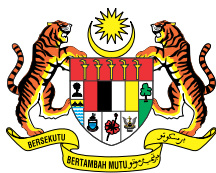


DON'T-LAH WEI!¹

A PEER-TO-PEER RESOURCE GUIDE ON ENSURING
YOUR KAWAN² NEVER BECOMES A TERRORIST

THOMAS KORUTH SAMUEL



Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism
(SEARCCT),
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Malaysia

¹ The ubiquitous word *lah*, normally used at the end of a sentence, can also be described as a particle that simultaneously asserts a position and entices solidarity. *Wei*, originally a Chinese character is often used when conversing with a close friend.

² *Kawan* is the Malay word for friend.

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The Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism (SEARCCT),
Ministry of Foreign Affairs,
No. 516, Persiaran Tuanku Ja'afar,
Bukit Persekutuan,
50480 Kuala Lumpur,
MALAYSIA.

Tel : (603) 2280 2800

Fax : (603) 2274 2374

E-mail : thomas_samuel@searcct.gov.my or conflict_analysis@yahoo.com

Website: www.searcct.gov.my

**“I HAVE THE SHOE,
BUT I HAVE NO SON....”³**



³ Words of a father who tied the shoelace of his son before sending him to the Army Public School in Peshawar, Pakistan, where six gunmen killed 149 individuals, including 132 schoolchildren on 16 December 2014.

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A glorious debt of grace!

Being in debt is generally seen to be something negative. Not for me!

This resource guide would not have seen the light of day without the generous and unstinting support of so many.

Firstly, to Dato' Azmil Zabidi; the Director-General of the Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism (SEARCCT), for his trust and faith in allowing me the freedom to write this piece.

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My daughter; Naomi Mary Thomas; my joy and my pleasure.

My wife; Amelia Grace William, who was and will always be my gift of Grace.

My Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; what He saw in me, I do not know; what He did for me, I am forever grateful.



FOREWORD

The ability of terrorists to cause mayhem, ruin lives and generate fear is something that we continue to witness in almost every part of the world and on an almost daily basis. More and more, however, we are beginning to observe that their ability to wreck damage goes far beyond the physical plane and extends its bloody hands into the minds and hearts of our young people.

Make no mistake, terrorists are identifying, targeting, indoctrinating and recruiting young Malaysians. And they are doing it well.

Where does that leave us?

In a desperate place, I am afraid.

What have we done?

Not enough.

In view of this situation, SEARCCT in 2012 decided to make 'youth and terrorism' one of our core focus areas and incorporated this theme as one of our seven flagship subjects. We conducted research in the area of youth radicalisation at the national and regional levels, developed strategies to reach out to them, conducted various programmes on the ground among the youth, and shared and learned with various partners across the globe.

It is however significant to note that one of the most important things that we learned after actively engaging in countering violent extremism among the youth was that we were, ironically, *not* the best people to actually be reaching out to them.

Assisting; yes.

Reaching and changing their mind-set on terrorism and counter-terrorism; not quite.

Who, then, was best suited to reach out to the youth?

The answer was quite obvious; the youth themselves were the best people to reach out to their fellow peers.

They knew the lingo, understood the behaviour, lived in the medium ie. the Internet, and had the passion and creativity that the authorities were struggling to grapple with.

The authorities, on the other hand, while not being in the best position to influence and change the youth, nevertheless, had the experience of dealing with terrorism and counter-terrorism as well as the resources to facilitate outreach programmes. With that in mind, SEARCCT together with the generous support of our partners, developed this resource guide; providing ideas, arguments and stories to persuade, provoke and engage the youth.

It must be stressed here, however, that this resource guide is very much a “work in progress.” We envision refining this resource to become a tool that young people could take, change and use, according to their environment, target audience and circumstances. We will also be using this resource guide as a template to produce a simplified leader’s guide.

Lastly, while many talk about the generational divide and the age gap that exist between the young and old, the reality is that terrorists do not recognise the idea of generational differences. For them, blood must be spilt, regardless of age. Hence, we are in this together and we hope that this guide could be the start of a partnership with young people that would see countering

extremism and terrorism move beyond the confines of the government and into the lives of the youth.

Simply put, we cannot do it without you.

Dato' Azmil Zabidi

Director-General

Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism (SEARCCT),

Ministry of Foreign Affairs,

Malaysia.

31 December 2017

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AIVD	The Netherlands General Intelligence and Security Service (<i>Algemene Inlichtingen- en Veiligheidsdienst</i>)
ASG	Abu Sayyaf Group
CPM	Communist Party of Malaya
CVE	Countering Violent Extremism
DHS	Department of Homeland Security
DoD	Department of Defense
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
ISIL	Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant
Jl	Jemaah Islamiyah
LTTE	Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam
NAVCO	Nonviolent and Violent Campaign and Outcomes
NIA	National Investigation Agency
NOI	Nation of Islam
OIC	Organisation of Islamic Countries
PET	Danish Security and Intelligence Service (<i>Politiets Efterretningstjeneste</i>)
PTSD	Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
RRG	Religious Rehabilitation Group
RSM	Rajah Sulaiman Movement
Säpo	Swedish Security Service (<i>Säkerhetspolisen</i>)
SCLC	Southern Christian Leadership Conference

SEARCCT	Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism
SLAYER	Student Leaders Against Youth Extremism and Radicalisation
USA Patriot Act	Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism Act
YSS	Yayasan Sukarelawan Siswa

DEDICATED TO

Latha Skariah
(1957 – 2017)

a selfless teacher and extraordinary woman,
who made the classroom a magical and
inspirational hideout
that cultivated, stirred and churned out students
who dreamed of making the world a better place and
subsequently went on to do
just that.



INTRODUCTION

We seem to be losing.

Losing the hearts and minds of our young people.

In my talks, discussions and sessions with them, formally and informally, there is a cry on their part; that we do not understand them, that we care little for them and that we often times see them as part of the problem.

Unfortunately, this is only part of the mess that we are in.

It is of the greatest importance that we also understand and comprehend that there are others out there, who are desperately trying to reach, persuade, radicalise, recruit, equip and finally make them part of a violent and extremist ideology. In short, they are being identified, taught and equipped to hate.

Where do the authorities fit in all of this?

For many of us, we remain clueless, indifferent and powerless.

We do not know and do not want to know what needs to be changed, what needs to be done and how we can go about doing it.

Given this, perhaps it is time to shift certain responsibilities of reaching the youths from the authorities to the youth themselves.

Perhaps, given our intrinsic and extrinsic problems, issues and challenges, it might be time to consider partially outsourcing our efforts of ‘countering the ideology of hatred’ to the young people themselves.

This resource guide is a preliminary attempt to equip young leaders with the skills and tools to understand the deception of the extremists; the manner in which past and current heroes overcame adversities and addressed grievances without using indiscriminate violence; critically examine the claims and ‘promises’ of the terrorists; understand the potential for women in both terrorism and countering terrorism; and study the radicalisation process to better understand the vulnerable, paving the way for an intervention to reverse the process. This guide hopes to provide an introductory template on which young people can build a more robust defence against the ideology of extremism, violence and hatred. It endeavours to offer ideas, case studies and narratives from which young people can develop their own creative and dynamic ‘mental firewalls’ to resist and God-willing, roll-back the mistaken belief that violence, hatred and its evil spawn, terrorism can bring about positive change.

I started out by saying that we seem to be losing.

Are we *really* losing?

Let’s have a look at the numbers.

At the global level, 31,000 is a low estimate of fighters who have flocked to Syria and Iraq. On the home front, more than 270 Malaysians have been arrested thus far, with another 55-60 said to be in Iraq and Syria. Approximately 30 Malaysians have been killed there with eight of them being suicide bombers. These are depressing numbers.

Perhaps, in some instances, we have indeed reached rock-bottom.

But then again, 'rock-bottom' is also a good place to build a foundation.

And I believe that to build this solid foundation, we need to reach out to the youths with the aim of equipping them to reach out to their fellow peers.

I hope that this could be a small step in that direction.

I. TERROR WHAT?

Authors have spilled almost as much ink (trying to define the concept in terrorism and radicalisation) as the actors of terrorism have spilled blood.

(Alex Schmid & Albert Jongman)

Defining Terrorism

“A journey of a thousand miles, begins with a single step”.

So perhaps said some wise old travelling guru!

A journey into any research question however, begins with defining the terms, understanding the context, comprehending the nuances and setting in place the terms of reference. In short, extensive literature surveys followed by expert opinions and views.

For most people however, that would mean looking up the first definition that comes up on Wikipedia and consulting Doctor Google.

I, however, am not ‘most people’, and have decided that *besides* consulting Wikipedia and Google, I will endeavour to provide a little more background analysis on this fascinating subject.

Firstly, there are numerous definitions of terrorism because generally most people cannot agree on what constitutes terrorism and who qualifies to be called a terrorist. Hence, the saying, “one man’s terrorist is another man’s freedom fighter’.

Allow me to share with you a few of the various definitions of terrorism by various bodies, organisations and governments.

On 9 December 1994, the United Nations during the General Assembly adopted Resolution 49/60 which contained a provision describing terrorism as “*criminal acts intended or calculated to provoke a state of terror in the general public, a group of persons or particular persons for political purposes are in any circumstance unjustifiable, whatever the considerations of a political, philosophical, ideological, racial, ethnic, religious or any other nature that may be invoked to justify them.*”⁴

It is interesting to note that while the UN has attempted to push for an inclusive and comprehensive definition of terrorism, achieving a consensus has proven to be a monumental task. In this particular instance, the United Nations is very much the *Disunited Nations*, through no fault of its own, as its very own member-states cannot compromise and come to an agreement on the definition. For example, in the oral report on measures taken to eliminate international terrorism which was presented by the Chair of the General Assembly Working Group in November 2014, there were several outstanding issues, including the submission by the Organisation of Islamic Countries (OIC) on differentiating “between acts of terrorism and the legitimate struggle of peoples under foreign occupation and colonial or alien domination in the exercise of their right to self-determination in accordance with the principles of international law”.⁵

The Routledge Handbook of Terrorism Research listed 260 definitions of terrorism⁶. Ironically, while we have not gone far

4 United Nations General Assembly, *Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism*, A/RES/49/60, 9 December 1994, <http://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/49/a49r060.htm> (accessed on 30 August 2017).

5 Patryk Pawlak, *Understanding Definitions of Terrorism, At A Glance*, European Parliamentary Research Service, November 2015, http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/ATAG/2015/571320/EPRS_ATA%282015%29571320_EN.pdf (accessed on 21 August 2017).

6 Alex Schmid, *The Revised Academic Consensus Definition of Terrorism*, *Perspectives on Terrorism*, Volume 6, No. 2 (2012), Terrorism Research Initiative, <http://www.terrorismanalysts.com/pt/index.php/pot/article/view/schmid-terrorism-definition> (accessed on 7 October 2017).

in reaching a consensus on what constitutes terrorism, our list of definitions of terrorism continues to grow. Hence, as we can see, while we have a common definition for kidnapping, murder and hijacking, we cannot seem to come to a consensus on terrorism and terrorists. The problem is further magnified when we attempt to define extremism, radicalisation and violent radicalisation.

For the purpose of this guide, I would like to use the definition that terrorism is an act whereby the perpetrators target civilians, destroy property and generate fear among a group of people with the intention to change a certain political status quo that they perceive to be unfair, unjust or repressive.

Also, it might be wise to consider the position that Professor Kumar Ramakrishna took in his excellent book *'Radical Pathways: Understanding Muslim Radicalisation in Indonesia'*⁷ of not 'splitting hairs' on the definitions but rather looking at the motivating factors and radicalising pathways that terrorists use to radicalise and recruit young people.⁸

Lastly, I would like to state at the very onset that religion has little to do with terrorism. Religion is the search for God to provide significance and security in life. Terrorism, on the other hand, is all about destroying lives. While terrorists have and continue to use religion in defining and legitimising their acts, it would be not only catastrophic but also academically inaccurate for us to do the same.

⁷ Kumar Ramakrishna, *Radical Pathways: Understanding Muslim Radicalization in Indonesia*, Praeger Security International, 2009.

⁸ Further definitions of the term 'terrorism' is listed in Appendix One should you want to be further confused or have the desire to impress your girlfriend/boyfriend.

Is it my problem?

So what if my friend intends to be a radical?

Or an extremist?

Or a terrorist?

Is it really a bad thing?

Anyway, is it really a problem here in Malaysia?

Can something that is taking place in locations such as Syria, Southern Philippines, Afghanistan, Nigeria, Columbia and Iraq actually affect my life here in Malaysia?

Even if it is, why do I need to interfere?

Why should I care?

Does it bother me?

Am I not infringing on their rights to express themselves?

Even if I do care, what can I do anyway?

Didn't some radicals bring about good by shaking up the status quo?

Not all radicals are the same

Let's review again what we consider to be 'radical' and 'extreme', and who we consider to be a terrorist.

Firstly, let us be clear that being radical is not necessarily bad and on many occasions the so-called radicals have brought upon a lot of good to people.

A Radical 'Great' Idea: Granting Women the Right to Vote

Women are vital and significant stakeholders in all aspects of life, whether at the domestic, national or even international levels. While there are areas in which the position of women can still improve, we have thankfully come a long way, thanks to the perseverance and tenacious ways of women pioneers who refused to let society dictate and decide their role. There was a time when married women were not allowed to own property, had no legal right to any money that they might have earned and had no right to vote. Women were expected to focus solely on housework and motherhood. Everything else was deemed unsuitable. Let us consider, for example, the right for women to vote or woman suffrage in the United States. When the United States was founded, women did not have the right to vote. In 1848, the struggle for women to have the right to vote started when abolitionists Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott initiated a convention which subsequently led to a women's movement seeking the right to vote. After more than 70 years, their efforts together with the efforts of various other women led to the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution that was ratified on 18 August 1920 which gave women the right to vote.

The emancipation of slaves, giving non-whites and women the opportunity to vote, and the struggle for independence in some countries were all radical ideas that were opposed and seen as going against status quo or the majority but were thankfully championed and brought to pass.

So being radical in and of itself is not wrong.

However, when being 'radical' and 'extreme' go beyond just being 'unique' or 'different' or 'going against the status quo', but rather expounding, glorifying, inciting, promoting, threatening and/or using violence to force and coerce one's viewpoints; that is when we have a serious problem.

A Radical 'Bad' Idea: The Ku Klux Klan

The Ku Klux Klan or KKK is considered to be one of the oldest American hate groups and was founded in 1866 in Pulaski, Tennessee by mainly former Confederate veterans who fought and lost during the American Civil War. In 1867, various local branches of the KKK met and established the 'Invisible Empire of the South' and former Confederate General, Nathan Bedford Forrest was appointed as the first leader or the 'grand wizard' of the KKK. The group is also known for its outlandish titles such as 'imperial wizard' and 'exalted cyclop'; hooded costumes, violent 'night rides' and burning crosses. Lynchings, tar-and-featherings, rapes, hangings and various other forms of inhumane acts were attributed to the KKK. The KKK sought to maintain white supremacy and not only targeted African Americans but also attacked Jews, immigrants, gays, lesbians and even Catholics.⁹ At its peak in the 1920s, the KKK was said to have more than 4,000,000 members throughout the United States. However, at present, it is estimated that there are about 5,000 to 8,000 members belonging to many splinter KKK groups.¹⁰

It is indeed conniving and deceptive that many violent radicals and extremists paint themselves as underdogs, struggling and fighting for a cause, portraying themselves very much like past heroes who fought against slavery, foreign occupation or the right to vote for all.

While the current violent radicals and extremists might share something in common with advocates who fought against slavery and discrimination given that both groups championed ideas that were going against the status quo; the similarities end there.

The extremists incite violence, promote hate-speech and glorify

⁹ Ku Klux Klan, Southern Poverty Law Centre, <https://www.splcenter.org/fighting-hate/extremist-files/ideology/ku-klux-klan> (Accessed on 20 October 2017)

¹⁰ The Ku Klux Klan, History, <http://www.history.com/topics/ku-klux-klan> (Accessed on 20 October 2017)

terror as a means to achieve their objectives. They have no qualms in using any tactic, method or action that would bring them closer to achieving their goals, even if it is unlawful, immoral or unethical. For them, the journey to reach the destination does not matter, so long as the final destination is reached. This is in stark contrast to those who struggled, persisted and used various non-violent means to support, cajole and persuade, and at times even forced the authorities to change their positions, views and actions.

Gandhi's Salt March

Gandhi's Salt March was considered an act of civil disobedience to produce salt from the seawater as was the practice before the British deemed it illegal and introduced taxation on salt production. The 24-day march which began on 12 March 1930 and continued until 6 April 1930 was a non-violent protest against the British salt monopoly and it subsequently gained worldwide attention for the Indian independence movement and more importantly, showcased the effective use of civil disobedience as a tactic to fight social and political injustice.¹¹

So let us be clear, the violent extremists we are talking about are those who articulate and support an idea that leaves no room for compromise, has little respect for any form of disagreement and as its name suggests, promotes the use of violence as a means to achieve its objectives.

Radicalism in Malaysia, really?

Is this a problem directly affecting us?

Or rather something foreign; found in war-conflict and terror-affected countries like Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria, Somalia and Pakistan?

Statistics in Malaysia suggest otherwise.

As of December 2017¹², 349 individuals have been arrested for terrorism-related offenses, out of which 275 were Malaysians. There are approximately 55-60 Malaysians suspected to be in Iraq and Syria with 30 already been killed. Out of this, eight were possible suicide bombers, a significant development that thus far was never seen. Eight Malaysians have also returned to Malaysia from Syria and Iraq. Almost 35 per cent of the remaining Malaysians in Syria and Iraq are reported to be females. Almost on a weekly basis, we hear reports of Malaysians being arrested, charged and convicted in the courts for attempts to support or join terrorist organisations.

These are just statistics-lah.....

Does it really matter?

And as Mark Twain once said, “there are three kinds of lies: lies, damned lies, and statistics.

Are there *real* Malaysians actually involved?

Let us consider Ahmad Tarmimi Maliki. On 26 May 2014, 27-year old Ahmad had the ‘dubious honour’ of being the first Malaysian suicide bomber linked to *Daesh* when he blew up 25 elite Iraqi soldiers at Iraq’s SWAT headquarters in the al-Anbar province. Reports indicated that he drove a ‘military SUV which was filled with tonnes of explosives’ into the SWAT headquarters,

12

Communications with Senior RMP officer in December 2017.

killing himself in the process. Tarmimi's actions together with his photograph was subsequently reported in *Daesh's* official website with the heading, *Mujahidin Malaysia Syahid Dalam Operasi Martyrdom* describing Tarmimi as Malaysia's first suicide bomber.¹³

Are Malaysians really a threat?

If only we could ask Muhammad Wanndy Mohamed Jedi.

Born in Melaka, 26-year old Wanndy, also known as Abu Hamzah Al Fateh, left for Raqqa, Syria with his wife in 2014 and was reportedly killed on 26 April 2017 in a drone attack there. He caught the attention of the Malaysian public when he appeared in a video that showed the beheading of a Syrian man. He also developed the skills and networking for both fundraising and recruiting and was linked to at 'least a third of the more than 250 people arrested for ISIL-linked activities in Malaysia between 2013 and 2016'. Significantly, he was credited to be the mastermind behind the Movida-Puchong attack which injured eight people in June 2016 and which thus far, remains the sole *Daesh* inspired attack in Malaysia. Given these developments, Wanndy was named 'Specially Designated Global Terrorist' making him a 'high-profile target for law enforcement agencies worldwide'.¹⁴

Is Wanndy an exception or is there a pattern?

¹³ *ISIS and the first Malaysian suicide bomber*, StarOnline, 14 June 2014 <http://www.thestar.com.my/news/nation/2014/06/14/isis-and-the-first-malaysian-suicide-bomber/>

¹⁴ *Top Malaysian ISIL operative killed in Syria*, Aljazeera, 9 May 2017. [http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/05/top-malaysian-isis-operative-killed-syria-17050818Final Editing \(9 January 2018\).docx2519182.html](http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/05/top-malaysian-isis-operative-killed-syria-17050818Final%20Editing%20(9%20January%202018).docx2519182.html)

Katibah Nusantara

The Katibah Nusantara Lid Daulah Islamiyah or the 'Malay Archipelago Unit for the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria' was formally launched on 26 September 2014. Based in Al-Shadadi in the Syrian province of Hasaka,¹⁵ the Katibah Nusantara was a special unit within Daesh that catered specifically for the Malay-speaking fighters from both Indonesia and Malaysia.¹⁶ The Katibah Nusantara's primary goal was to assist Daesh to establish an Islamic State in Iraq and Syria. The group was involved in combat operations, snipers, heavy weaponry, tactics, strategy as well as military management.¹⁷ The capability and capacity of the group were seen when it captured five Kurdish-held locations in Syria. It is also significant to note that this particular success story was highlighted in the social media, especially in both the Indonesian and Malay languages,¹⁸ ostensibly to attract and possibly recruit Indonesians and Malaysians.¹⁹

Let us consider Fudhail Omar.

Twenty-five year old Muhammad Fudhail Omar was slated to replace Wannady. Fudhail who went with the *nom de guerre* Abu Qutaibah, reached Syria in May 2014 and initially joined the *Ajnad Al Sham* group. He subsequently joined *Daesh* in late 2014, where he had the tasks of guarding security posts and teaching children of *Daesh* members. He was also active in disseminating *Daesh* ideology and 'recruiting new militants via social media'. It was then that he attempted to influence a seventeen-year old

¹⁵ Jasminder Singh, *Katibah Nusantara: Islamic State's Malay Archipelago Combat Unit*, RSIS Commentary, No. 126, 26 May 2015, <https://www.rsis.edu.sg/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/CO15126.pdf> (Retrieved on 2 December 2015).

¹⁶ *The Evolution of IS in Indonesia*, Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict (IPAC).

¹⁷ Jasminder Singh, *Katibah Nusantara: Islamic State's Malay Archipelago Combat Unit*.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ Thomas K. Samuel, *Radicalisation in Southeast Asia: A Case Study of Daesh Radicalisation in Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines*, Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism (SEARCCT), 2016.

Sabahan to carry out a lone-wolf attack and slaughter foreign tourists in Sandakan. The Sabahan teenager had also threatened on Facebook to kill former Inspector-General of Police Tan Sri Khalid Abu Bakar but was mercifully arrested before he could carry out any of his plans.²⁰

Sham — Bird of Jannah

Sham, a 26-year old Malaysian female doctor started a blog called 'Diary of a Muhajirah' (Tumblr page at <http://diary-of-a-muhajira.tumblr.com/>). The account was opened on 10 July 2015 following the closing down of a previous site with the same name.²¹ She claimed to have travelled from Malaysia to Syria and had married a Moroccan born-fighter with the nom de guerre Abu Barra²², whom she had met while in Syria. She also used the moniker 'Bird of Jannah' to relate her experience in becoming a Daesh fighter in Raqqa and Taqba²³ since she left home in February 2014. She revealed that she flew to Turkey and then crossed into Syria without the knowledge of her parents, who later relented.²⁴ She became pregnant and was said to have given birth to a baby boy. Sham's blog gained tremendous following as she was successful in humanising a group which was primarily known for beheading its adversaries.

²⁰ Aliza Shah, *Would-be Malaysian IS Chief killed*, New Straits Times, 20 July 2017, <https://www.nst.com.my/news/exclusive/2017/07/258948/exclusive-would-be-malaysian-chief-killed>

²¹ Suhartini Samsudin and Anitawati Mohd Lokman, *Women and the Themes and Narratives of the 'Diary of a Muhajirah' Tumblr Page*, Journal of Media and Information Warfare Vol. 8, 117-155, June 2016 <http://jmiw.uitm.edu.my/images/Journal/v8article4.pdf> (Accessed on 22 October 2017).

²² John Hall, MailOnline, 22 November 2014 <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2843901/The-secret-diary-jihadi-bride-Doctor-leaves-middle-class-life-Malaysia-travels-join-ISIS-keeps-journal-time-Syria.html> (accessed on 22 October 2017).

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ <http://english.astroawani.com/malaysia-news/we-shall-meet-jannah-malaysian-woman-reveals-married-life-isis-militant-44247>

Maybe these Malaysians who were mentioned were those who were really naïve, uneducated and were basically tricked because they were extremely gullible. This would never happen to an educated, well-informed Malaysian graduate.

Someone should have told that to Doctor Mahmud.

