of an overarching authority, at the international level, provide favorable permissive condition for terrorists' operation. This study concludes that the permissiveness of terrorists' national and international operating environments are needed to be reduced concurrently for efficient and effective dealing with terrorists.

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## **Part I: Transnational terrorism and Al Qaeda**

### **General Outlook to Transnational Terrorism**

Transnational terrorism is regarded as the latest generation of terrorism. This generational approach to terrorism highlights the importance of continuity in the logic and the methods and tactics of terrorists.<sup>1</sup> It also points out the evolution and socialization of terrorist organizations within and across time. According to these, terrorist organizations are evolved from their predecessors in terms of logic, capabilities and strategies. Terrorist organizations from the same generation socialize because they learn from each others' successes and failures.

Transnational terrorism; therefore, as the most recent generation of terrorism, has similar characteristics with its predecessors. Transnational terrorism shares most with international terrorism, which is known as the third wave. Before international terrorism, terrorists' actions were domestic in terms of their ramifications, perpetrators, mechanism of resolution, and their institutional and human victims. However, both international and transnational terrorism are characterized with actions whose the ramifications transcend national boundaries through the nationality or foreign ties of its perpetrators, its location, the nature of its institutional or human victims, or the mechanism of its resolution.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> David Rapaport, "The Fourth Wave: September 11 in the History of Terrorism," *Current History*, Dec. (2001): 419, Richard M. Pearlstein, *Fatal Future: Transnational Terrorism and The New Global Disorder* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2004), 3.

<sup>2</sup> Walter Enders and Todd Sandler, "Transnational Terrorism in the Post-Cold War Era," *International Studies Quarterly* 46 (2002): 145-148, John Richard Thackrah, *Encyclopedia of Terrorism and Political Violence* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1987), 27-33, Brian Jenkins "Defense Against Terrorism," *Political Science Quarterly* 101, no: 5 (1986), 776, Wayman C. Mullins, *A Sourcebook on Domestic and International Terrorism: an Analysis of Issues, Organizations, Tactics, and Responses* (Springfield, Ill.: C.C. Thomas, 1997), 35. Nand Kishore, *International Terrorism: A New Kind of Conflict* (New Delhi: S. Chand and Co., 1989), 49-129, Boaz

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Despite these common characteristics, transnational terrorism is distinct from international terrorism in terms of the scope of its political objective, the sources of its capabilities and ability to act as an independent political actor. International terrorist organizations usually have a domestic political agenda such as establishing a new state but use international means of terror in order to intimidate their audience and attract international attention. These organizations highly depend on states' support so as to be able to undertake actions with international character. Their dependency on states' supports constraint their freedom of setting political agenda and strategy. However, transnational terrorist organizations have transnational political agenda, such as changing the world system. They are self-sufficient in terms of acquiring their capabilities; thereby, they have liberty of setting their own political agenda independent from any states' wishes. The match of transnational political agenda with self-sufficient capabilities is the most crucial characteristic that summarizes distinctiveness of transnational terrorist organizations.

The following section will focus on how transnational terrorist organizations replaced states' support with geographically dispersed resources converting them into a consolidated source of power.<sup>3</sup> Since al Qaeda has been regarded as the harbinger of transnational organizations that achieved to consolidate capabilities from its geographically dispersed audience, transnational terrorist actors' strategies for acquiring and preserving independent characters will be analyzed with al Qaeda example.

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Ganor, *Defining Terrorism: Is One Man's Terrorist Another Man's Freedom Fighter*, available on <http://www.ict.org>; Internet. Brian Jenkins, "International terrorism," in *The Use of Force: Military Power and International Politics*, eds. Robert Art and Kenneth N. Waltz (Lanham, Md: Littlefield Press, 1999), 74.

<sup>3</sup> Fiona Adamson, "International Terrorism as a Conceptual Challenge for International Relations" (presented at the conference Social Science Research Council Workshop on International Law, International Relations and Terrorism, November 14-15, 2002" available from [http://programs.ssrc.org/gsc/gsc\\_activities/adamson/](http://programs.ssrc.org/gsc/gsc_activities/adamson/). The latest entry on 19.04.2007.

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## **Transnational Political Cause**

Political claim is existential for terrorist organizations because terrorists gather their operatives, sympathizer, supporters and audiences using the attraction of their political promises. Promises of change and a better future are envisioned based on this political claim. In this sense, political cause is a reason for being, a means to explain past, rationalize present, and elucidate the future.<sup>4</sup> Since ancient times, terrorists claim that they oppose a repressor authority and asking for justice.<sup>5</sup> Mostly, their opponents are governments of the same nationality and their political cause is only appealing to their own nationals. These terrorist organizations are defined as domestic terrorist organizations.

However, terrorist organizations with political claims appealing for people from different nationalities are transnational terrorist organizations. It has been observed that terrorist organizations with radicalized religious and political claims attract larger operatives, sympathizers, supporters and audience, albeit it is an ancient strategy, in 21<sup>st</sup> century terrorism.<sup>6</sup> Religion contributes to transnational character and capabilities of terrorist organizations.

By definition, religions such as Islam and Christianity are transnational. Borders nation-states and religions do not match. Believers of a religion may live in different states as majorities or minorities. Therefore, radicalized groups supporting terrorists' claims may be living within the different nation states. Furthermore, radicalized religious and political ideology holds the member of terrorist groups together by creating a new identity and

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<sup>4</sup> Angel Rabasa et al., *Beyond al-Qaeda: Global Jihadist Movement* (Santa Monica: Rand, 2006), 9.

<sup>5</sup> Cindy C. Combs, *Terrorism in the Twenty-First Century* (Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1997), 22. Walter Laqueur, "The Futility of Terrorism," in *Characteristics of Contemporary International Terrorism*, ed. Charles W. Kegley, Jr. (Hampshire: Macmillian Education Ltd., 1990), 69-73. Walter Laqueur, *Terrorism* (Boston: Little Brown, 1977), 32.

<sup>6</sup> Rapaport, 419, Pearlstein, 3.

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replacing their former allegiances. Second, it provides terrorists with “software” to rationalize the sacrifices that they made worth it and they will be rewarded in afterlife.<sup>7</sup> Third, radicalizing their political cause with religion, terrorists close the possibility of negotiation with their adversaries. They perceive the world as “us vs. them”. Fourth, as a function of the absolute worldview of friend and enemy, victims are not regarded as innocent but the blasphemous people and attacking on them becomes an easy and justifiable act.

Radical interpretations of Islam allow terrorism and groups such as al Qaeda make combine their political aims with their fundamentalist understandings of Islam. Fundamentalists focus on the radical themes within a belief system in order to justify their radical actions.<sup>8</sup> Islamic fundamentalism is defined as a religion narrowed down to a political ideology which is fully religion and fully politics.<sup>9</sup> Searching for an earthly power, generally, fundamental Islamic groups call for jihad against nonbelievers and ‘apostates’ in order to establish a new world in line with their radical understanding of Islam.<sup>10</sup>

As a radical Islamist group, al Qaeda’s political ideology shares general tenets with other fundamentalist groups. Specifically, its political ideology depends on the extremist teachings and writings of Islamic thinkers. Ibn Taymiyya, Sayyid Qutb, Abd Al-Salam Faraj, Ayman al-Zawahiri and Osama bin Laden have been influential in defining and justifying the political ideology of al Qaeda.<sup>11</sup> To begin with, Ibn Taymiyya is the Islamic thinker who was

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<sup>7</sup> Rabasa et al., xvi.

<sup>8</sup> Pearlstein, 44.

<sup>9</sup> Pearlstein, 45.

<sup>10</sup> Pearlstein, 47.

<sup>11</sup> “Usama Bin Ladin and other Islamist terrorist leaders draw on a long tradition of extreme intolerance within one stream of Islam (a minority tradition), from at least Ibn Taymiyya, through the founders of Wahhabis, through the Muslim Brotherhood, to Sayyid Qutb. That stream is motivated by religion and does not distinguish politics from religion, thus distorting both . . . It is not a position with which Americans can bargain or negotiate. With it there is no common ground—not even respect for life—on which to begin a dialogue. It can only be destroyed or utterly isolated.” The National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States, *The 9/11 Commission Report*, (Washington, D.C.: 2004), 362. Available online from <http://www.9-11commission.gov/>

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referred in the 1996 statement of Osama bin Laden.<sup>12</sup> It has been mostly stated that he laid foundations for the extremist fundamentalism in the twentieth century.<sup>13</sup> Taymiyya's thoughts about state and religion reflect al Qaeda's ideal type of government to be established in the world. According to this, the only proper government is one that is ruled by the Shari'ah and more importantly, a ruler (or individual) who does not apply (or live by) the Shari'ah is in fact an infidel, apostate, or kafir.<sup>14</sup> He also suggested that jihad is as crucial as "five pillars" of Islam and that the defense of the umma against apostates is an individual duty incumbent upon all Muslims.<sup>15</sup> Benjamin and Simon argue that by suggesting that jihad is no longer a collective duty, but rather an individual duty, Ibn Taymiyya has provided a useful recruiting device for many radical Islamic groups.<sup>16</sup> Also, his emphasis on raising the spiritual value of jihad to the level of the five pillars contributed terrorists' beliefs that their battle for the sake of Allah.

Moreover, it is stated Taymiyya was interested in Islamic identity, which was reflected in the homogeneity of religious rituals, not only governance.<sup>17</sup> Religious and political thoughts of Taymiyya targeted Mongol ruler, Khan Mahumoud Ghazan, who converted to Islam with its tribes and it has been argued that al Qaeda replace Mongols with Western civilization and

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<sup>12</sup> Bin Ladin argues that: The right answer is to follow what have been [sic] decided by the people of knowledge, as was said by Ibn Taymiyya (Allah's mercy upon him): "people of Islam should join forces and support each other to get rid of the main 'Kufr' who is controlling the countries of the Islamic world, even to bear the lesser damage to get rid of the major one, that is the great Kufr." Osama bin Laden, "Declaration of War against the Americans Occupying the Land of the Two Holy Places," Usama bin Laden, "Declaration of War against the Americans Occupying the Land of the Two Holy Places," August, 1996. Latest access on 19.04.2007. Available online from [http://www.pbs.org/newshour/terrorism/international/fatwa\\_1996.html](http://www.pbs.org/newshour/terrorism/international/fatwa_1996.html)

<sup>13</sup> Michael Doran, "The Pragmatic Fanaticism of al Qaeda: An Anatomy of Extremism in the Middle Eastern Politics," *Political Science Quarterly* 117, no. 2 (2002): 178.

