

Middle East Terrorism, Global Governance and China's Anti-terror Policy

ZHU Weilie^①

(Middle East Studies Institute, Shanghai International Studies University)

Abstract: *The anti-terror campaign in the Middle East is the key and influential part of global anti-terror endeavor, which is one of the most challenging global governance issues in the international community. It is closely linked with the transformation of the international system and the reconstruction of the world's new political and economic order. Within the background of economic globalization, the Middle East Islamic countries are confronted with the problems of promoting reform and development, facilitating institutional reform and social transformation. Internally, the Middle East terrorism originates from the complicated historical, social, religious and ethnic conflicts; externally, the Middle East terrorism hinges on interference, invasion, occupation, and the rival for territory, recourses and interest. China's anti-terror endeavor aims at protecting its overseas interest and meanwhile, it reflects China's unique idea*

^① ZHU Weilie, Director and Professor of Middle East Studies Institute, Shanghai International Studies University. This research is the product of the Chinese Educational Ministry program "Islamic Middle East Region and the Transition of International System" (08JZD0039), and it is also supported by the Shanghai International Studies University "211" program (Stage III) and Key Discipline of Shanghai (B702).

and mode of global governance.

Key Words: *Anti-terror Policy; China's Middle East Policy; Global Governance; Non-traditional Security; Terrorism*

I. The Impact of Middle East Terrorism to China's Overseas Interests

The Middle East is an important area for China's energy, economic and trade cooperation. Since the 1990s, China has developed increasingly close economic and trade ties with the Middle East and personnel exchanges have become more frequent too. Since the beginning of the new century, Chinese overseas organizations and government projects have increased in the Middle East year by year and more and more Chinese citizens have worked, studied and travelled in the Middle East countries. Although Middle East terrorism was seriously reduced in recent years, it still persists and spreads. Chinese citizens who do business, projects or carry out cultural and tourism activities in the Middle East, including their lives and property, have become targets of terrorist organizations or extremist terrorist groups, as well as the "East Turkistan" separatist forces. Their purpose is to create a sensational effect and exert pressure on the local government or the Chinese government, which poses a threat and invasion to China's interests and citizen safety.

In the 1990s, there had been terrorist attacks against Chinese citizens and institutions in the Middle East. For example, Liu Caifa and Qian Yongqiang who worked in the China Water and Electric Corporation representative office in Algeria were killed on August 15, 1994 by four Islamic militants (Liu, 2006: 120). The Chinese Embassy in Turkey was attacked by "East Turkistan" terrorists in March 1997; on March 5, 1998, "East Turkistan" terrorist organization also sent bombs against the Chinese Consulate General of Istanbul, Turkey.

After the 9/11, terrorist attacks against Chinese citizens and business organizations in the Middle East have increased significantly. Many of them affected innocent Chinese citizens. There was a suicide bombing in Jerusalem, Israel on April 12, 2002 killing two Chinese and injuring two others. On July 17 of the same year, there were two suicide bombings in Tel Aviv, killing two Chinese people and injuring four. A Chinese citizen was killed in another suicide bombing on January 5, 2003 and 7 were injured (Nie & Ming, 2003). The casualties of Chinese citizens in these three terrorist attacks all were laborers in Israel. After these incidents, the Chinese Government strongly condemned the violence against innocent civilians; and urged the two sides to take practical efforts to actively cooperate with the international community's peace endeavor and stop violent confrontation in order to avoid additional casualties among innocent civilians. A series of hotel bombings occurred in Amman, Jordan on November 9, 2005 killing three and injuring one from a China National Defense University delegation group. It was planned by Al-Zarqawi's terrorist organization "Jihad al-Qaida in Iraq." President Hu Jintao who was on a state visit to Britain immediately instructed the Foreign Ministry and relevant departments to investigate the situation and take measures to rescue the injured Chinese workers and to properly handle relevant issues. He strongly condemned the terrorist acts of violence reiterated that the Chinese government resolutely opposes all forms of terrorism; and stressed that China is willing to join the international community including Jordan to strengthen anti-terrorism cooperation in the fight against terrorism.

