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SOME REFLECTIONS ON THE CONCEPT OF TERRORISM IN INTERNATIONAL LEGISLATION

CZU: 323.28:341 **DOI: https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.12719874**

Abstract

After the end of the bipolar conflagration, there were several cardinal transformations of the model of world order and international security architecture. Thus, in the post-bipolar period, the understanding of international security issues underwent essential changes, given that the main threat to peace and security shifted from nuclear arms to international terrorism. It should be noted that this scourge has undergone numerous transformations, becoming a global threat by the end of the 20th century: from a local phenomenon, terrorism has become a transnational one. The tragic events of September 11, 2001, as well as numerous other terrorist attacks in recent years, have demonstrated that the growing risks and consequences of terrorism cannot be ignored. The article will highlight the issue of the definition of terrorism in international legislation.

Keywords: t*errorism, international terrorism, international law, international legislation.*

Terrorism is a complex and multi-faceted phenomenon that exists in various types and forms. Despite the accumulated experience of political analysis over the past decade, science is still unable to answer a number of questions that have important theoretical and practical significance. Despite the diversity of definitions in scientific literature and in documents adopted at the domestic and international levels, there is no unified interpretation of the phenomenon under consideration.

An important argument demonstrating the relevance and significance of the topic relates to categorical-legal aspects, regarding the lack of a generally accepted conceptualization of terrorism as a phenomenon and of international terrorism as a separate issue, given its transnational character, as well as the lack of a common international position regarding the category of state terrorism. The interpretation of terrorism differs significantly in the national legislation of states, and political differences and double standards hinder constructive dialogue among actors in international communication. Currently, there is no single universal international treaty that clearly defines the concepts of "terrorism" and "international terrorism."

The problem of developing a universally recognized definition of international terrorism is constantly in the focus of the global community, international scholars, and international organizations, primarily the United Nations. In the following, we

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will consider various approaches to defining terrorism and international terrorism, contained in international legal acts.

The term "terrorism" itself to designate a new composition of an "international" crime was first used in international law in 1930 at the International Conference for the Unification of Criminal Law held in Brussels, to characterize actions "capable of giving rise to a common danger." Terrorism at that time was understood as a form of mass political crime. In 1934, the League of Nations put the issue of terrorism on the international agenda, and the first attempt was made to develop an international convention to combat terrorist activities. The definition of terrorism developed by the League of Nations in 1937 is the first officially recorded interpretation of terrorism. In the convention, terrorism is defined as "any criminal acts directed against a state and intended or calculated to create a state of terror in the minds of particular persons, groups of persons or the general public" (Vasecova, Elena, 2012: 29).

The most active attempts to define "terrorism" were made in the 1970s-1980s. In 1972, the United Nations General Assembly established an "ad hoc" committee on terrorism – the Ad Hoc Committee on International Terrorism of the UN General Assembly – to discuss measures to combat this dangerous phenomenon. Unfortunately, the work of this body did not result in the development of a universally accepted definition of this crime. Currently, there is no universal definition of the concept of terrorism and its derivatives – national (internal), international, recognized by the international community of states.

Thus, some representatives of certain states believe that it would be better to develop several conventions, each of which would relate to a specific category of terrorist acts, instead of trying to develop a general convention in this field. Others, on the contrary, have pointed out that there is no need for a definition of international terrorism, which it is useless and that attempting to develop one is undesirable.

In 1977, the Ad Hoc Committee on International Terrorism resumed its work after a four-year break to implement the provisions of Resolution 32/147 of December 16, 1977, based on the report submitted by the Committee to the 35th session of the United Nations General Assembly. During its work, some UN member states called for joining existing international agreements on combating terrorism and achieving the development of a universal definition of the concept of international terrorism (Timofeeva, Natalya, 2009).

In 1979, another meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee on International Terrorism took place. According to the Report adopted at this meeting, the Committee made the following recommendations: to ensure close international cooperation in the fight against terrorism; to recommend that states that have not yet done so join existing international agreements to combat terrorism; to take measures at the national level to eliminate the problem of terrorism; for states to refrain from organizing, facilitating

and participating in terrorist acts in other states and to prohibit on their territory activities aimed at committing such acts, and others.

Unfortunately, the UN was not able to ensure the implementation of relevant resolutions and the effective application of conventions concluded under its auspices. In addition, states did not properly consider the practice of international relations in the issue of combating terrorist acts, which had previously taken place. The problem of developing a common concept of international terrorism remained unresolved.