<sup>14</sup> Elizabeth A. Barre, "The Shaykh Al-Islam: The Legacy of Ibn Taymiyya in 20th Century Political Islam," Florida State University Department of Religion Graduate Symposium (April 2005) Available on the internet.

<sup>15</sup> Elizabeth A. Barre, "The Shaykh Al-Islam: The Legacy of Ibn Taymiyya in 20<sup>th</sup> Century Political Islam" Unpublished Article

<sup>16</sup> Daniel Benjamin and Steven Simon, *The Age of Sacred Terror: Radical Islam's War Against America* (New York: Random House Trade Paperbacks, 2003), 48.

<sup>17</sup> Paul L. Heck, "Jihad Revisited," *Journal of Religious Ethics* 32, no. 1 (2004): 117.

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regard the ruling elite in the Middle East as apostates representing Western civilization led by the United States.<sup>18</sup> David suggests that radical Islamist groups feel as if they are under attack “from within where western values spread by impious regimes are undermining what it means to be a Muslim”;<sup>19</sup> therefore, toppling these regimes from the power becomes the part of global jihad targeted to ‘enemy within’.

In the 1960s, Qutb translated the logic of Ibn Tamiyya’s thoughts regarding apostasy into a comprehensive perspective on the problems of the Islam in the contemporary world.<sup>20</sup> Qutb provided the underpinnings of violent resistance to regimes claiming to be Muslim but whose practice of Islamic rule is imperfect. He stated that the world is in the state of sin, ignorance and moral darkness as it was before the Prophet Muhammad arrived in jahilliya age. In order to end, egoism, exploitation of man by man, petty class hierarchies and other alleged ills of liberal democracy, Qutb called for the creation of a violent revolutionary vanguard to wage jihad and restore Islam.<sup>21</sup>

Faraj’s work, named *The Neglected Duty*, underlines two themes:<sup>22</sup> First, jihad or armed struggle against moderate Muslims, apostates, and infidels has been neglected by the ulama (leading Muslim scholars) and Muslims. Second, a united Islamic world ruled by Shari’a must be established, which has been a neglected duty by the Muslims. He calls all Muslims for the establishment of the rule of Allah on this earth and if this obligation cannot be fulfilled without war, he says, the war is an obligation. Before achieving this goal, he sees the purification and revitalization of existing Muslim societies as the primary goal because any weakness in war would harm the primary goal. Therefore, apostates and infidels are the

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<sup>18</sup> Doran, 180.

<sup>19</sup> David, Peter. "In the Name of Islam." *The Economist*, September 13 2003, 4.

<sup>20</sup> Doran, 180.

<sup>21</sup> Interestingly, these thoughts are parallel with the arguments of socialism. For this reason some state that this is “Leninism in Islamist dress.” Rabasa et al., 11.

<sup>22</sup> Pearlstein, 49-55.

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initial targets before waging jihad on external infidels. According to Faraj, any strategies and tactics that are suitable for the fewest losses and easiest means possible are permitted. The killings of children of the enemies are allowed if needed and justifiable for the act. He promises an eventual victory to Muslims regardless of the size and strength of their opponents. Based on Faraj's work, some fundamentalists may conclude terrorism as a justifiable and appropriate strategy in prolonged and extensive war against infidels and apostates

Al-Qaeda's leader Osama bin Laden and his lieutenant Ayman al-Zawahiri expressed their political objectives in line with global jihad and targets in clear terms as to overthrow Arab rulers that do not adhere to the Islamic Shari'a rules and in the meantime attack targets of the Jewish-Crusader alliance under the banner of Islam against an infidel external enemy supported by corrupt internal system.<sup>23</sup> Thus, bin Laden and Zawahiri postulate a simultaneous jihad against internal and external enemies. External target of Al Qaeda is America and its allies because the defeat of the internal apostates, all Muslim governments that do not follow al-Qaeda's path of Islam, would be easier if 'crusaders and Zionists' do not support these apostate regimes. Guerilla warfare and other 'asymmetric' ways of struggle are seen as appropriate strategies to defeat even the largest and most sophisticated armed forces, as it has been proved in Afghanistan against the Soviets and in Vietnam against the U.S armed forces.<sup>24</sup> Similar to aforementioned ideologists, Bin Laden and Zawahiri also believe that they will eventually succeed in transforming the world in line of their fundamentalist vision because Allah is on their side.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Shaul Mishal and Maoz Rosenthal, "Al Qaeda as a Dune Organization: Toward a Typology of Islamic Terrorist Organizations," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 28 (2005): 276-277.

<sup>24</sup> Rabasa et al., 13.

<sup>25</sup> Paul Wilkinson, "International Terrorism: the Changing threat and the EU's Response," *Challiot Papers* 84 (2005), 13-14.

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In 1998 fatwa, Osama bin Laden openly declared that it was the duty of all Muslims to kill Americans, including civilians and its allies, and plunder their money whenever and wherever there is an opportunity on the basis of three reasons.<sup>26</sup> First, bin Laden claims that the United States has been “occupying the holiest places of the Arabian Peninsula, plundering its riches, dictating to its rulers, humiliating its people, terrorizing its neighbors, and turning its bases in the Peninsula into a spearhead through which to fight the neighboring Muslim peoples”.<sup>27</sup>

Second, referring the First Gulf War, the fatwa states that the crusader- Zionist alliance is the responsible of the devastated situation of the Iraqi people and blames the alliance of the desire to further massacre Iraqi people as though they are not content with the protracted blockade imposed after the ferocious war or the fragmentation and devastation.

Third, it is also claimed that as well as religious and economic aims of the United States, it also aims to serve “Jews’ petty state and divert attention from its occupation of Jerusalem and murder of Muslims there.” The fatwa claims that the alliance’s eagerness to destroy Iraq and its endeavor to fragment all the states of the region such as Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Sudan into paper fragmented and weak statelets proves the alliance’s desire to guarantee Israel's survival and the continuation of the brutal crusade occupation of the Peninsula.

Al Qaeda not only holds the United States responsible of economic, political and military backwardness but also social and moral corruption of Muslim societies. Thus, the United States is defined as ‘the Great Satan’ who the major obstacle against the foundation of

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<sup>26</sup>Usama bin Laden’s 1998 fatwa available on [http://www.pbs.org/newshour/terrorism/international/fatwa\\_1998.html](http://www.pbs.org/newshour/terrorism/international/fatwa_1998.html)

<sup>27</sup>[http://www.pbs.org/newshour/terrorism/international/fatwa\\_1998.html](http://www.pbs.org/newshour/terrorism/international/fatwa_1998.html)

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a new world in accordance with Allah's order.<sup>28</sup> Al Qaeda specifically perceived the dissemination of secularization, consumerism, democratization, the growth of market economy and Westernization as onslaught to basis of Islamic society.<sup>29</sup> Interestingly, besides those who perceived threat to their cultural unity and identity due to the dissemination and infusion of American soft power,<sup>30</sup> radical Islamists also criticized the United States as an imperialist, assimilator, hegemonic, arrogant and corrupt power due to its overwhelming role as the purveyor of international tastes and information.<sup>31</sup> It has been argued that World Trade Center and Pentagon were attacked because they symbolized the liberal economic and political system backed by the American military power.<sup>32</sup>

In his statement referring to the September 11 attacks, Bin Laden the United States was attacked because of the crimes committed against Muslims, the American occupation of Islam's holiest of places, devastation of Iraq and support of the Jewish state.<sup>33</sup> He also gave the moral message that the attacks were defensive since Muslims have been exploited and oppressed and victimized over the years. Therefore, he claims, as the leader and the major backer of the morally corrupt international system, the U.S. deserved to be attacked.

It can be concluded that the leader of al Qaeda has contextualized local and regional conflicts as a part of a global jihad and depicts the world in terms of a stark and ultimately irreconcilable dichotomy between the Muslims and the U.S and its foreign and domestic

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<sup>28</sup>[http://www.pbs.org/newshour/terrorism/international/fatwa\\_1998.html](http://www.pbs.org/newshour/terrorism/international/fatwa_1998.html)

<sup>29</sup> Audrey Kurth Cronin, "Behind the Curve," *International Security* 27, no: 3 (2002/03): 45.

<sup>30</sup> Joseph Nye, *The Paradox of American Power: Why the World's Only Superpower Can't Go it Alone* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002).

<sup>31</sup> Cronin, 45, Ian O. Lesser, "Countering the new terrorism: Implications for Strategy," in *Countering New Terrorism*, ed. Ian O Lesser (Santa Monica: Rand Publications, 2003), 97-102.

<sup>32</sup> Mikkel Vedby Rasmussen, "A Parallel Globalization of Terror: 9-11, Security and Globalization," *Cooperation and Conflict: Journal of the Nordic International Studies Association* 37, no: 3 (2002): 338. Sibel Özbudun, "Modern Dünyadaki Cadı Avı," in *Küreselleşme ve Terör: Terör Kavramı ve Gerçeği*, ed. Mehmet Ali Civelek (Ankara: Ütopya, 2001), 17. Immanuel Wallerstein, "11 Eylül 2001, Niçin?" in *Küreselleşme ve Terör: Terör Kavramı ve Gerçeği*, ed. Mehmet Ali Civelek (Ankara: Ütopya, 2001), 268.

<sup>33</sup> Ivan Leudar, Victoria Marsland and Jiri Nekvapil, "On Membership Categorization: 'Us', 'Them' and 'Doing Violence' in Political Discourse," *Discourse Society* 15 (2004): 258-262.