After the war in Iraq, Chinese citizens suffered twice in the wave of hostages. On April 11, 2004, seven Chinese from Fujian Province were abducted and detained near Fallujah in Iraq by armed men. The Chinese Foreign Ministry immediately launched an emergency mechanism. By various efforts of the Chinese Embassy in Iraq and with the help of Iraqi Muslims, these seven Chinese people finally

were released unharmed. Eight Chinese citizens from Pingtan, Fujian Province were held hostage by Iraqi militants from Iraq to Jordan on January 18, 2005. The Chinese government quickly dispatched specialists to take comprehensive multi-level rescue efforts with the Chinese embassy in Iraq. With the assistance of the Iraqi government and all the friends, the eight workers in Fujian Province were saved on January 23. In general, the number of direct attacks against the Chinese interests in the Middle East region is still relatively limited, but those incidents have already caused Chinese foreign casualties and economic losses, as well as destroyed the friendly and cooperative relations between China and Middle East countries and severely damaged the expansion and extension of China's interests overseas.

In addition, it must be noted that around half of China's crude oil was from the Middle East, so the continuous terrorist attacks posed a potential threat to China's economic security, particularly energy security (Wang, 2004: December). After the 9/11 incident, the Middle East terrorism appears to be a trend to attack oil industries and marine transportation routes, especially to take oil in Saudi Arabia as targets. The Middle East is China's most important oil supplier. Saudi Arabia is also the largest oil export country for China. If the Middle East terrorist forces would further attack oil transport facilities, the main oil-producing land or oil refinery in Saudi Arabia or other Middle East oil producers, it would not be only be bound to affect international oil prices and undermine the stable development of the world economy and growth, but would also have direct adverse effects on China's energy security and economic development.

II. The Global Governance on Terrorism and the Chinese Government's Anti-terrorism Stance

As an important member of the international community and one of the UN Security Council permanent members, China has always

opposed any countries, organizations, groups or individuals to take terrorist actions and violate recognized norms of international law. China actively supports and participates in the international fights and cooperation against terrorism. In dealing with terrorism, the Chinese government's basic position is to reject and condemn the international terrorism which violates the "UN Charter" and the basic principles of international law and international conventions; it is to oppose the large-scale terrorist activities which are controlled by the state sovereignty to directly violate other countries' rights, have armed aggression to occupy territory, subvert legitimate government and do killings and expulsion of people. The Chinese government also has always been opposed to taking international terrorism as a political means and has been against using terrorism as the means to fight the national liberation movement, the people revolutionary movement and the aggression against other countries (Yang & Zhao, 2002).

Since the reform and opening-up policy in 1978, China has been expanding international exchanges and getting into the process of integration as a stakeholder in the international system. At the same time, China's attention in n international organizations and the international system has significantly increased. Since 1978, China has begun to join a series of multilateral international conventions against specific terrorist activities. In the 1990s, international terrorism has become a direct threat to China. Since the new century, especially after the 9/11 incident, international terrorism has become an increasingly serious international menace. The important duty to maintain China's national security interests has become fighting against terrorism. After years of experience of domestic anti-terrorist struggle and participation in international bilateral and multilateral anti-terrorist cooperation, China has deepened its understanding of terrorism forms and its perniciousness and its anti-terror policies have been clearer and more pacific. In particular, after the adaptation of the contemporary international end of the new security concept, so far

China has formed a more systematic and complete set of policies and positions in anti-terrorism, which include the following aspects.^①

1. Opposition to all forms of terrorism

Since terrorism is a politically motivated and illegal criminal act which harms the innocent civilians, it is not only harmful to people's lives and causes huge material losses, but also disrupts normal social order, which is contrary to social morality and human law of civilization and progress. Therefore, China strongly condemns and resolutely opposes all the terrorist activities with any form and any reason and is resolutely opposed to terrorism as a weapon and means of political struggle. China advocates that the world should take comprehensive and effective measures to combat all forms of terrorism. In the situation that terrorism has become a serious threat to world peace and security, China adheres to its anti-terrorism position without any conditions and helps to establish a fair, reasonable and effective mechanism for international cooperation against terrorism. The definition of terrorism has not been agreed within the international community; especially there is huge difference between Western and Arab countries. In these circumstances, it would be easy for the international parties to accept the Chinese government's stand to condemn and fight against all forms of terrorism.

2. Solution to the problem of terrorism by treating both root causes and symptoms

^① The contents about Chinese anti-terrorism policies and counteractions arranged according to the following articles: Yang Hui: *The New Theory of Anti-terrorism* (World Knowledge Publishing House, 2005); Liu Enzhao: *International Terrorism* (World Knowledge Publishing House, 2006); Yang Jiechi. & Zhao Nianyu: *International Terrorism and the Contemporary International Relations* (Guizhou People's Press, 2002); Hu Lianhe: *The Contemporary Terrorism and Counteractions* (Orizental Press, 2001) and *Seeing Terrorism in the Third Eye* (World Knowledge Publishing House, 2002).