The UNGA Resolutions of 1989, 1991, 1993-1996 on measures to prevent international terrorism repeat in their main texts the main provisions of UNGA Resolution 42/159 of 1987. It is recognized that "the effectiveness of the fight against terrorism could be enhanced by developing a generally acceptable definition of international terrorism" (UNGA Resolution 46/51 of December 9, 1991. Measures to eliminate international terrorism).

An attempt to define the concept of "international terrorism" was made at the Eighth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders in 1990.

As a result of unsuccessful attempts to develop an acceptable definition of international terrorism for all states, a certain polarization of opinions has emerged among political scientists and legal experts. Some terrorism experts believe that due to the lack of prospects for developing a universally accepted definition of international terrorism, it is not advisable to strive to solve this problem. They propose to limit the agreement to joint efforts to combat specific types of criminal acts, such as hostage-taking. At the same time, the vast majority of researchers recognize that effective and comprehensive cooperation between states in this area is possible only if there is an agreement on a comprehensive definition of terrorism. This view is shared by the United Nations General Assembly, in a resolution specifically stating that "the effectiveness of the fight against terrorism could be enhanced by developing a generally acceptable definition of international terrorism."

The first and so far only consensus definition of a terrorist act is contained in Resolution No. 49/60 "Measures to eliminate international terrorism," adopted by the General Assembly in 1994. It has subsequently been used in some other documents. It reads as follows: "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" (Barri, Hassimiu, 2017:35).

Another definition of terrorism is contained in Article 2 of the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism (1999):

"1. Any person commits an offence... if... provides or collects funds... in order to carry out:

a) an act which constitutes an offence within the scope of and as defined in one of the treaties listed in the annex;
b) any other act intended to cause death or serious bodily injury to a civilian, or to any other person not taking an active part in the hostilities in a situation of armed conflict, when the purpose of such act, by its nature or context, is to intimidate a population, or to compel a government or an international organization to do or to abstain from doing any act" (Convenție internațională privind reprimarea finanțării terorismului, 1996).

In its subsequent resolutions from 1997 to 2008, the UN General Assembly recommended that states consider the development of a comprehensive convention on international terrorism in the near future. India proposed in 1997 that a convention on terrorism be adopted at the UN level, which would establish a common understanding and definition of terrorism and thus create a legal framework for coordinated efforts to combat international terrorism. Unfortunately, India's proposed Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism was never adopted. This can be explained by the excessive politicization of the phenomenon, as well as the particular requirements of counter-terrorism activities involving intelligence information and the work of special services. All of this imposes objective limitations on the scope and nature of international cooperation in the field.

In UN Security Council Resolution 1566 (2004), it is stated that "...criminal acts, including against civilians, committed with the intent to cause death or serious bodily injury, or taking hostages with the purpose to provoke a state of terror in the general public" can never be justified, nor can a group of persons or individuals intimidate a population or compel a government or an international organization to do or abstain from doing any act that constitutes offences under the international conventions and protocols relating to terrorism... (UN Security Council Resolution 1566 (2004) of October 8, 2004 Doc. S/RES/1566).

It is necessary to mention that most international legal documents are dedicated to the fight against terrorism in general, not just its international version. Thus, in the UN's universal anti-terrorism conventions, "international terrorism" is mentioned only in the Hostages Convention of 1979, in the preamble of the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material of 1980 (amended in 2005), and in the preamble of the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Maritime Navigation of 1988. All criminal acts against which UN conventions have been developed have been called "an expression of international terrorism" in the 1994 Declaration on Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism. A similar rule exists in the UN's Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. Therefore, most conventions and other international legal documents focus on combating a wide range of manifestations of terrorism (Chernyad'eva, Natal'ya, 2018:97).

According to the Report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, which was established by Kofi Annan, former Secretary-General of the United Nations, in November 2003, to develop proposals on ways to strengthen international security, the definition of international terrorism should include:

- the recognition in the preamble that the use of force by a state against civilians is regulated by the Geneva Conventions and other documents and, if applied on a wide scale, constitutes a war crime by the relevant individuals or a crime against humanity;
- confirmation that acts falling under the scope of previous counterterrorism conventions constitute terrorism, and a statement that they are crimes under international law; and confirmation that terrorism during armed conflict is prohibited by the Geneva Conventions and Protocols;
- a reference to the definitions contained in the 1999 International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism and in Security Council resolution 1566 (2004).
- description of terrorism as any act, in addition to those acts already specified in existing conventions on various aspects of terrorism, the Geneva Conventions, and Security Council Resolution 1566 (2004), that aims to cause the death of civilians or other non-combatants, or serious bodily injury to them, when the purpose of such an act, by its nature or context, is to intimidate a population or compel a government or an international organization to do or to abstain from doing any act (Report of the High Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change (A/59/565+Corr.1, 2004).