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allies.<sup>34</sup> In October 2001, bin Laden stated that “these events [September 11 attacks] have divided the whole world into two sides: the side of the believers and the side of infidels.” Again, he calls every Muslim to rush to make his religion victorious.<sup>35</sup> It is also made clear that the global jihad has waged against the enemies of Islam, both internal and external, residing throughout the world.<sup>36</sup> Therefore, the global jihad is not confined to a defined territory. Rather, wherever the enemies are present is defined as the theater of fundamentalists’ war. And, it is the duty of the every Muslim to attack and harm their enemies whenever and wherever possible by all means. Thereby, global jihad is transnationalized securing allies and recruits beyond borders.

To sum up, the political cause is crucial for terrorist organizations because combining its political cause with religion provides terrorist organizations with a human resource that transcends national border of states, which reflects in recruitment, sponsorship and operational capabilities of the terrorist organization. Al Qaeda’s radical political ideology and its political aims can be regarded as the organization’s grand strategy desired to be realized in the future. In its long-term strategy against the United States and its allies, al Qaeda aims to establish ‘the base’<sup>37</sup>, as its name suggests, for the global jihadist movement.<sup>38</sup> Appealing like-minded individuals and organizations for the purpose of creating a global terrorist network constitute the foundation of the organization’s strategy for establishing the rule of Allah on the earth.

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<sup>34</sup> Rabasa et al., 8-10.

<sup>35</sup> Walid Phares and Robert G. Rabil, “The Neglected Duty: Terrorism's Justification,” *National Interest*, May 5, 2004. available online from <http://www.inthenationalinterest.com/Articles/Vol3Issue18/Vol3Issue18RabilPFV.html> latest access on 19.04.2007.

<sup>36</sup> Pearlstein, 54.

<sup>37</sup> Wilkinson, 13.

<sup>38</sup> Yassin Musharbash , “The Future of Terrorism: What al-Qaida Really Wants,” *Spiegel Online International*, August 12, 2005 article online available from <http://www.spiegel.de/international/0,1518,369448,00.html> latest access 19.07.2007.

## **Transnational Organizational Structure**

The radical ideology of al Qaeda sets its long-term political goals, which connects the means to the ends. Al Qaeda's organizational structure is a very important means that keeps the organizations capabilities intact. Organizational structure of transnational terrorist organizations is different from former hierarchically structured terrorist organizations. Transnational terrorist organizations' structure is flexible, adaptive and able to capitalize on the talents of all members of the organization.<sup>39</sup> Instead of one man leadership commanding from defined headquarters, transnational terrorist organizations are decentralized.<sup>40</sup> Combined with an overarching ideology, transnational terrorist organizations are the sum of loosely connected and geographically dispersed networks. These dispersed groups communicate, coordinate, and conduct their campaigns in the internetted manner without a precise central command and control.<sup>41</sup>

Flexibility of structuring has important implications for transnational terrorist organizations. To begin with, survival of is the guiding principle for all terrorist organizations and it highly depends on maintaining the secret membership and operational security.<sup>42</sup> Loosely connected terrorist organizations have less risk of infiltration and in case of betrayal organizational damage is expected to be lesser than hierarchically organized groups.<sup>43</sup> Second, since transnational terrorist organizations lack a central authority, smaller groups are also

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<sup>39</sup> John Arquilla, David Ronfeldt, and Michele Zanini, "Networks, Netwar, and Information Age Terrorism," in *Countering New Terrorism*, ed. Ian O Lesser (Santa Monica: Rand Publications, 2003), 49. Available online from [http://www.rand.org/pubs/monograph\\_reports/MR989/](http://www.rand.org/pubs/monograph_reports/MR989/) latest access on 19.04.2007.

<sup>40</sup> Brian Jenkins, *The New Age Terrorism :Beyond al Qaida*, (Santa Monica: Rand Publications, 2006 ), 122-124.

<sup>41</sup> Arquilla et al., 51.

<sup>42</sup> Brian Jenkins, *Countering Al Qaeda* (Santa Monica: Rand, 2002), 3

<sup>43</sup>Jenkins, *The New Age Terrorism: Beyond al Qaida*, 123.

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empowered in deciding to hold an attack. With more power left to their discretion, smaller units may undertake deadly attacks to prove themselves. Third, networked terrorist organizations are more capable of defeating the obstacles stemmed from geography because such organizations are able to work within an alliance system due to shared ideology, beliefs and political cause. Fourth, in the absence of hierarchic command structure, younger recruits are motivated by showing their individual talents and creativity in order to prove their commitment to the cause.<sup>44</sup> Fifth, each unit is able to gather support and financial help, which would contribute to overall capability of the terrorist network. Finally, due to the flow of information within the terrorist network, terrorist learn from each other and adapt to new conditions. Thereby, transnational terrorism has become deadlier and widespread.

Al Qaeda's organizational structure has been a contested issue. Some experts argue that al Qaeda has never been a hierarchical organization with monolithic leadership and central control while some others claim that the organization had clear-cut structure, hierarchy, and command and control mechanisms.<sup>45</sup> Despite the differences of opinion on its organizational structure, it has been widely accepted that the organization has been acting in a rational manner weighing ends and means like other political units and it considers alternative organizational approaches best for its survival.<sup>46</sup> Therefore, even though the organization has had an hierarchic organizational structure initially, in the end, with a strategic choice, it is most likely that it has preferred to become a networked organization to benefit from abovementioned advantages before September 11 and to adapt constrained operational

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<sup>44</sup>Bruce Hoffman, "Terrorism Trends and Prospects," ed. Ian O Lesser (Santa Monica: Rand Publications, 2003), 20. Available online from [http://www.rand.org/pubs/monograph\\_reports/MR989/](http://www.rand.org/pubs/monograph_reports/MR989/) latest access on 19.04.2007.

<sup>45</sup> Wilkinson, "International Terrorism: the Changing threat and the EU's Response," 13, Rabasa et al., 27.

<sup>46</sup> Doran, 177-190.

Burcu Sari  
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conditions of the post September 11 environment, especially after its base in Afghanistan has been harmed in Operation Enduring Freedom and the battle of Tora Bora.<sup>47</sup>

After September 11, though the organizational structure of the organization has been severely harmed due to the deaths of its core members and professional operatives in Afghanistan after September 11,<sup>48</sup> Wilkinson states that al Qaeda is still able to maintain its global network through its widely dispersed network of cells and affiliates in over 60 countries.<sup>49</sup> Al Qaeda with its worldwide web of affiliates and cells has become the most dispersed terrorist organization of the history. This network has been described as ‘a global jihadist ‘nebula’ which holds together its affiliates by bonds of varying degrees of intensity, and collectively seeks to harm the U.S., the West and apostate governments in the Muslim world’.<sup>50</sup> For instance, Egyptian Islamic Jihad, the Afghan Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat and Saudi Islamic extremist openly allied themselves with al Qaeda.<sup>51</sup>

Thanks to transnational network structure, al Qaeda is more capable of conducting global jihad both internal and external at one time. Using local operatives, the organization can reach a wider audience, supporters and the most importantly new recruits from all around the world. States like France, Germany, Italy, Spain and the United Kingdom also have a small but determined presence of al Qaeda.<sup>52</sup> In a study from 1993 to 2004, it has been concluded that 41 percent of terrorist operatives are from European and North American

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<sup>47</sup> Rabasa, et al., 23-25

<sup>48</sup> Rabasa, 30. See also fugitive terrorists list on official web site of the Federal Bureau of Investigation <http://www.fbi.gov/wanted/terrorists/fugitives.htm>

<sup>49</sup> Wilkinson, “International Terrorism: the Changing threat and the EU’s Response,”13.

<sup>50</sup> Rabasa et al., 77.

<sup>51</sup> Al- Itihaad al-Islami (Somalia), Dhamat Houmet dawaa Salafia (Algeria), Egyptian Islamic Jihad, Moroccan Islamic Combatant Group, Harakat-ul-Mujahideen (Pakistan/Kashmir), Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, Jaish-e Muhammed (Pakistan/Kashmir), Laskar-e-Jhangvi (Pakistan), Laskar-e-Taliba (Pakistan/Kashmir) are among the some affiliate groups of al Qaeda. See Rabasa et al., 79. Matthew A. Levitt, "The Role of Charities and NGOs in the Financing of Terrorist Activities," Presented at U.S. Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs’ Subcommittee on International Trade and Finance, 2:30 p.m., Thursday, August 1, 2002 available from online last accessed on 19.04.2007. [http://banking.senate.gov/02\\_08hrg/080102/levitt.htm](http://banking.senate.gov/02_08hrg/080102/levitt.htm)

<sup>52</sup> Wilkinson, “International Terrorism: the Changing threat and the EU’s Response,” 13.

Burcu Sari  
Bilkent University  
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Ankara/Turkey

nationalities, and 35 of 375 (9 percent) operatives are converts to Islam whose 16 are U.S citizens, 10 French and six are British.<sup>53</sup> This also shows that al Qaeda eased its way of penetration into the United States and its allies using counter-profile operatives such as converts, women and Caucasian-looking people.<sup>54</sup> Converts are attractive because they can travel and operate easily, especially in their countries of origin. High profile of European and North American operatives create vulnerability for the U.S. and its European allies because of no visa policy.<sup>55</sup>

To sum up, dispersed networking of al Qaeda's operatives within states at different regions constitutes the most important tenets of al Qaeda's description as a transnational terrorist organization. By means of this global network, the organization is able to conduct deadly operations with minimum cost and defeat the disadvantage of geographical distance from its enemies. The dispersed nature of the operatives contributes to the cost-efficiency of terrorist operations, which is crucial because the realization of terrorist operations depends on the economic strength of the organization. Considering the link between economic strength and dispersed nature of the organizations, it is reasonable to suggest that the leaders of al Qaeda have masterminded the structure of the organization in a way to ease in collecting financial resources from these global networks and provide cost-effectiveness in operations

### **Transnational Financial of Network**

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<sup>53</sup>Steven Brooke and Robert S. Leiken, "The Quantitative Analysis of Terrorism and Immigration: An Initial Exploration," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 18 (2006): 508 -511.

<sup>54</sup> Brooke and Leiken, 511.

<sup>55</sup>Robert S. Leiken, "Europe's Angry Muslims," *Foreign Affairs*, (July/August 2005) available online from <http://www.foreignaffairs.org/20050701faessay84409-p50/robert-s-leiken/europe-s-angry-muslims.html> latest access on 19.04.2007.