Terrorism is a complex political and social issue. It needs the international community to have a comprehensive and objective understanding and analysis of the causes for the spread of terrorism and to take effective measures to reduce and eradicate the root causes of terrorism. Thus fundamentally curbing the spread of terrorism is a necessity. In October 2003, President Hu Jintao further pointed out in the APEC meeting in Bangkok that conflicts and instability are the breeding ground of terrorism and poverty and backwardness are its soil. In order to eradicate terrorism, China should carry out work in easing regional and international tensions, poverty eradication and the strengthening of cooperation against terrorism and take positive actions from the political, economic, cultural and social aspects. It should treat both root causes and symptoms to win the final victory of the struggle against terrorism (Yang, 2005: 231). The long-term struggle against terrorism is a social system work. China should use political, economic, diplomatic, cultural, military and other comprehensive ways to prevent, deter and combat terrorism instead of relying solely on military actions which are not the fundamental way to completely solve the problem of terrorism.

3. Opposition to the links between terrorism and certain ethnic nation or religions

Although the contemporary international terrorism has complex ethnic and religious backgrounds, there is no nation or religion whose chief goal should be to pursue terrorism. Whatever country terrorists are coming from, they always have certain national, religious and cultural background, but their background cannot be generalized to the point that terrorists with some ethnic, religious and cultural backgrounds are acting on behalf of this ethnic nation, religion or culture. Those extremists and terrorist organizations who in the name of ethnics and religions have taken terrorism as the violent way to achieve their political purpose, which has made them alienated from their ethnic, religion and human society. They are not ethnic or

religious representatives, but evil forces falsely acting under the ethnic and religious banners. Terrorism is the common enemy of all different civilizations, peoples and religions. Anti-terrorism must not exacerbate ethnic conflict, religious hatred, the clash of civilizations and human barriers. It should be a new opportunity for different civilizations to exchange and learn from each other, a new starting point for dialogue and integration, and a new power for common progress and prosperity (Liu, 2006: 131).

4. "Double standards" cannot engage in the fight against terrorism

In the current world, some Western countries appear to have pursued double standards for a long time. Taking ideology or national interest as the standard, they have adopted a severe reprimand and strike against terrorism within their own or western countries and have supported or covered up, condoned, or even encouraged terrorism that occurred in other countries holding as an excuse "humanitarian" and "human rights protection." Actually, this double standards' practice has greatly exacerbated the spread and proliferation of international terrorism. The Chinese government believes that since terrorism is against human peace and development, the world should uphold justice and treat all domestic and international terrorism with the same standards, or it would be inevitable to seriously hamper international cooperation. On June 7, 2002 the adoption of the "Declaration of Heads of Shanghai Cooperation Organization" also declared that the fight against terrorism "cannot have a preference, no double standards." The Chinese representative Chen Shiqiu pointed out in the 55th session of the United Nations Human Rights team on August 5, 2003 that the international society should avoid double standards on terrorism. All countries in the world should treat all terrorist activities at home and abroad with the same standards and oppose all forms of terrorism (Liang, 2003: August 6).

5. Making full use of the leading role of the United Nations in the international anti-terrorism

At present, terrorism has already been an international scourge, so any region and country cannot stay aloof from the threat of terrorism. The fight against terrorism cannot just rely on one region or one country only; it needs the bilateral and multilateral cooperation from the regional to global scale in all relevant areas. All countries should base their actions on mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity to make great efforts to strengthen international cooperation in combatting terrorism in order to effectively curb its spread. The United Nations is the most universal, representative and authoritative inter-governmental international organization. The "United Nations Charter" sets the basis of international law. The United Nations plays an important role for promotion and coordination to maintain world peace and security and to promote the common progress of human society and prosperity. The UN has done a lot of work to fight against terrorism. The relevant international conventions, resolutions, reports, statements, declarations and other international or soft law have been passed within the UN framework, which clearly defined principles, norms, rules and decision-making processes to prevent, combat and eliminate terrorism. Therefore, the Chinese government has always stressed that the United Nations and its Security Council should always play a leading role in international anti-terrorism. Any country or group cannot bypass the United Nations Security Council to practice their own way.