Doctor Mahmud Ahmad, 39 years old, also known as Abu Handzalah, had a Masters degree from the International Islamic University of Malaysia and a PhD. from University of Malaya. He then became a senior lecturer in the Department of *Aqidah* and Islamic Thought in the Academy of Islamic Studies in University of Malaya. While studying at Islamabad Islamic University in the late 1990s, Doctor Mahmud underwent training at an *Al-Qaeda* training camp. He was involved in recruiting and arranging for Malaysians to go and fight in Syria, and was credited for successfully recruiting Ahmad Tarmimi Maliki, Malaysia's first suicide bomber. Doctor Mahmud played a pivotal role during the Marawi City siege in Southern Philippines where he was said to have been holed up in the city battling the Philippine military. He was also said to have been one of the leaders of *Daesh* in Southeast Asia after the death of Isnilon Hapilon (the former leader of the Abu Sayyaf Group or ASG), as Doctor Mahmud was seen as a trusted lieutenant with links even to *Daesh's* Baghdadi. Intelligence sources also highlighted that Doctor Mahmud's plan was to form an official *Daesh* faction in Southeast Asia by uniting different terror cells from Malaysia, Indonesia and the Philippines.²⁵ However, it was reported on 19 October 2017 that President Rodrigo Duterte had stated that Doctor Mahmud was killed in Marawi City.²⁶ His death however has yet to be confirmed. Sadly, his education in Islamic studies did little to prevent his radicalisation.

²⁵ Muguntan Vanar, *Former UM lecturer to take over militant leadership if incumbent is killed*, The Star Online, 27 May 2017, <https://www.thestar.com.my/news/nation/2017/05/27/dr-mahmud-lined-up-as-next-leader-former-um-lecturer-to-take-over-militant-leadership-if-incumbent-i/> (Accessed on 29 October 2017).

²⁶ *Ibid.*

The case studies mentioned above are worrying and indicate that violent radicalisation is both a serious and pressing concern in Malaysia which cannot be taken lightly.

Why should I care and what can I do?

So we have established thus far that violent radicalisation is indeed a grave concern here in Malaysia judging by the number of individuals, particularly the young, who have chosen to tread this path.

Now, why should it be my problem?

Firstly, there are some who consider such violent ideologies to have similar characteristics to that of an infectious disease. If we are not careful, there is always the possibility that we or the people close to us could be infected with this ideology of violence and hatred. It is indeed significant to note that many who eventually became terrorists were never like that in the beginning. However, after being introduced to an extremist, continuously being exposed to a violent ideology, undergoing a personal crisis or a personal problem, feeling isolated, being placed in positions where they were not able to hear any differing views other than that which are expounded by the terrorists; these vulnerable individuals often succumb to the pull of the terrorists and the call to indiscriminate violence.

Secondly, terrorist recruiters seem to focus on young people. The majority of Malaysians who have travelled to Syria and Iraq are below the age of 40 and many key leaders are in their twenties. Young people, for various reasons, continue to be the focus of different terrorist groups.

Where are these young people now?

Many of them have unfortunately suffered and died for groups like *Daesh*.

For what purpose?

Daesh promised them a caliphate in which they could join, bring their families and prosper.

Has any of these come true?

The Engineering student/Latrine Cleaner

Areeb Majeed, a 23-year old civil engineering student from Mumbai who joined *Daesh*, left after he spent most of his time doing menial jobs such as washing toilets, fetching water and tending to other fighters. He was said to have been recruited online and was aided by a network of local contacts and travel agents who subsequently assisted him in reaching Mosul. Majeed and three others flew to Baghdad on 23 May 2014 for 'pilgrimage' to Iraq's religious sites. They travelled on to Falujjah on 25 May 2014 and around mid-July he informed his family that he was fighting for *Daesh*. On 26 August 2014, it was reported that Majeed had died from a bomb blast in Mosul. Two days later, a pro-*Daesh* website referred to him as Abu Ali al-Hindi and reported that he had gotten married and had subsequently achieved martyrdom. In mid-November 2014, Majeed called his father and dismissed reports that he had died. He said that he was instead injured in Turkey and wanted to be rescued and taken back home. His father sought the help of the National Investigation Agency (NIA) in India and Majeed was subsequently brought back to Mumbai in November 2014.²⁷ He had suffered a bullet injury in the neck which was left untreated until he pleaded for help and only then was he taken to the hospital. According to Majeed, what the recruiters had promised him and what he ended up doing were very different, highlighting that the way the war was conducted

²⁷ *I cleaned toilets while in ISIS, Kalyan youth Areeb Majeed tells NIA*, The Times of India, 30 November 2014, <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/i-cleaned-toilets-while-in-ISIS-Kalyan-youth-Areeb-Majeed-tells-NIA/articleshow/45328623.cms> (accessed on 23 October 2017)

followed little religious principles, even adding that the ‘fighters raped many women there’. Majeed mentioned that while he was taught to use an AK-47 and rocket launchers, he was nevertheless considered too ‘physically weak’ to serve in the front lines.²⁸

Thirdly, are we going to allow our peers who might be in vulnerable positions or perhaps susceptible to the violent ideology expounded by extremists and terrorists be brainwashed into doing something that is not only illegal but also morally reprehensible?

It is important to realise that no one is born a violent radical or extremist but rather becomes one through a process that at times, is meticulously crafted and systematically reinforced. It is a journey that often starts with the premise that innocent people-groups are suffering under the hands of cruel oppressors, while those who are in power refuse to help. The victims are pictured as being defenceless while the aggressors are painted as bloodthirsty villains who will never cease nor compromise until their foes are completely vanquished. This process of indoctrination is heavily emotion-based with the hope that the youths might be more gullible to accept assertions as facts if the extremists are able to bypass the minds and go straight to the heart.

²⁸ Ishaan Tharoor, *Indian Student Went to Join the Islamic State but all he got was this lousy job cleaning toilets*, The Washington Post, 1 December 2014, https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2014/12/01/indian-student-went-to-join-the-islamic-state-but-all-he-got-was-this-lousy-job-cleaning-toilets/?utm_term=.a2b2c36d64aa (accessed on 23 October 2017).

Secondary Trauma

The phenomenon of 'secondary trauma' is defined as a set of symptoms that parallel those of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)²⁹. They include hyperarousal symptoms such as feeling tense and/or having angry outbursts.³⁰ These emotions could happen when an individual associates himself with victims of violence, through direct or indirect means, and as a result, over a period of time, identifies and feels the suffering and pain of the victim as his own. What is of significance is the manner in which secondary trauma has been the trigger of violent conduct. No longer does an individual have to be in direct contact or close association with a victim before he or she feels their pain. It is in this regard that we see how the terrorists have focused and have been able to connect the individual to the perceived injustice of the aggrieved party. By cleverly manipulating the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) revolution, in tandem with the globalisation phenomenon, terrorists have been very successful in ensuring that pain, anguish and misery happening in distant lands and even in different times, have been brought into the lives of the people, vividly and graphically, by the media in general and the Internet in particular. Through blogs, chat rooms and YouTube, perceived or real injustices happening all around the world have been condensed, edited, packaged and delivered to arouse a variety of feelings and emotions with the express purpose of eliciting sympathy, 'igniting the flame'³¹ or even encouraging active participation in violent actions.

29 Ted Bober and Cheryl Regehr, *Strategies for Reducing Secondary or Vicarious Trauma: Do They Work?* Brief Treatment and Crisis Intervention Advance Access originally published online on December 30, 2005, Oxford University Press.

30 *What are the Symptoms of PTSD?*, National Institute of Mental Health, <http://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/post-traumatic-stress-disorder-ptsd/what-are-the-symptoms-of-ptsd.shtml>

31 Thomas K. Samuel, *Reaching the Youth: Countering the Terrorist Narrative*, Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism (SEARCCT), 2012.

In such a situation, could the advice or help or intervention of a friend make a difference?

Would it have made a difference to Ahmad Tarmimi Maliki, Malaysia's first suicide bomber, if he had friends who were able to gently yet critically point out the cruelty that *Daesh* was inflicting upon fellow Muslims in both Iraq and Syria?

Would he have considered terrorism if it was highlighted and explained to him that there were numerous non-violent strategies that were used by individuals and groups in the past which actually worked and brought about the desired results?

Would Muhammad Wannady Mohamed Jedi, who directed the Movidia-Puchong attack that severely injured eight people, acted any differently if he had good friends of other races and religions?

Would Muhammad Fudhail Omar, who replaced Wannady as the Malaysian leader in *Daesh*, have changed his mind if a group of friends was able to get him to critically examine how his actions would bring tremendous grief and sorrow to his immediate and extended family?

Would Sham, the Malaysian medical doctor who started the blog 'bird of *jannah*' and who decided to use her medical skills to assist *Daesh*, have done things differently if she had friends who could have shown how her talent and passion for bringing healing to people could have had a far greater reach and impact to the suffering in Syria and Iraq if she had joined the Red Crescent instead of *Daesh*?

We do not and will never know for these individuals are sadly dead.

The purpose of this guide is to get young people to reach out to their peers who might be considering violent radical actions, to rationally challenge the rhetoric of indiscriminate violence, to highlight the pain and suffering violent extremism inflict, and to provide better alternatives for those wanting to 'make a difference.'

Broken Promises, Crushed Dreams

Terrorists are skilled and talented in many areas.

Their ability to spot and recruit talents is indeed impressive.

Their charismatic speeches and superb leadership is something that even our politicians can learn from.

Their ability to organise forces and essentially fight a state and sometimes groups of states which have conventional armies is nothing less than amazing.

Their passion, never-say-die attitude and determination to proceed regardless of the cost to others show their steadfastness to achieve their goals.

Their chief attribute, however, is their ability to continue to break their promises and crush the dreams of their followers, supporters and sympathisers and ***get away with it.***

Their ability to do this and continue to do this is not merely by chance, but rather it is a well-crafted, organised and systematic process, involving the fabrication of half-truths, the exploitation of individual and group fears, the clever manipulation of events to bring on the feeling of victimisation, the ability to rile up anger and passion, the ability to conjure up a sense of heroism and finally, the skill to make individuals have a sense of significance and meaning through their violent actions.

These are what we are up against.

II. *PRETTY LITTLE LIARS:* TERRORISTS AND THE ART OF LYING

You can fool some of the people all of the time, and all of the people some of the time, but you cannot fool all of the people all of the time.

(Abraham Lincoln)

The Myths of the Terrorist

Myth #1: “Violence is the only way”

To ensure that radical violent ideology remains the sole option, those involved in radicalising susceptible individuals present a case where there is no other alternative but indiscriminate violence.

‘Violence is the only way’ is their rallying call.

In my earlier writings, I argue that,

“The audience, particularly the youth, is made to believe that the world that they dream of can only be shaped through violence. Violence is seen as a cleansing force to rid the world of the evil that thrives on inequality, injustice

*and discrimination. In this light, violence is seen as both permissible and justifiable. Also, the use of force is touted as an operational and strategic option that will propel the terrorists group towards success and the accomplishing of their objectives and goals. Violence, then, is branded both as the morally justifiable and tactically superior option that will in due time ensure complete victory”.*³²

I further argued that the assumptions quoted above are not sufficiently challenged and debunked, and then proceeded to highlight three lines of thoughts that could be used to stimulate the thinking of the target audience. Firstly, the need to identify the so-called objectives of the groups advocating violence. Secondly, to make a comparison between the stated objectives of the terrorists and the actions that they have actually taken and finally, to analyse if any of their actions have enabled them to achieve their stated objectives.

For example, the Liberation Tamil Tigers of Ealam (LTTE) had the stated objective of achieving a separate and independent homeland for the Tamil people carved from the northern and eastern part of Sri Lanka. They tried to achieve that objective by carrying out numerous acts of terrorism throughout the whole of Sri Lanka with the hopes that the authorities would in the end relent and give into their demands. After tremendous deaths and destructions on both sides, the Government forces finally defeated the LTTE in 2009. The LTTE failed to meet any of their stated objectives despite carrying out various acts of terrorism.

I tried to highlight this point in my earlier works by analysing closely what the terrorists had stated were their objectives (i.e. what they had said) and subsequently carefully collating their deeds and actions (i.e. what they had done) and finally evaluating if their actions had indeed been able to achieve what they had set forth to do. The two conclusions that could be derived were

³² Thomas K. Samuel, *Reaching the Youth – Countering the Terrorist Narratives*, May 2012, Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism (SEARCCT), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia.

firstly, violence was a tactically inferior strategy and secondly, terrorists were aware of this but had their own vested interests which have very little to do with their stated objectives of helping the people.

Myth #2: “For the people”

The one consistent thing most terrorists have in common is their supposed reason for their existence; the people. Their claim that they will fight or struggle or die or live or endure or suffer or kill solely and fully for the people is repeated at every chance, in every message, and through every medium. The late Vellupillai Prabhakaran, leader of the LTTE demonstrated this when he proclaimed, ‘it is the plight of the Tamil people that compelled me to take up arms. I felt outraged at the inhuman atrocities perpetrated against an innocent people. The ruthless manner, in which our people were murdered, massacred, maimed.....’³³

In my previous writings, I had also addressed this issue and highlighted the following;

“There is a need to ask the young people to consider if there are any differences between a terrorist organisation which claims to speak and act on behalf of a people-group and a malevolent dictator who decides, unilaterally and with impunity, what is good for the people he forcibly rules. The question must be asked; why are people aghast when authorities come to power through force, yet treat as legitimate the actions of terrorist groups which have not even been legally chosen to represent the people they claim to be fighting for?”

Is it justifiable for a terrorist group to claim that they are representatives of a suffering group of people simply

³³ Tamil National Leader Hon. V. Prabhakaran’s Interview, The Week (India) March 23, 1986 as quoted by Louise Richardson, *What Terrorists Want: Understanding the Terrorist Threat*, John Murray Publishers, 2006.

because they are fighting for them? If that is the case, hypothetically, can a Malaysian who is angry with what is going on in Palestine and intends to fight for the rights of the Palestinian people, immediately assume the role of the representative of the Palestinians, simply because he has decided to fight for them?

The assumptions of the terrorists are very superficial and based on the following premises. Firstly, they claim that the ‘people’ are marginalised. Secondly, they assert that this drives them to take up arms and fight on behalf of such ‘people’. Lastly, they declare that the very act of fighting on behalf of the ‘people’ bestows on them the right and privilege to lead and represent the people and their interests.

Following the logic of the terrorists, the people-group that is alleged to be suffering under some form of oppression or persecution does not have the right to decide who should represent them or their interests, and has little choice but to allow the terrorists to lead and speak on their behalf.

Myth #3: “We have no choice”

When confronted with the atrocities, destruction and bloodshed that terrorists have orchestrated and caused, at times, even to the very people they claim to fight for, we hear the similar and familiar refrain; ‘we have no choice’. Again, quoting Vellupillai Prabhakaran,

“the Tamil people have been expressing their grievances in parliament for more than three decades. Their voices went unheard like cries in the wilderness. In Sri Lanka there is no parliamentary democracy where our people could effectively represent their aspirations. What passes as parliament in Sri Lanka is an authoritarian rule founded on the tyranny of the majority.”³⁴

³⁴ Tamil National Leader Hon. V. Pirapaharan’s Interview, The Week (India) March 23, 1986.

Hence, following this premise and logic, terrorists justify and legitimise their actions by claiming that the ‘choice of violence was not taken by them but was rather forced upon them through the various actions of the authorities.’³⁵ Simply put, they had ‘no choice’ in the matter.

Anders Behring Breivik had ‘no choice’ when he killed eight people with a car bomb in Oslo. He then went on to a summer camp near Oslo and had ‘no choice’ as he started shooting and eventually killed 69 people.³⁶

Imam Samudra had ‘no choice’ when he planned and orchestrated the Bali bombing that led to the deaths of 202 people from 21 countries.³⁷

Redondo Cain Dellosa, the Rajah Sulaiman Movement (RSM) member had ‘no choice’ when he orchestrated the world’s deadliest terrorist attack at sea³⁸ and planted a bomb on board the SuperFerry 14 that resulted in the deaths of 116 people.³⁹

In my writings in 2012 on the subject, I had highlighted a few questions which I find is still relevant now.

“What is the justification for killing the innocent?”

Have they exhausted all other means before they came to the conclusion that they had no choice but to turn to

³⁵ Thomas K. Samuel, *Reaching the Youth: Countering the Terrorist Narrative*, Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism (SEARCCT), 2012.

³⁶ Adrian Pracon, “*Utoya, a survivor’s story: ‘No!’ I yelled. Don’t shoot!*”, The Guardian, 1 June 2012, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/jun/01/utoya-survivors-story-anders-breivik> (accessed on 18 November 2017).

³⁷ *The 12 October 2002 Bali Bombing Plot*, 11 October 2012, BBC News, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-19881138> (accessed on 18 November 2017).

³⁸ Matthew Harwood, *Piracy and Terrorism Up on the High Seas, Says Study*, Security Management. <https://sm.asisonline.org/migration/Pages/piracy-and-terrorism-high-seas-says-study.aspx> (accessed on 12 November 2017).

³⁹ Simon Elegant, *The Return of Abu Sayyaf*, 23 August 2004, Time Magazine, <http://content.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,686107,00.html> (accessed on 5 October 2017).

violence, or is violence seen as the less difficult path to take in wanting to achieve their objectives?

Does it make sense in rational, moral or religious terms to take the life of another due to the pain and misery brought about by a third party, solely on the basis that the aggressor and the victim of terrorism had some things in common, such as their nationality, race or religion?

Does that not make the victim the new aggressor?

Is it not logical to conclude that using violence against a stronger opponent would in most cases further enrage the aggressor, causing greater violence to be unleashed on the victims?

Will the act of terrorism not alienate the victims from the mainstream and will they not lose support when they engage in acts of violence?

Should violence be used, will it not mean that the victim has to give up the moral high ground which is often the only advantage he or she possesses?

Given the doubtful effectiveness of the tactic of violence, is that trade-off a wise one?

Will it not ensure that the possibility of compromise is no longer tenable and further justify the authorities in question to continue their unjust ways?⁴⁰

With all these questions unsatisfactorily answered, the premise of the terrorists that they have 'no choice' simply cannot be considered.

⁴⁰ Thomas K. Samuel, *Reaching the Youth: Countering the Terrorist Narrative*, Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism (SEARCCT), 2012.

Reaching the Promised Land: The Terrorists Pathway to Indiscriminate Violence

The terrorists have become extremely good at transforming seemingly normal individuals into committed fighters prepared to utilise any means possible to change the status quo in any way they seem fit.

How are they able to do so?

By planting three simple steps into the ‘hearts and minds’ of their potential recruits.

Firstly, it is emphasised that innocent people all around the world are undergoing severe deprivation, suffering and prejudices. “Reports, images and witness accounts are all skilfully deployed to bear witness to this worldwide suffering, and it is subsequently conveyed by the terrorists to any interested individual through any available means.”⁴¹

Secondly, the targeted audience is then challenged on how they will react to the suffering and misery they have just witnessed. In my interview with Setyo⁴², a former Indonesian terrorist, he highlighted how the terrorist recruiters would attract the attention of the young people by showcasing the sufferings of the Muslims and then immediately follow up by seeking their response to such tragedies. Marhmudi Hariano alias Yusuf, another former Indonesian terrorist recalled “how as a young man he felt compelled to defend his fellow Muslims, whom he perceived as hearing the propaganda of the terrorists.”⁴³ Sydney Jones summed it up well when she highlighted that in the Indonesian examples, the premise that ‘this is the way that you can actively help your fellow Muslims’, is a compelling recruiting

41 *Ibid.*

42 Harry Setyo R., Interview by Author, Semarang, Indonesia, 5 April 2011.

43 Marhmudi Hariano alias Yusuf, Interview by Author, Semarang, Indonesia, 5 April 2011.

strategy for terrorists.⁴⁴

Thirdly, the conclusion is then made that the only recourse available to correct this terrible injustice is by initiating violence. Hence, in my earlier writings, I highlighted that,

“young people are shown graphic evidence of the first premise – that injustice is thriving and causing tremendous misery. Once their conscience is seared and their idealism evoked, they are confronted with the second premise – that they now have to act. In this excited state, where emotions are stirred and passions are running high, the third premise, that violence is the sole alternative, is offered; often, it is blindly accepted, with little critical evaluation or thinking on the part of the young person. Thus, it is significant to note that in the hands of the terrorists, the youth do not just arrive at the conclusion that violence is a possible alternative; rather, they are carefully, methodically and systematically led through various stages involving their mental and emotional faculties, passing from intellectual analysis to a stirred conscience and finally to a perceived undeniable conclusion that violence is the sole alternative.”

III. WHEN ANGER + HATRED + VIOLENCE = MISERY4ALL: THE CONSEQUENCES OF TERRORISM

*There are many causes I would die for.
There is not a single cause I would kill for.*

(Mahatma Gandhi)

The Consequences of Terrorism

One of the greatest successes of the terrorists lies not at the battlefield but with their ability to convince the 'hearts and minds' of the people that indiscriminate violence against innocent civilians is both justifiable and will bring about positive change in the lives of the 'victims'.

There is an urgent need to debunk and counter this assumption as it forms the basis of why people consider joining such groups to begin with. There is therefore the need to firstly, (i) deconstruct the premise that the actions of the terrorists are justifiable and

legitimate; and (ii) secondly, debunk the idea that violent actions against the innocent will lead to better lives for the aggrieved party.

Justifiable and legitimate

The premise of the argument here is that the victims are merely responding, defending and protecting against further aggression by the oppressors. The victims cannot be faulted as they are merely reacting against the unjustified force used by the perpetrators. Therefore, any actions by the victims are both justifiable and legitimate.

If there are cases in which victims are fighting directly against the aggressors in self-defence, perhaps there would be a case for their actions being justifiable and legitimate. However, when the supposed 'victims' target and kill innocent civilians, how then can their actions be legitimate and justified?

Indiscriminate violence brings about positive change

Terrorists often times argue that their violent actions bring about change. This assumption is often embraced quickly without critical and careful examination. Let us be clear about the kind of indiscriminate violence that terrorists have often employed.

The case of the Air India Flight 182 disaster is an example of how the actions of extremists did little to bring about any change to the status quo. Sikh extremists were accused of sabotaging the Air India flight, flying the Toronto-Montreal-London-New Delhi route, by setting up a bomb that in the end killed 329 passengers on 23 June 1985 over the coast of Ireland. The authorities determined that the main suspects of this bombing were members of *Babbar Khalsa*, a Sikh militant group. The bombing by the perpetrators was seen as a retaliation and an act of revenge against India for Operation Blue Star, in which the Indian Army tried to flush out Sikh militants within the premise of the Golden Temple in

Amritsar. Basically, the attack was carried out as an act of revenge against the Indian military over Operation Blue Star, which led to a high number of casualties among the Sikh community. *Babbar Khalsa's* objective was to secure an independent Sikh state of Khalistan, in the Indian province of Punjab.

Allow me to ask some tough questions.

How did the killing of 329 passengers, of which more than 90 per cent of them were non-Indian citizens on board Air India Flight 182, avenge the supposed acts of the Indian military in Amritsar?

How did the bombing of that flight help in any way the struggle for the formation of an independent Khalistan?

Let us consider in detail another group that is constantly highlighting its role as the saviour of the people it claims to be fighting for.

The *Abu Sayyaf Group* (ASG), based in Southern Philippines, has the supposed goal of creating an independent state encompassing the Philippines' Muslim population to be governed by *Sharia* law⁴⁵. The manner in which they have sought to realise this goal is through bombings, kidnappings, assassinations and extortions⁴⁶. Interestingly, their aim to pursue an independent *Sharia*-based state has not stopped them from being involved in criminal activities such as kidnapping, rape, child sexual assault, forced marriages⁴⁷, drive-by-shootings, extortion and drug-trafficking.⁴⁸ Also of significance is that while the ASG claims their motivation to fight comes from the people and the religion,

45 Colleen Sullivan, *Abu Sayyaf Group*, Encyclopaedia Britannica, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Abu-Sayyaf-Group> (accessed on 10 October 2017).

46 Rommel C. Banlaoi, *The Abu Sayyaf Group: From Mere Banditry to Genuine Terrorism*, Southeast Asian Affairs, ISEAS – Yusof Ishak Institute, 2006.

47 Barbara Mae Dacanay (21 April 2002). "Abducted nurse marries Abu Sayyaf leader". Gulf News. <http://gulfnews.com/news/uae/general/abducted-nurse-marries-abu-sayyaf-leader-1.438945> (accessed on 12 November 2017).