In 2006, the UN member states adopted the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy aimed at strengthening efforts to combat terrorism at all levels: national, regional, and international. Above all, this strategy identifies terrorism as one of the most serious threats to international peace and security, and unequivocally and resolutely condemns it in all its forms and manifestations. The UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy places the task of promptly acceding to existing international conventions and protocols against terrorism and their implementation at the top of the list for states, and proposes to make every effort to coordinate and conclude a comprehensive convention on international terrorism.

The document also provides a range of measures that need to be taken for effective counterterrorism efforts, which will be further discussed in the following chapters of the study: - measures to eliminate the conditions that contribute to the spread of terrorism; - measures to prevent and combat terrorism; - measures to strengthen the capacity of states to prevent and combat terrorism, and to strengthen the role of the United Nations system in this area; - measures to ensure universal

respect for human rights and the rule of law as a fundamental basis for counterterrorism efforts (United Nations Counter-Terrorism Strategy, 2006).

Efforts to develop a common definition of terrorism are also being made at the regional level. Work in this direction is being carried out within the framework of the activities of 11 regional organizations and includes 24 documents, including 15 conventions, 2 agreements, 7 protocols and amendments (Cerebrova, Anastasiya, 2020:30).

The peculiarity of this level is that many of the mentioned documents refer back to the previously adopted international declarations and resolutions of the UN Security Council, while a consensus definition of terrorism is either absent or replaced by a list of individual terrorist acts.

It should be noted in particular the European Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism adopted within the Council of Europe on January 27, 1977, which was signed at a time when acts of international and national terrorism had not yet become so widespread. In a sense, it can be said that signing this Convention was a preemptive, preventive step in the fight against growing terrorism. The main goal of this Convention is to take effective measures to ensure that persons committing terrorist acts are not exempt from punishment.

The Council of Europe Convention on the Prevention of Terrorism (Warsaw, 16.05.2005) does not provide a detailed definition of terrorism, but defines "terrorist offense" as any of the offenses provided for in the treaties listed in the appendix to this Convention, which include universal international anti-terrorism treaties. In addition, according to the Convention, offenses are considered to include public incitement to commit a terrorist offense, recruitment and training of terrorists, and other acts considered ancillary (complicity, organization and direction of others, and assistance). In the same year, the Council of Europe Convention on Laundering, Search, Seizure, and Confiscation of the Proceeds from Crime and on the Financing of Terrorism was adopted, which does not provide a definition of terrorism, but introduces the concept of "financing of terrorism," referring to the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism of 1999.

It is significant that such a large supranational structure as the Council of Europe only initiated in May 2018 the creation of a group to study the feasibility of developing a definition of "terrorism". This is presumed to be necessary to modify the text of Article 1 of the Council of Europe Convention on the Prevention of Terrorism, as it only contains a description of a terrorist offense, but not terrorism as a phenomenon (Council of Europe Convention on the Prevention of Terrorism. 2005). There is no concept of terrorism in the Council of Europe's Counter-Terrorism Strategy, for 2018-2022, approved by the Committee of Ministers on July 4, 2018. The document only states that terrorism "...represents the most serious threat to international peace, security and well-being." (Council of Europe Counter-Terrorism

Strategy (2018-2022). The main objective of the Council of Europe Counter-Terrorism Strategy for 2023-2027 is to strengthen efforts to combat terrorism in Europe and beyond by eliminating not only manifestations of terrorism, but also its root causes and driving forces in the current geopolitical situation. The strategy also aims to combat the growing threat of violent extremism in Europe, the surge of abuses of new technologies for messaging, recruitment and training of terrorists, as well as the nexus between terrorist acts and violations of the laws of armed conflict, witnessed in recent times in the context of Russian Federation aggression against Ukraine. The Strategy also notes that the terrorist threats associated with ISIL/ISIS or "Al-Qaeda" have decreased in recent years, but effective and comprehensive means must be found to prevent their resurgence (Council of Europe Counter-Terrorism Strategy for 2023-2027). The strategy also envisages 24 actions targeted at strengthening preventive, repressive and protection capacities of national authorities through the development of a set of binding and non-binding legal standards, analytical reports, and model tools.

