

# Fighting Terrorism

## What can be done?

**Context**      **Political leaders and security organisations from around the world have been trying to put in place new measures to fight the war against terrorists after last Tuesday's attack on America.**

President George W Bush has already called for a lifting of the ban on US involvement in assassinations overseas. There have also been calls for the CIA to work with former members of known terrorist organisations to widen their knowledge of these groups.

Mr Bush also hopes to get new security measures in place including increased powers on detaining non-US citizens, phone tapping, email surveillance, tracing laundered money and tougher penalties for those assisting terrorists.

We must not fight terrorism with terror. We have to look very hard the reasons behind such attacks - that does not mean they are justified but we have to accept that nobody chooses terror as a career. I believe desperation, the feel of hopelessness and the absence of a peaceful alternative for redress against a much more powerful opponent drive people to take such drastic action.

I therefore think it is about time the UN became more democratic. The way to do that is to do away with the right of veto enjoyed by the five permanent members of the Security Council. Surely nobody can make a case for the current system as being a fair and democratic one. Yes let's attack terrorists wherever they are, but let us give them an alternative - a peaceful one.

***Sherif El-Alfy, UK***

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Governments all around the world should put aside their political ambition and their own private agenda to fully (and I mean fully) address the ongoing highly sensitive problems of society. If these problems are not addressed, we can fear that extremists will take the law in their own hands thus giving birth to political violence or in other words, terrorism. Groups or individuals that support race-hate, anti-government policy, etc, must be looked upon as a potential problem that we should not just swept under the carpet until it becomes too late.

Action must be taken - not just against Osama Bin Laden but any groups that can have the potential to damage society with their beliefs. Remember we are not fighting against the Islamic faith or a culture of people, we are fighting for the right to live freely and in peace. This is nothing new, and it is time that governments unite to ensure the preservation of humanity.

***Norman, Australia***

To suggest that the US simply fold its hands and let these people get away with this, and hope that they go away is not realistic and isn't going to happen. They must be tracked down and eliminated permanently. There really isn't any other way to restore security to the rest of the world.

***Jim Hubbell, Texas, USA***

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All religions preach tolerance and peace - turn the other cheek. I do not think that these philosophies preach cowardice but more a way to defuse the hate and prejudice we face daily. It takes a lot of courage not to hit back, especially when you know you have the means to do so. Somewhere, somehow, someone must say "Enough of reprisals - it ends here and it starts with me". Then the wounds can start to heal and trust restored. I know this is an idealistic scenario and may never materialise, knowing the dark side of human nature. But like many others who hope for peace, I pray that humankind will someday come to realise this and hope that it won't be too little, too late.

***Felix Tan, Singapore***

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The terrible events of last week have produced world-wide sympathy for all those who have lost family, friends, colleagues and loved ones. Ironically it presents the US with a unique opportunity. Rather than react in the predictable - though understandable way - of mounting a US-led military campaign against the perceived enemy, it can call upon the world at large to bring them to justice. It is time to give the United Nations the authority to deal with this through the international justice system. It could be the beginning of genuine world peace which in the end is the only way to defeat terrorism.

***Philip S. Hall, England, UK***

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Get away from our thirst for oil so we would not have to get involved with non-democratic states

***D. Cocker, England***

Destroying terrorist networks will accomplish nothing unless it is supported by addressing the cause of Arab/ Islamic anger, most specifically the US' shameful "green light" to Israeli aggression on Palestinians. Purely destroying the existing terrorist networks will be as effective as taking an aspirin for cancer.

***Anthony C, Australia***

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Terrorism may be a growth industry, but like every other industry it costs money to run properly. I think that some of the measures to freeze terrorist assets, announced today by the Chancellor, Gordon Brown, might be a first step down the right road.

***Henry Case, UK***

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Would I accept greater surveillance measures in order to combat terror attacks? Along with every other sane person who has seen what's happened in New York, my answer is an unhesitating yes! Furthermore, it's no longer enough to leave anti-terrorist measures and intelligence gathering to the agencies configured to deal with the problem. Every citizen of every country needs to become the eyes and ears of the intelligence agencies. It is, after all our lives, and those of our families that are at risk.

***Chris, England***

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Regarding hand luggage, maybe a standard clear plastic bag with few pockets would make it easier for staff to check?

***Pete Wilson, UK***

At times of such great tragedy, when natural feelings and emotions run high, it is difficult to interject cool logic into any discussion. Such pragmatic arguments are generally considered "unseemly" or "inappropriate" whilst the tragedy itself remains fresh in people's minds. Nevertheless, the ensuing economic catastrophe following the attack on New York, further enforced by the doom and gloom prophecies of the media, has brought results far greater than whatever were the original aims of the terrorists who carried out this atrocity.

To accept this situation is to accept defeat at the hands of those who wish to harm us. We should all refuse to have our lives so disrupted and so changed. To do this we must adopt the "business as usual" slogan of the London 'Blitz': continue to travel and continue to spend, revitalising the economy and demonstrating that that the peoples of the democracies will not be cowed by acts of terrorism.

***John Gant, UK***

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The lifting of sanctions and the cancelling of third world debt, will do more to halt terrorism than all the bombs in the world.

***Luke Rothwell, UK***

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Many of the terrorists involved in previous incidents and indeed this latest atrocity have all the necessary papers or are citizens of the countries they attack. Terrorists are distinguished by their actions not by their nationality. Unfortunately by the time they act it is all too late.