Burcu Sari  
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Terrorist organizations' ability to act more efficiently and effectively is closely linked to their financial capabilities.<sup>56</sup> Transnational terrorism is also different from its predecessors in terms of its finance. Transnational terrorist organizations are self sufficient as opposed to international terrorist organizations that rely on state support in order to survive, travel, communicate, obtain equipment, and conduct attacks. In parallel to transnational political ideology and organizational structure, transnational terrorist organizations raise and use funds from different targets with decentralized, compartmentalized, flexible and diverse methods.<sup>57</sup>

As opposed to the general belief that Osama bin Laden is the chief financier of the organization, Al Qaeda's financial power stems from money that is being raised at the grassroots level of support.<sup>58</sup> The CIA has estimated that it cost al Qaeda approximately \$ 30 million a year to sustain itself during the period preceding the September 11 attacks.<sup>59</sup> This considerable amount of money indicates that the strength of al Qaeda's financial network.

Creating a financial support network the organization free from the control of any government and assuring its financial robustness are regarded as Laden's chief accomplishment.<sup>60</sup> Al Qaeda raises money from variety of sources and moves the money in a variety of ways. The roots of networked financial system go back to mujahedeen fighting against the Soviets in Afghanistan. It is stated that this financial network kept the organization

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<sup>56</sup> Matthew A. Levitt, "The Political Economy of Middle East Terrorism," *MERIA Journal* 6, no: 4 (Dec., 2001): 1.

<sup>57</sup> Lee Wolosky "Address on Council on Foreign Relations Task Force on Terrorist Financing Report" (presented at the conference Social Science Research Council Workshop on International Law, International Relations and Terrorism, November 14-15, 2002, "available from [http://www.ssrc.org/programs/gsc/gsc\\_activities/wolosky.page](http://www.ssrc.org/programs/gsc/gsc_activities/wolosky.page). The latest entry on 19.04.2007.

<sup>58</sup> Rabasa, et al., 57.

<sup>59</sup> Victor Comras, "Al Qaeda Finances and Funding to Affiliated Groups," *Strategic Insights* IV, no: 1 (January 2005) article available online from [http://apgml.org/frameworks/docs/7/Al%20Qaeda%20Financing\\_%20V%20Comras\\_Jan05.pdf](http://apgml.org/frameworks/docs/7/Al%20Qaeda%20Financing_%20V%20Comras_Jan05.pdf) latest access on 19.04.2007. See The 9/11 Commission Report available online on the internet <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/911/> and National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States, Monograph on Terrorist Financing, 9. the monograph is available online [http://govinfo.library.unt.edu/911/staff\\_statements/911\\_TerrFin\\_Monograph.pdf](http://govinfo.library.unt.edu/911/staff_statements/911_TerrFin_Monograph.pdf)

<sup>60</sup> Council on Foreign Relations Independent Task Force, 5.

Burcu Sari  
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Ankara/Turkey

alive in times when bin Laden was extradited from Saudi Arabia and forced to move to first Sudan and then to Afghanistan.<sup>61</sup> The robustness of financial network has still been contributing to the organization's strength even after the swift toppling of Taliban regime in Afghanistan after 9/11.

Fundraising is the most important source of al Qaeda's finance. The network that helped the finance of mujahedeen has extended to all corners of the world from the Persian Gulf States to Europe and even to the United States.<sup>62</sup> Charities, nongovernmental organizations, mosques, websites, fundraisers, intermediaries, facilitators, and banks and other financial institutions are the significant components of the global financial network of al Qaeda.

The larger amounts of small donations from the Muslim world are gathered with different methods. For instance, it has been widely pointed out that the *zakat*, which is a regular charitable donation as a part of religious obligation that ask all competent Muslims to give at least 3 percent of their income to the people in need, has been exploited by terrorist as a source of fund.<sup>63</sup> The *zakat* provided in cash is usually given to trusted organizations or community leaders to be distributed for the purpose. However, this widely unregulated, seldom audited and mostly undocumented transfer of money creates financial resource that is open to exploitation.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>61</sup>Council on Foreign Relations Independent Task Force, 5.

<sup>62</sup> Council on Foreign Relations Independent Task Force, 7- 9.

<sup>63</sup> Council on Foreign Relations Independent Task Force, 7. Rabasa t al., 57.

<sup>64</sup> In bin Laden's own words, "We expect attacks that would target Afghanistan as a Muslim nation...and all Muslims should support it. Muslims and Muslim merchants in particular should give their *zakat* and their money in support of this state...where followers of Islam can embrace the Prophet of God." Interview, ABC News, "Interview: World's Most Wanted Terrorist" [ABCNEWS Online](http://jya.com/bin-laden-abc.htm), 2 January 1999. Transcript of the interview is available on-line at <http://jya.com/bin-laden-abc.htm> latest accessed on 20 April 2007.

Burcu Sari  
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Besides the contributions of wealthy supporters, small amounts of donations collected from individuals in charities also make huge amount of money.<sup>65</sup> While some people knowingly donate to charity organizations linked to al Qaeda some consider that they support a humanitarian cause.<sup>66</sup> Nevertheless, the money is put into the organization's service. Comras mentions that as close scrutiny by counter- intelligence and enforcement agencies around the world resulted in putting together a composite sketch of the activities of more than 50 international and local charities.<sup>67</sup>

In addition to charities, al Qaeda engages in economic activities seemingly legal. Infrastructure, mining, and banking sectors, and agricultural including honey trade, boating and fishing businesses can be given example to show the wide spectrum of al Qaeda's legally dressed economic activities.<sup>68</sup> The poppy and opium trade, drug-trafficking, gemstone smuggling especially diamond and gold are among the illegal and criminal activities that al Qaeda extensively benefits.<sup>69</sup>

Al Qaeda benefits from diverse sets of mechanisms in transferring the money. To begin with, it takes advantage of global financing system starting with the network of banks and financial institutions. On September 10, Mohammad Atta, who was named by the FBI as the

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<sup>65</sup> Levitt states that a few wealthy individuals are able to sponsor much terror. For example, Mustafa Ahmed al-Hasnawi, the Saudi national and bin Laden money man, sent the September 11 hijackers operational funds and received at least \$15,000 in unspent funds before leaving the UAE for Pakistan on September 11. According to U.S. officials, Yasin al-Qadi, a prominent Jeddah businessman and the head of the Muwafaq Foundation, has supported a variety of terrorist groups from al-Qaeda to Hamas. According to U.S. court documents, in 1992 al-Qadi provided \$27,000 to U.S.-based Hamas leader Muhammad Salah and lent \$820,000 to a Hamas front organization in Chicago, the Quranic Literacy Institute (QLI). Levitt, "The Role of Charities and NGOs in the Financing of Terrorist Activities,"

<sup>66</sup> Council on Foreign Relations Task Force on Terrorist Financing Report, 8.

<sup>67</sup> He maintains that many of these charities are, or were associated with some of the major Islamic umbrella organizations headquartered in Saudi Arabia, including, but certainly not limited to, the International Islamic Relief Organization (IIRO), the Benevolence International Foundation, the al Haramian Islamic Foundation, Blessed Relief (Muwafaq) Foundation, and the Rabita Trust. Comras, "Al Qaeda Finances and Funding to Affiliated Groups,"

<sup>68</sup> Steve Kiser, "Financing Terror An Analysis and Simulation for Affecting Al Qaeda's Financial Infrastructure," (Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Pardee Rand Graduate School: 2005), 95-96. [http://www.rand.org/pubs/authors/k/kiser\\_steve.html](http://www.rand.org/pubs/authors/k/kiser_steve.html)

<sup>69</sup> Kiser, 96- 100. Rabasa et al., 57 -62.

Burcu Sari  
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Ankara/Turkey

head suicide terrorist of American Airlines Flight 11, the first plane to crash into the World Trade Center during the September 11, 2001 attacks, has been recorded withdrawing money from an ATM in South Portland, which illustrates a good example of terrorists' capability in circumventing banking system without detection.<sup>70</sup> Islamic banking system which prohibits the earning of interest and financial services such as insurance and investment management services also work for holding money and transfer assets. Moreover, al Qaeda uses couriers who physically carry large amounts of cash, diamond, gold and other valuables.<sup>71</sup>

Nevertheless, the most innovative method to raise fund is the use of internet. According to the 2003 National Money Laundering Strategy, terrorists use the Internet "to direct solicitation for the organization itself; exploit charitable organizations by soliciting in that guise; perpetrate on-line crime, such as identity and credit card theft; to organize and implement other fund-raising activities."<sup>72</sup>

The fact that terrorist groups no longer depend on states support but other resources are available to them is called 'privatization of terror'.<sup>73</sup> Al Qaeda's decentralized, compartmentalized, flexible and diverse financial organization enables it to operate financially, both within borders and between borders of states through its local affiliates, and thereby privatize its resources. The fact that transactions between political borders are targeted more than the transactions within the states might have contributed the increase in domestic financial activities since it is less risky.<sup>74</sup> Kiser states that the privatization of terror

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<sup>70</sup> "[National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States, Monograph on Terrorist Financing](#)", Lee Wolosky, "Address on [National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States, Monograph on Terrorist Financing](#)", [http://www.ssrc.org/programs/gsc/gsc\\_activities/wolosky.page](http://www.ssrc.org/programs/gsc/gsc_activities/wolosky.page)

<sup>71</sup> Rabasa et al, 58.

<sup>72</sup> Kiser, "Financing Terror An Analysis and Simulation for Affecting Al Qaeda's Financial Infrastructure," 56. See also, "2003 National Money Laundering Strategy" available online from <http://www.ustreas.gov/offices/enforcement/publications/ml2003.pdf>

<sup>73</sup> Lesser, "Countering The New Terrorism: Implications for Strategy," 86.

<sup>74</sup> Rabasa et al., 60.

Burcu Sari  
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Ankara/Turkey

has led to the localization of terror, especially after the September 11 counter terrorism measures covering financial transactions of al Qaeda.<sup>75</sup> Localization of terror means that financially, independent small cells and affiliate groups also have become able to conduct their own plans with their own capabilities for the sake of global jihad uniting them with the same base.