48 Martin, Gus (2012). *Understanding Terrorism: Challenges, Perspectives, and Issues*. Sage Publications. p. 319.

there have been evidence⁴⁹ to suggest that many ASG members are also *shabu*⁵⁰ (methamphetamine) users.⁵¹

The ASG has also been particularly known for their beheadings. On 30 July 2017, seven⁵² Filipino loggers⁵³ who were kidnapped by the ASG were found beheaded in two separate locations in Basilan⁵⁴. On 4 July 2017, two Vietnamese sailors⁵⁵ who were kidnapped by the ASG in November 2016 were found beheaded in Sumisip, Basilan⁵⁶. On 16 April 2017, Noel Besconde, a Filipino captain was beheaded after being kidnapped. It was suspected that he was beheaded because he was sick and was slowing down the movements of the ASG who was at that point being pursued by the Philippine military.⁵⁷ Closer to home, on 27 February 2017, Jurgen Kantner and his friend Sabine Merz were abducted from a yacht off Sabah. Merz's body was later found

49 There were cases where surviving hostages revealed that they had seen ASG members taking shabu as well as military findings that had found drugs in many of the abandoned ASG camps.

50 Ryan Pickrell, *Meet 'Shabu,' - The Drug Fueling Islamic Extremism*. The Daily Caller, 30 September 2016. <http://dailycaller.com/2016/09/30/meet-shabu-the-drug-fueling-islamic-extremism/> (accessed on 12 November 2017).

51 *Military says Abu Sayyaf members are shabu users*, GMA News Online, 29 September 2016 <http://www.gmanetwork.com/news/news/nation/583221/military-says-abu-sayyaf-members-are-shabu-users/story/> (accessed on 12 November 2017).

52 Bong Garcia, *Abu Sayyaf bandits behead 7 people*, Sun.Star Zamboanga, 31 July 2017. <http://www.sunstar.com.ph/zamboanga/local-news/2017/07/31/abu-sayyaf-bandits-behead-7-people-556042> (accessed on 12 November 2017).

53 Aaron Recuenco, *7 Basilan loggers beheaded by suspected Abu Sayyaf bandits*, Manila Bulletin, 31 July 2017. <https://news.mb.com.ph/2017/07/31/7-basilan-loggers-beheaded-by-suspected-abu-sayyaf-bandits/> (accessed on 12 November 2017).

54 Song Lifang, *Bodies of 7 loggers killed by Abu Sayyaf found in S. Philippines*, Xinhua News Agency, 31 July 2017. http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-07/31/c_136488647.htm (accessed on 12 November 2017).

55 Svilen Petrov, *Two Vietnamese Seafarers Beheaded By Abu Sayyaf Piracy Group*, Maritime Herald, 6 July 2017, <http://www.maritimeherald.com/2017/two-vietnamese-seafarers-beheaded-abu-sayyaf-piracy-group/> (accessed on 12 November 2017).

56 Zhang Dongmiao, *Vietnam condemns Abu Sayyaf murder of 2 sailors*, Xinhua News Agency, 7 July 2017. http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-07/07/c_136426035.htm (accessed on 12 November 2017).

57 *Abu Sayyaf captive beheaded in Philippines, says army*, Al Jazeera, 17 April 2017. <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/04/abu-sayyaf-captive-beheaded-philippines-army-170416202324427.html> (accessed on 12 November 2017).

on the boat with a gunshot wound. Kantner was subsequently beheaded after a deadline for USD 600,000 in ransom expired on 26 February 2017.⁵⁸ Sadly, being young does not preclude one from being a victim of the ASG. On 24 August 2016, Patrick Almodovar, a Filipino teenager, was killed after his family was not able to meet ASG's USD 1 million dollar ransom demand.⁵⁹ On 25 April 2016, John Ridsel and Robert Hall, two English-born Canadians were kidnapped from a resort on Samal Island by the ASG. They were both then brought to Jolo. Both were beheaded and Ridsel's body was found on 25 April 2016⁶⁰ while Hall's body was found on 13 June 2016⁶¹. On 17 November 2015, Bernard Then, a Malaysian, was kidnapped by the ASG in Sandakan, Sabah. He was beheaded in Jolo after his ransom demand was not met.

⁵⁸ *Philippine Abu Sayyaf jihadists behead German hostage in video*, BBC News, 27 February 2017. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-39102762> (accessed on 12 November 2017).

⁵⁹ *Abu Sayyaf beheads 18-year-old hostage in Sulu*, SunStar, 24 August 2016. <http://www.sunstar.com.ph/manila/local-news/2016/08/24/abu-sayyaf-beheads-18-year-old-hostage-sulu-493534> (accessed on 12 November 2017).

⁶⁰ Brian Murphy, *Islamist militants behead Canadian man in southern Philippines*, The Washington Post, 25 April 2016. https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia_pacific/islamist-militants-behead-canadian-man-in-southern-philippines/2016/04/25/c4d94a60-0b14-11e6-bfa1-4efa856caf2a_story.html?utm_term=.ea5f37867929 (accessed on 12 November 2017).

⁶¹ Michael Friscolanti, *Extremists execute Canadian hostage in the Philippines*, Macleans, 13 June 2016. <http://www.macleans.ca/news/canada/extremists-behead-another-canadian-hostage-in-the-philippines/> (accessed on 12 November 2017).

The Response Of Bernard Then's Family

The response of Bernard Then's family to his cruel killing was indeed inspiring. While Gerald Then (Bernard's brother) pleaded for the government to improve the security of the nation 'so that no other person would have to suffer the way that Bernard did and that no other family should have to endure our heartache', the family also highlighted that while it was extremely difficult, their faith had enabled them to show mercy upon those who had caused them "so much anguish and anger." They went even further and stated that "when the day arrives we pray that God will also show mercy to the perpetrators of this heinous crime and to those who were responsible for Bernard's suffering."⁶²

On 11 June 2010, three Filipino men, believed to be loggers, were abducted by the ASG while gathering wood near the town of Maluso in Basilan. They were subsequently beheaded.⁶³ On 9 November 2009, Gabriel Canizares, a Filipino teacher's head was found at a petrol station three weeks after being kidnapped by the ASG.⁶⁴ His body was later found on 11 November in Sulu.⁶⁵ On 25 April 2009, Doroteo Gonzales, a Filipino farmer was kidnapped by the ASG and was subsequently beheaded on 17 May, when his family was not able to pay the ransom.⁶⁶

⁶² *Moving eulogy at slain Malaysian hostage Bernard Then's funeral*, The Star/Asia News Network, 18 January 2016, <http://globalnation.inquirer.net/135225/moving-eulogy-at-slain-malaysian-hostage-bernard-thens-funeral> (accessed on 23 October 2017)

⁶³ Manny Mogato & RJ Rosalado, *Painful Independence Day as Abu Sayyaf beheads 3 loggers*, Reuters. ABS-CBN News, 12 June 2010. <http://news.abs-cbn.com/nation/regions/06/12/10/militants-behead-2-loggers-basilan> (accessed on 12 November 2017).

⁶⁴ *Teacher beheaded in Philippines*, BBC News. 9 November 2009. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/8349771.stm> (accessed on 12 November 2017).

⁶⁵ *Body of beheaded Sulu principal recovered*, GMA News, 14 November 2009. <http://www.gmanetwork.com/news/news/regions/176981/body-of-beheaded-sulu-principal-recovered/story/> (accessed on 12 November 2017).

⁶⁶ Lizzie Smith, *Kidnapped farmer beheaded by Filipino al-Qaeda militants after family fail to pay ransom*, Daily Mail, 18 May 2009. <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1183962/Kidnapped-farmer-beheaded-Filipino-al-Qaida-militants-family-fail-pay-ransom.html> (accessed on 12 November 2017).

On 22 August 2002, two Jehovah's Witness missionaries were kidnapped and subsequently beheaded. Their heads were then dumped at a public market in Southern Philippines in a bag with a note saying 'infidels'.⁶⁷ On 19 June 2001, Guillermo Sobero, an American, was kidnapped from the Dos Palmas Resort and subsequently beheaded by the ASG. He was the first foreigner beheaded by the ASG.⁶⁸

It is also significant to note that the actions of the ASG are not merely confined to small acts of terrorism. On 27 February 2004, the ASG through an RSM operative, planted a bomb on board the SuperFerry 14 that resulted in the deaths of 116 people. It was the deadliest attack in the Philippines and remains the world's deadliest terrorist attack at sea.⁶⁹ Redondo Cain Delloso, an RSM member confessed to planting the bomb for the ASG.⁷⁰ The ASG was said to have targeted the SuperFerry 14 because its operators had refused to pay the group USD 1 million in protection money.⁷¹

After reading their list of atrocities, let us remind ourselves again that the ASG has done all these *purportedly* to achieve its goal of creating an independent state encompassing the Philippines' Muslim population which is to be governed by *Sharia* law.

Again, let us ask some tough questions.

How is anything that the ASG has done consistent with Islamic

⁶⁷ *Jehovah's Witnesses beheaded in Philippines*, The Guardian, 22 August 2002. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2002/aug/22/alqaida.terrorism> (accessed on 12 November 2017).

⁶⁸ *Troops scour area for man rebels say they beheaded*, USA Today, 20 June 2001. <http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/world/june01/2001-06-11-hostages.htm> (accessed on 12 November 2017).

⁶⁹ Matthew Harwood, *Piracy and Terrorism Up on the High Seas, Says Study*, Security Management. <https://sm.asisonline.org/migration/Pages/piracy-and-terrorism-high-seas-says-study.aspx> (accessed on 12 November 2017).

⁷⁰ Simon Elegant, *The Return of Abu Sayyaf*, 23 August 2004, Time Magazine, <http://content.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,686107,00.html> (accessed on 5 October 2017).

⁷¹ *Bomb caused Philippine ferry fire*, BBC News, 11 October 2004. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/3732356.stm> (accessed on 12 November 2017).

principles of warfare and *jihad*?

Has the group come any closer in reaching their objectives?

Would the majority of the minority-Muslim population in the Philippines ever accept the ASG as their leaders after all that it has done?

IV. IF NOT TERRORISM, THEN WHAT?

There is nothing in the world, I venture to say, that would so effectively help one to survive even the worst conditions as the knowledge that there is a meaning in one's life.

(Viktor Frankl)

Introduction

In many, many cases, the terrorists seem to win the battle without even stepping onto the physical plane. Often times, they seize the intellectual high ground by articulating the argument that there are no viable alternatives other than what they are prescribing. In short, according to them, besides using indiscriminate violence to change the status quo, there is no other viable and sustainable alternative to address a conflict or resolve a grievance.

How often have I had discussions with young people in which they consider the merits, advantages and benefits of terror tactics without even considering that there could be other ways to actually resolve a conflict without having to resort to the ways of the terrorists.

Much has been written on the effectiveness and sustainability of the non-violent approach. While I am tempted to delve into the theory and impact assessment of various non-violent approaches, perhaps it would be far better for me to take real-life examples of people who were confronted with severe injustice and tyrannical

opposition, but nevertheless chose to take a very different route to that of a terrorist and managed instead to bring about lasting and positive change.

Hence, I am going to present several examples of those who confronted evils of various kinds and who had every opportunity to respond using hatred, violence and terrorism. They, however, wilfully chose other creative and courageous approaches which did not utilise violence but were nevertheless effective in bringing about concrete and tangible results. For some of these heroes, the battle is far from over, as we can see in the case of Malala. But the results of their non-violent approach have nevertheless borne short-term, and in some cases long-term results. I am also going to highlight a few individuals who decided to take a more militant/violent approach and see where that has led them.

Malala Yousafzai

Malala Yousafzai was born on 12 July 1997 in Mingora, Pakistan to Ziauddin Yousafzai and Tor Pekai Yousafzai.⁷² She was named after Malalai of Maiwand, a famous female Pashtun poet and warrior from southern Afghanistan.⁷³ (Incidentally, Malala means 'grief-stricken'⁷⁴). Malala was blessed with a forward-thinking father who encouraged her to both think and speak up. For her, growing up in the Swat Valley was a treasured memory until the Taliban took over in 2007. In December 2008, the Taliban issued an edict banning girls from going to school.⁷⁵ Malala was upset and while speaking in Peshawar, questioned the Taliban by asking, "how dare the Taliban take away my basic right to

⁷² Thomas, Rebecca, *Malala Yousafzai: Her father's daughter*, BBC News, 6 November 2015 <http://www.bbc.com/news/entertainment-arts-34637751> (accessed on 12 November 2017).

⁷³ *Bacha Khan's philosophy of non-violence and Benazir Bhutto's charisma inspires Malala*, The Express Tribune. 16 January 2012. <https://tribune.com.pk/story/322054/bacha-khans-philosophy-of-non-violence-and-benazir-bhuttos-charisma-inspires-malala/> (accessed on 12 November 2017).

⁷⁴ *Diary of a Pakistani schoolgirl*, BBC News. 19 January 2009. http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/7834402.stm (accessed on 12 November 2017).

⁷⁵ <https://www.malala.org/malalas-story> (accessed on 20 October 2017).

education?”⁷⁶

In 2008, the BBC wanted a creative way to cover the Taliban’s growing reach and influence in the Swat Valley and decided to feature 11-year old Malala.⁷⁷ So Malala started blogging anonymously about her life under the Taliban rule. In her first entry dated 3 January 2009, she wrote,

“I had a terrible dream yesterday with military helicopters and the Taliban. I have had such dreams since the launch of the military operation in Swat. My mother made me breakfast and I went off to school. I was afraid of going because the Taliban had issued an edict banning all girls from attending schools. Only 11 out of 27 pupils attended the class as the number decreased because of the Taliban’s edict. My three friends have shifted to Peshawar, Lahore and Rawalpindi with their families after this edict.”⁷⁸

Great care was taken to ensure that Malala’s writings for the BBC were kept anonymous. Her hand-written notes were passed on to a reporter who would then scan and subsequently email them to the BBC.⁷⁹

Things appeared to turn for the better as time progressed and the Taliban appeared to have softened their stance, allowing girls

⁷⁶ Rick Westhead, *Brave defiance in Pakistan’s Swat Valley*, Toronto Star, 26 October 2009. https://www.thestar.com/news/world/2009/10/26/brave_defiance_in_pakistans_swat_valley.html (accessed on 12 November 2017).

⁷⁷ Sonia van Gilder Cooke, *Pakistani Heroine: How Malala Yousafzai Emerged from Anonymity*, Time World. 23 October 2012. <http://world.time.com/2012/10/23/pakistani-heroine-how-malala-yousafzai-emerged-from-anonymity/> (accessed on 12 November 2017).

⁷⁸ *Diary of a Pakistani schoolgirl*, BBC News. 19 January 2009. http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/7834402.stm (accessed on 12 November 2017).

⁷⁹ Basharat Peer, *The Girl Who Wanted To Go To School*, *The New Yorker*, 10 October 2012, <https://www.newyorker.com/news/news-desk/the-girl-who-wanted-to-go-to-school> (accessed on 12 November 2017).

to go to school until their exams as long as they wore *burqas*.⁸⁰ Malala, nevertheless, continued to speak out against the Taliban and the importance of education for females at various platforms including on the radio and television. In December 2011, Malala was awarded the National Peace Award for Youth by Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gilliani.⁸¹

Nevertheless, as Malala became more recognised, the threats against her increased. Threats over her life were published in newspapers and even slipped under her door⁸² and even on social media.⁸³

These threats did little to stop Malala.

Hence, the Taliban were 'forced to act' and in a meeting held in the summer of 2012, the Taliban leaders unanimously agreed to kill her.⁸⁴ Her impending death was something that Malala had often thought about and she had this to say about it; "I think of it often and imagine the scene clearly. Even if they come to kill me, I will tell them what they are trying to do is wrong, that education is our basic right."⁸⁵

The dreaded day finally came on 9 October 2012.

⁸⁰ *Diary of a Pakistani schoolgirl*, BBC News, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/7834402.stm (accessed on 12 November 2017).

⁸¹ *Malala in the House, plans to launch political party*, Dawn, 4 January 2012. <https://www.dawn.com/news/685504> (accessed on 12 November 2017).

⁸² *Radio Mullah' sent hit squad after Malala Yousafzai*, *The Express Tribune*. 12 October 2012. <https://tribune.com.pk/story/450639/radio-mullah-sent-hit-squad-after-malala-yousafzai/> (accessed on 12 November 2017).

⁸³ Basharat Peer, *The Girl Who Wanted To Go To School*, *The New Yorker*, 10 October 2012, <https://www.newyorker.com/news/news-desk/the-girl-who-wanted-to-go-to-school> (accessed on 12 November 2017).

⁸⁴ *Radio Mullah' sent hit squad after Malala Yousafzai*, *The Express Tribune*. 12 October 2012. <https://tribune.com.pk/story/450639/radio-mullah-sent-hit-squad-after-malala-yousafzai/> (accessed on 12 November 2017).

⁸⁵ Basharat Peer, *The Girl Who Wanted To Go To School*, *The New Yorker*, 10 October 2012, <https://www.newyorker.com/news/news-desk/the-girl-who-wanted-to-go-to-school> (accessed on 12 November 2017).

A Taliban assassin boarded the bus taken by Malala and threatened to kill everyone on the bus if Malala did not identify herself.⁸⁶ When Malala identified herself, he shot her with one bullet that went through her head, neck and ended up in her shoulder⁸⁷. Two other girls were also wounded in the attack.⁸⁸

Malala was initially airlifted to a military hospital in Peshawar for surgery. On 11 October 2012, she was moved to another hospital in Rawalpindi for further treatment.⁸⁹ On 15 October 2012, Malala was sent to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in the UK⁹⁰ and on 3 January 2013, she was finally discharged.⁹¹

It is significant to note that Ehsanullah Ehsan, the chief spokesman for the Taliban in Pakistan, claimed responsibility for the attack. He went on to say that Malala was ‘the symbol of the infidels and obscenity’ and went further to say that in the event she survived, the group would seek to kill her again.⁹² A

⁸⁶ Owais Tohid, *My conversations with Malala Yousafzai, the girl who stood up to the Taliban*, *The Christian Science Monitor*, 11 October 2012. <https://www.csmonitor.com/World/Global-News/2012/10/11/My-conversations-with-Malala-Yousafzai-the-girl-who-stood-up-to-the-Taliban> (accessed on 12 November 2017).

⁸⁷ Asma Ali Zain, *Malala will soon undergo reconstructive surgery*, *Khaleej Times*, 4 November 2012. <https://www.khaleejtimes.com/article/20121104/ARTICLE/311049814/1002> (accessed on 12 November 2017).

⁸⁸ Declan Walsh, *Taliban Reiterate Vow to Kill Pakistani Girl*, *The New York Times*, 12 October 2012, <https://mobile.nytimes.com/2012/10/13/world/asia/malala-yousafzai-faces-new-taliban-threat.html> (accessed on 20 December 2017).

⁸⁹ Robert Mackey & Adam B. Ellick, *Pakistani Girl Airlifted to Military Hospital*, *The New York Times*, 11 October 2012. <https://thelede.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/10/11/pakistani-girl-airlifted-to-military-hospital/> (accessed on 12 November 2017).

⁹⁰ *Malala Yousafzai: Pakistani girl shot by Taliban to be treated in Birmingham hospital that treats wounded soldiers*, *The Telegraph*, 15 October 2012. <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/pakistan/9608832/Malala-Yousafzai-Pakistani-girl-shot-by-Taliban-to-be-treated-in-Birmingham-hospital-that-treats-wounded-soldiers.html> (accessed on 12 November 2017).

⁹¹ *Pakistani girl Malala released from hospital*, *CNN*, 4 January 2013. <http://news.blogs.cnn.com/2013/01/04/pakistani-girl-malala-released-from-hospital/> (accessed on 12 November 2017).

⁹² Richard Leiby & Michele Langevine Leiby, *Taliban says it shot Pakistani teen for advocating girls' rights*, *The Washington Post*, https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia_pacific/taliban-says-it-shot-infidel-pakistani-teen-for-advocating-girls-rights/2012/10/09/29715632-1214-11e2-9a39-1f5a7f6fe945_story.html?utm_term=.bf89054cd141 (accessed on 12 November 2017).

few days after the attack, the Taliban reiterated its justification that Malala had been indoctrinated by her father and highlighted the following, “We warned him (Malala’s father) several times to stop his daughter from using dirty language against us, but he didn’t listen and forced us to take this extreme step”.⁹³ The Taliban also attempted to justify its action with a religious cover by highlighting that it was written in the Quran that “people propagating against Islam and Islamic forces would be killed” and that *Sharia* law stated that “even a child can be killed if he is propagating against Islam”.⁹⁴

If the Taliban had intended for the attempted murder of Malala to silence her or even to make it as difficult as possible for females in Pakistan to pursue an education, they failed miserably.

Malala, who was already famous in Pakistan before the attempted murder, gained tremendous prominence at the global level after the incident. In Pakistan, more than two million people went on to sign the ‘Right to Education’ campaign petition. This, in turn, led to the ratification of the first ‘Right to Education’ bill in Pakistan.⁹⁵

Globally, then UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, then United States President Barack Obama, then Secretary of State Hilary Clinton, then British Foreign Secretary William Hague, singer Madonna and actress Angelina Jolie were among those who condemned the attempted murder, brought attention to the atrocities committed by the Taliban, and highlighted Malala’s brave and principled stand particularly on the issue of education for girls.

⁹³ Declan Walsh, *Taliban Reiterate Vow to Kill Pakistani Girl*, The New York Times, 12 October 2012, <https://mobile.nytimes.com/2012/10/13/world/asia/malala-yousafzai-faces-new-taliban-threat.html> (accessed on 20 December 2017).

⁹⁴ *Malala Yousafzai deserved to die, say Taliban*, The Guardian. <http://archive.iiwXXEr> (accessed on 20 December 2017).

⁹⁵ *Education is now compulsory for Pakistani children*, NDTV.com. 14 November 2012. <https://www.ndtv.com/world-news/education-is-now-compulsory-for-pakistani-children-504527> (accessed on 12 November 2017).

It was also interesting to note that Malala's action even galvanised outside interventions for the people of Pakistan. On 15 October 2012, UN Special Envoy for Global Education and former British Prime Minister Gordon Brown, launched a petition in Malala's name, using the tagline "I am Malala". The petition focused on three key areas: calling on Pakistan to agree to a plan to deliver education for every child, calling on all countries to outlaw discrimination against girls, and calling on international organisations to ensure the world's 61 million out-of-school children are in education by the end of 2015.⁹⁶

On the occasion of Malala's 16th birthday, on 12 July 2013, she was invited to speak before the UN in an event which the world body called 'Malala Day'. In her first public speech since the Taliban tried to silence her, she said,

*"The terrorists thought they would change my aims and stop my ambitions, but nothing changed in my life except this: weakness, fear and hopelessness died. Strength, power and courage was born ... I am not against anyone, neither am I here to speak in terms of personal revenge against the Taliban or any other terrorist group. I'm here to speak up for the right of education for every child. I want education for the sons and daughters of the Taliban and all terrorists and extremists."*⁹⁷

She went on to say that, "*Malala Day is not my day. Today is the day of every woman, every boy and every girl who have raised their voice for their rights*".⁹⁸ On 10 October 2014, the Nobel Committee awarded Malala (jointly with Kailash Satyarthi, a

⁹⁶ A World at School, The Office of the UN Special Envoy for Global Education. <http://educationenvoy.org/malala-day-2/> (accessed on 12 November 2017).

⁹⁷ Michelle Nichols, *Pakistan's Malala, shot by Taliban, takes education plea to U.N.*, Reuters. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-malala-un/pakistans-malala-shot-by-taliban-takes-education-plea-to-u-n-idUSBRE96B0IC20130712> (accessed on 12 November 2017).