The European Union only recognized terrorism as one of the most serious threats to democracy, human rights, as well as economic and social development of member states after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. The events led to a significant change, which consisted of a shift from political and programmatic statements to legislative actions (Zubzhicki, Valdemar 2017: 261).

The most complete definition of an act of terrorism undoubtedly is the definition contained in the "Common Position" adopted by the European Union on December 27, 2001. Reflecting the latest trends, the Common Position distinguishes between an act or action of a terrorist nature committed by individuals, groups of individuals or terrorist organizations. This distinction is important because it leaves some room for maneuver by classifying individual actions with a terrorist nature without taking into account the associated problem of classifying groups or movements as terrorist in all aspects (Journal officiel des Communautés européennes. Position commune du conseil du 27 décembre 2001, relative à l'application de mesures spécifiques en vue **de lutter contre le terrorisme).**

In the European Union, the definition given in the EU Council Framework Decision of 13 June 2002 on combating terrorism (amended on 28 November 2008) is considered to be the main one. "The Council relied on the model proposed by the UN General Assembly in the definition of aggression of 1974: a list of specific criminal acts that become terrorist under certain conditions/circumstances." The document lists a set of terrorist acts. These are criminal acts committed with the purpose of: "seriously intimidating a population; unlawfully compelling a government or international organization to do or refrain from doing any act; seriously destabilizing or destroying the fundamental structures of a state or an international organization." (Council

Framework Decision of 13.06.2002 on combating terrorism (2002/475/JHA) (OJ L 164, 22.6.2002, p. 3).

Nine types of offenses are classified as terrorist acts:

1) attack on a person with the intention of killing them;
2) infliction of serious bodily injury;
3) kidnapping and hostage-taking;
4) the serious destruction of government or public structures, transportation and information systems, oil platforms located on the continental shelf;
5) hijacking of a ship or aircraft;
6) production, transportation, supply and use of explosives and weapons for military operations, biological, nuclear, chemical weapons, research for the creation of these types of weapons;
7) the use of hazardous substances, actions that cause fires, floods, or explosions that threaten the lives of the population;
8) damaging water and electricity systems, as well as other vital resources;
9) threatening to do the above (Council Framework Decision of 13.06.2002 on combating terrorism (2002/475/JHA) (OJ L 164, 22.6.2002, p. 3) Amended by: Council Framework Decision 2008/919/JHA of 28.11.2008. 09.12.2008. Article 1.).

In 1999, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) proposed the following definition: "Terrorism means any act of violence or the threat thereof regardless of the motives or intentions perpetrated to carry out an individual or collective criminal plan with the aim of terrorizing people or threatening to harm them, or endangering their lives, honor, dignity, security, or rights, or exposing the environment or facilities, or public or private property, or occupying or seizing them, or endangering national resources or international facilities, or threatening stability, territorial integrity, political unity, or sovereignty of independent states." (Convention of the Organization of the Islamic Conference on Combating International Terrorism, 1 July 1999)

At the same time, the Convention defines the concept of "terrorist crime" as any crime which was committed, begun or participated in for the purpose of achieving a terrorist goal in any of the Contracting States, or against its citizens, property, or interests or foreign objects and citizens on its territory, and which entails punishment in accordance with its domestic law. The Convention also includes as terrorist crimes the offenses provided for in "anti-terrorism" conventions of the United Nations, except for those which are excluded on the basis of the legislation of the Contracting States or states that have not ratified them.

The African Union in 1999 defined terrorism as: "Any act which is a violation of the criminal laws of a State Party and which may endanger the life, physical integrity or freedom ... of any person... and (i) which is intended to intimidate, coerce, suppress, or induce any government, body, institution, the general public or any

segment thereof, to do or abstain from doing any act … or (ii) which is committed against any public service providing essential services to the public or creating a public emergency situation; or (iii) which is intended to destabilize or overthrow the constitutional order in a State." (OAU Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism, 1999).

In these and in similar international agreements of a regional nature, concluded within the framework of the Organization of American States, the South Asian Association Regional Cooperation, the definition of the term "international terrorism" has not been developed.