6. Initiation of a new security concept and strengthening the international cooperation against terrorism

These Chinese policies above are not only involved in the nature, causes and hazards of terrorism, but also in the basic principles and means of anti-terrorism. What needs to be noted is that since the late 1990s, the new security concept which the Chinese government actively advocated along with the Chinese government's

anti-terrorism policies is the guide to fight against terrorism and cooperate with each other. After the Cold War, as the evolution of international situation's deepening economic globalization and enhanced interdependence among countries, the possibility of another world war can be ruled out for quite a long time, but the non-traditional security threats of terrorism are becoming increasingly prominent. Those non-traditional threats are intertwined and become a serious threat to the world's peace, stability and development. Therefore, the international community needs to abandon the traditional concept of security and establish a new security concept of mutual benefits. President Hu Jintao at the Asia-Africa summit on April 22, 2005 further stressed that "we should establish a new security concept with mutual benefits, trust, equality and coordination in order to enhance mutual trust through dialogue, resolve conflicts through negotiation and pursue stability through cooperation. We get together to respond to traditional security threats and non-traditional security threats to safeguard the world peace"(Shanghai International Studies Institution, 2006: 476). The substantive content of the new security concept is also the guiding theory for the Chinese government to develop its anti-terror policies and carry out international cooperation against terrorism (Yang, 2005: 241-243).

III. The Chinese Government's Anti-terrorism Initiatives and Its Role in the Middle East

Since the 1990s, with increasingly rampant "East Turkistan" forces and the development and spread of international terrorism, China with the guidance of the above anti-terror policies and the new security concept has actively carried out a series of anti-terrorism struggles and international cooperation. So far, China has established a set of counter-terror coordination mechanisms. In early 2002, the Ministry of Public Security added an anti-terrorism bureau which is

responsible for research, planning, guiding, coordinating and promoting the country's counter-terrorism efforts. Each province also increased its anti-terrorism forces and institutions including Special Forces. China has formulated work plans for the prevention and disposal of all terrorist attacks and established and improved an emergency response system and rapid response mechanism and has carried out multi-sectorial, multi-system counter-terrorism exercises to effectively respond to every possible terrorist attack. As a responsible member and stakeholder of the international community, China has always actively participated in the international fight against terrorism and has done an extensive amount of work including the following aspects:

1. China's full participation in global cooperation against terrorism

Since 2006, China has joined 12 international conventions against terrorism and seriously implemented its obligations. The Chinese government firmly supports the leading role of the United Nations and the Security Council in the international campaign against terrorism and has consistently and conscientiously implemented a series of resolutions in the fight against terrorism which were adopted by the UN Security Council, as well as actively participated in the work of the Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee. After less than two years since the 9/11 incident, the Chinese Foreign Ministry submitted reports to the Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee on how the Chinese side had implemented Security Council Resolution 1373 concerned with cutting off the economic sources of terrorists for three times and introduced details on the relevant counter-terrorism measures taken in Hong Kong and Macao Special Administrative Region (Zhang & Huang, 2003: 181).

2. China's advocacy and active expansion of cooperation in international multilateral anti-terror mechanisms.

Following the 2001 signing of the "Shanghai Convention" as the

theme of anti-terrorism, in 2004, China promoted the Shanghai Cooperation Organization to establish the regional anti-terror institutions which take Tashkent as the permanent headquarter. After “the Shanghai Cooperation Organization’s Conceive of Cooperation to Combating Terrorism, Separatism and Extremism” was signed in 2005, China further signed “the 2007-2009 Cooperation Program of Combating Terrorism, Separatism and Extremism,, “the Programs Agreement of Joint Anti-terrorism Actions within the territory of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Member States” and “Agreement of Identifying and Cutting off Infiltrating Channels of Terrorism, Separatism and Extremism within the Territory of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Member States ” in June 2006 when China hosted the fifth anniversary of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization summit in Shanghai. In addition, China has successively participated in several bilateral and multilateral joint military exercises against terrorism in the framework of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization; China has also actively participated in international anti-terrorism exchange and cooperation in the framework of APEC, the ASEAN Regional Forum and the Asia-Europe Meeting.

3. China’s active carrying out and promotion of the mechanism of international bilateral cooperation against terrorism.

China has established bilateral cooperation mechanisms of anti-terror consultations with the United States, Russia, Great Britain, France, Germany, Pakistan, India and other countries and has maintained fruitful cooperation against terrorism with Australia and many other countries, of which, the US anti-terrorism cooperation has made significant progress. After 9/11, the Sino-US cooperation against terrorism first focused on the exchange of information, cutting off the financial resources of terrorist organizations and jointly supporting the Pakistani anti-terrorism. In October 2001, with the US request, China sealed off the border with Afghanistan which provided an important support for the US anti-terrorism military operations in

Afghanistan. And then, China and the United States have also established long-term mechanisms for exchanges and cooperation, as well as the financial anti-terrorism working group. The US formally listed the "East Turkistan Islamic Movement" on the list of terrorist organizations in August 2002. With the help of China, the US, Afghanistan, and Kyrgyzstan, this organization was included in the UN Security Council list of the International Terrorist Organizations. The FBI established an office in Beijing, which is intended to facilitate both sides to further take actions to fight against terrorism, drug trafficking, arms smuggling and illegal migration and other transnational criminal activities. China has also actively participated in Afghanistan's post-war reconstruction with the international community.