⁹⁸ *Malala Yousafzai's speech at the United Nations*, A World at School. <http://theirworld.org/explainers/malala-yousafzais-speech-at-the-youth-takeover-of-the-united-nations> (accessed on 12 November 2017).

children's rights activist from India) the 2014 Nobel Peace Prize for her 'struggle against the suppression of children and young people and for the right of all children to education'.⁹⁹ In 2013, Malala's memoir, *'I am Malala: The Story of a Girl Who Stood Up for Education and was Shot by the Taliban'* was published.¹⁰⁰ A children's version of the memoir titled *'I am Malala: How One Girl Stood Up for Education and Changed the World'* was published in 2014¹⁰¹ and the audio book edition went on to win the 2015 Grammy Award for Best Children's Album¹⁰². Malala's life was also the subject of a 2015 documentary titled *'He Named Me Malala'* and which later received a nomination for an Academy Award for Best Documentary Feature.¹⁰³ In August 2017, Malala was accepted into Oxford University where she is studying Philosophy, Politics and Economics.¹⁰⁴

Malala's struggle showcased two important facets of human nature. On one hand, we have the Taliban, an extremist organisation, hell-bent on implementing its so-called religious ideas and ultra-conservative ways throughout Pakistan. The manner in which it chooses to push its agenda is solely through indiscriminate violence. Threatening, killing and destroying all who disagree and whom it considers standing in its way of total and complete control. The other facet is that of Malala, her

99 Alan Cowell, *Malala Yousafzai and Kailash Satyarthi Collect Nobel Peace Prizes*, 10 December 2014, The New York Times, <https://www.nytimes.com/2014/12/11/world/europe/malala-yousafzai-kailash-satyarthi-nobel-peace-prize.html> (accessed on 12 November 2017).

100 *I am Malala: The Story of a Girl Who Stood Up for Education and was Shot by the Taliban*, <https://www.theguardian.com/childrens-books-site/2015/jul/05/i-am-malala-by-malala-yousafzai-christina-lamb-review> (accessed on 12 November 2017).

101 Yousafzai, Malala (2014). *I Am Malala: How One Girl Stood Up for Education and Changed the World*. Little, Brown Books for Young Readers. ISBN 978-0-316-32793-0.

102 *India's Ricky Kej, Neela Vaswani grab Grammys*, *The Times of India*. 9 February 2015. <https://archive.is/2FKY3> (accessed on 12 November 2017).

103 *15 films in the Documentary Feature category will advance in the voting process for the 88th Academy Awards*, Oscar.org, 1 December 2015. <http://www.oscars.org/news/15-documentary-features-advance-2015-oscarr-race> (accessed on 12 November 2017).

104 Helen Regan (17 August 2017). "Malala Yousafzai Has Been Accepted to Study at Oxford University". *Time.com*. Retrieved 17 August 2017.

father and others like her, who when faced with opposition from those who think that women should not be given education, fought back with courage, perseverance, creativity, persuasion and sacrifice.

A very superficial analysis of these two camps would initially lead to the conclusion that this battle would be a very one-sided and short-lived campaign. On one hand, the Taliban is well-organised, well-armed and well-experienced. Conventional forces from the most advanced of states have had and continue to have problems dislodging the group and even curtailing its reach, influence and impact. Contrast this with people like Malala; a young female coming from an environment where women seem to have little influence, are inexperienced, vulnerable to attacks, ill-equipped and with hardly any initial resource and support.

What should have been the most likely outcome?

Allow me to share with you what has happened.

Malala had forced the Pakistani Government to relook the area of women's education in Pakistan. In fact, through her speeches and interventions, Malala had 'sparked a dialogue about children's education throughout the world.' In 2012, Gordon Brown, UN Special Envoy for Global Education launched the earlier mentioned "I am Malala" petition that looked at getting Pakistan to agree to a plan to deliver education for every child, calling on all countries to outlaw discrimination against girls, and calling on international organisations to ensure the world's 61 million out-of-school children are in education by the end of 2015.¹⁰⁵ The UN has designated 12 July as 'Malala Day'. Millions have signed the 'Malala Petition', which urges the United Nations to recommit to the Millennium Development Goal 2, which focuses on primary education for children around the world.¹⁰⁶ Malala has also used

¹⁰⁵ *A World at School*, The Office of the UN Special Envoy for Global Education. <http://educationenvoy.org/malala-day-2/> (accessed on 12 November 2017).

¹⁰⁶ 10 Ways Malala Yousafzai Has Changed the World, <https://mic.com/articles/55333/10-ways-malala-yousafzai-has-changed-the-world#.5sL77kveW> (Accessed on 21 October 2017).

her platform to not only speak on issues affecting Pakistan but to passionately advocate for numerous initiatives including rights for girls, helping to rebuild 65 schools in Gaza¹⁰⁷ and opening a school in the Bekaa Valley, Lebanon for Syrian refugees.¹⁰⁸

To all those sceptics out there, tell me again your reasoning for how you believe that it is only force and violence that have the potential to achieve anything positive in this world.

To those who continuously advocate indiscriminate violence as the panacea to ironically fight against injustice, please explain how Malala was able to do all that she did without such violence or force.

Please explain how numerous positive results have emerged due to Malala's actions in Pakistan, the region and even the world.

Please let me know how this now 20-year old girl has been able to affect global events, particularly concerning the education of girls without using guns, grenades and bombs.

Martin Luther King Jr.

Martin Luther King Jr. was one of the most influential African American who played a significant role in American history. The son and grandson of Baptist ministers, he too became a Baptist minister and it was his Christian beliefs that inspired him to become one of the key leaders of the American civil rights movement.

Born on 15 January 1929 in Atlanta, Georgia, King tasted discrimination and racism very early in his life. When he was a

¹⁰⁷ Malala Yousafzai gives \$50,000 to reconstruction of Gaza schools, *The Guardian*. 29 October 2014. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/oct/29/malala-yousafzai-reconstruction-gaza-schools> (Accessed on 12 November 2017).

¹⁰⁸ Sylvia Westall, *Nobel winner Malala opens school for Syrian refugees*, Reuters, 12 July 2015. <http://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-lebanon-malala/nobel-winner-malala-opens-school-for-syrian-refugees-idUKKCN0PM0L920150712> (Accessed on 12 November 2017).

child, he befriended a white boy whose father had a business near King's house. When the boys turned six and started school, they had to be separated as public schools were segregated and King's friend's father no longer wanted his son to spend time with King.¹⁰⁹ Later on, in his teens, when King and his teacher were returning home to Atlanta by bus, they were ordered by the bus driver to stand so as to allow white passengers to sit. While King initially refused, he later complied when his teacher warned him that he would be breaking the law. Looking back at that incident, King later remarked that he was "the angriest I have ever been in my life."¹¹⁰

It is important at this juncture to fully understand the anger and frustration faced by people like King. It is also important to stress that anger and frustration over injustice, are experiences that have been felt by many throughout the course of history and unlike what the terrorists are apt to tell us, such strong emotions are not solely confined to them. In short, many individuals and people-groups have experienced the cruelty and evil that come with injustice but not all have responded in the way the terrorists have. I find that it is important to stress this, as often times the extremists and terrorists act as though they, and only they, are the sole recipients of suffering, cruelty and injustice.

Wake up!

Numerous individuals and people-groups have been unjustly identified and cruelly punished simply because of a certain skin colour, mother-tongue, religious belief, nationality or race.

Coming back to King.....

He was a brilliant student and after completing his Masters, began his doctoral studies in systematic theology at Boston

¹⁰⁹ Alan Pierce, (2004) *Assassination of Martin Luther King Jr.* Abdo Daughters Publishers.

¹¹⁰ Alice Fleming, (2008). *Martin Luther King Jr.: A Dream of Hope.* Sterling. p. 9. ISBN 978-1-4027-4439-6.

University and received his Ph.D. in 1955.¹¹¹ King then went on to marry Coretta Scott in June 1953 and later became a father to four children.¹¹²

So how did King start his fight against racial discrimination?

His role in the civil rights movement was established during the famous Montgomery bus boycott of 1955. On 1 December 1955, Rosa Parks was arrested for refusing to give up her seat on a city bus.¹¹³

It is hard to imagine that barely 63 years ago, an African American woman did not have the right to sit on a bus if there were whites who did not have a seat on that very same bus. Hence, King led the Montgomery bus boycott that lasted 385 days¹¹⁴. His leadership did not go unnoticed. During that time, King's house was bombed¹¹⁵ and he was even arrested. Nevertheless, the courts did rule in favour of the civil rights movement and racial segregation ended on all Montgomery public buses.¹¹⁶ King's courageous leadership and pragmatic approach without utilising violence was the catalyst to bring about a reversal of segregation on buses in Montgomery.

King was on a roll and he wanted to bring about this change to the whole nation.

Subsequently, King together with his fellow activists founded

111 Charles A. Radin, (October 11, 1991). "Panel Confirms Plagiarism by King at BU". *The Boston Globe*. p. 1.

112 Warren, Mervyn A. (2001). *King Came Preaching: The Pulpit Power of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.* InterVarsity Press. p. 35. ISBN 0-8308-2658-0.

113 *December 1, 1955: Rosa Parks arrested*, CNN, 11 March 2003. <http://edition.cnn.com/2003/US/03/10/sprj.80.1955.parks/> (accessed on 12 November 2017).

114 McMahon, Thomas F. (2004). *Ethical Leadership Through Transforming Justice*. University Press of America. p. 25. ISBN 0-7618-2908-3.

115 Fisk, Larry J.; Schellenberg, John (1999). *Patterns of Conflict, Paths to Peace*. Broadview Press. p. 115. ISBN 1-55111-154-3.

116 King, Martin Luther (1992). *The Papers of Martin Luther King, Jr, Volume 1*. University of California Press. p. 82. ISBN 978-0-520-07950-2.

the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) in 1957. The SCLC was created with the intention to focus on the moral authority and the organising prowess of the African American churches to facilitate and carry out protests to support the US civil rights movement.

King knew that he could not bring about change by himself and used all the available platforms to create awareness and mobilize the people around him. It is important to note that not all African Americans were on the same level of thinking and reasoning as King and hence, he spent a great deal of time and effort cajoling, persuading and making alliances with both blacks and whites to get them to see the injustice, and to subsequently move them to fight such injustice without resorting to armed conflict.

King then turned his sights onto the Jim Crow Laws.

This was a set of state and local laws that allowed and enforced racial segregation in all public facilities, particularly in the Southern states. King was of the opinion that a well-planned, non-violent protest against such laws would bring about media attention and showcase the plight and injustice faced by the African Americans. He therefore planned, conducted and led protests for the right to vote, desegregation, labour rights and other basic civil rights.¹¹⁷

King started non-violent protests in Albany, Georgia in November 1961 and July 1962¹¹⁸; Birmingham in April 1963; St, Augustine, Florida in March 1964; Selma, Alabama in December 1964 and New York City in February 1964.

¹¹⁷ Jackson, Thomas F. (2006). *From Civil Rights to Human Rights: Martin Luther King Jr. and the Struggle for Economic Justice*. University of Pennsylvania Press. ISBN 978-0-8122-3969-0.

¹¹⁸ King, Martin Luther. *The Autobiography of Martin Luther King Jr.* Hachette Digital. 2001. <https://www.hachettebookgroup.com/titles/clayborne-carson/the-autobiography-of-martin-luther-king-jr/9780759520370/> (accessed on 12 November 2017).

Again, it is important to stress that King's fight against the unjust American system of that time was closely matched by his continuous efforts of highlighting and educating those around him on the cruelty of racial discrimination. Hence, it was in Birmingham that King composed 'Letters from Birmingham Jail'. In his letters, King highlighted the difficulties faced by the civil rights movement by stating, "we know through painful experience that freedom is never voluntarily given by the oppressor; it must be demanded by the oppressed."¹¹⁹ In these letters, King also expressed his deep frustrations with the so-called white moderates and clergymen whom he felt were not taking a strong stand to oppose racism and stated,

"I have almost reached the regrettable conclusion that the Negro's great stumbling block in his stride toward freedom is not the White Citizen's Council or the Ku Klux Klanner, but the white moderate, who is more devoted to "order" than to justice; who prefers a negative peace which is the absence of tension to a positive peace which is the presence of justice; who constantly says: "I agree with you in the goal you seek, but I cannot agree with your methods of direct action"; who paternalistic-ally believes he can set the timetable for another man's freedom; who lives by a mythical concept of time and who constantly advises the Negro to wait for a "more convenient season."¹²⁰

It is also important to note that King's non-violent approach did not by any means lessen his opposition to the discrimination perpetrated by the authorities, as seen by his writings and speeches. He used his spoken and written words to highlight the cruelty of discrimination, condemn hypocrisy and challenge the notion that the African American would allow this injustice to

¹¹⁹ King, Martin Luther (April 16, 1963). *Letter from Birmingham Jail*, The Martin Luther King Jr. Research and Education Institute. http://okra.stanford.edu/transcription/document_images/undecided/630416-019.pdf (accessed on 12 November 2017).

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*

continue. Let it be clear - King never used guns or knives during the civil rights movement, but his words, writings and actions figuratively 'cut', 'sliced' and 'gunned down' his opposition and would later be pivotal in bringing them down. Again, his words, writings and actions were not only aimed at the perpetrators of racial discrimination but were also intended to educate, cause awareness and galvanise support.

Indeed, one of King's most significant protest took place during the 'March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom' on 28 August 1963. The march in Washington had the specific aims of ending racial segregation in public schools, coming up with an effective civil rights legislation with specific reference to a law prohibiting racial discrimination in employment, protecting civil rights workers from police brutality, implementing a minimum wage of USD 2 for all workers, and self-governing for Washington D.C. The march, which initially targeted to attract 100,000 people in the end saw more than 250,000 people of diverse ethnicities attending. It was also here that King delivered his immortal 'I have a dream' speech.

Martin Luther King Jr. delivered his 'I have a dream' speech during the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom on 28 August 1963.

I am happy to join with you today in what will go down in history as the greatest demonstration for freedom in the history of our nation.

Five score years ago, a great American, in whose symbolic shadow we stand today, signed the Emancipation Proclamation. This momentous decree came as a great beacon light of hope to millions of Negro slaves who had been seared in the flames of withering injustice. It came as a joyous daybreak to end the long night of their captivity.

But one hundred years later, the Negro still is not free. One hundred years later, the life of the Negro is still sadly crippled by the manacles of segregation and the chains of discrimination. One hundred years later, the Negro lives on a lonely island of poverty in the midst of a vast ocean of material prosperity. One hundred years later, the Negro is still languished in the corners of American society and finds himself an exile in his own land. And so we've come here today to dramatize a shameful condition.

In a sense we've come to our nation's capital to cash a check. When the architects of our republic wrote the magnificent words of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, they were signing a promissory note to which every American was to fall heir. This note was a promise that all men, yes, black men as well as white men, would be guaranteed the "unalienable Rights" of "Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness." It is obvious today that America has defaulted on this promissory note, insofar as her citizens of colour are concerned. Instead of honouring this sacred obligation, America has given the Negro people a bad check, a check which has come back marked "insufficient funds."

But we refuse to believe that the bank of justice is bankrupt. We refuse to believe that there are insufficient funds in the great vaults of opportunity of this nation. And so, we've come to cash this check, a check that will give us upon demand the riches of freedom and the security of justice.

We have also come to this hallowed spot to remind America of the fierce urgency of Now. This is no time to engage in the luxury of cooling off or to take the tranquilizing drug of gradualism. Now is the time to make real the promises of democracy. Now is the time to rise from the dark and desolate valley of segregation to the sunlit path of racial justice. Now is the time to lift our nation from the quicksand of racial injustice to the solid rock of brotherhood. Now is the time to make justice a reality for all of God's children.

It would be fatal for the nation to overlook the urgency of the moment. This sweltering summer of the Negro's legitimate discontent will not pass until there is an invigorating autumn of freedom and equality. Nineteen sixty-three is not an end, but a beginning. And those who hope that the Negro needed to blow off steam and will now be content will have a rude awakening if the nation returns to business as usual. And there will be neither rest nor tranquillity in America until the Negro is granted his citizenship rights. The whirlwinds of revolt will continue to shake the foundations of our nation until the bright day of justice emerges.

But there is something that I must say to my people, who stand on the warm threshold which leads into the palace of justice: In the process of gaining our rightful place, we must not be guilty of wrongful deeds. Let us not seek to satisfy our thirst for freedom by drinking from the cup of bitterness and hatred. We must forever conduct our struggle on the high plane of dignity and discipline. We must not allow our creative protest to degenerate into physical violence. Again and again, we must rise to the majestic heights of meeting physical force with soul force.

The marvellous new militancy which has engulfed the Negro community must not lead us to a distrust of all white people, for many of our white brothers, as evidenced by their presence here today, have come to realize that their destiny is tied up with our destiny. And they have come to realize that their freedom is inextricably bound to our freedom.

We cannot walk alone.

And as we walk, we must make the pledge that we shall always march ahead.

We cannot turn back.

There are those who are asking the devotees of civil rights, "When will you be satisfied?" We can never be satisfied as long as the Negro is the victim of the unspeakable horrors of police brutality. We can never be satisfied as long as our bodies, heavy with the fatigue of travel, cannot gain lodging in the motels of the highways and the hotels of the cities. We cannot be satisfied as long as the negro's basic mobility is from a smaller ghetto to a larger one. We can never be satisfied as long as our children are stripped of their self-hood and robbed of their dignity by signs stating: "For Whites Only." We cannot be satisfied as long as a Negro in Mississippi cannot vote and a Negro in New York believes he has nothing for which to vote. No, no, we are not satisfied, and we will not be satisfied until "justice rolls down like waters, and righteousness like a mighty stream."

I am not unmindful that some of you have come here out of great trials and tribulations. Some of you have come fresh from narrow jail cells. And some of you have come from areas where your quest - quest for freedom left you battered by the storms of persecution and staggered by the winds of police brutality. You have been the veterans of creative suffering. Continue to work with the faith that unearned suffering is redemptive. Go back to Mississippi, go back to Alabama, go back to South Carolina,

go back to Georgia, go back to Louisiana, go back to the slums and ghettos of our northern cities, knowing that somehow this situation can and will be changed.

Let us not wallow in the valley of despair, I say to you today, my friends.

And so even though we face the difficulties of today and tomorrow, I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream.

I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal."

I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia, the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood.

I have a dream that one day even the state of Mississippi, a state sweltering with the heat of injustice, sweltering with the heat of oppression, will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice.

I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the colour of their skin but by the content of their character.

I have a dream today!

I have a dream that one day, down in Alabama, with its vicious racists, with its governor having his lips dripping with the words of "interposition" and "nullification" -- one day right there in Alabama little black boys and black girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls as sisters and brothers.

I have a dream today!

I have a dream that one day every valley shall be exalted, and every hill and mountain shall be made low, the rough places will be made plain, and the crooked places will be made straight; "and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together."

This is our hope, and this is the faith that I go back to the South with.

With this faith, we will be able to hew out of the mountain of despair a stone of hope. With this faith, we will be able to transform the jangling discords of our nation into a beautiful symphony of brotherhood. With this faith, we will be able to work together, to pray together, to struggle together, to go to jail together, to stand up for freedom together, knowing that we will be free one day.

And this will be the day - this will be the day when all of God's children will be able to sing with new meaning:

My country 'tis of thee, sweet land of liberty, of thee I sing. Land where my fathers died, land of the Pilgrim's pride, from every mountainside, let freedom ring!

And if America is to be a great nation, this must become true.

And so let freedom ring from the prodigious hilltops of New Hampshire.

Let freedom ring from the mighty mountains of New York.

Let freedom ring from the heightening Alleghenies of Pennsylvania.

Let freedom ring from the snow-capped Rockies of Colorado.

Let freedom ring from the curvaceous slopes of California.

But not only that:

Let freedom ring from Stone Mountain of Georgia.

Let freedom ring from Lookout Mountain of Tennessee.

Let freedom ring from every hill and molehill of Mississippi.

From every mountainside, let freedom ring.

And when this happens, and when we allow freedom ring, when we let it ring from every village and every hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day when all of God's children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual:

Free at last! Free at last!

Thank God Almighty, we are free at last!

When looking back at his life, we see the terrible injustice that King, together with his fellow African Americans had to suffer in the form of racial discrimination. We see how he had to fight for basic civil rights and struggle against an unjust system that refused to recognise him and others like him as anything but an inferior man solely due to the colour of his skin.

We see him fighting not only against an unjust system with unfair laws but also equally devoting his time to educate, bring awareness and galvanise support for the cause of the African Americans.

We see him fighting hatred, bigotry and discrimination and often times we see him angry, frustrated and despondent but never once giving into the easier path of violence against the authorities. We see him struggling against the calls from his own side to take a more militant approach, especially when

faced with grieving family members whose loved ones had been lynched, raped or murdered. We see him, time and time again, constantly advocating the need to fight injustice but always having the moral courage to never respond with hatred and bitterness.

Was he effective?

Did his way work?

In one sense, I don't think he ever fully knew.

For on 4 April 1968, King was assassinated by James Earl Ray.

But through him and many others like him, the African Americans got a measure of dignity that was absent prior to that.

The Irish rock band U2 in their classic song 'Pride (In the Name of Love)'¹²¹ had this to say about Doctor King;

"Early morning, April four

Shot rings out in the Memphis sky.

Free at last, they took your life

They could not take your pride."

On 20 January 2009, President Barack Obama was sworn as the 44th President of the United States. In many ways, King's actions and the actions of others like him, paved the way for that to happen.

Hence, during the civil rights movement, Martin Luther King Jr. was best known for his principles of non-violence and civil disobedience modelled upon his Christian beliefs and other

¹²¹ From the 1984 album, *The Unforgettable Fire*.

non-violent leaders such as Mahatma Gandhi.

Nevertheless, it is important to note that there were also other figures during the civil rights movement that advocated a more militant and armed approach when dealing with the injustice of racism, segregation and outright violence to the lives of the African Americans. It would be good to see the contrast between the two schools of thoughts and actions, both in terms of the response to injustice and the impact that they subsequently had.

Therefore, let us consider Malcolm-X.

Malcolm-X

Malcolm-X was born Malcolm Little on 19 May 1925 in Omaha, Nebraska. His father, Earl Little, was killed when he was six and his mother, Louise Helen Little, was placed in a mental hospital when he was thirteen. Malcolm was subsequently raised in a series of foster homes. It was perhaps this tragic beginning that led young Malcolm into crime and sent to prison at the age of 21 for larceny and breaking and entering.

However, it was in prison that Malcolm became a member of the Nation of Islam (NOI) and subsequently changed his name to 'Malcolm X'. He explained this name change in his autobiography, saying, "For me, my 'X' replaced the white slave master's name of 'Little' which some blue-eyed devil named Little had imposed upon my paternal forebears."¹²²

In the case of Malcolm, the NOI promoted the belief that the black people were the original people of the world¹²³, the white people were 'devils'¹²⁴, the blacks were superior to the

¹²² *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*. With the assistance of Alex Haley. New York: Grove Press, 1965.

¹²³ *When the Word Is Given*, Louis E. Lomax, (1964) p. 55.

¹²⁴ *Malcolm X: The Last Speeches*. Bruce Perry, ed. New York: Pathfinder Press, 1989.

whites and the that demise of the white race was imminent¹²⁵. However, due to differences with the leadership of the NOI, Malcolm X left the organisation in March 1964.

It is significant to note that Malcolm's views on dealing with the issues affecting the African Americans in the United States were very different from that of Martin Luther King's. While one of the goals of the civil rights movement was to end the disenfranchisement of African Americans, the NOI, on the other hand, had very different objectives and specifically did not allow its members to participate in voting and other aspects of the political process.¹²⁶

Malcolm also had strong views on the civil rights movements and even called Martin Luther King 'a chump' and other civil rights leaders 'stooges' of the white establishment.¹²⁷ While King fought against racial segregation, Malcolm took the extreme view of a complete separation between African Americans and the whites. He was of the opinion that the African Americans must return to Africa and until that was achieved, he believed that a complete, separate country should be created for them. Most importantly, he completely rejected King's strategy of non-violence and instead was fully devoted to the idea that the African Americans should defend and advance themselves 'by any means necessary.'¹²⁸

On 21 February 1965, Malcom was assassinated by three members of the NOI.

Malcolm and King both faced a similar problem, that of racial discrimination and inequality. The system that they struggled and fought against was both morally corrupt and inherently evil.

125 *When the Word Is Given*, Louis E. Lomax, (1964) p. 57.

126 *The Life and Work of Malcolm X*, Kofi Natambu, Alpha, (2002) p. 260.

127 *Malcolm: The life of a man who changed Black America*, Bruce Perry, Station Hill Press, p. 203.

128 *When the Word Is Given*, Louis E. Lomax, (1964), pp. 173–174.

The similarities ended there.

They both advocated very different approaches to change the status quo, of which both were passionately against. While King advocated a non-violent approach, modelled after Gandhi's civil disobedience; Malcolm proposed a radically different approach that justified using violence to bring about change.