In the Shanghai Convention on Combating Terrorism, Separatism and Extremism (2001), a definition is provided in which terrorism is also viewed primarily as a type of criminal activity. Terrorism, as stated in this document, is:

a) any act which is recognized as a criminal offense in one of the treaties listed in the Appendix to the Convention and which is defined as such in that treaty;
b) any other act aimed at causing the death of any civilian or any other person who is not taking an active part in the hostilities in a situation of armed conflict, or serious bodily injury to them, as well as causing significant damage to any property, as well as the organization, planning of such an act, aiding its commission, incitement to it, when the purpose of such an act due to its nature or context is to intimidate the population, disrupt public security, or force the authorities or international organization to take any action or refrain from taking it, and prosecuted criminally in accordance with national legislation of the parties (Shanhajskaya Konvenciya o bor'be s terrorizmom, separatizmom i ekstremizmom ot 15.06.2001: 143).

An explicit difference of the Shanghai Convention from the previously discussed documents is the development of the concept of "extremism" and the differentiation of it from "terrorism". Let's dwell on this in a little more detail. Often, "extremism" and "terrorism" are considered synonymous terms that have multiple interpretations.

The CIS countries became concerned about the problem of terrorism much earlier than Europeans as a whole, which was reflected in the basic documents. A general interpretation of the studied phenomenon was first given in the law "On Combating Terrorism", adopted on December 8, 1998. Terrorist acts included actions (for example, explosions, arson) that pose a "danger of death to people, cause significant material damage, or trigger other socially dangerous consequences." Separately, the presence of a characteristic purpose was emphasized – "violating public safety, intimidating the population, or influencing decision-making by authorities..." (Model'nyj zakon O bor'be s terrorizmom (prinyat postanovleniem na

dvenadcatom plenarnom. Assamblei gosudarstv - uchastnikov SNG ot 8 dekabrya 1998).

According to the Treaty on Cooperation of the States Members of the Commonwealth of Independent States in Combating Terrorism (Minsk, 04.06.1999), terrorism is a criminal offense that is punishable by law, committed with the aim of disrupting public safety, influencing decisions of governmental bodies, intimidating the population, and manifested in the form of violence or threats of violence against physical or legal persons; destruction (damage) or threats of destruction (damage) to property and other material objects that create a danger to human life; causing significant material damage or other socially dangerous consequences; an attack on the life of a government or public figure committed to cease their state or other political activities, or as revenge for such activities; an attack on a representative of a foreign state or an employee of an international organization enjoying international protection, as well as on office premises or vehicles of persons enjoying international protection; other acts falling under the definition of terrorism in accordance with the national legislation of the Parties, as well as other generally recognized international legal acts aimed at combating terrorism.

The Model Law within the CIS "About Counteraction to Terrorism" of December 3, 2009 established the concept of terrorism as "the ideology of violence and the practice of influencing decision-making by state authorities, local governments or international organizations associated with the intimidation of the population and/or other forms of illegal violent actions." (Model'nyj zakon O protivodejstvii terrorizmu, 2009)

An analysis of doctrinal research and legal documents of the UN system and regional associations allows us to propose the most significant features of terrorism that reflect the political and legal essence of this phenomenon.

Firstly, terrorism is a complex socio-political phenomenon that must be recognized as a crime in all its forms.

Secondly, terrorism is based on political violence against individuals, states, international organizations, the global community as a whole, or its individual parts.

Thirdly, terrorism is always politically motivated. Its destructive power is aimed at changing the existing socio-political system, undermining it, destabilizing it, and destroying the foundations of civilization. To achieve this, the tactics of instilling social fear and horror are used, which in specific terrorist acts can constitute an independent criminal goal.

Fourthly, terrorism uses a tactic of indirect influence on political actors through criminal impact on the civilian population.

Fifthly, it is carried out primarily in the form of organized activity (Chernyad'eva, Natal'ya, 2018: 97).

To harmonize national legislations and establish global rules and mechanisms to combat terrorism, it is appropriate to establish a single definition of "terrorism" at the UN level. It should be noted that the absence of a universally recognized definition of "terrorism" and "international terrorism" does not hinder the development of international cooperation in the fight against terrorism. However, the current task of the international community is to develop a common definition that should include the most general characteristics enshrined in already adopted anti-terrorism conventions and protocols. The developed definition should be enshrined in a comprehensive convention that should, if possible, fill all the gaps in the international legal regulation of various aspects of international cooperation in the fight against terrorism.

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