For instance, 2004 Madrid attack exemplifies the localization of terror. The attack is undertaken by the Spanish cell of al Qaeda organization recruited from the local mosques and largely funded through the sales of drugs.<sup>76</sup> Researches express that localization of terrorist organization has begun to shape terrorists' attacking strategies since September 11.<sup>77</sup> Instead of widespread, spectacular, and internationally orchestrated attacks, the attacks have been smaller (with the exception of Bali and Madrid) and local.

To sum up, financial strength is crucial for terrorist organizations to survive and operate. The financial resources of the organization has strong influence over density, scope and shape of the attacks because without money terrorist organizations would less likely be able to buy weapons, recruit and train members and eventually conduct large-scale operations. Al Qaeda has succeeded to consolidate the capabilities of local affiliate groups and supporters, thereby, created an enormous financial strength that is purported to turn into destructive capability.

### **Transnational Information and Communication Network**

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<sup>75</sup>Kiser, 105.

<sup>76</sup> Kiser, 106. Al Goodman, "Spain: Terror Cell 'Neutralized'," CNN on-line. 14 March 2004. Available on-line at <http://www.cnn.com/2004/WORLD/europe/04/14/spain.terror/index.html> as of 20 September 2004.

<sup>77</sup> Rabasa et al., 60.

Burcu Sari  
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Communication, coordination, and the conduct of terrorist campaign is the major difficulty in loosely connected and geographically dispersed networks. Coordinated and efficient operation of transnational terrorist organizations require a capacity for constant, information and communication flows within the loosely connected and geographically dispersed units.<sup>78</sup> This requirement is realized by the latest information and communication technologies such as World Wide Web sites, electronic mail, computer conferencing, mobile phones, digital cameras, web cameras, and fax machines and so on. Especially, the increases in the speed of communication, dramatic reductions in the costs of the communication, increases in bandwidth, vastly expanded connectivity and integration of communication with computing technologies enabled transnational terrorist organizations to reach their highly dispersed constituents.<sup>79</sup>

Communication technologies have always been significant for terrorist organizations since terrorists' violent actions do not target the immediate victims but these violent acts aim to communicate with wider audience.<sup>80</sup> In another saying, terrorists make propaganda by deed and they need communication technologies to publicize their actions.<sup>81</sup> The researches on media and terrorism have indicated that media enabled terrorists to reach a wider audience and it magnifies the magnitude of terrorists' actions by creating 'echo effect'.<sup>82</sup> It is

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<sup>78</sup> Arquilla et al., "Networks, Netwar, and Information Age Terrorism" in *Countering new Terrorism* in *Countering the New Terrorism*, ed. Ian O. Lesser (Santa Monica: Rand Publications, 2003), 52.

<sup>79</sup> Arquilla et al., 52.

<sup>80</sup> Jenkins, "International Terrorism: The Other World War" in *International Terrorism, Characteristics, Causes, Controls*, ed. Charles W. Kegley, Jr. (London: Macmillan Education Press, 1990), 35. Jenkins, "International terrorism", in *The Use of Force: Military Power and International Politics*, eds. Robert Art and Kenneth N. Waltz (Lanham, Md: Littlefield Press, 1999), 73-78.

<sup>81</sup> Wilkinson, *Terrorism: British perspectives*, 12, Laqueur, *The Age of Terrorism*, 59. Martha Crenshaw, "The Causes of Terrorism," *Comparative Politics* 13, no: 4 (Jul., 1981): 387.

<sup>82</sup> Dissemination of the beheadings using the Internet and television networks is a strategy that terrorists use hoping that it would not only terrify the enemy but also enhance the terrorists' legitimacy in their own claimed constituencies. Pete Lentini, Muhammad Bakashmar, "Jihadist Beheading: A Convergence of Technology, Theology, and Teleology?," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, no: 30 (2007): 305. Yariv Tsfati and Gabriel Weimann, 'www.terrorism.com: Terror on the Internet,' *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 25, (2002): 317-32.

Burcu Sari  
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Ankara/Turkey

maintained that the fact that the more terrorists' actions are dreadful and frightening, the more they secure coverage encouraged terrorists to undertake more dramatic and destructively lethal actions in order to achieve the same effect every time. However, the message that terrorists want to transfer via the most of media vehicles such as television channels, newspapers and weekly magazines is mediated and filtered.

Nevertheless, the internet provided transnational terrorist organizations with unmediated and unfiltered opportunity not only for communicating with outside world but also communication within the group thereby enabling coordination between their operatives and affiliates. As Tsfati and Weimann state 'the network of computer-mediated communication is ideal for terrorists-as communicators because it is decentralized, it cannot be subjected to control or restriction, it is not censored, and it allows access to anyone who wants it.'<sup>83</sup> Terrorists make use of the internet as a forum in which they can present their views, publications, communiqués and actions and justifications. Using the internet as a forum, terrorists become able to bypass the states' sovereignty by challenging states' monopoly over the mass communication of terrorist message.<sup>84</sup>

Transnational terrorist organizations' creativity in benefiting from the internet enable them challenge sovereignty of states in fields other than communication. Hoffman states that the

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Ross, "Structural Causes of Oppositional Political Terrorism: Towards a Causal Model," 320, *Elegab, International Law Documents Relating to Terrorism*, iv, Bruce Hoffman, "Terrorism Trends and Prospects," in *Countering the New Terrorism*, ed. Ian O. Lesser (Santa Monica: Rand Publications, 2003), 13.

<sup>83</sup> Tsfati and Weimann "www.terrorism.com: Terror on the Internet," 317-332. See also report by Weimann the Internet is in many ways an ideal arena for activity by terrorist organizations. Most notably, it offers easy access; little or no regulation, censorship, or other forms of government control; potentially huge audiences spread throughout the world; anonymity of communication; fast flow of information; inexpensive development and maintenance of a web presence; a multimedia environment (the ability to combine text, graphics, audio, and video and to allow users to download films, songs, books, posters, and so forth); and the ability to shape coverage in the traditional mass media, which increasingly use the Internet as a source for stories. Gabriel Weimann, "www.terror.net: How Modern Terrorism Uses the Internet," (United States Institute of Peace: Special Report 116: March 2004), <http://www.usip.org/pubs/specialreports/sr116.html>

<sup>84</sup> Bruce Hofmann, "The Use of the Internet by Islamic Extremists," (Santa Monica: Rand Publications, 2006), Testimony presented to the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, on May 4, 2006.

Burcu Sari  
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internet provided terrorists with a virtual sanctuary ‘providing an effective, expeditious and anonymous means through which the movement can continue to communicate with its fighters, followers, sympathizers and supporters world-wide.’<sup>85</sup> Similarly, Tsfati and Weimann put that the utopian vision of ‘virtual state’ provided by the internet was distracted by terrorist organizations’ use of it to distribute their propaganda, to communicate with their supporters, to create public awareness and sympathy, and even to execute operations.<sup>86</sup>

The internet as a virtual sanctuary fulfills the functions of an actual sanctuary for terrorist organizations. Actual sanctuaries provide terrorists with opportunities to command and control recruits, train and plan operations, and collect financial help within a defined geographic area.<sup>87</sup> Under virtual sanctuary of the internet, terrorists can undertake all of these activities on a global scale. Hofmann states that formerly terrorists acquired the capabilities, such as training, access to weapons and operational knowledge, through training undertaken in camps run either by terrorist organizations and/or in concert with state sponsors. However, today the internet provided terrorists with the same opportunities that have been provided by actual sanctuaries. In short, the internet is the new safe haven of terrorist networks.<sup>88</sup>

The importance of the internet presence has been so widely appreciated by terrorists that almost all terrorist organizations have their own websites.<sup>89</sup> Weimann mentions that internet served for eight different purposes: Psychological Warfare, Publicity and Propaganda, Data Mining, Fundraising, Recruitment and Mobilization, Networking, Sharing Information and

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<sup>85</sup> Hofmann, “The Use of the Internet By Islamic Extremists”, Timothy L. Thomas, “Al Qaeda and the Internet: the Danger of Cyberplanning,” *Parameters* (Spring 2003): 121.

<sup>86</sup> Tsafati, Weimann, 318.

<sup>87</sup> Rabasa et al., 62.

<sup>88</sup> Hofmann, “The Use of the Internet By Islamic Extremists” p

<sup>89</sup> Zanini and Edwards, “The Networking of Terror in the Information Age,” 43.

Burcu Sari  
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Planning and Coordination.<sup>90</sup> Al Qaeda is one of the terrorist organizations that succeeded to use the internet with at most efficiency by using the internet for all of the purposes mentioned above.

By including media and publicity as one of the four operational committees under its consultative committee, known as the shura majlis, Al Qaeda's leadership showed that they grasped the importance of communication.<sup>91</sup> Al Qaeda also realized the enormous communicative opportunities provided by the internet to further its strategic aims and facilitate its purposes.<sup>92</sup> The sheer size of its internet presence and the scope of activities that it conducts by using the internet support the significance of the internet for the organization.<sup>93</sup>

Al Qaeda conducts psychological warfare by means of websites where audience can access prerecorded videotapes, audiotapes, CD-ROMs, DVDs, photographs, and announcements. Also, Al Qaeda constantly makes announcements of an impending attack on U.S. targets, which aims to create a widespread sense of insecurity among the audience within the U.S. and throughout the world. Images the destruction of the World Trade Center are depicted as the part of psychological warfare campaign. These websites also serve publication and propaganda purposes of al Qaeda because internet provides uncensored communication. By means of these websites, the organization justifies its violent actions claiming the unjust and oppressive politics of the U.S. and apostate regimes in the Middle East towards the Muslims.<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> Weimann, "www.terror.net: How Modern Terrorism Uses the Internet,"

<sup>91</sup> Other committees are military, finance and business, and fatwas and Islamic studies. Rabasa et. al., 29.

<sup>92</sup> Hofmann, "The Use of the Internet By Islamic Extremists" pp

<sup>93</sup> Around 4000 websites exist in cyberspace making propaganda of global jihad. Rabasa, et al., 18.