Archbishop Desmond Tutu

Apartheid is a word taken from the Afrikaans language which means 'separateness'¹²⁹ or 'the state of being apart'.¹³⁰ Apartheid was a system of 'institutionalised racial segregation' and discrimination developed and put in place in South Africa between the years of 1948 and 1991.¹³¹ Apartheid meant that the blacks and the whites in South Africa were given separate treatment. For example, the blacks were not allowed to live or even work together with the whites solely due to the colour of their skin. Funding or opportunities for the black community in South Africa was very much reduced in almost every aspect and field.¹³² Hence, apartheid basically institutionalised and codified a racist and bigoted system.

It was in this environment that Archbishop Desmond Tutu was born.

Born in South Africa in 1931, Tutu was a good student and he was accepted into medical school. But his dreams of becoming a doctor could not be realised due to his family's financial

129 Nancy L. Clarkson & William H. Worger. *South Africa: The Rise and Fall of*. Routledge, 2013. Chapter 3: The Basis of Apartheid.

130 Shore, Megan. *Religion and Conflict Resolution: Christianity and South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission*. Ashgate Publishing, 2009. p.36

131 Myre, Greg, *South Africa ends racial classifications, Southeast Missourian*. Cape Girardeau. 18 June 1991. <https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=1893&-dat=19910618&id=3sQfAAAAIBAJ&sjid=ltgEAAAAIBAJ&pg=5582,6356040&hl=en> (accessed on 12 November 2017).

132 Crompton, Samuel Willard (2007). *Desmond Tutu: Fighting Apartheid*. New York: Chelsea House, Publishers. pp. 34–35. ISBN 978-0791092217.

position. He then turned to teaching but that no longer became viable due to the apartheid policies. His life choices were limited and changed simply because of a racist system put in place by the authorities. Tutu then turned to theology and in time rose to become South Africa's most prominent spiritual leader. He used his position as a church leader to bring attention to the injustice of apartheid and in 1984, he was awarded a Noble Peace Prize.¹³³

What was unusual about Tutu's struggle against apartheid was his principle of non-violence and his optimism that despite such adversity good would eventually triumph. He was quoted to have said, *"So, I never doubted that ultimately we were going to be free, because ultimately I knew there was no way in which a lie could prevail over the truth, darkness over light, death over life."*¹³⁴

Apartheid was something that provoked very strong reactions from the people of South Africa, particularly the black community, which bore the brunt of the oppressive regime.

In this environment, Tutu was extraordinary.

His struggle was one which was founded on justice but carried out with forgiveness and reconciliation. While Tutu's opposition to apartheid was unequivocal and he was at the forefront of denouncing both the injustice that was carried out in the name of apartheid and the hypocrisy manifested by those who manipulated Christianity to justify the continuation of apartheid, he was also clear in his advocacy of non-violence and denounced terrorism against the Apartheid South African government in all its forms.¹³⁵

¹³³ Desmond Tutu, Biography.com, <https://www.biography.com/people/desmond-tutu-9512516> (accessed on 28 October 2017).

¹³⁴ Desmond Tutu, Biography.com, <https://www.biography.com/people/desmond-tutu-9512516> (accessed on 28 October 2017).

¹³⁵ Wesley Baines, The Legacy of Desmond Tutu, Beliefnet, <http://www.beliefnet.com/inspiration/the-legacy-of-desmond-tutu.aspx> (Accessed on 28 October 2017).

His moral courage was subsequently displayed again when he was elected by President Nelson Mandela to chair the Truth and Reconciliation Commission to investigate past human rights abuses. His insistence on forgiveness, which he defined as *“abandoning my right for revenge, to payback.....and when that right is abandoned, when that resentment is let go, the relationship between oppressor and oppressed can be restored, and a people can become one”*¹³⁶ was pivotal for South Africa to acknowledge its atrocities while still allowing the nation to move forward. Perhaps, Tutu’s high standard could be traced back to his model of forgiveness. He was quoted to have said *“forgive one another as God, Himself, forgave you, that’s the standard.”*¹³⁷

The apartheid system, which institutionalised discrimination and racism, and led to the death and misery of thousands in South Africa was a black mark in human history. It was in such a bleak environment that Archbishop Desmond Tutu advocated peaceful resistance and sought to redress the grievances of his people without violence and revenge.

And he succeeded.

136 *Ibid.*

137 *Ibid.*

Tan Sri Dr. Jemilah Mahmood and MERCY Malaysia

Tan Sri Dr. Jemilah Mahmood, the founder of MERCY Malaysia, is a fantastic example of how a single individual has the potential to make a tremendous difference in the lives of so many afflicted by suffering and misery. In 1999, after several successful years in private practice, Dr Jemilah, a gynaecologist and obstetrician, began to have a yearning for something more. “I woke up one day and thought, I love my patients, I love what I do, but I am not being true to what I really want to do.” Initially, she applied to various local organisations offering her medical services but sadly none responded. She then applied to Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) or Doctors Without Borders who immediately set up an interview. Her response was, “why is it that Malaysians don’t care? We emphasise the development of buildings and the economy but we don’t consider human development in the equation. If we don’t develop compassion, if we don’t develop global solidarity, then it’s going to be a dark place in the future.” Her husband’s response (which might have been the catalyst for Dr. Jemilah’s next step) was, “if you feel strongly about it, then start an organisation.”¹³⁸ This led to Dr. Jemilah withdrawing their Tabung Haji savings and that became the seed capital for MERCY Malaysia. This organisation works both domestically and internationally, especially in areas affected by conflict and natural disasters, such as Sudan, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, the Philippines and Myanmar, among others. Following the success at Mercy Malaysia, Dr. Jemilah then moved on to co-found the Asian Disaster Reduction and Response Network (ADRRN), which aims to enhance the capacity development of local NGOs. Her passion and novel approach on humanitarian

138 Zarina Abu Bakar, *A Chat with International Humanitarian: Tan Sri Dr. Jemilah Mahmood*, Perdana Leadership Foundation, 7 October 2015. <http://www.perdana.org.my/our-e-magazine/item/a-chat-with-international-humanitarian-tan-sri-dr-jemilah-mahmood> (accessed on 20 December 2017).

issues has also led her to serve in various organisations such as The International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA) and Save the Children UK, among others. Ten years after founding MERCY Malaysia, Dr. Jemilah left to focus on other areas of humanitarian and development. In August 2009, she joined the United Nations and was appointed as Chief of Humanitarian Response at the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). Dr. Jemilah then went on to lead the World Humanitarian Summit Secretariat based at the United Nations headquarters in New York from 2014 to November 2015. She was subsequently appointed as Under-Secretary-General of the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent in Geneva.¹³⁹ It is significant to note that in the various conflict and disaster areas that Dr. Jemilah had served, she undoubtedly witnessed and experienced (she was shot and her colleague was killed) tremendous amount of misery, pain and suffering. In such situations, she decided to fight back, not with bitterness and hatred but with compassion and hope.

The LTTE and Velupillai Prabhakaran

The LTTE was founded by Velupillai Prabhakaran in 1976 and was based in northeastern Sri Lanka. Its objective was to create an independent State of Tamil Eelam for the Tamil people in the north and east of Sri Lanka.¹⁴⁰

Prabhakaran spoke on the formation of the LTTE highlighting;

“It is wrong to call our movement “separatist.” We are fighting for independence based on the right to national self-determination of our people. Our struggle is for self-determination for the restoration of our sovereignty

¹³⁹ Tan Sri Dr. Jemilah Mahmood, *Recipient/Profile for Outstanding Contribution to the Development of Humanitarian and International Emergency Relief*, Merdeka Award, <http://www.merdekaaward.my/Recipients/By-Category/Education-Community/Tan-Sri-Dr-Jemilah-Mahmood.aspx> (accessed on 20 December 2017).

¹⁴⁰ Sherman, Jake (2003). *The Political Economy of Armed Conflict: Beyond Greed and Grievance*. New York: Lynne Rienner Publishers.

*in our homeland. We are not fighting for a division or a separation of a country but rather, we are fighting to uphold the sacred right to live in freedom and dignity. In this sense, we are freedom fighters not terrorists.”*¹⁴¹

He justified the armed action of the LTTE by stating that

*“[I]t is the plight of the Tamil people that forced me to take up arms. I felt outraged at the inhuman atrocities perpetrated against an innocent people. The ruthless manner in which our people were murdered and colossal damage done to their property made me realize that we are subjected to a calculated program of genocide. I felt that the armed struggle is the only way to protect and liberate our people from a totalitarian Fascist State bent on destroying an entire race of people.”*¹⁴²

In short, the LTTE was focused on ‘changing the status quo’ and was committed to use ‘physical violence to pursue its declared aim of establishing a Tamil State (Eelam)’.¹⁴³

At the height of its power, the LTTE had a functioning government which controlled almost 76 per cent of the northern and eastern provinces of Sri Lanka, collected taxes, had a police force, law courts, postal services, banks, administrative offices, television and radio broadcasting station,¹⁴⁴ administered its own justice system, had a well-organised army and even a small navy and air force¹⁴⁵. It was also successful in carrying out numerous terrorist

141 Anita Pratap, “*If Jayawardene was True Buddhist, I would not be carrying a gun,*” Sunday, 11-17 March 1984. <http://www.srilankaguardian.org/2013/09/if-jayawardene-was-true-buddhist-i.html> (Accessed on 12 November 2017).

142 Reporter, 1986. Vellupillai Pirapaharan’s Interview, The Week, 3 March 1986 quoted in Syed Rifaat Hussain, *Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE)*, Criterion Quarterly, 20 November 2012, <http://www.criterion-quarterly.com/liberation-tigers-of-tamil-eelam-ltte/> (accessed on 29 October 2017).

143 Syed Rifaat Hussain, *Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE)*, Criterion Quarterly, 20 November 2012, <http://www.criterion-quarterly.com/liberation-tigers-of-tamil-eelam-ltte/> (accessed on 29 October 2017).

144 Ibid.

145 *Sri Lanka rebels in new air raid*, BBC News, 29 April 2007. http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/6604645.stm (accessed on 12 November 2017).

attacks and was credited to be the only terrorist group to have assassinated two world leaders; former Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi in 1991 and former Sri Lankan President Ranasinghe Premadasa in 1993.¹⁴⁶ The scale and impact of terror that was employed by the LTTE on the ground was extensive. According to Robert Pape, from 1987 to 2001, the LTTE carried out 76 suicide attacks killing 901 people. Jane's Intelligence Review highlighted that there were 168 LTTE suicide attacks during the same period.¹⁴⁷ Sugeeswara Senadhira was of the opinion that there were 270 suicide missions carried out by the LTTE in the last two decades.¹⁴⁸ The LTTE themselves claimed to have executed 147 suicide operations during the period between 1987 and 1999. However, the LTTE only claimed responsibility publicly for military attacks and not for attacks on civilians, politicians or economic targets.¹⁴⁹ It is significant to note that suicide attacks were often times used by the LTTE as "an emphatic statement to the Sri Lankan government and the international community that the LTTE is a force to be reckoned with."¹⁵⁰

Despite all these, in 2006, the Sri Lankan army launched a full military assault and in 2009 declared victory over the LTTE. Prabhakaran was subsequently killed on 19 May 2009.¹⁵¹

It is important that we consider the cost, in terms of death and

¹⁴⁶ *Taming the Tamil Tigers*, Federal Bureau of Investigation. Federal Bureau of Investigation. 1 October 2008. https://archives.fbi.gov/archives/news/stories/2008/january/tamil_tigers011008 (accessed on 12 November 2017).

¹⁴⁷ Syed Rifaat Hussain, *Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE)*, Criterion Quarterly, 20 November 2012, <http://www.criterion-quarterly.com/liberation-tigers-of-tamil-eelam-ltte/> (accessed on 29 October 2017).

¹⁴⁸ Sugeeswara Senadhira, *Suicide Bombings: The Case of Sri Lanka*, in Security and Terrorism: Suicide Bombing Operations, Issue No. 5 (March 2007), p. 32

¹⁴⁹ Syed Rifaat Hussain, *Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE)*, Criterion Quarterly, 20 November 2012, <http://www.criterion-quarterly.com/liberation-tigers-of-tamil-eelam-ltte/> (accessed on 29 October 2017).

¹⁵⁰ Neloufer de Mel, *Militarizing Sri Lanka: Popular Culture, Memory and Narrative in the Armed Conflict* (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2007), p. 194.

¹⁵¹ Jyoti Thottam, *Prabhakaran: The Life and Death of a Tiger*, Time.com, 19 May 2009, <http://content.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,1899590,00.html> (accessed on 12 November 2017).

destruction, that the LTTE orchestrated in its quest to achieve its goal of an independent Tamil Eelam.

Thousands killed on both sides, thousands of orphans and massive destruction on a huge scale.

For what?

What exactly was achieved by the LTTE?

Was there no any other way?

The Case for Non-Violence

But Thomas, the examples you gave are qualitative at best, and purely anecdotal at worst. They are selected on a bias basis to prove your narrow viewpoint and do not reflect the actual situation on the ground.

Where is the quantitative data?

Show us the numbers!

In reality, civilian populations have often times organised themselves successfully utilising numerous non-violent resistance methods such as ‘boycotts, strikes, protests, and organised non-cooperation to exact political concessions and challenge entrenched power’. For example, non-violent methods were successfully used to remove ‘autocratic regimes from power’ in Serbia in 2000, Madagascar in 2002, Georgia in 2003, Ukraine in 2004-2005, and were also instrumental in forcing the Nepal monarch in making fundamental constitutional concessions in 2006.¹⁵²

To understand the efficacy and to conduct a comparative analysis of both non-violent and violent approaches, Chenoweth &

¹⁵² Erica Chenoweth & Maria J. Stephan, *Why Civil Resistance Works – The Strategic Logic of Nonviolent Conflict*, Columbia University Press, 2011.

Stephan developed the Nonviolent and Violent Campaign and Outcomes (NAVCO) data sets in which they analysed 323 violent and non-violent resistance campaigns between 1900 and 2006.¹⁵³ According to them, “the most striking finding is that between 1900 and 2006, non-violent resistance campaigns were nearly twice as likely to achieve full or partial success as their violent counterparts”.¹⁵⁴ This means that the non-violent campaigns that took place between the years of 1900 and 2006 had double the chance of success when compared to the violent campaigns during that similar period.



Figure showing rates of success, partial success and failure of both non-violent and violent campaign.

Chenoweth and Stephan proffered a reason why they think this is so. Their premise is that ‘non-violent campaigns have a participation advantage over violent insurgencies’ which they believe is a vital factor that determines the success or failure of a particular campaign. They believe that the “moral, physical, informational, and commitments barriers to participation are much lower for non-violent resistance than for violent insurgency”.¹⁵⁵ Hence, on the average, non-violent campaigns are

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

usually four times larger when compared to violent campaigns.¹⁵⁶

What does this mean?

Basically, when trying to change the status quo, it is much easier to get big numbers of people to participate in a non-violent campaign as compared to a violent campaign. The higher the number of people participating, the better the chance of changing the status quo.

It is also significant to note that the study found that changes in the status quo that was brought upon by peaceful means were more likely to last as compared to changes brought by violent campaigns.

In essence, the hard data suggests that non-violent strategies were more 'effective in getting results' and after they succeeded, they were less likely to revert back to violence.¹⁵⁷

156 *Ibid.*

157 *Ibid.*

*V. THEN YOU WILL
KNOW THE TRUTH
AND THE TRUTH
WILL SET YOU FREE:*

**WHAT TERRORISTS
NEVER WANT YOU TO
KNOW AND HENCE YOU
MUST KNOW**

(I) Who are you killing for?

On 1 January 2017 in Istanbul, Turkey, Abdulkadir Masharipov orchestrated a shooting at a nightclub which left 39 people dead and at least 70 people wounded.¹⁵⁸ He did so on behalf of the *Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant* (ISIL) who subsequently claimed responsibility, highlighting that they had “struck one of the most famous nightclubs where the Christians celebrate their apostate holiday”.¹⁵⁹

Who exactly did ISIL kill those 39 individuals for?

On whose behalf did ISIL choose to carry out this massacre?

On 31 May 2017, a bomb placed in a truck was used to kill approximately 150 people and injure another 413 people in Kabul, Afghanistan.¹⁶⁰ It was said to have been carried out by the *Haqqani Network*.¹⁶¹ The network is said to be nationalistic in nature and its objective is to force the US and Coalition forces to withdraw from Afghanistan,¹⁶² ostensibly to let the Afghans determine their own future without any outside interference. Tragically, their actions led to the death and injury of their own countrymen. Afghan President Ashraf Ghani initially highlighted that “over 150 entirely innocent Afghan sons and daughters were killed and more than three hundred (initial estimates) were

¹⁵⁸ Eاون McKirdy, Holly Yan, Ian Lee, *Istanbul attack: ISIS claims nightclub shooting; killer still at large*, CNN, 3 January 2017, <http://edition.cnn.com/2017/01/02/europe/turkey-nightclub-attack/index.html> (accessed on 10 November 2017).

¹⁵⁹ *Istanbul: ISIS claims responsibility for Reina attack*, 2 January 2017, Al Jazeera, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/01/isil-claims-responsibility-turkey-nightclub-attack-170102082008171.html> (accessed on 10 November 2017).

¹⁶⁰ *Kabul bomb: Diplomatic zone attack kills dozens*, BBC News, 31 May 2017, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-40102903> (accessed on 10 November 2017).

¹⁶¹ *Kabul bombing: Afghans blame Haqqani network and Pakistan*, Shy News, 31 May 2017, <https://news.sky.com/story/kabul-bombing-afghans-blame-haqqani-network-and-pakistan-10900078> (accessed on 10 November 2017).

¹⁶² Jeffrey Dressler, *The Haqqani Network: A Strategic Threat*, Afghanistan Report 9, Institute for the Study of War, March 2012, http://www.understandingwar.org/sites/default/files/Haqqani_StrategicThreatweb_29MAR_0.pdf (accessed on 10 November 2017).

brought to hospital with burns, lacerations, and amputations.”¹⁶³

While the network claims to be fighting for the Afghan people, the majority of the people that ended up dying were also Afghans.

Pray tell me, how is that a nationalistic group?

On 14 July 2016, Mohamed Lahouaie-Bouhlel deliberately drove a cargo truck into crowds of people celebrating Bastille Day in Nice, France. He caused the deaths of 86 people and injured another 458 individuals ¹⁶⁴ and one of the first victims to die was Fatima Charrihi, a Muslim.¹⁶⁵ ISIL subsequently claimed responsibility for the attack stating that Bouhlel had answered its “calls to target the citizens of coalition nations fighting the Islamic State.”¹⁶⁶

The irony of fighting for the ‘Islamic State’ in an act where the first victim was a Muslim.

The recent killing in New York City on 1 November 2017 was orchestrated by Sayfullo Habibullaevic Saipov. He was said to have planned the attack for over a year, which took the lives of eight people,¹⁶⁷ including five childhood Argentinian friends who

¹⁶³ Amy Held, *Death Toll in Kabul Surpasses 150, Afghan President Says*, NPR. Org, 6 June 2017, <https://www.npr.org/sections/thetwo-way/2017/06/06/531729176/death-toll-in-kabul-blast-surpasses-150-afghan-president-says> (accessed on 10 November 2017).

¹⁶⁴ *Death Toll from France truck attack rises to 85*, BNO News, 4 August 2016, <http://bnonews.com/news/index.php/news/id4998> (accessed on 10 November 2017).

¹⁶⁵ *Nice attack: What we know about the Bastille Day killings*, BBC News, 19 August 2016, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-36801671> (accessed on 10 November 2017).

¹⁶⁶ Patrick Cockburn, *From Paris to London: another city, another attack with elements from the Isis playbook*, Independent, 22 March 2017, <http://www.independent.co.uk/voices/london-attack-isis-playbook-from-paris-to-uk-a7644736.html> (accessed on 10 November 2017).

¹⁶⁷ Shimon Prokupez, Eric Levenson, Brynn Gingras & Steve Almasy, *Note found near truck claims Manhattan attack done for ISIS, source says*, CNN, 6 November 2017, <http://edition.cnn.com/2017/10/31/us/new-york-shots-fired/index.html> (accessed on 10 November 2017).

decided to spend a holiday in New York City together.¹⁶⁸

In April 2014, Boko Haram, which seeks the establishment of an Islamic State in Nigeria¹⁶⁹ kidnapped 276 female students in Chibok, Nigeria. While some of the girls managed to escape and some were set free,¹⁷⁰ 113 girls are said to be still missing.¹⁷¹ Non-Muslim girls were forced to convert to Islam¹⁷² and many were forced into marriage for the 'bride price' of USD 6¹⁷³. Experts have pointed out that the group's objective was to use the girls and young women as sexual objects, and as a means to intimidate the civilian population into non-resistance.¹⁷⁴

Behind these attacks and many more similar attacks all over the world, this question must be asked; who were the perpetrators fighting for?

Who was the truck driver fighting for when he rammed into the people in Nice on 14 July 2016?

168 Claire Phipps and Sam Levin, *Five Argentinian friends named among eight killed in New York attack – as it happened*, The Guardian, 2 November 2017, <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/live/2017/oct/31/new-york-vehicle-manhattan-bike-path-attack-fears-live-updates> (accessed on 10 November 2017).

169 *African Arguments Editorial – Boko Haram in Nigeria : another consequence of unequal development*, African Arguments, 9 November 2011, <http://africanarguments.org/2011/11/09/african-arguments-editorial-boko-haram-is-another-consequence-of-unequal-development-in-nigeria/> (accessed on 10 November 2017).

170 *Nigeria says 219 girls in Boko Haram kidnapping still missing*, Fox News, 26 June 2014, <http://www.foxnews.com/world/2014/06/23/nigeria-says-21-girls-in-boko-haram-kidnapping-still-missing.html> (accessed on 10 November 2017).

171 Stephanie Busari, Kelly McCleary, 82 Chibok schoolgirls released in Nigeria, CNN, 7 May 2017, <http://edition.cnn.com/2017/05/06/africa/chibok-girls-released/index.html> (accessed on 10 November 2017).

172 Howard LaFranchi, *What role for US in efforts to rescue Nigeria's kidnapped girls?*, CS Monitor, 5 May 2014, <https://www.csmonitor.com/USA/Foreign-Policy/2014/0505/What-role-for-US-in-efforts-to-rescue-Nigeria-s-kidnapped-girls> (accessed on 10 November 2017).

173 Laura Heaton, *Nigeria: Kidnapped schoolgirls sold as wives to Islamist fighters*, The Daily Telegraph, 30 April 2014, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/africaandindianocean/nigeria/10797454/Nigeria-kidnapped-schoolgirls-sold-as-wives-to-Islamist-fighters.html> (accessed on 10 November 2017).

174 Jonathan Hill, *Boko Haram, the Chibok Abductions and Nigeria's Counterterrorism Strategy*, Combatting Terrorism Center at West Point, 30 July 2014, <https://ctc.usma.edu/posts/boko-haram-the-chibok-abductions-and-nigerias-counterterrorism-strategy> (accessed on 10 November 2017).

Whose cause was it that made him decide it was worthwhile to kill 86 people and injure 458 others, including Muslims?

Who exactly was Sayfullo Habibullaevic Saipov fighting for when he decided to take his car and slaughter the people in New York City?

In whose name did he do his killing for?

Which group did he represent that wanted him to carry out such an act?

The continuous kidnappings and often times beheadings of foreign tourists conducted by the ASG are done on whose behalf?

The point being is that we are often unclear and in the dark on who exactly these so-called terrorists are fighting for.

Often times, the terrorists too are unsure and equally ignorant on why they are doing what they are doing. If you go past the rhetoric and propaganda and ask them who exactly benefits from their violent indiscriminate actions, they have various opinions and sometimes no answers at all.

Allow me to put this in focus - we have individuals and sometimes groups of like-minded individuals who resort to killing in the name of an aggrieved party, without actually having a clue as to who this party is.

Who are you killing for?

Who are you maiming for?

Who are you destroying for?

Tell me again how anyone can support such a logically-devoid and morally-reprehensible cause.

(II) Who elected or appointed you for such a responsibility?

Prabhakaran often times boasted that he had the support of the Tamil people in Sri Lanka in the struggle against the Sri Lankan Government. The source of information and analysis that Prabhakaran indeed had such support was of course *his* unbiased word. That must have been the reason why we never witnessed an election campaign by the late leader!

Jemaah Islamiyah had the objective of establishing a caliphate stretching from Southern Thailand to Malaysia to Singapore to Indonesia to Southern Philippines. We are still unclear as to who exactly in those countries elected or appointed them for this role.