The China's performance of international cooperation against terrorism has been generally appreciated by the international community. S. Simon, an American scholar said that: "for the international joint anti-terrorism, China's assistance is essential to prevent future terrorist attacks." (Simon, 2004). In recent years, the international community has maintained concerns over the Middle East and the anti-terrorism situation of the Great Middle East. As a permanent member of the Security Council, China's role in fighting against terrorism has been enhanced. This mainly is represented in the following areas:

First, China actively supports and promotes the United Nations and its Security Council-led international anti-terrorism cooperation to ward the right direction. China has repeatedly stressed on various occasions at the United Nations that China opposes linking terrorism with certain nations and religions and is against double standards on the terrorism issue. The clear position has won the trust and respect of the international community, especially the majority of Middle Eastern Islamic countries. The Middle East is a terrorism-prone area, so those countries are the ones who support international

anti-terrorism, who in large scale support the fights against terrorism in Middle East countries. The Afghanistan war launched by the United States to combat the al-Qaeda group and the Taliban regime which was verified by evidence was supported by the United Nations, China and other powers, as well as Islamic countries.

Second, China has strengthened negotiations on anti-terrorism with the Middle East countries and actively supported the ideas and initiatives of the Middle East countries' anti-terror cooperation. Shortly after the 9/11 incident in 2001, China actively supported the Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak's idea of convening an international conference on terrorism. The Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Zhang Qiyue said on December 27, 2001 that the majority of Arab countries are also victims of international terrorism. China has attached great importance to this issue and has understood the concerns and positions of Arab countries. China appreciated Egypt's active role in anti-terrorism and supported President Mubarak on the idea of convening an international conference on terrorism and was willing to work with the majority of the Arab and Islamic countries, including Egypt to strengthen consultation and coordination in the fight against terrorism.

Finally, China has actively participated in the mediation of the Middle East trouble spots. China always believes that it should take efforts to eradicate the root causes of terrorism, so China strengthened its participation in the Middle East troubled areas. A large-scale military conflict broke out between Israel and Lebanon in the summer of 2006. The Chinese government adopted a series of positive actions to deal with this sudden regional conflicts including sending the former Chinese Middle East envoy Sun Bigan to mediate on August 6; joining hands with France to promote the United Nations to adopt Resolution 1701 on the suppression of the Israel-Lebanon conflict on August 12. Premier Wen Jiabao announced that China would provide 40 million yuan as the humanitarian assistance to Lebanon on

September 18 and at the same time, the Chinese UN peacekeeping force stationed in Lebanon was raised to 1,000. The international community and other regional countries held a positive attitude toward China's mediation in the conflict between Israel and Lebanon, and believed that "an increasingly confident China is showing its positive impact to the United Nations" and the above actions is the "part of efforts the international community made to stop the conflict between Israel and Hezbollah" (Zhang & Huang, 2003: 333-334). Lebanon, Syria and other Arab countries welcomed and thanked China. Israel also cautiously welcomed this initiative. In addition, the positive role of China in the settlement of the Sudan Darfur issue has also received international attention and appreciation.

IV. Conclusion

In short, the governance over terrorism in the Middle East cannot be achieved overnight. Facts have proved that the Afghan and Iraq wars launched by the United States since the new century did not receive the effect of "once for all," but resulted in the spread of terrorism. Because of that, the Chinese government has insisted with the guidance of Chinese humanistic ideas to form its own clear anti-terrorism policies and initiatives which are not only consistent with the purposes and principles of the UN Charter and the internationally recognized norms, but also objectively take concerns of the Islamic Middle East countries and peoples into consideration. Meanwhile, with the strengthening national power and expanding oversea interests, China's participations in international consultations on the Middle East matters and diplomacy efforts in regional contentious issues have been significantly enhanced. China's policies and diplomatic practices have been acknowledged and praised by the international society. However, the world is far from being peaceful. The traditional and non-traditional security threats are intertwined

and the local conflicts including international terrorism and hotspot issues are continual and even heating up. Therefore, there is still a long way to enhance international and regional security cooperation and oppose all forms of terrorism. As a responsible power, China will continue to enhance the participation and cooperation on anti-terrorism and make greater contributions to the peace and development of the Middle East and the world.

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