<sup>94</sup> Jenkins, *Countering Al Qaeda*, pp 24, Weimann, "www.terror.net: How Modern Terrorism Uses the Internet," .

Burcu Sari  
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Ankara/Turkey

Furthermore, the internet provides the terrorist organizations a digital freely available information pool. Terrorists can follow the counterterrorism measures and learn necessary information regarding their targets such as transportation facilities, nuclear power plants, public buildings, airports, and ports, and even about counterterrorism measures.<sup>95</sup> Search engines, e-mail distribution lists, and chat rooms and discussion groups are among the data collection tools that terrorists can benefit. For instance, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, speaking on January 15, 2003, stated that an al Qaeda training manual recovered in Afghanistan tells its readers, “Using public sources openly and without resorting to illegal means, it is possible to gather at least 80 percent of all information required about the enemy.”<sup>96</sup> Besides legal information collection methods, terrorists are capable of devising hacking stratagems, sabotaging networks, and developing codes and creating and spreading viruses thereby targeting and circumventing governmental websites.<sup>97</sup>

As it was stated in the former section, Al Qaeda’s financial strength heavily depends on donations from foundations, charities, nongovernmental organizations, and other financial institutions that use websites and Internet-based chat rooms and forums. The U.S. government has frozen the activities of three seemingly legal charity organizations operating within the

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<sup>95</sup> Minji Daniels, “Online Islamic Organizations and Measuring Web Effectiveness,” (Unpublished Master Thesis, Naval PostGraduate School, December 2004), 12.

Weimann, states that one captured al Qaeda computer contained engineering and structural features of a dam, which had been downloaded from the Internet and which would enable al Qaeda engineers and planners to simulate catastrophic failures. In other captured computers, U.S. investigators found evidence that al Qaeda operators spent time on sites that offer software and programming instructions for the digital switches that run power, water, transportation, and communications grids. Weimann, “www.terror.net: How Modern Terrorism Uses the Internet”.

<sup>96</sup> Cited in Weimann, “www.terror.net: How Modern Terrorism Uses the Internet”.

<sup>97</sup> The website operated by the Muslim Hackers Club (a group that U.S. security agencies believe aims to develop software tools with which to launch cyber attacks) has featured links to U.S. sites that purport to disclose sensitive information such as code names and radio frequencies used by the U.S. Secret Service. Weimann, “www.terror.net: How Modern Terrorism Uses the Internet” .

Burcu Sari  
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borders of the U.S. based on the evidence that they funneled their money to al Qaeda.<sup>98</sup>

Although the activities of these organizations have been suspended, al Qaeda has succeeded to finance its operations with the money coming from collected within the borders of the U.S for a while by means of the internet.

The organization not only collects financial aid from the sympathetic individuals to their cause but also aims to establish network by recruitment and mobilization via the internet. Goolsby states that human social capital –knowledge expertise, trust relationships, ability to reciprocate and trade- is the premium asset for terrorist organizations.<sup>99</sup> The more the terrorist organization has recruits, the more capable it is. Jenkins affirms the importance of the number of recruits stating that the quantity of terrorist translates into quality.<sup>100</sup> Al Qaeda benefits from the internet for recruitment and mobilization of its new members.

For recruitment, al Qaeda captures information about the users who browse their websites and contact with those who seem most interested in its cause or well suited to its operational purposes.<sup>101</sup> Online chat rooms and cybercafes, electronic bulletin boards and user nets (issue-specific chat rooms and bulletins) serve as vehicles for reaching out to potential recruits. Besides this, in some cases, would-be terrorists use the internet to contact with terrorist organizations through the same mechanisms provided by the internet. The internet provides a two way street for terrorist and its audience for recruitment and mobilization. This voluntary allegiance relationship between the terrorist organization and its recruits challenges the relationship between states and citizens.

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<sup>98</sup> Weimann, “www.terror.net: How Modern Terrorism Uses the Internet,”

<sup>99</sup> Rebecca Goosby, “Combating terrorist networks: An evolutionary approach,” *Comput Math Organization Theory* 12 (2006): 8.

<sup>100</sup> Philip Heymann, “Dealing With Terrorism: An Overview,” *International Security* 26 (Winter 2001/02): 54. Jenkins, *Countering Al Qaeda*, 4.

<sup>101</sup> Daniels, 13.

Burcu Sari  
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The internet is also place for sharing information and training the recruits. Through websites, online chat rooms and cybercafes, electronic bulletin boards and user nets terrorists pass their information over issues like how to build chemical and explosive weapons, prepare homemade poisons, poisonous gases and other deadly materials. *The Terrorist's Handbook* and *the Anarchist Cookbook*, *The Mujahadeen Poisons Handbook*, are well known manuals available to terrorists by means of internet.<sup>102</sup> Chapters of the book entitled *The Encyclopedia of the Afghan Jihad*, known as the training manual of al Qaeda, are also available on the internet.<sup>103</sup> Gerecht states that the Encyclopedia is one of the most detailed and the largest terrorist guide ever written and describes it as a portable university for the common militant.<sup>104</sup> Eleven-volume encyclopedia constituted not only the base of al Qaeda's practical fight but also theoretical base for terrorists.<sup>105</sup> By the use of internet, terrorists share their

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<sup>102</sup> Weimann, "www.terror.net: How Modern Terrorism Uses the Internet."

<sup>103</sup> Rabasa et al., 19.

<sup>104</sup> Reuel Marc Gerecht, "The Terrorists' Encyclopedia," *Middle East Quarterly* (Summer 2001), <http://www.meforum.org/article/88>

<sup>105</sup> Book 1 is on Theories and Explosives Eight chapters with diagrams and formulas to handle, manufactured and detonate explosives, and how to disarm explosives; scientific industrial terror; the use of liquid explosives; Book 2 is on First aid: Methods of first aid including the handling of psychological shock, the treatment of burns and electrical shocks. Describes the handling of several medical needs including delivering a child; Book 3 is on Pistols, revolvers: Illustrated guide to the care and use of pistols, revolvers and specialized hand- guns and where to keep guns in the house and how to use silencers. Book 4 is on Bombs, mines: Illustrated manual on grenades, bombs, mines, mine fields and mine war. Recipes for mines made of raw materials; How to pass through a mine field. Book 5 is on Muslim Security intelligence locks; How to spy; kinds of security; military intelligence; sabotage; communications; security within Jihad; secret observation; assassination; brainwashing; protection of leaders; laws of sabotage; arms use. Punishment of spies, Muslim and non-Muslim; interrogation; analyzing information; psychological war; poison use; opening U.S. military training; assassination by riding a motorcycle; Book 6 is on Tactics Islamic Principals of war including battle organization, reconnaissance, infiltration, ambush; elaboration on incursion. Muslims are urged to follow the Jihad, established in Afghanistan against un-Islamic states and stated where true Islam is not practiced. Book 7 is on Silencers; Weapons making. The book consists mostly of diagrams of machinery for the manufacture of arms and on the manufacture of bullets and metal casting; the use of steel files. Book 8 is on Tanks, the anatomy and history of tanks, their effectiveness and descriptions of different types, cost of maintenance of tanks; how to drive a tank. Book 9 is on Close fighting Physical fitness; akedo and other forms of self defense; how to overcome a rival and how to attack with knives, chairs; methods of releasing oneself from a grip. Book 10 is on Topography Natural directions; using a compass; topography; following directions on maps; military area survey; area survey apparatus. This book looks at the estimation and measurement of distance, height, and speed for military use. Book 11 is on Armament Use of small arms including antiaircraft arms, machine guns, rifles, antitank arms and artillery. Reviews mostly Russian weapons; offers practical details on the assembly, cleaning, and use of weapons. "Encyclopedia of Afghan Jihad Source," Associated Press, October 2, 2001 <http://www.unl.edu/eskridge/encyclopedia.html> ,

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violent ‘software’<sup>106</sup> and ‘know-how’<sup>107</sup> online instead of sharing them in actual camps and safe havens as it used to be.

The internet enables terrorist organizations function as a loosely knit network defeating geographical restraints. The internet provides the opportunity for exchanging messages almost instantly, with the minimum cost and maximum accuracy. Using the internet, thereby, terrorist organizations become able to connect with not only their group members but also other groups. Networking as such, terrorist organizations become able to plan and coordinate their activities almost at real time.

Al Qaeda managed the plan of 9/11 attacks by means of encrypted messages that had been posted in an area of a website protected by password and they assured anonymity by using the internet in public places and sending messages by email.<sup>108</sup> It is known that the eighteen terrorists who carried out the September 11 attacks read Mohammed Attar’s simple message: “The semester begins in three more weeks. We have obtained 19 confirmations for studies in the faculty of law, the faculty of urban planning, the faculty of fine arts, and the faculty of engineering.”<sup>109</sup> Apparently, these faculties corresponded to buildings targeted in the attacks.

To sum up, the internet provided transnational terrorist organizations such as al Qaeda with the opportunity of cyberplanning. The term coined by Timothy L. Thomas refers “to the digital coordination of an integrated plan stretching across geographical boundaries that may or may not result in bloodshed.”<sup>110</sup> By means of the internet, transnational terrorist

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<sup>106</sup> Rabasa et al., 8.

<sup>107</sup> Lesser, “Countering the New Terrorism: Implications for Strategy,” 96.

<sup>108</sup> The 9/11 Commission Report: Authorized edition (New York & London w.w. Norton & Company, 2004), 157, 164, & 495

<sup>109</sup> Thomas, 119. Weimann, Gabriel. “www.terror.net: How Modern Terrorism Uses the Internet.”

<sup>110</sup> Thomas, 113.

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organizations are able to conduct political, financial, and organizational command and control without being restrained by geographical distances.

Terrorists' increased adaptation to the use of communication and information technologies not only enhanced terrorists' political, financial and organizational effectiveness, but also provided them a virtual sanctuary where they can plan attacks, gather financial support and recruits and make political propaganda. The effective use of communication and information technologies has contributed a lot to the independent character of transnational terrorist organizations.