The Communist Party of Malaya, who was purportedly fighting for the people of Malaya, must have intuitively known that the people wanted them to take on this role. I say intuitively simply because they never had an election nor a referendum to confirm their appointment as the ‘people’s fighters.’

Baghdadi of *Daesh* went further and decided that Muslims, not just in the Middle East but all over the world, had ‘chosen’ him to lead the revival of the Muslim *ummah* and that they were to ‘obey him’. There was little need to consult or be elected by the Muslims who were, in his opinion, to be ‘subjected to him’, simply because he knew what was best for the one billion Muslims.

The Maute Brothers¹⁷⁵ (together with the ASG, the Maute Brothers planned and led the assault and siege of Marawi in Southern Philippines in May 2017) must have had a ‘secret’ referendum with the people of Marawi before they decided to take over the city and make it their battleground. Hundreds of

¹⁷⁵ Neil Jerome Morales, Tom Allard, *The Maute Brothers: Southeast Asia’s Islamist ‘Time Bomb’*”, Reuters, 12 June 2017, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-philippines-militants-maute/the-maute-brothers-southeast-asias-islamist-time-bomb-idUSKB-N19302Q> (accessed on 21 December 2017).

citizens were caught in the cross-fire, numerous were killed, the city was nearly reduced to rubble and an estimated 1.1 million people were displaced in the five-month conflict.

The question that we need to ask is this; who elected or appointed these so-called fighters to fight on behalf of the people that they claim to be fighting for?

Who decided that these ‘freedom-fighters’ had the right to represent the people they say are the beneficiaries of their struggles?

It is important to note that in most cases, the ‘freedom fighters’ themselves presumed they had the right to represent the people, without even being elected or appointed by them. They decided they knew best and subsequently were best suited to take on the role of representing, defending and protecting the rights and privileges of the people they claim to be fighting for. They did so without permission or approval and without being elected or appointed by the people. They did so because *they* decided that it would be best to do so.

Hence, that is why you will never see or hear the following:

“Vote for Baghdadi”

“ASG for 2018”

“Jemaah Islamiyah: The Best Choice for You”

“Maute Brothers – Choose Us, We Know what is Best for Marawi City”

“North, South, East, West: Osama bin Laden is the Best”

“Elect Jemaah Islamiyah: Best in Southern Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore and some say even Southern Philippines.”

Indeed, if by the off-chance they did have an election or referendum, it should have sounded like this:

“Vote for Baghdadi – He alone knows what is best for 1 billion Muslims.”

“Daesh: They only ask for your complete obedience, nothing else”

“Remember to choose Communist Party of Malaya: Because if you don’t, we will choose to kill you”

(III) What good have you done?

I mentioned earlier (Chapter Three) the list of atrocities that have been carried out by the ASG. Kidnappings, beheadings, extortions; how have any of these activities brought any good to the people in Southern Philippines?

What and how does an ordinary family in Southern Philippines gain if the ASG decided to kidnap, decapitate and then dump the head of a kidnapping victim?

What did the people in Southern Philippines gain when the ASG together with the RSM decided to bomb the SuperFerry 14 in February 2004?

How did the deaths of 116 people in that world’s deadliest terrorist attack at sea help the people in the south of the country?

How was the Bali bombing able to help the Muslims in Indonesia or anywhere else for that matter?

How did the deaths of 202 individuals in Bali, including Muslims, help JI’s cause of defending Muslims?

What did JI hope to achieve when they got a suicide bomber to detonate his suicide pack in a bar with the despicable intention of getting everyone in the restaurants to run outside, and then have a truck bomb waiting out on the street to detonate and cause far greater death and damage?

Tell me, who benefited from that?

Please explain to me how a single Muslim is better off after that horrific incident.

Let us ask some hard questions.

What good exactly have they brought to the people that they claim to be fighting for?

Do the so-called freedom fighters have objectives and goals that they shared with the people they claim to be fighting for?

Do they have a timeline on how long they think they will take to achieve their goal?

And what happens if they are not able to meet that goal in the given timeline?

Will they abdicate?

If they do abdicate, who will monitor and ensure that the fighters comply with their promise to fully abdicate?

(IV) Do the people agree with your methods?

Let me be the first to acknowledge that there are real grievances out there. There are injustice and discrimination. The early chapter highlighted how numerous individuals fought against injustice and cruelty, and sometimes even had to pay the ultimate price of surrendering their lives for the cause.

So, the reality is that there are real problems with real suffering undergone by real people.

Nevertheless, while people might be suffering against an unjust system or a morally bankrupt regime, they might still not agree with the act of terrorism or indiscriminate violence against

innocent people.

While they might resist foreign occupation or even fight with soldiers of the opposing side, many would draw the line when an individual chooses to drive a truck and run over a group of people purportedly siding the 'enemy' or take a knife and brazenly start beheading people on the streets in the name of an aggrieved group of people.

Would the people agree to be used as pawns in the battle between the 'freedom-fighters' and the so-called enemy?

Were the people of Marawi City consulted by the ASG or the Maute Brothers and were their permissions obtained before their lives and homes were used as the battlefield initiated by these so-called freedom fighters?

Hence, the next question that we need to ask is whether the people agree with the method of terror that these so-called freedom-fighters are using on their behalf.

(V) What happens when people disagree with you?

This is a question that the so-called freedom fighters squirm when asked.

What do you do when the people that you claim to represent or even your own members disagree with you?

It could be disagreeing with your leadership;

Disagreeing with your methods, tactics or strategy;

Disagreeing with even wanting to continue the struggle.

How do terrorists deal with this issue?

In my earlier writings, I highlighted how terrorist groups maintain

strict ‘conformity and obedience’ and how numerous case examples have shown that disobedience and disloyalty were ‘immediately dealt with.’ The punishments of course range in severity. In Indonesia for example, individuals who wanted to leave a terrorist group were ‘threatened or even branded as infidels’. In the case of the ASG in the Philippines, those who ‘doubted the principles and tenets of the group’ were ‘immediately branded as traitors and in some cases even killed.’¹⁷⁶

The CPM was extremely brutal not just to those who decided to leave them but also to those they remotely suspected of even having second thoughts.

The LTTE was extreme in its dealings with all those they considered to be disloyal and whom they branded as traitors. Such individuals were executed with extreme prejudice.¹⁷⁷

So in essence, what happens when the people that the terrorists claim to be fighting for disagree with them or their methods?

Can they choose another representative to represent them?

Can they choose another method other than terrorism?

(VI) Can your member/s choose to leave your organisation?

What happens when a member of a terrorist organisation chooses to leave or quit the organisation?

For whatever reason, if an individual decides that he or she would like to part ways with the so-called freedom fighters, are they allowed to do so?

¹⁷⁶ Thomas K. Samuel, *Reaching the Youth: Countering the Terrorist Narrative*, Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism (SEARCCT), 2012.

¹⁷⁷ RR Vinod, *LTTE and Its Disclaimers*, Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies, 4 September 2005, <http://www.ipcs.org/article/terrorism/ltte-and-its-disclaimers-1833.html> (accessed on 4 November 2017).

Will they be able to leave in peace, or will they leave in pieces?

While joining a terrorist organisation is relatively easy, what is the procedure to leave?

Could a member of *Daesh* terminate his or her membership?

What would the consequence be to a member of the ASG who decides to leave the organisation?

Could a JI member explain his decision to leave the organisation and get the blessings of its leadership?

Could an LTTE member hope that there would be no consequences to his decision to terminate his membership in the organisation?

Perhaps there are certain procedures or forms that resigning members would have to complete should they decide that they would like to leave the organisation?

Would it be possible for us to showcase an individual who has successfully left a so-called freedom-fighting organisation without any consequences?

Can the ASG show us such a member?

Or perhaps, the LTTE in its time, had such members that they could show?

Hence, these questions remain:

Can those who join the terrorists, choose to leave the organisation freely?

Would the terrorist organisation allow them to leave with their blessings?

Or would there be consequences?

(VII) Does your tactic actually work?

Does the tactic of indiscriminate violence or terrorism actually work?

The LTTE engaged in indiscriminate violence for decades; were they actually able to achieve their goal of an independent Tamil Eelam?

Jl conducted numerous terrorist operations that took the lives of countless innocent civilians; did their objective of having a caliphate comprising Southern Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore and Southern Philippines become a reality?

Daesh proclaimed to the world that they were building an Islamic caliphate and encouraged thousands to go to Syria and Iraq and conduct *jihād* for the faith. What we have instead is their near-complete loss of territory in Syria and Iraq, thousands killed, and millions of Iraqis and Syrians displaced.

Al-Qaeda promised to change the world through its call for violence; besides so much blood spilled, what else has it achieved?

Going back in history, the CPM promised to overthrow the government and build a classless society by forcefully taking over via violence. How far did it get in its mission in relations to the tremendous amounts of lives that were lost?

Even if we were to accept the goals and objectives of these terrorist organisations, where is the quantitative and qualitative proof that the strategy of indiscriminate violence actually brings about results?

The pertinent question that we need to ask ourselves is this; if we were to look at the stated goals and objectives of the so-called freedom fighters and subsequently examine their actions of indiscriminate violence, would we come to the conclusion that

they have indeed achieved their objectives or are coming close to obtaining their stated goals?

Does indiscriminate violence actually help these groups achieve their objectives?

VI. I AM A FEMALE TERRORIST - HEAR ME ROAR: THE TERRORIST CALL TO WOMEN

My sisters, be bases of support and safety for your husbands, brothers, fathers, and sons. Be advisors to them. They should find comfort and peace with you. Do not make things difficult for them. Facilitate all matters for them. Be strong and brave. Know that the Companions did not spread Islam in these vast lands except with their righteous wives behind them.

(Umm Basīr al-Muhajirah, the widow of Amedy Coulibaly, who carried out a shooting attack at a Jewish supermarket in Paris in 2015).

If you want something said, ask a man; if you want something done, ask a woman.

(Margaret Thatcher)

Introduction

Women have played a pivotal and significant role in conflict.

However, it is also significant to point out that women face discrimination and inequality in every facet of life and often times, this applies even in the world of extremism and terrorism. Hence, if we do see robust and active participation of women which is beyond the norm in a particular group, we can be quite certain that this involvement might not necessarily be accidental but instead, a planned and systematic strategy to involve the fairer sex.

This premise has been exploited in varying degrees, ranging from a passive and indirect supportive role of women in groups such as JI to a more active and direct role in groups such as the LTTE, the Maoist in Nepal and *Daesh*.

Let us start with the LTTE.

Liberation Tamil Tigers of Eelam (LTTE)

The LTTE was highly successful in identifying, tapping, mobilising and exploiting women in their aims for a separate Tamil Eelam homeland. The LTTE engineered a “gendered reconstruction of womanhood”, whereby women were no longer confined to the parametres of their domestic dwellings but instead ‘ventured out into the battlefields, side-by-side with their male combatant counterparts.’¹⁷⁸ According to Erin Alexander, the LTTE was able to attract ‘tens of thousands of women’ and in the process transformed the idea of the ‘ideal Tamil woman into one who is militarized, independent, and empowered’.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁸ Joke Schrijvers, *Fighters, victims and survivors: constructions of ethnicity, gender and refugeeness among Tamils in Sri Lanka*, *Journal of Refugee Studies* 12.3 (1999): 308.

¹⁷⁹ Erin Alexander, *Women of War: The Female Fighters of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam*, *The Yale Review of International Studies*, <http://yris.yira.org/essays/1347> (accessed on 10 November 2017).

The Women's Front of the LTTE had three main objectives, which were to: (i) secure the right of self-determination and establish an independent democratic state of Tamil Eelam; (ii) abolish the oppressive caste discrimination and division, and feudal customs such as the dowry system; and (iii) eliminate all discrimination, secure social, political, and economic equality. Hence, the LTTE leadership very astutely inculcated 'gender equality',¹⁸⁰ which in turn was a tremendous incentive and motivation for the women who joined the group. Posters were used to galvanise females proclaiming, "Women you light the flames of liberations! We are calling upon you. Pick up the torch of liberation and struggle for each heartbeat, our nation is taking form – Tamil Eelam!"¹⁸¹

And LTTE's propaganda worked!

A female LTTE soldier observed, "One cannot but be inspired when one sees the women of the LTTE in the night with their AKs slung over the shoulder ... One cannot but admire the dedication and toughness of their training ... One could see the nationalist fervour and the romantic vision of women in arms defending the nation."¹⁸²

Tamilini, who was a former LTTE soldier acknowledged that, "Tamil women are traditionally shy and timid, lacking self-confidence. But all that changed after [LTTE] women were inducted into the battlefield."

Hence, it is important to note that not only did the LTTE benefit from having the services of women in its military ranks but it also offered women a sense of equality, dignity and acceptance.

180 Vidyamali Samarasinghe, *Soldiers, Housewives and Peace Makers: Ethnic Conflict and Gender in Sri Lanka*, Gender Peace and Security Research Hub 14.2 (1996): 217.

181 Yamuna Sangarasivam, "Militarizing the Female Body: Women's Participation in the Tamil Nationalist Struggle," in *Violence and the Body: Race, Gender and the State*, ed. Arturo J Aldama (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003), 71.

182 De Mel, *Women & the Nation's Narrative*, 206 quoted in Erin Alexander, *Women of War: The Female Fighters of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam*, The Yale Review of International Studies, <http://yris.yira.org/essays/1347> (accessed on 10 November 2017).

In a sense, “training and fighting in the battlefield had provided women with the strength and self-empowerment to defend themselves and fight for their homeland.”¹⁸³

Another group that has been able to connect extremely well with women is *Daesh*.

Daesh

The group has shown tremendous success in identifying and recruiting women to its cause. It is estimated that out of the 31,000 fighters within *Daesh* territories, around 20 per cent or 6,200 are women.¹⁸⁴

Women in *Daesh* could be categorised under three main groups. Firstly, those who were captured such as the Yazidis. Secondly, Arab and Asian women, and thirdly, women from the West.

They also have a differing profile from their male colleagues. They are generally younger (22 years old) than their male colleagues (25 years old), approximately one-third are converts (as compared to approximately one-quarter among men) and have less of a criminal history when compared to the men.

The role that women in *Daesh* play is varied. *Rumiyah*, the group’s mouthpiece, indicated that their role in actual physical *jihād* remains limited and they could instead participate in collecting funds¹⁸⁵. They are also called to play the ‘vital’ role of being wives and child bearers. However, in recent times, their roles seem to be evolving as they now contribute in logistics, fundraising, medical

¹⁸³ Erin Alexander, *Women of War: The Female Fighters of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam*, The Yale Review of International Studies, <http://yris.yira.org/essays/1347> (accessed on 10 November 2017).

¹⁸⁴ Sofia Patel, *The Sultanate of Women: Exploring female roles in perpetrating and preventing violent extremism*, Australian Strategic Policy Institute, February 2017. <https://www.aspi.org.au/publications/the-sultanate-of-womenexploring-female-roles-in-perpetrating-and-preventing-violent-extremism> (accessed on 10 November 2017).

¹⁸⁵ 21 *Rumiyah* Issue 1, *O Women, Give Charity*, p.18

care, as well as intelligence gathering and sharing. Some have even attained leadership positions. For example, the all-female *al-Khansaa* brigade, which plays the role of the 'moral police force' is said to be under the leadership of British convert Sally-Anne Jones. Significantly, *Daesh* also appointed the first female official spokesperson. This could indicate the importance that they are now placing on women in the fields of communication, propaganda and recruitment.

However, there are many women in *Daesh* who want an even more direct involvement. They expressed sadness at not being able to 'carry out executions and join their husbands and brothers in combat' and often times recalled and highlighted the 'actions of *al-Qaeda* and *Daesh* heroines such as Aafia Siddiqui', a Pakistani neuroscientist, who was arrested for attempting to kill American agents in Pakistan in 2008 or Sajida al-Rishawi, an Iraqi suicide bomber who killed 57 people in a hotel attack in Amman, Jordan and was later executed.

What is disconcerting however is that recently, *Daesh's* leadership has become more explicit in their push for women to take a more active role. It was reported that they had declared that it was an 'obligation' for women to wage *jihad* and that it was 'necessary for female Muslims to fulfil their duties on all fronts in supporting the *mujahedeen* in this battle', even to the extent of 'preparing themselves to defend their religion by sacrificing themselves to *Allah*'. They justified this shift by claiming that females had also participated in battles during the Islamic Golden Age and even cited female companions of the Prophet as examples.¹⁸⁶

Hence, the limited role that women have played in *Daesh* is changing. Apart from the supportive role that women played in the recent attacks in Paris, San Bernardino and Orlando, they have now graduated to a more direct and active role. Examples

¹⁸⁶ Lizzie Dearden, *ISIS calls on women to fight and launch terror attacks for first time*, 6 October 2017, Independent, <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/isis-war-syria-iraq-women-call-to-arms-islamic-state-terror-attacks-propaganda-change-ban-frontline-a7986986.html> (accessed on 21 December 2017).

include the failed all-women attacks in France and New York, the attack on a police station in Kenya, and the attack on a cattle farm in Nigeria.

In a chilling development, two new camps specifically meant for training women in combat are said to have been opened near Raqqa, Syria in the past year. Also, female militants and suicide bombers were reportedly deployed by *Daesh* in Libya in February 2016.¹⁸⁷

The reason that their roles could be evolving is because of the realisation that women have certain advantages over men. Firstly, there is a positive security bias when it comes to women, whereby they are subjected to less vigorous security checks. This, coupled with the fact that women have the advantage of concealing weapons and terrorist-related material due to their looser clothing and garments, have made them lethal weapons in terrorism. Even men have realised this advantage and have disguised themselves as women.

Secondly, experts have highlighted that some women who, for whatever reason, have not been able to travel and fight in Syria and Iraq, have adapted and fought in other ways instead. For example, a sixteen-year-old German girl who had in the past attempted to travel to Syria and was instead asked to return home by *Daesh* operatives in Turkey, subsequently stabbed a police officer at a train station in Hanover in February 2017. Similarly, another woman who was not successful in joining *Daesh* in Syria went on to be involved in the thwarted attack in Paris in September 2016.¹⁸⁸

There are also other less visible but equally significant roles that have been entrusted to women by the *Daesh* leadership. Hayat Boumeddiene, for example, is an excellent example of

¹⁸⁷ Brenda Stoter, *As IS loses power, will group tap women jihadis to fight?*, Al Monitor. 16 November 2016.

¹⁸⁸ Rubin, Alissa J. and Aurelien Breeden, *Women's Emergence as Terrorists in France Points to a Shift in ISIS Gender Roles*, The New York Times. 1 October 2016.

a recruiter. She was the widow of Amedy Coulibaly, who was responsible for carrying out the shooting attack at a south Paris supermarket in coordination with the Charlie Hebdo massacre. Boumeddiene went to *Daesh* controlled territory in early 2015 and was subsequently interviewed by *Dabiq* (*Daesh's* former mouthpiece publication). In the interview, she spoke of ways to become good Muslim women and wives, particularly for male *Daesh* fighters. She then went on to write her own opinion pieces under the name of Umm Basir al-Muhajirah, which identified her as a female and as a foreign fighter. She was also the sole contributor to have her own specific byline that identified her with her articles. She was responsible for enhancing '*Daesh's* image as a place where any woman who believes in the ideology can find community, support and a voice.'¹⁸⁹

Daesh looks far into the future. In that future, one of its goals is to “create an intergenerational culture of violence and religious extremism that can survive any potential political-territorial loss”.¹⁹⁰ The manner in which it hopes to achieve this is by focusing on its younger generation (whom they call ‘lion cubs of the caliphate) and to subsequently install in them its hateful and virulent ideology. For *Daesh* to achieve this objective, it has enlisted women or the “mothers of the lion cubs,” who they perceive are “the guardians of the faith and protectors of the land” to influence, indoctrinate and radicalise their children.¹⁹¹

Women are powerful tools in the hands of terrorists and extremists. Equally powerful is their ability to play significant and pivotal roles in reversing the ideology of hatred. Individuals such as Malala Yousafzai and collective groups of women such as

¹⁸⁹ *The Women in Daesh: Deconstructing Complex Gender Dynamics in Daesh Recruitment Propaganda*, The Carter Center, May 2017, https://www.cartercenter.org/resources/pdfs/peace/conflict_resolution/countering-isis/women-in-daesh.pdf (accessed on 12 November 2017).

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*

Mothers for Life¹⁹², Tackling Terrorism Through Women,¹⁹³ and Women without Borders¹⁹⁴ have made tremendous strides in this particular area.

Allow me to leave you with a particularly moving letter from 'Mothers for Life' addressed to Baghdadi, the leader of *Daesh*.

*A Second Letter to Our Sons and Daughters
Attention: Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi
From the Mothers for Life¹⁹⁵*

Almost one year ago we spoke about our feelings regarding you – our sons and daughters – who have been killed in Syria and Iraq or are being called to join a war that is not yours. Instead of answering our questions, we have been scorned, mocked and attacked by those claiming to uphold the values and traditions of Islam and those who hate Islam. In attacking us they found alliance. Representatives of the so called 'Islamic State' called us ridiculous and dismissed the pain we felt about losing you.

Now, many countries celebrate Mother's Day around the world, but for us this is a day of sadness and sorrow. We are reminded of how our hearts were broken and those being most valuable to us were taken from us. We do not even have a grave to turn to and mourn about our loss. Our lives and families were torn apart by claims of defending honour and quests for justice or freedom. Tricked by those who only follow their own greed, sin and lust for power, our most precious believed to follow a higher cause and were turned against us. You even dared to turn our own children

192 <http://www.mothersforlife.org/en> (accessed on 12 November 2017).

193 <http://familiesmatter.org.uk/mothers-united-against-terrorism/> (accessed on 12 November 2017).

194 <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p02fg9g4> (accessed on 12 November 2017).

195 <http://www.mothersforlife.org/en> (accessed on 12 November 2017).

against us in the name of Allah and forced some of them to kill their own mothers because they tried to plead for their children's return. We who gave birth and life, were cheated, threatened, and forced into the open in the midst of our pain and not granted the right to heal and mourn in silence. We had no one to turn to and so found each other. Despite your attempts to silence us, we are still here, we became stronger, and we keep gaining in numbers and in strength. In the end, it was you hiding behind your own cowardice in silence when we approached you.

We do not ask you to honour us – your mothers – on Mother's day, as you hold this day to be an innovation of the kuffar and it is forbidden to celebrate any other days than the Eids prescribed in Islam. Instead we ask you to fulfil those duties and values being bestowed upon you by the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him), those values – you claim – making you superior to the Kuffar. And it does not matter what faith we have, as Asmaa' the daughter of Abu Bakr said: "My mother came to visit me at the time of the Messenger of Allah (Peace be upon him) and she was a disbeliever. So I consulted the Messenger of Allah, (Peace be upon him) and asked him, 'My mother wants to visit me and expects me to treat her kindly; should I uphold the ties of kinship with my mother?' He said, 'Yes, uphold the ties of kinship with your mother'" (agreed upon prophetic tradition).

You have been commanded to honour your parents and uphold the ties of kinship, and you have been forbidden to disobey your parents. As mothers it was conveyed to us that we have been given something in Islam that no other religion has: that our rights take precedence over those of the father, as alBukhaari (5514) and Muslim (4621) narrated that Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) said: A man came to the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and said: "O Messenger of Allah, who is most deserving of my good company?" He said: "Your mother." He said: "Then who?" He said: "Your mother." He said: "Then who?" He said: "Your mother." He said: "Then who?" He said: "Then your father."

Maybe you are right not to celebrate Mother's Day, which contradicts the commandment to honour your parents every day. But when you attack those who do as being corrupt and sinful because they only honour their mothers once in a year, you should recognize that you have become worse. You do not honour us by following the orders of some self-subscribed Caliph. You do not honour us by killing other human beings and throwing away your life, for which we gave everything. And you certainly do not honour us by dragging our mutilated bodies through the streets, because your commanders were scared by our presence.

Again we turn to those thinking of going to Syria and Iraq and those who are there. There is no glory in death and killing. We have seen the pictures of our children and they were not smiling, because they had realized that they would not die for a great cause but simply for hollow and shallow opportunism filled with hypocrisy and double standards. There was nothing glorious about their death. One of our sons was forced to blow himself up, because he was shot in the face and of no further use to his 'brothers'. He died alone. While his 'brothers' stab into each other's backs, he had to die for their corruption and not for any glorious cause. We hear from our sons and daughters who are still alive and in Syria or Iraq almost every day how miserable their lives have become. We see their misbelief and urge to come home, and while talking with some of you, we can see through the tough shell, and see you miss the everyday life with your friends and family. We know that you can feel your roots with us - your family. Do not fall prey to those who use you for their own gain. Listen to your heart and the ones who brought you into this world.

To parents all around the world: reach out, ask for help and support, and do not hesitate to speak out against those trying to take away your children as cannon fodder. We are here, and we are many. You are not alone.

We are the Mothers for Life and Paradise still lies at our feet
[Musnad Ahmad, Sunan An-Nasâ'i, Sunan Ibn Mâjah].

Women and The Quest for Significance

The quest for significance is based on the premise that individuals who experience a threat to their personal significance attempt to restore this lost significance through their attachment to a social group and subsequently defense of that group¹⁹⁶. Basically what that means is that if an individual is of the opinion that they are of little significance, they will then take steps to gain back that significance by joining a group they perceive will give them back some form of that significance.

In the case of the increasing role of women in terrorism, I would like to propose that there is a growing sense of disillusionment over what some women perceive is their role and contribution in society. They are of the opinion that they matter little and that their contributions, for whatever reasons, are minimal, ignored and even systematically reduced. Against this backdrop, the extremists and terrorists seemed to have excelled in creating an atmosphere that gives some women the perception that they are valued, their contributions matter and that their role is essential and cannot be replaced. For example, as mentioned earlier, *Daesh* proclaims women as “mothers of the lion cubs” and they have been glorified as “the guardians of the faith and protectors of the land”.

Perhaps in this light, it becomes easier to understand why some women might make the seemingly ‘insane’ decision to leave environments which are perceived to be ‘safe’ and travel to areas of conflict with some even getting involved directly in the struggle. In such situations, the need or quest for significance becomes so important that security takes a lesser precedence and what appears instead is the willingness to fight and die for a cause if necessary.

¹⁹⁶ Kruglanski, A. W., & Orehek, E. (2011), *The Role of the Quest for Personal Significance in Motivating Terrorism*, Chapter in J. Forgas, A. Kruglanski, & K. Williams (Eds.), *The Psychology of Social Conflict and Aggression*, (pp. 153-166). New York: Psychology Press.

VII. !WARNING! SIGNS OF RADICALISATION AND WHAT TO LOOK FOR

Radicalisation - What goes on before the bomb goes off.

(Peter Neumann)

Definition

The term 'radical' was often times associated with the French and the American revolution during the 18th century, and in the 19th century was often used to describe a 'political agenda advocating thorough social and political reform'.¹⁹⁷ Being a 'radical' also meant that one was supporting an extreme section of a particular group.¹⁹⁸ In 2006, the European Commission established the Expert Group on Violent Radicalisation and

¹⁹⁷ Alex P. Schmid, *Radicalisation, De-Radicalisation, Counter-Radicalisation: A Conceptual Discussion and Literature Review*, ICCT Research Paper, International Centre for Counter-Terrorism (ICCT), March 2013, <https://www.icct.nl/download/file/ICCT-Schmid-Radicalisation-De-Radicalisation-Counter-Radicalisation-March-2013.pdf> (accessed on 13 November 2017).

¹⁹⁸ Oxford English Reference Dictionary, 2nd rev. edition 2002, p.1188; Oxford English Dictionary as quoted in Akil N. Awan, Andrew Hoskins and Ben O' Loughlin, *Radicalisation and Media: Connectivity and Terrorism in the New Media Ecology* (London: Routledge, 2012), p 3.

they defined violent radicalisation as ‘socialization to extremism which manifests itself in terrorism’.¹⁹⁹

Alex Schmid in his excellent paper²⁰⁰ highlights how security agencies defined ‘radicalisation’. The Danish Security and Intelligence Service (PET) described it as ‘a process by which a person to an increasing extent accepts the use of undemocratic or violent means, including terrorism, in an attempt to reach a specific political/ideological objective’.²⁰¹ The Netherlands General Intelligence and Security Service (AIVD), on the other hand, explained ‘radicalisation’ as ‘the (active) pursuit of and/or support to far-reaching changes in society which may constitute a danger to (the continued existence of) the democratic legal order (aim), which may involve the use of undemocratic methods (means) that may harm the functioning of the democratic legal order (effect)’.²⁰² The US Department of Homeland Security (DHS) saw radicalisation as ‘the process of adopting an extremist belief system, including the willingness to use, support, or facilitate violence, as a method to effect social change’.²⁰³ The Swedish Security Service (Säpo) saw it at two levels. Firstly, ‘a process that leads to ideological or religious activism to introduce radical change to society’ and secondly, a ‘process that leads to an individual or group using, promoting or advocating violence for political aims’.²⁰⁴

199 Expert Group, *Radicalisation Processes Leading to Acts of Terrorism: A Concise Report* prepared by the European Commission’s Expert Group on Violent Radicalisation (Submitted to the European Commission on 15 May 2008), p. 7

200 Alex P. Schmid, *Radicalisation, De-Radicalisation, Counter-Radicalisation: A Conceptual Discussion and Literature Review*, ICCT Research Paper, International Centre for Counter-Terrorism (ICCT), March 2013, <https://www.icct.nl/download/file/ICCT-Schmid-Radicalisation-De-Radicalisation-Counter-Radicalisation-March-2013.pdf> (accessed on 13 November 2017).

201 PET, Danish Intelligence Services, 2009. See also COT, *Radicalisation, Recruitment and the EU Counter-radicalisation Strategy* (The Hague: COT, 17 November 2008), p. 13.

202 AIVD [Dutch Intelligence and Security Service], *From Dawa to Jihad: The Various Threats from Radical Islam to the Democratic Legal Order* (The Hague: AIVD, 2004).

203 Homeland Security Institute, *Radicalisation: An Overview and Annotated Bibliography of Open-Source Literature*. Final Report (Arlington: HSI, 2006), pp. 2 & 12.

204 Swedish Security Service, ‘Radikalisering och avradikalisering’, 2009; see also, Magnus Ranstorp, *Preventing Violent Radicalisation and Terrorism. The Case of Indonesia* (Stockholm: Center for Asymmetric Threat Studies 2009), p. 2.

Alex Schmid described ‘radicalism’ in terms of two main components. Firstly, ‘advocating sweeping political change, based on a conviction that the status quo is unacceptable while at the same time a fundamentally different alternative appears to be available to the radical’ and secondly, ‘the means advocated to bring about the system-transforming radical solution for government and society (that could) be non-violent and democratic (through persuasion and reform) or violent and non-democratic (through coercion and revolution)’.²⁰⁵

For us, what is more important lies beyond the definition.

Simply put, are there clues; in the words spoken, the thoughts articulated or even the behaviour expressed that could potentially show the possibility of someone heading down the path of violent radicalisation?

Tiping Points to Violent Radicalisation

Daveed Gartenstein-Ross and Laura Grossman in 2009, identified six common indicators based on their in-depth study of 117 violent religious extremist terrorists in the US and the UK.²⁰⁶

Firstly, those who engaged in violent radicalisation adopted a legalistic interpretation of Islam, particularly interpreting their rights and obligations in the most strictest and conservative sense. A heavy emphasis was placed on externally manifesting this legalistic interpretation. After some time, new recruits, who constantly felt like religious failures for not being able to meet the ultra-conservative standards, were duped into believing that ‘undertaking *jihad* was their only chance at salvation’.

²⁰⁵ Adapted from A.P. Schmid (Ed.), *The Routledge Handbook of Terrorism Research* (2011), op. cit. pp. 679-80; and, in part, from Roger Scruton, *A Dictionary of Political Thought* (London: Macmillan, 1996), p. 462.

²⁰⁶ Daveed Gartenstein-Ross and Laura Grossman, *Homegrown Terrorists in the U.S. and the U.K. – An Empirical Examination of the Radicalisation Process*, Foundation for Defence of Democracies (FDD) Press, April 2009. http://www.defenddemocracy.org/content/uploads/documents/HomegrownTerrorists_USandUK.pdf (accessed on 19 November 2019).

Secondly, there was a tendency for those who were prone to become violently radicalised to trust only select religious authorities. Only a chosen few had the right to interpret scriptures and only they were considered 'authentic' and credible religious teachers. Everyone else was simply a fraud and was seen as 'offering a watered-down and inauthentic version of the faith'.

Thirdly, those who got involved in violent radicalisation strongly believed that there was a perceived divide between Islam and the West. A clash was hence inevitable and coexistence was no longer possible due to the irreconcilable differences between the two civilisations. This belief was then manifested in various ways, including keeping themselves physically apart from Western society, taking it upon themselves to explain the perceived divide to all those willing to listen, believing that an individual has to choose and decide his or her loyalty between Islam and the West and at times even coming to the conclusion that mere participation in the democratic process goes against Islamic religious principles. This has led to some individuals physically separating themselves from non-Muslims and at times, even hating their very existence.

Fourthly, there was a low tolerance for perceived theological deviance amongst those who got involved with violent radicalisation. Having internalised their rigid interpretation of the religion, they now view anyone with a different interpretation as not just having 'incorrect theology' but rather a personal insult to their own belief systems. This difference was expressed not only by verbal disagreement but sometimes even through violence on other Muslims.

The fifth common indicator for those who got involved with violent radicalisation was their attempt to impose their religious beliefs on others. Given that those who do not share their beliefs were theologically deviant and had chosen a 'wrong' path, it was then necessary to 'correct' this religious anomaly by forcing the 'truth' upon them.

The sixth and final indicator, according to Gartenstein-Ross and Grossman, was political radicalisation. Those who got involved with violent radicalisation believed that the West had ‘conspired against Islam’ with the goal of defeating it, both ‘physically and morally’. The Muslims, according to them, were both weak and disunited and lacked the power they had during the time of the Prophet. The only way to correct this equation was all-out war.

While Gartenstein-Ross and Grossman studied common indicators, Kebbell and Porter took another approach and looked at six attitudinal risk factors which they said were possible tipping points from non-violent extremism to violent extremism. The signs they warned of was firstly, the perception that the aggrieved party was not initiating any violence on their part but merely retaliating against the perceived enemy. Secondly, the ‘enemy’ that was being targeted was less than human. Dehumanising the enemy was necessary to justify their violent response. Thirdly, the actions that were taken against the enemy were religiously sanctioned and therefore both justifiable and legitimate. Fourthly, those who transitioned from non-violent to violent behaviour had little positive influences in their lives and environment. Fifthly, they had access to violent materials and lastly, they had exhibited a past capability and capacity for violence.²⁰⁷

²⁰⁷ Quoted in Kumar Ramakrishna's *Islamic Terrorism and Militancy in Indonesia - The Power of the Manichean Mindset*, Springer, 2015.

Possible Signs of Radicalisation²⁰⁸

Physical changes:

- A sudden or gradual change in physical appearance.
- A sudden desire to wear religious attire.
- Obtaining tattoos that display various messages.
- A sudden desire to grow a beard.
- A sudden desire to shave their heads (skinhead).
- Suddenly possessing unexplained gifts and clothing (terrorist recruiters often times give gifts such as mobile phones and clothing to bribe a young person).

Social changes:

- Starts to cut ties with family, friends and the community.
- Starts to become a loner.
- The Internet and the social media become essential components of life.
- Starts to associate with other radical individuals.
- Often times bullies others who do not share their beliefs/ ideology.
- Starts to attend extremist rallies and demonstrations.
- Frequently visits and chats on extremist websites, networks and blogs.

Emotional and verbal changes:

- Starts taking strong positions against government policies, particularly foreign policy.
- Starts to advocate violent behaviour for their cause.
- Starts to strongly believe conspiracy theories, particularly

208 *Radicalisation*, Wandsworth Council's Family Information Service, <http://fis.wandsworth.gov.uk/kb5/wandsworth/fsd/home.page> (accessed on 20 November 2017).

involving the authorities.

- **Starts to exhibit strange and erratic behaviour such as anger²⁰⁹, paranoia and delusion.**
- **Starts to speak and justify revenge for their cause.**
- **Starts displaying religious intolerance.**
- **Starts to be sympathetic to radical and violent groups.**
- **Starts to develop hatred for all those who might have different beliefs, ideologies and points of view.²¹⁰**

Spotting the Signs

There are numerous ways²¹¹ in which an individual could be drawn towards extremism in the radicalisation process. An individual could be considered vulnerable and susceptible due to their environment, circumstances, situation or state of mind, and these could act as tipping points to facilitate radicalisation. Among the potential vulnerabilities include:

1. Susceptibility towards Indoctrination

There are some who are particularly vulnerable and are drawn to the beliefs, ideologies and principles of others. These individuals could be lacking good role models, are naïve or are isolated in a closed environment whereby they are not exposed to any differing thoughts or ideas other than the ones being expounded by the extremist.

2. Social Networks are Involved in Extremism

The importance of social networks are significant,

²⁰⁹ *Protecting Children from Radicalisation*, National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-you-can-do/report-abuse/dedicated-helplines/protecting-children-from-radicalisation/> (accessed on 20 November 2017).

²¹⁰ *Spotting Signs of Radicalization*, Operation 250, <https://www.operation250.org/spot/> (accessed on 20 November 2017).

²¹¹ *Spot the Signs*, Let's Talk About It - Working Together to Prevent Terrorism, <http://www.ltai.info/spotting-signs/> (accessed on 20 November 2017).

particularly in the lives of the young people. Extremists have been very adept at utilising such networks to befriend, communicate and subsequently radicalise people.

3. Being at a Transitional Stage in Life

Individuals who are at a transitional stage in their lives, such as relocating, changing schools, graduating from one stage to another or changing jobs could start questioning their identity and seeking new meaning. This transition could lead to a vacuum in their lives that often times is skillfully manipulated and exploited by extremists and terrorists.

4. A Need for Identity, Meaning and Belonging

Often times, people go through a stage in their lives where they seek to establish their own identity, find meaning in their lives or search for a sense of belonging. While this is perfectly normal, there are those with low self-esteem or are experiencing rejection who might look for security and significance elsewhere. Hence, they might, for whatever reason, choose to disassociate themselves from their existing identity, religion and belief system, and instead seek something new or foreign. The trouble comes when this 'new and foreign' element is introduced by extremists.

5. Feeling under Threat

Conflict or difficult relationships in the family have the potential to lead to insecurities and feelings of vulnerability. These, coupled with traumatic experiences due to war or sectarian conflicts, could create a heightened sense of threat and often times causes such individuals to want a sense of protection that is then 'offered' by extremists, with the caveat that those 'vulnerable' ones join them.

6. Relevant Mental Health Issues

Individuals who have various forms of mental distress such as depression, PTSD, anxiety and personality problems could be susceptible to being radicalised.

7. A Desire for Status

At times, a loss of identity or a sense of inadequacy might lead to individuals seeking a greater desire for power or social standing. Such people have a higher risk of radicalisation due to their need for a more superior identity, a need to command or a desire to control.

8. A Desire for Excitement and Adventure

Terrorists are adept at portraying a life of tremendous excitement and constant adventure. This heightened sense of stimulation and risk greatly appeal to the young people.

9. A Need to Dominate and Control Others

At times, certain individuals might have a natural inclination to dominate and rule others. Terrorism offers them the opportunity to do so.

10. A Desire for Moral or Political Change

In many instances, individuals who face injustice and oppression seek to change the status quo by going against the authorities. At times, observing suffering and pain could even lead people who are not directly involved to feel what is known as secondary trauma. These powerful feelings, however, have the potential to be exploited by terrorists who will claim that they have the 'answers' to address those grievances.

Having these signs do not conclusively show in any way that one is radicalised or is a terrorist. Nevertheless, they could be useful indicators that show the need for more care and attention.

VIII. SO YOU THINK YOU CAN ~~DANCE~~ COUNTER TERRORISM?

RUNNING A COUNTER VIOLENT EXTREMISM (CVE) MODULE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

The deepest definition of youth is life as yet untouched by tragedy.

(Alfred North Whitehead)

The Issue at Stake

In 2011, I posed this question in one of my writings,

“When a youth is confronted with the rhetoric and propaganda of the terrorists, does he possess the ability to critically analyse the assumptions and presuppositions of the terrorists and is he equipped to offer a counter to the narrative of violence subscribed by the terrorists?”

With the advent of *Daesh* and the massive influence it has and continues to have on young people, the answer to the question then seems obvious.

As I already mentioned in my introduction; ‘we seem to be losing’.

How have we reached this stage?

How is it that we are in a situation where there is a sizable group of young people who would rather side with a group that brazenly beheads unarmed people in the name of religion?

Why is it that despite having a strong presence in both the traditional and social media, the authorities still struggle to convince people, particularly the youth, that there are other ways to address grievances and injustice besides death and destruction advocated by terrorists?

Why haven’t we won their hearts and minds?

Perhaps, for various reasons, we have not been focusing on the young people as potential agents to counter terrorism or more specifically, counter violent extremism.

Again in my previous writings,²¹² I had highlighted the following,

²¹² Thomas Koruth Samuel, *The Lure of Youth into Terrorism*, SEARCCT’s Selection of Articles 2011, Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism (SEARCCT), December 2010.

“The ability of the terrorist to identify, indoctrinate, recruit and utilise youths for political violence has been both systematic and widespread. They have also demonstrated great sensitivity in crafting out their message to the youths and creativity in exploiting the various technological mediums in reaching out to them. In this arena, the authorities are struggling to counter and roll back the momentum that terrorists have garnered in winning over the youths.”

Could it be that the authorities are ‘struggling’ simply because we are not exactly the ‘right people’ for the job?

That our ability to reach out to the youths is limited and we could play a better role if we took on the part of ‘equipping and facilitating’ instead.

So, who could we help to equip and who exactly would we help facilitate?

The YOUTHS!

The Possible Way Forward

I would like to propose that we consider equipping and facilitating young people to reach out to their fellow peers in the area of Countering Violent Extremism (CVE). I am of the opinion that young people would be in a far better position to reach out, understand and make an impact in the field of CVE, particularly among their fellow peers.

I would like to suggest that in the field of countering extremism, the young people know the lingo, are themselves part of the target audience and are already immersed in the medium. These would give them a distinctive advantage over the authorities, who have to learn the ‘language’ of the youth, understand their aspirations and desires, attempt to ‘break-into’ their following, bridge the possible generational-divide and most importantly,

earn the trust. Only if we have done all these, could we even think of making a lasting and sustainable impact.

I am suggesting that the ‘prevention’ component of countering violent extremism be an area that we should emphasise the involvement of the youths a great deal more. By ‘prevention’ I am referring to exposing the terrorist propaganda and rhetoric, suggesting viable and credible alternatives to address legitimate grievances, and countering hate-speech, prejudices and ignorance. In all these areas, the authorities could collaborate, share, facilitate and work with youth leaders, influencers and change-agents among the youth. Specifically, I am looking at equipping youths to create and disseminate both counter and alternative messages in all forms, particularly through the social media.

The challenge in such cases is that the authorities must identify the right youth leaders to act as reliable bridges and responsible conduits to subsequently reach out to other youths. The biggest challenge however, would be best summed up by the animated character Elsa in the hit animation movie ‘Frozen’; the authorities need to “LET IT GO”!

In short, authorities need to seek out the young people and facilitate *them* to reach out to their fellow peers.

To ensure that we are not branded as members of NATO (‘No Action, Talk Only’), the Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism (SEARCCT), under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia with the funding support of our international partner, decided to embark on such a programme that we call the ‘SLAYER’ workshop.

Student Leaders Against Youth Extremism and Radicalisation (SLAYÉR) Workshop

We started this programme by asking some questions.

What if we were to gather passionate young leaders into one room?

What if we were to put together a fun-filled, jam-packed, CVE programme that seeks to impart knowledge and creates awareness through games, short talks, food, movies, discussions, songs and fun?

What if we were to get beauty queens, young heroes and 'sheroes' (female heroes), celebrities and basically those people who had nothing remotely to do with counter-terrorism to talk about being passionate, persevering, caring and going the distance for others even when it hurts?

What if we were to organise 'no-holds barred' question & answer sessions between religious clerics and young people?

What if we were to get counter-terrorism experts, who not only had the knowledge but also the passion for young people?

What if we were to arrange for former youth terrorists to share their experiences with the student-leaders?

What if we were to get psychologists to explain how extremists are preying on the fears and insecurities of young people to propagate their vision of violence and hatred?

What if we were to ask 'techies' to come up with competitions offering prizes to tempt young people to counter terrorist propaganda in their own words through their own mediums?

What if we were to get cartoonists to work with young people to visually express CVE ideas in their own creative ways?

What if we were to honestly tell young people that we have problems, that we need their help in solving them and subsequently 'lock' them up in a room, give them obscene amounts of food and carbonated drinks and only 'release' them when they are able to 'solve' our problems?

What would happen if we did all these?

What happened was we got RESULTS!

Unexpected, never imagined, unbelievable results!

What exactly is SLAYER?

The Students Leaders Against Youth Extremism and Radicalisation (SLAYER) workshops (we conducted two of these workshops in five days) brought 100 university undergraduate leaders from various races, religions and cultures from all over Malaysia over a period of two-and-a-half days in April 2017. Each workshop was divided into four components.

Firstly, we found inspiring Malaysians to motivate, persuade, affirm and inspire these young people to realise the tremendous creativity, potential and talents they possess. These speakers also shared their triumphs and failures, and showed the young people that heroes do not necessarily have to carry guns and lob grenades before they can make a difference.

Secondly, we brought in experts to share with the young people the lies and deception perpetuated by the terrorists through their propaganda and to build mental and emotional 'fire-walls' in the hearts and minds of the young people. We found psychologists who shared the common triggers and enablers that were present in young people who were radicalised and how those were manipulated by the extremists. We brought in former terrorists who were recruited when they were young to share their 'journey' into radicalisation and the great gulf between what they initially expected they would do and what they actually ended up doing.

Thirdly, we brought in our ‘techies’ to share and teach the young people specific skills such as creating online digital banners and posters as well as digital posters through readily available free software.

Fourthly, to ensure that our teaching was being applied, we organised a hackathon with amazing prizes to generate excitement and buzz among the participants. Hence, using the knowledge and awareness they gained with regards to extremists’ rhetoric and propaganda, the young people then designed digital end-products to counter the terrorists’ claims. The specific purpose of the hackathon was to get the student-leaders to create content as well as to disseminate them. The entries were then judged qualitatively (the quality of the digital end-products) as well as quantitatively (how many likes the end-products received).

A template for the SLAYER programme is given below.

STUDENT LEADERS AGAINST YOUTH EXTREMISM & RADICALISATION PROGRAMME (SLAYER)

DAY 1

ACTIVITY	NOTES
Registration	We registered 100 undergraduate leaders (whom we called 'SLAYERS') from various universities all over Malaysia over two workshops for a period of 2.5 days.
Briefing	We started off by telling them that this was not going to be a 'normal' workshop. From the casual dressing, to bean-bags, to the talk-show format, to the music and movies and to the inductive/deductive games, we sought to create a conducive environment of reaffirming the youth leaders, creating awareness on what the extremists were planning, imparting to them the skills to build 'mental firewalls' and challenge the narrative of the extremists and subsequently 'unleashing' them to the digital world via a hackathon.
Games	The importance of games cannot be underestimated; not just to break the 'ice' between the participants but also to emphasize and reinforce points. Given this, we had specially-chosen games for every session.

Opening Ceremony	We got our Director-General to meet and have fun with the undergraduate leaders. That set the tone and was the start of doing away with the 'us-versus-them' top-down approach, which unfortunately, is often times the way things are done.
Games	
Panel Session 1: 'Let's Get It Started'	We started our workshop with an aspiring young paralympian and a young teacher whose dedication and commitment subsequently led to a film being made about her. Though not remotely connected to CVE, this hero and 'shero' showed what grit, passion and vision could do regardless of age, gender or race.
Games	
Lecture 1: 'Terror-What?!'	This researcher, who also works with young people, gave the audience a peek into the history of terrorism and how terrorists across ages, ideologies and beliefs, all had one thing in common; to achieve total power and dominion through any means possible. He did this by using humour, stories, analogies, case-studies and video clips.
Games	
Panel Session 2: 'Peer-Suasion'	We got a celebrity television host as well as a former beauty queen to speak about influence, confidence, persuasion and passion. The host spoke on how he overcame the challenges of being a shy young man into who he is today and the former beauty queen spoke on how her passion to help refugee children led her to establish a school that catered specifically for them. The audience were visibly impressed by the sheer grit and determination that it took to be MAD or to 'Make A Difference'.