Overall, in this section, it has been argued that transnational terrorism is the latest form of terrorism that has evolved since centuries. Different from its predecessors, especially international terrorism, transnational terrorist organizations do not require states' active financial, military or political support for sustaining their survival. In other words, transnational terrorist organizations are self-sufficient in financial, military and political terms. With their political claims, they are able to attract people from different nationalities, create their own allegiances replacing the national identities thereby to recruit their own transnational armed forces. Transnational human resource of terrorist organizations also translates into financial, organizational and military strength. United with the same political motivation, geographically dispersed terrorist organizations gather their financial, operative and organizational capabilities using the information and communication technologies, especially the internet. Transnational terrorist organizations are in search of reinforcing their independent character and guaranteeing their place in the political arena by means of acquiring the weapons of mass destruction. Al Qaeda with its self-sufficient character is taken as an example and forerunner of transnational terrorist organizations.

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In conclusion, so far, the self-sufficient characters of transnational terrorist organizations have been the focus. The following section will be devoted to the operating environment in which terrorist organizations find opportunities to evolve as independent political actors. The focus will be shifted to the impact of the state and international structure in the evolution of terrorist organizations looking at al Qaeda's history.

## **PART II: Operating Environment: Al Qaeda**

Operating environment is crucial for terrorist organizations' survival and growth as stronger entities. Unless terrorist organizations internal efforts for survival and increasing their capabilities take place in a permissive environment, terrorist organizations' chance of survival and getting stronger will be less likely. As non-state actors, transnational terrorist organizations basically operate within two structures simultaneously: national and international.

### **National Environment**

At national level, regimes that do not have political will and capability to deal with terrorists constitutes permissive operating environments for terrorist organizations. For instance, states those use its political will on the sides of terrorists and actively provide financial, military and political support or knowingly allow a terrorist group to raise money, enjoy sanctuary, recruit or otherwise flourish without interference are the most convenient

operating environment.<sup>111</sup> Also, if states have political will to fight against the terrorists, but do not have capacity, such as democracies and weak states, then operating within these states becomes easier for terrorists.

To begin with, active state sponsorship is the open regime decision to support terrorist organization for several reasons such as political affinity to terrorists' cause, or common enemy. Active state sponsorship provides the basic needs of a terrorist organization required for its survival. Primarily, the state becomes terrorist organization's safe haven. This safe haven ease command and control, enables extensive training and planning, collect financial support, recruit new members and make propaganda.<sup>112</sup> In other words, active state support functions as a force multiplier for terrorists.<sup>113</sup> For instance, Afghanistan has functioned as the base for al Qaeda where it built its strength, established its web of organizations and consolidated its political stance.

Second, states where regime does not actively support but knowingly allows terrorists to raise money, enjoy sanctuary, and recruit members without interference are also permissive grounds for terrorists to flourish, which is defined as passive support.<sup>114</sup> If a regime knowingly allows other actors such as political parties, wealthy merchants, or other actors in the country to aid a terrorist group, or it has capacity to stop assistance or has chosen not to develop this capacity, then that regime provides passive support to terrorism.<sup>115</sup> Here, the regime in question allows terrorist organization's activities for domestic political constraints or incapacity to restrain supportive actions of its constituents.

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<sup>111</sup> Daniel Byman, "Passive Sponsor of Terrorism," *Survival* 47, no. 4 (Winter 2005-06): 118.

<sup>112</sup> Rabasa et al., 62.

<sup>113</sup> Hoffman, *Terrorism Trends and Prospects*, 15.

<sup>114</sup> Byman, 118.

<sup>115</sup> Byman, 118.

Burcu Sari  
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For instance, al Qaeda receives a very significant amount of financial aid from the charities and non-governmental organizations from the Saudi Arabia. Saudi recruits are also one of the top nationalities within al Qaeda.<sup>116</sup> Due to the parallels between al Qaeda and the Saudi Arabian religious doctrine especially on Jihadist causes, anti- Americanism, imitation of the West, Islam's defensive position and calling for restrictions on non-Muslims, bin Laden's sermons and rhetoric have attracted many Saudis.

Despite al Qaeda's popularity and high support among the population, the Saudi regime wanted to defeat al Qaeda movement whose leadership has formerly accused the Saudi Arabia's ruling family of apostasy and declared the Saudi rule as the target. The Saudi royal family caught between Saudi people's support to al Qaeda and its enmity towards the royal family, decided to turn a blind eye to people's support in order to protect regime's credibility until the U.S. increased its pressures on the Saudis to take action to halt support to al Qaeda within its borders. However, the Saudi Arabia's capacity for counterterrorism remains limited especially tracking terrorist financing, investigating techniques, and law enforcement.

As it has formerly been discussed in detail, al Qaeda is a terrorist organization with networked organizational structure and highly developed capabilities and techniques. With its geographically dispersed and networked organizational, financial and operational characteristics, al Qaeda is not bureaucratized like the preceding terrorist organizations that have clear organizational structure. Therefore, the fight against such a capable organization requires the security agencies not only to have highly developed organizational capabilities but also high level of coordination between the security agencies that have been accustomed

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<sup>116</sup> Byman, 121.

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to function in line with the traditional division of labor to deal problems specifically.<sup>117</sup> In another saying, ‘it takes networks to fight networks’.<sup>118</sup>

The fact that the fight against network structured organization like al Qaeda requires efficiently coordinated agencies, which is quite hard to achieve. The failure of the U.S. security agencies in transmitting information to each before the 9/11 incidents took place suggest that even the most developed states’ security agencies are apt to fail due to bureaucratic considerations and interagency competition.<sup>119</sup> Therefore, it can be fairly suggested that the states with less organizational efficiency such as the Saudi Arabia are also permissive operating environment for terrorists.

Lastly, the permissive operating environment at national level is provided by democratic regimes.<sup>120</sup> Democratic regimes are restricted with rules and principles and they have to be legal and legitimate in their actions. In democracies, the rights of the government are restricted in favor of its constituents. On the other hand, the constituents are granted civil rights and liberties such as freedom of speech, movement and association. These rights are protected under the law against violations. Terrorists acting as ordinary citizens take

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<sup>117</sup> Ashton B. Carter, “The Architecture of Government in the Face of Terrorism,” *International Security* 26, no. 3 (Winter 2001/02): 5-23, Amy B. Zegart, “September 11 and the Adaptation Failure of U.S. Intelligence Agencies,” *International Security* 29, no. 4 (Spring 2005): 78-111, Richard A. Falkenrath, “The 9/11 Commission Report: A Review Essay”, *International Security* 29, no. 3 ( Winter 2004/05): 179-190, [The 9/11 Commission Report](http://www.gpoaccess.gov/911/Commission_Report) available online on the internet [http://www.gpoaccess.gov/911/](http://www.gpoaccess.gov/911/Commission_Report)

<sup>118</sup> Arquilla et al., 49.

<sup>119</sup> Jenkins, *Countering Al Qaeda*, 6.

<sup>120</sup> How democracy affects terrorism is a contentious issue. Another position is that democracy reduces terrorism since democratic societies provide their citizens a political arena where they seek solution for their grievances and have representation for their different interests. Therefore, people living within democratic regimes tend to solve their problems by nonviolent means. Quan Li “Does Democracy Promote or Reduce Transnational Terrorist Incidents?” *Journal Of Conflict Resolution* 49, no. 2 (April 2005): 278. Walter Enders, and Todd Sandler, “Transnational terrorism in the post-cold war era,” *International Studies Quarterly* 43, no. 1 (1999): 145-67, Walter Enders, and Todd Sandler, “Patterns of transnational terrorism 1970-99 Alternative time series estimates,” *International Studies Quarterly* 46, no. 2 (2001): 145-65, Martha Crenshaw, “The causes of terrorism,” *Comparative Politics* 13, no. 4 (1981): 379-99, William Eubank, and Leonard Weinberg, “Terrorism and democracy: Perpetrators and victims,” *Terrorism and Political Violence* 13, no.1 (1998): 155-64. Jeffrey Ian Ross, “Structural causes of oppositional political terrorism: Towards a causal model,” *Journal of Peace Research* 30, no.3 (1993): 317-29.

Burcu Sari  
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advantage of these rights and liberties and under legal protection of their rights terrorists operate at lesser cost and without interference.

In democracies, it is harder to detect and track terrorists because individuals' rights and freedoms are protected under law and considering this restriction, terrorist organizations choose operatives who can infiltrate easily to society. In democracies, terrorists are better able to follow press accounts, judicial indictments, courtroom testimony and trial transcripts to learn from the tactics and methods of security forces and tend to prefer amateurs who can conceal their identity in the lights of former experience.<sup>121</sup>

For instance, the September 11 operatives have so successfully infiltrated into normal life that they lived in the U.S. for months, took courses of piloting, received money from abroad, paid visit to other countries and turned back as normal people without being detected as terrorists.<sup>122</sup> Under the disguise of normal constituents, terrorists enjoyed their time until the moment of their operations.

To sum up, transnational terrorist organizations require political environments where they can easily make propaganda gather recruits and financial support and plan and conduct their operations. At national level, this permissive operating environment has been provided by regimes who actually give permission to terrorists, who lacked the capacity to control and who are restricted by its own rules. Terrorists benefit from the absence of political will and capacity of regimes for their own benefit. Therefore, it can be concluded that at national level, if regimes have higher the amount of control then it will be harder for terrorist organizations to operate.<sup>123</sup> However, the increased amount of control at national level is not enough to deal

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<sup>121</sup> Hoffman, *Terrorism Trends and Prospects*, 25.

<sup>122</sup> Jenkins, *Countering Al Qaeda*, 6.

<sup>123</sup> Jenkins states that the most permissive operating environment is where there is lesser the amount of control over the society because there it is easier terrorists to conduct their activities. Jenkins, "International Terrorism"

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with transnational terrorist organizations. As it has been stated before, these kinds of organizations are geographically dispersed and organizationally networked. They operate in domestic and international environment simultaneously. Therefore, in addition to characteristics of operating environment at national level, the characteristics of the international environment are significant for terrorists' operation.