Games	
Lecture 2: ‘Story Vs. “Story”’	In this session, the researcher presented the narratives that was driving extremists and terrorists, and exposed the myths that they were expounding. He then subsequently delivered the counter-narratives and case-studies that showcased examples of those who addressed grievances without resorting to violence.
Games	
Test Drive 101: a) Viral Visions – Review of Digital Banners	In this session, we showed the audience the various CVE digital-end products that are out there. We wanted to expose them to some fantastic work and also to inspire them to create their own localised and nuanced digital end-products.
Games	
POPCORN TIME: ‘Jihad Selfie’ Documentary & Dinner	‘Jihad Selfie’ is a documentary produced by Pak Noor Huda Ismail (the Indonesian ‘terrorist whisperer’) which explores Daesh’s attempts to radicalise Indonesian teenagers. After seeing the movie, we had a Skype call with Pak Noor Huda for him to share his thoughts and feelings about his documentary.
Special Sharing: My Journey – The Story of a Former Youth Terrorist	We invited a former youth terrorist to share his thoughts, experiences and feelings and the result was spectacular! Hearing an ‘actual’ terrorist speak was something that resonated deeply with the young leaders.

DAY 2

ACTIVITY	NOTES
REARVIEW MIRROR: DAY 1 (Participants Review)	The participants were asked to reflect on the previous day's programme and share the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) What did they learn? ii) What would be the 'one' thing they would change after hearing the sessions?
Games	
LECTURE 3: <i>'#JgnKataAbg-TakWarning'</i> – Malaysia's Cyber Laws	We invited a Malaysian cyber law officer from the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC) to share with the audience the laws in Malaysia, particularly pertaining to social media. The audience was educated on what was deemed illegal and how to spot fake news.
Games	
PANEL SESSION 3:  Turning Something Viral	We got the hosts of a very well know Malaysian talk show that focuses solely on answering the question of 'what makes things go viral' to speak to our audience. Their celebrity status, coupled with their energy, enthusiasm and skill in social media, were eagerly received by the young people.
Games	
PANEL SESSION 4: 'Art vs. Extremism' - Countering Extremism with Comics	A group of talented Malaysian cartoonists shared, not so much in the form of a lecture but rather through their observations and drawings how any skill and talent could be utilised in countering terrorist narratives. These cartoonists also helped visually illustrate ideas that were given by the youth leaders.

Games	
<p>PANEL SESSION 5: <i>'MaiDengaqSat'</i> – Religion & Religious Extremism</p>	<p>Young religious clerics, from Malaysia and beyond, discussed various issues with regards to how the religion was being hijacked by terrorists. A lengthy Q & A followed, in which both Muslims and non-Muslims candidly posed their questions to a panel of extremely intelligent yet sporting religious clerics.</p>
Games	
<p>'BREAKING BOUNDARIES': A HACKATHON'</p>	<p>The Hackathon was the climax of the workshop for many. The participants were put in a room and given the task of creating and disseminating counter-narratives in the form of digital banners, memes and videos using their laptops and smart phones. Using both the knowledge they had learned with regards to building mental firewalls and also the technical skills of creating images and scripts, they were given the whole night to let their creativity run wild. They were judged in terms of the quality of their digital products as well the 'views' the products received.</p>

DAY 3

<p>REARVIEW MIRROR: DAY 2 (Participants Review)</p>	<p>The participants were asked to reflect on the previous day's programme and share the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) One thing that had inspired them? ii) One thing that they hope they could change?
<p>Games</p>	
<p>WR-WR-WR-WRAP IT UP!</p>	
<p>i. 'Spreading the Love' – <i>Dissemination, Monitoring & Evaluation</i></p>	<p>In 'Spreading the Love', we spoke to the undergraduate leaders on the importance of disseminating online material that would both counter the terrorist narratives as well as provide a compelling alternative narrative. We also spoke on the need to develop monitoring and evaluating capabilities.</p>
<p>ii. 'Let's Stay Together' – <i>Keeping In Touch With Us</i></p>	<p>In 'Let's Stay Together', we discussed how to maintain the network and relationship which were formed during the 2.5 days of the workshop. By creating What's App Groups, inviting each other to other similar CVE events and social gatherings, I am delighted to inform that the relationship that started in April 2017 is still going strong. However, a more systematic arrangement might be necessary to maintain the network over time as well as to fully utilise the strength of the respective members.</p>

<p>iii. 'Digital Vault'</p>	<p>We also created a digital repository to store the digital products that were created by the undergraduate leaders. This storehouse allows the participants to view the products not just done by themselves and their fellow participants but also other products from other countries which we continuously replenish. This then allows them to learn from each other as well as to share those products within their circle of friends. This means that a digital CVE product created by a cartoonist can now be shared by a fellow participant who is a gamer, allowing the cartoonist to reach and impact a circle of people which otherwise he might not have come into contact with.</p>
<p>iv. 'Down the Yellow Brick Road' – <i>Looking Forward</i></p>	<p>In this session, we took the opportunity to put forth before the undergraduate leaders, the way forward, suggesting ways for them to be effective 'CVE messengers'.</p>
<p>Games</p>	
<p>'YOU TALK, WE LISTEN Floor open to the students to voice their opinions</p>	<p>In this closing session, we opened the floor to get the participants, particularly the quiet ones, to share their thoughts and feelings. We tried hard to listen as closely as possible to the ideas and thoughts that were expressed. The trust, closeness and camaraderie that was generated in the 2.5 days, meant that the participants were honest with their feedback and as organisers, we took great care to listen to them.</p>

CLOSING CEREMONY	
i. Closing Remarks by Deputy Director-Generals of SEARCCT	During the closing ceremony, we emphasised that this was just the beginning; to better equip them, to listen more to them, to cater to their needs, to develop opportunities for them, to create avenues for them to volunteer and serve and lastly to bridge the gap and become friends.
ii. Prize-Giving Session Presentation of Certificates	The prize giving and certificate presentation ceremony was very important. Firstly, we put a lot of thought into the prizes and the Return on Investment (RoI) was exceptionally high. Great prizes develop a buzz which motivates, inspires and excites. This then is translated many times over in terms of effort, creativity and productivity. Prizes matter! We also presented numerous creatively designed certificates, ranging from 'Energiser Bunny' to 'Quiet but Deep' to 'Mr. Creativity' to 'Milo Ambassador' to 'Ms. Congeniality' to 'Mr. Profound'. These recognitions did wonders in terms of the participants' confidence.

The template of our programme can certainly be improved and I am in no way suggesting that this model is a standard one which will work in all situations and circumstances. Please scale up, scale down, adapt, amend or completely revamp. The objective, in whatever programme we conduct for our young people, would be to affirm, educate, equip and subsequently unleash our youths to create and disseminate counter-narratives to that of the extremists with the end result of reaching and winning the hearts and minds of their fellow youths. And to do all this in a manner which is both exciting and fun.

Results of SLAYER

As mentioned, the results were spectacular.

Qualitatively, we trained 100 young leaders in producing and disseminating digital CVE products. These student leaders then went back to their respective campuses and on their own, initiated workshops and sessions for their fellow peers. They also became our strong advocates and started, *on their own*, to stress the importance of building ‘mental firewalls’ in the hearts and minds of their peers. This led to a flurry of invitations from various universities for us to speak. The two cohorts, on their own initiatives, still have strong relations with us and with each other, and this has led to many positive results, such as them taking the lead in CVE in their respective campuses with our support and assistance, volunteering for humanitarian and social work via legitimate organisations abroad, reporting suspicious behaviour, reviewing our own work and assisting us to read the heartbeat of the young people in campuses.

Quantitatively, the results we saw were staggering. With their assistance, our ability to produce digital content doubled and then tripled. Most significantly, in the five-days that we had the two SLAYER workshops, our reach on social media increased.²¹³

It increased by 20,000 per cent²¹⁴.

It took us months to get the numbers that we were getting and it took the young people five days to increase those numbers by 20,000 per cent.

I will repeat it again; 20,000 per cent.

²¹³ Due to the sensitivity of the nature of our work, I will not be publishing our account names on social media but would welcome anyone who would like to know more to contact us directly.

²¹⁴ According to our Facebook analytics during that period of time.

What Else is Out There?

The Ministry of Higher Education launched an excellent programme in 2012 called *Yayasan Sukarelawan Siswa* (YSS) or Student Volunteer Foundation. The programme's mission is to "promote, educate and guide students to volunteer to promote world peace and foster a spirit of camaraderie through community services at home and abroad". The programme does this by developing leadership among student volunteers, organising high-impact volunteer programmes and creating an environment that promotes volunteerism. Since its launch, YSS has organised 23 volunteer programmes in Malaysia and across many countries, particularly in Southeast Asia. The programme provides young people with the channel to contribute significantly in areas that would see them make a tangible and concrete difference.²¹⁵

Concluding Thoughts

When we envisioned the SLAYER programme, we did not anticipate such results. Perhaps this is an indication of the problem. We underestimated our young people and did not consider them possible partners in our struggle against extremism.

It was wrong for us to do so.

It would be a tragedy for us to continue to do so.

²¹⁵ More information with regards to participating in the programme could be obtained from their website; <http://www.sukarelawansiswa.my/> (accessed on 20 December 2017).

CONCLUSION

The ability of the terrorists to both radicalise and recruit lie in their ability to convey an emotional-based, simplistic, one-sided argument, often times based on dubious premise that attempt to bypass the mind by going straight to the heart. They do so in a creative and passionate manner, deceptively crafting a narrative that carefully takes the target audience on a journey that finally leads them to believe that indiscriminate violence targeting the innocent is the only possible solution to address their perceived political grievance.

How do we counter this?

By speaking truth, teaching critical thinking, highlighting the cost and failure of indiscriminate violence, reviewing heroes both past and present who bravely stood up against injustice without resorting to extremism, and by providing channels for young people to make a difference, contribute and do something of significance.

Would the young people listen?

Perhaps; if it comes from one of them.

The purpose of this resource guide is to equip young people with the knowledge to get this message out.

What message?

That violence does not work and is not effective; that the actions of the terrorists and extremists are not in the best interest of the people and that there are other alternatives to that of indiscriminate violence.

For too long, the authorities took charge in disseminating this message, Perhaps it is time for us to step back and allow the young people to do the talking, articulating and persuading. Perhaps the time is right for us to play a supporting role and provide them with the resources and materials, and subsequently let these passionate youths disseminate the message that indiscriminate violence can never be a viable alternative.

In light of this, Chapter One starts by providing a few definitions of the term terrorism with the purpose of highlighting that this field is indeed challenging and that simplistic black-and-white arguments put forth by extremists are naïve at best and dangerous at worst. Following that, we narrow the focus onto Malaysia, giving a glimpse of the extent of the problem by looking at case studies of young Malaysians who have succumbed to extremist ideas and emphasising the need for young people in particular to have a vital role to play in addressing this issue.

Chapter Two takes a closer look at the three main myths that terrorists propagate which include the idea that (i) violence is the only way; (ii) that they are killing for the people; and (iii) that they have little choice in this matter. We also examine the pathways that the terrorists carefully construct for their target audience to be radicalised and recruited. Firstly, their message is highlighted through a cocktail of graphic images and videos that show people suffering severe deprivation, discrimination and injustice. Secondly, it is established that these 'victims' are defenceless and their suffering shows no signs of abating. The target audience is subsequently challenged to examine what role they could play in assisting these 'victims' and changing what is perceived to be their 'doomed future.' Thirdly, after some simplistic analysis

and questionable assumptions, it is then firmly concluded that the only way to 'rescue' the victims, redress the grievances and subsequently change the status quo is by employing violence at all cost and through any and every means necessary.

The third chapter examines the consequences of terrorism by specifically reviewing the assumption that the actions of the terrorists are justifiable and legitimate, and by discrediting the idea that violent actions against the innocent would eventually lead to better lives for the victims. By examining case studies such as the sabotaging of the Air India flight from Canada in 1985 by the Sikh militant group *Babbar Khalsa* to the numerous atrocities committed by the ASG, the reader is challenged to consider the logic that even if the issue of morality of indiscriminate killing is dismissed, terrorism seldom brings good to the people in whose name such acts are carried out.

The fourth chapter 'takes the bull by the horns' and provides real life examples of individuals who were or are still being confronted with injustice, discrimination and suffering and chose to fight back without resorting to indiscriminate violence. The lives of Malala Yousafzai, Martin Luther King Jr., Tan Sri Dr. Jemilah Mahmood and Archbishop Desmond Tutu vividly demonstrate that it is possible, with courage, tenacity, wisdom and patience to triumph and to hate the sin without destroying the sinner. Conversely, America's Malcolm-X and LTTE's Velupillai Prabhakaran showcase the strategic failure of indiscriminate violence. The case for non-violence is also rationally and objectively presented with quantitative data to dispel the notion that it is an impractical and unsubstantiated strategy.

The fifth chapter is based on building 'mental firewalls' among the youth by critically examining some of the premises of the terrorists and asking fundamental questions. Among the questions posed include: (i) who the terrorists are killing for; (ii) where they get their mandate to carry out such acts; (iii) what good they have done for the people they claim to be fighting for; (iv) whether the people agree with the methods and strategies

of the terrorists; (v) the consequences if the people were to disagree with the terrorists; (vi) whether the members were allowed to leave the terrorist organisations should they chose to do so; (vii) and whether the tactic/strategy of indiscriminate violence carried out by the terrorists actually bring about lasting results.

The sixth chapter examines the growing and significant role that women are playing in terrorist organisations. Utilising case studies from the LTTE and *Daesh*, this chapter looks at the direct and indirect roles that women have played and how their involvement is reshaping the landscape of terrorism. This relatively new development is attributed to their possible 'quest for significance' and how this need is perhaps even superseding the traditional need for 'security' among women.

The seventh chapter takes a closer look at radicalisation and the possible signs that could indicate such a process is occurring. The possible 'tipping points' that lead to violent radicalisation, especially with groups like *Al-Qaeda*, *Jemaah Islamiyah* and *Daesh* include: (i) a legalistic interpretation of Islam; (ii) trusting only select religious authorities; (iii) a perception of a divide between Islam and the West; (iv) a low tolerance for perceived theological deviance; (v) the attempt to impose their religious beliefs on others; and (vi) political radicalisation leading to all-out war. There are also attitudinal risk factors which are possible tipping points from non-violent extremism to violent extremism and these include: (i) the perception that the terrorists did not start the problem but were merely retaliating against the perceived enemy; (ii) the terrorists were actively dehumanising the enemy; (iii) what the terrorists did was religiously sanctioned and hence justifiable and legitimate; (iv) the extremists who transitioned from non-violent to violent behaviour had little positive influence in their lives; (v) the terrorists had access to violent material; and (vi) the terrorists exhibited a past capability and capacity for violence. Also discussed were possible signs of physical, social and emotional radicalisation as well as the profile of those who are vulnerable and susceptible to such radicalisation.

The eighth and final chapter looked at running a youth-focused CVE module and examined the ‘Student Leaders Against Youth Extremism and Radicalisation’ (SLAYER) workshop as a possible template. The SLAYER workshop focused on reaching out to youth leaders based on the premise that they are the best ‘change-agents’ and ‘thought-influencers’ among their peers. Hence, the workshop sought to (i) inspire these undergraduate leaders to realise their potential; (ii) expose the lies and deception of the terrorists and subsequently build mental and emotional ‘fire-walls’ amongst the young leaders; (iii) teach young people specific technical computer skills to counter the terrorist narratives; and (iv) organise a hackathon to get the youth leaders to create counter-narratives as well as to disseminate those content. The results, both in terms of the quality of the counter-narratives as well as the reach and impact of the messages (measured quantitatively via Face Book) was extremely positive. The reach on social media over the two SLAYER workshops increased by a staggering 20,000 per cent.

In the end, I am of the opinion that terrorism cannot be defeated through hard power alone, and that soft power yields considerable influence over the landscape of counter-terrorism. Specifically, countering the terrorist narratives by highlighting the fallacies in their rhetoric and propaganda, showcasing living examples of those who overcame injustice without resorting to indiscriminate violence and providing non-violent alternatives to address grievances are all significant and vital ways to push back extremism and counter terrorism. In this regard, I am of the opinion that the authorities would make far greater progress in all the endeavours mentioned above if they facilitate, collaborate and engage with the young people.

It is my hope that this resource guide will play a significant role in equipping the young people to reach out to their fellow peers to persuade, debate, argue, communicate, engage and articulate two premises. Firstly, that the spilling of innocent blood is an abhorrent and tactically inferior act that can never be justified and would only seek to bring about temporary solutions at

best or prolong and even worsen the crisis at the very worst. To quote Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, “an eye for an eye will leave everyone blind”. The second premise is that persistence, strategic patience, courage, sacrifice, wisdom and creativity are powerful and potent tools that have and can realistically address grievances and bring about positive change. As Harry Belafonte put it, “you can cage the singer, but not the song”.

APPENDIX ONE

Further Definitions of Terrorism

On 8 October 2004, the United Nations Security Council adopted Resolution 1566 which defined terrorism as *“criminal acts, including against civilians, committed with the intent to cause death or serious bodily injury, or taking of hostages, with the purpose to provoke a state of terror in the general public or in a group of persons or particular persons, intimidate a population or compel a government or an international organisation to do or to abstain from doing any act, which constitute offences within the scope of and as defined in the international conventions and protocols relating to terrorism, are under no circumstances justifiable by considerations of a political, philosophical, ideological, racial, ethnic, religious or other similar nature.”*²¹⁶

In 1999, the Organisation of Islamic Countries (OIC) adopted the Convention on Combating International Terrorism which defined terrorism as *‘any act of violence or threat thereof notwithstanding its motives or intentions perpetrated to carry out an individual or collective criminal plan with the aim of terrorising people or threatening to harm them or imperilling their lives, honour, freedoms, security or rights or exposing the environment or any facility or public or private property to hazards or occupying or seizing them, or endangering a national resource, or international facilities, or threatening the stability, territorial integrity, political*

²¹⁶ United Nations Security Council, S/RES/1566 (2004), [http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/1566\(2004\)](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/1566(2004)) (accessed on 30 August 2017).

*unity or sovereignty of independent States’.*²¹⁷

In the case of the EU, the European Council at its extraordinary meeting on 21 September 2001 saw the need for a definition of terrorism and hence the Council Framework Decision of 13 June 2002 on Combating Terrorism²¹⁸ was formulated.

Article 1(1) for the Framework Decision states that;

“Each Member State shall take the necessary measures to ensure that the international acts referred to below in points (a) to (i), as defined as offences under national law, which, given their nature or context, may seriously damage a country or an international organisation where committed with the aim of:

- *seriously intimidating a population, or*
- *unduly compelling a Government or international organisation to perform or abstain from performing any act, or*
- *seriously destabilising or destroying the fundamental political, constitutional, economic or social structures of a country or an international organisation, shall be deemed to be terrorist offences:*
 - (a) attacks upon a person’s life which may cause death;*
 - (b) attacks upon the physical integrity of a person;*
 - (c) kidnapping or hostage taking;*
 - (d) causing extensive destruction to a Government*

²¹⁷ Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), *Convention of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference on Combating International Terrorism*, 1 July 1999, Annex to Resolution No: 59/26-P, available at: <http://www.refworld.org/docid/3de5e6646.html> (accessed 31 August 2017).

²¹⁸ Council Framework Decision of 13 June 2002 on Combating Terrorism, *Official Journal of the European Communities*, (2002/475/JHA), http://euromed-justice.eu/files/repository/20100909161723_COUNCILFRAMEWORKDECISION4752002ON-COMBATINGTERRORISM2002UE.pdf (accessed on 221 August 2017).

or public facility, a transport system, an infrastructure facility, including an information system, a fixed platform located on the continental shelf, a public place or private property likely to endanger human life or result in major economic loss;

- (e) seizure of aircrafts, ships or other means of public or goods transport;*
- (f) manufacture, possession, acquisition, transport, supply or use of weapons, explosives or of nuclear, biological or chemical weapons, as well as research into, and development of biological and chemical weapons;*
- (g) release of dangerous substances, or causing fires, floods or explosions the effect of which is to endanger human life;*
- (h) interfering with or disrupting the supply of water, power or any other fundamental natural resource the effect of which is to endanger human life; and*
- (i) threatening to commit any of the acts listed in (a) to (h)."*

The USA Patriot Act (Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism)²¹⁹ enacted in 2001 considers terrorist activities to include²²⁰:

- threatening, conspiring or attempting to hijack airplanes, boats, buses or other vehicles;
- threatening, conspiring or attempting to commit acts of

²¹⁹ The USA PATRIOT (Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism) Act, Department of Justice, <https://www.justice.gov/archive/ll/highlights.htm> (accessed on 31 August 2017).

²²⁰ The Patriot Act, *Constitutional Rights Foundation*, <http://www.crf-usa.org/america-responds-to-terrorism/the-patriot-act.html> (accessed on 31 August 2017).

violence on any “protected” persons, such as government officials; and

- any crime committed with “the use of any weapon or dangerous device,” when the intent of the crime is determined to be the endangerment of public safety or substantial property damage rather than for “mere personal monetary gain”.

The United States Department of Defense in its ‘DOD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms’ defines terrorism as *“the unlawful use of violence or threat of violence, often motivated by religious, political, or other ideological beliefs, to instil fear and coerce governments or societies in pursuit of goals that are usually political”*.²²¹

Alex Schmid, the noted academic in his excellent paper²²² spoke on the various definitions of terrorism that have appeared over the years, highlighting that both international organisations and countries have struggled to come up with a definition accepted by all. In his paper, Professor Schmid showcased a search performed on the Internet on the key words listed below:

Key Words	4 October 2004	27 January 2005	Percentage of change
“definition of terrorism”	6,070 hits	2,310,000 hits	Increase of 38,056%
“definitions of terrorism”	230,000 hits	856,000 hits	Increase of 372%

²²¹ DOD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms, United States Department of Defense, August 2017, http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/new_pubs/dictionary.pdf (accessed on 31 August 2017).

²²² Alex Schmid, Terrorism - The Definitional Problem, 36 Case W. Res. J. Int'l L. 375 (2004) Available at: <http://scholarlycommons.law.case.edu/jil/vol36/iss2/8> (accessed on 6 October 2017).

“definitions terrorism”	232,000 hits	867,000 hits	Increase of 374%
“terrorism”	9,580,000 hits	21,200,000 hits	Increase of 221%

Obviously, there has been little consensus on what constitutes terrorism.

Has the situation changed since 2004 and 2005?

I performed the same Google search on 7 October 2017 and the results are listed below:

Key Words	7 October 2017	Percentage of change since 27 January 2005
“definition of terrorism”	78,400,000 hits	Increase of 3,394%
“definitions of terrorism”	47,600,000 hits	Increase of 5,561%
“definitions terrorism”	48,400,000 hits	Increase of 5,582%
“terrorism”	156,000,000 hits	Increase of 736%

If anything, the amount of literature on the definition of the term terrorism has only increased indicating the possibility that a consensus for the meaning of the word has not come any nearer.

PROFILE OF THE AUTHOR

Thomas Koruth Samuel is at present the Director of the Digital Strategic Communications Division (DSCD) with the Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism (SEARCCT), which is under the purview of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia. He started off as a volunteer Health Officer for World Vision East Timor in 2003 and then moved to the Research and Publications division in SEARCCT in 2004. He served as the division's director from 2010 to 2016 before assuming his current position with the DSCD. He has an honours degree in Biomedical Technology (2000) and a Masters degree in Strategic and Defence Studies (2005) from the University of Malaya, Malaysia. He is currently pursuing his PhD. in the area of youth radicalisation. His main areas of research include the narratives of the terrorists and the subsequent counter-narratives, the radicalisation process, strategic communications and youth involvement in terrorism. He is also very interested in mediation, conflict resolution and 'spoiler management' during times of conflict. He lectures frequently on counter-terrorism and international security, and has delivered lectures in Australia, Bangladesh, Belgium, Cambodia, China, Egypt, Germany, Indonesia, Japan, Laos, Maldives, Nepal, The Philippines, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand, United Arab Emirates and the United States of America. He has also represented Malaysia and led delegations as an officer for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He has written several articles, papers and monographs and has been interviewed on radio. He is also a Senior Fellow with the International Centre of Excellence for Countering Violent Extremism (Hedayah Centre) based in Abu Dhabi, the United Arab Emirates. He can be reached at thomas_samuel@searcct.gov.my OR conflict_analysis@yahoo.com