### **International environment**

International politics is 'politics in the absence of government.'<sup>124</sup> The international system is the system of equals. The relationship between the units does not involve one's command or obedience. In other words, there is not an overarching authority above the states and this state of nature is called international anarchy.<sup>125</sup> Under international anarchy, states are functionally similar and each pursues their survival.<sup>126</sup> In order to assure their own survival, each state spends efforts to increase the means to enhance its security. States pursue relative gains in order to assure a better position vis-à-vis others in the self-help system. The pursuit of relative gains makes cooperation between the states less likely because of the uncertainty of future intentions and actions if the others gain more out of the cooperation.<sup>127</sup> States' search for more power to sustain their survival leads a constant security competition among the states. This security competition among the states not only influences their actions but also creates a political environment that terrorists can exploit to survive, operate and evolve as more capable organizations.

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73-76. Laqueur also supports the idea by stating that whenever the means of repression has been the most complete and perfect, there has been no terrorism at all. Laqueur, *The Age of Terrorism*, 142-173.

<sup>124</sup> Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1979), 88.

<sup>125</sup> Waltz, 103.

<sup>126</sup> Waltz, 88.

<sup>127</sup> Waltz, 105.

Burcu Sari  
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The absence of a commonly accepted definition of terrorism ease terrorist organizations chances of survival. Under anarchy, states with different security interests have different positions with regard to terrorism. One state's freedom fighter is another man's terrorist in the system. States, some overtly some covertly, take side with the non-state organizations that distract the other party's security interests. No one state in the international system is capable to dictate a definition that is acceptable to all states. In the absence of a unified definition, an international cooperation against it becomes less likely. This ambiguity serves the terrorist organizations' interests so much that they can operate at different states exploiting this political vacuum in international system.

Terrorist organizations are smart enough to take advantage of states that do not define them as terrorists. Terrorists take advantage of that state using it as safe have and as the base of command, control and attack, making propaganda, and gathering recruits and financial support. These states serve the terrorist organizations enabling them grow as stronger, more capable and sophisticated actors. This fact implies that lack of definition allows terrorists to find support, which may be in active and passive forms.

The competitive security environment of international system and the absence of a central authority make active and passive forms of support to terrorism an attractive option. States may take advantage of terrorism as a means to weaken their adversary in order to secure their relative position in the picture. The attractions of weakening the adversary at lower risk and cost without being punished, unless the support is disclosed, give terrorists an opportunity to play politics with states that share political and security interests of terrorists. As a result of the relationship between the state and terrorist organization that share common interests, terrorists get chances to secure support their organization in different forms. Benefiting from the security competition between states, terrorist organizations secure their operational

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freedom. In a way, it can be argued that terrorists use states as extension of their terrorist politics to increase capabilities.

Al Qaeda's leadership, for instance, took advantage of the security competition between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. in order to secure itself a safe haven, increase its capabilities. In the face of the risk of nuclear war, both superpowers conducted their conflictual relations by means of proxy methods, such as supporting dissident groups against one another. The Soviets invaded Afghanistan in order to protect pro-Soviet regime against the Pakistani-backed Afghan insurgent in 1979.<sup>128</sup> Therefore, the interests of the U.S. and Pakistan merged in the region against the Soviets.

The aim of the U.S. was to protect global balance by containing the Soviets' advance in the region. Pakistan's involvement in Afghanistan was also an extension of regional rivalry in the Southeast Asia. Objectives of Pakistan's interventionist policies in Afghanistan include: to counter Afghan claims on Pakistan's Pashtun majority areas, to gain access to oil and gas recourses of Central Asia via Afghan territory, to undermine Iran's influence on Southwest and Central Asia, to gain strategic depth against the India, and to recruit Afghan religious extremists as well as Taliban-trained Kashmiri and Pakistani militants for the insurgency in Kashmir.<sup>129</sup> In following years, the Saudi Arabia also joined the informal alliance to export its religious ideology.

The U.S. and Pakistan, and Saudi Arabia helped Afghan extremists who waged jihad on the Soviets and the government in Kabul. During this war, these mujahedeen received financial, military and political support as well as training for their recruits in the camps at Pakistan. Ahmed states that during this period, the CIA recruited thousands of religious

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<sup>128</sup> Samina Ahmed, "The United States and Terrorism in Southwest Asia: September 11 Beyond," *International Security*, Special Issue (Winter 2001/02): 80.

<sup>129</sup> Ahmed, 86.

Burcu Sari  
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extremists from the Middle East, and North Africa including Algeria, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, the United States Emirates and Yemen.<sup>130</sup> Mujahedeen's production and sale of opium to finance their jihad against the Soviets were tolerated as well. In line with their supporters' expectations, with the major contribution of the mujahedeen, including Osama bin Laden, the Soviets withdrew in 1989 and after long period of power struggle, extreme religious the Taliban established their rule in Afghanistan.

During the years of the Cold War, it seemed that the U.S. gained over the Soviets by using the mujahedeen. The U.S. used the religious extremists for its security purposes and benefited from this relationship alone. However, in the relationship between the mujahedeen and supporting states led by the U.S., the mujahedeen also benefited on their part. Benefiting from the global and regional security struggle, this religious group secured all necessary means for their ends, including state of art weapons, millions of dollars and invaluable training and operational experience. Besides the direct benefit of the states' support, the mujahedeen group established the core cadre of al Qaeda, laid foundation of its international network by means of its warriors from different nationalities and had sanctuary where they could improve their organizational capabilities.

Back then the severity of security competition between the global and regional powers provided al Qaeda's core cadre with opportunities. Using states' support rationally and strategically, al Qaeda has gained its political, financial, and material independence. In the end, al Qaeda consolidated capabilities that would constitute the base of its evolution into transnational terrorist organization from state-sponsored international terrorist organization.

As al Qaeda case indicates using the capabilities provided states, even a small group of radicals might turn into a global terrorist organization in time. Even though, international

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<sup>130</sup> Ahmed, 81.

Burcu Sari  
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environment provides opportunities to terrorist organizations in terms of survival and capabilities, these opportunities might be under risk for terrorist organizations that do not have its independence. State support gives a means of monitoring terrorists and having an influence over terrorist operations. This dependence provides states with a crucial leverage to be used against the terrorists. By means of forcing supporting states cut support, by using diplomacy, deterrence, coercion, threat or actual use of war, it is possible to control and restrain international terrorist organizations' operation and even better to end its existence. However, after state support lost its importance for terrorists' survival, victim states lost their opportunity to eliminate terrorist adversaries by means of conducting state-to-state relationship. By gaining their independence from states, therefore, transnational terrorist organizations have become better able to sustain their survival than international terrorist organizations.

In the absence of an international sovereign that would provide monitoring of terrorists' and states' activities, transnational terrorist organizations have more chance to operate than international terrorist organizations. As stated before, transnational terrorist organizations are geographically dispersed, organizationally networked and independent in terms of capabilities. Al Qaeda, for instance, operates in almost 60 states, which includes the United States, the Great Britain, France, and Germany. Achieving international coalition to deal with activities of al Qaeda within these states is a great challenge even though all of the states have political will to do so.

Even if all states cooperate for the same purpose, there will be coordination problem between the security agencies of states, assuming that there will not be interagency problem within states. Even under the assumed ideal cooperation conditions, it is really hard to achieve the task of dealing with transnational terrorism. However, in actual world, not all states have

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political will and organizational capacity to fight against terrorism. For al Qaeda, the implication of problems of securing international cooperation and coordination under anarchy is to have more chance of operation within the system.

To sum up, it is clear that terrorist organizations, as non-state actors in the international system, have learned to act rationally and strategically to exploit opportunities that would increase their military, financial and operational capabilities.<sup>131</sup> For terrorist organizations, therefore, states are also among the means that contribute to their capabilities. By exploiting security competition among the states, which is an implication of international anarchy, terrorist organizations may get support, active or passive, from states with whom they have similar agenda or adversary. Out of the relationship between state and a terrorist organization, the only guaranteed consequence is that terrorist organization profit and get stronger in terms of operational experience, if not in terms of capabilities.

Depending on the evolutionary stage of that terrorist organization, the importance of state support might change. The state support might change a domestic terrorist organization to international or international terrorist organization to transnational. However, after a terrorist organization has become independent and transnational, state support loses its existential importance.

Preserving their survival by their own efforts and capabilities, being able to operate within the international system becomes at most importance for transnational terrorist organizations. Transnational terrorist organizations are in need of free and smooth operating environment than resources in order to make violent assaults. Terrorists necessitate a political environment in which they can face the least interruption with their financial activities, travel and communication for effective and destructive attacks. In the absence of an international

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<sup>131</sup> Doran, 180, Jenkins, *Countering Al Qaeda*, 28.

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sovereign that would create such disruption to terrorists' operations, international system remains as the permissive ground for terrorist organizations.

## **CONCLUSION**

This chapter regarded transnational terrorism as the latest and the most developed form of terrorist waves in the history. In the first section, the emphasis has been put onto the self-sufficient characteristic of transnational terrorist organizations, exemplified here with al Qaeda. Transnational political claim, transnational organizational structure and support base, transnational financial network, and effective and efficient use communication and information technologies are the cornerstones the organization' self sufficiency. Al Qaeda's pursuit of the weapons of the mass destruction points out organization's rational and strategic decision to use these weapons in order to guarantee its independence and power position in the international relations as a political actor.

The second section has focused on the operating environment of transnational terrorist organizations as independent and rational actors. It has been stated that national authority's lack of will and capability at national level provide terrorist organizations with permissive operating environment. At international level, it has been pointed out that absence of an international authority and its security implications provided terrorist organizations with the operating environment where they can build their actions.

As a conclusion, dealing with transnational terrorism requires a capable authority at national and international levels. At national level, the task requires increased state authority and capability. At international level, since it is not possible, or desirable, to have an international sovereign to deal with transnational terrorism in the near future, the most reasonable solution seems to establish and maintain an international coalition or a regime.

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Under anarchy, such a task is rather challenging because the task involves to mitigate, if not eliminate, competitive security environment of states so that terrorist organizations loose their opportunities to breed on states' security rivalries, and to maintain cooperation and coordination of individual states for the purpose in the long term. The most importantly, coordination of the efforts at two levels need to be established concurrently since having one without the other will always provide a foible that will be exploited by terrorists.