***David Needham, UK***

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First at all, rename the terrorist as guerrilla or as a fighter for human rights, then start negotiation and political dialogue about their demands. If you have a problem about it call for envoys from Macedonia, they will help you to endure all this easier. We are all with you.

***S.T., Macedonia***

It would be a mistake to identify Osama bin Laden as the principal or the only source of threat to the international community. The principal threat is the new kind of international terrorism as advocated by the so-called jihadis from Pakistan and Afghanistan. India has been facing this crisis for the past 20 years. More than 40,000 lives have been lost till date, most of them being civilians. But surprising is the fact that the US had been ignoring India's plea to recognize this terrorism and now when they themselves have been afflicted with it, suddenly they want to bomb Afghanistan.

***Aloke Bajpai, India / France***

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One solution could stop it. This solution will stop refugees coming to UK and will stop what happens to the state. The solution is to remove all leaders from the Middle East as these people haven't been elected by democratic means but by imposing themselves as their leader. Let the citizens of the Middle East elect their leader and we will see. What the UN has done to East Timor should be applied to the all Middle East, North Africa and Africa.

***Badreddine, UK***

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Suicide terrorism predates the existence of the State of Israel, is not caused by Israeli policy and will not be solved by decreasing American ties to Israel. While poverty can contribute to terrorism, it is totally simplistic to view these acts only as a response to poverty and/or suppression. Many poor societies do not produce suicide terrorists. Furthermore, the terrorist hijackers appear to have been middle- class, highly educated, with "something to lose." Several of them were married with children.

***Eve, Israel***

The most chilling aspect of last Tuesday's atrocity has been the reaction of some bystanders in the West. Until now, I had never suspected the depth of the moral corrosion that has eaten into the heart of anti-American prejudice and the degree to which it has corrupted "liberal" opinion. The warped moral relativism which has led some to attempt to rationalise, even excuse such a monstrous act of evil is not only sickening, but frightening. Tell me, how can such people seemingly find it easier to sympathise with terrorists and dictators than with the families of the innocent office workers who flung themselves to their deaths from the burning World Trade Centre?

***Henry Case, UK***

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I would like to send my love and sympathy to the people of the USA and I deplore the terrorism which caused so much suffering and loss of life. My hope is that their leaders will realise that spending trillions of dollars on national missile defence could never have prevented what has happened. The only way to remove the fear of further atrocities is to turn one's enemies into one's friends. Bombing and retaliation can never do that.

***Dr Jenny Gibson, UK***

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The obvious answer is to find him and detain him. The 'spy satellites' are being deployed but it seems to me that this is a somewhat flawed idea. Not only will he be 'lying low', but he can take steps to disguise himself and his environment. However the most significant problem is that the world's press are relaying all of the plans (ostensibly), and he must therefore be aware of exactly what is going on, without resorting to his own intelligence systems.

***Alan Challoner, Wales, UK***

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I would say to United States of America that they should make their policies sincere with the Middle East countries so that these countries will help

them in gaining control of global terrorism. Otherwise it will not be fruitful for them if they only take Britain and other western countries into their confidence.

***Prince Irshad, India***

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It's natural for Americans to want retribution. If any other country was attacked at this massive scale, they would have reacted the same. I am not so concerned about what happens right now. However, it's time we, the developed countries, realized that we cannot ignore this problem anymore. As someone here said, we have a lot to lose and most of the terrorist countries have nothing to lose. Unless developed countries take upon themselves to bring about democracy and education in those places, we will forever be vulnerable to such attacks.

We must try to understand that certain people are ready to die essentially because they have nothing to look for in life, no hope, only religious leaders who want control in the name of religion. It's not a single attack by the White House that will win the war, but a long, sustained and fully committed cooperative action by the democratic countries. I truly hope we can unite and bring terrorist countries out of utter hopelessness.

***K, USA***

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If the US government stopped blindly backing Israel, I think we'd see a dramatic drop in terrorism. Move an international force into Israel to make peace there once and for all. Otherwise Israeli acts will simply continue to generate suicide bombers.

Several people have also mentioned American funding of the IRA. It will be very interesting to see if this "war" against terrorism extends to South Boston, or if it will only be fought in the conveniently distant cities of the Mid-East.

***Marcus W, US ex-pat in Japan***



Instead of trying to find who did this, it is far more clever to understand why they did this. There should be something wrong that causes somebody to sacrifice their life to take others' lives with them. No-one wants to die unless their life is too desperate to live, unless living gives negative return. Military action gives no answer. They will strike back. This is a symptom of interventionist's American foreign policy which needs to be revised. Peaceful talk is no avail because they have no chance to talk. American and British are double standard. Every human being is equal only when it is white. Think again.

***Supruet Thavornyutikarn, UK***

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Like almost every one in this world, I was shocked by this irresponsible act. I also agree that those responsible must be found and punished. Even if the US foreign policy is not good for them, killing innocent people is not the way to express anger. However, the solution to this problem does not consist of a single step! Finding the right criminals is important. It is clear that the US somehow found the criminals before conducting the search! Jumping to conclusions is not good. The US must provide solid evidence before rushing into war. It is likely that more innocent people are about to die! Also the US must change its policy in the Middle East as an integral part of the solution. Because it is likely that out of 10 million angry people, one may find one person who is crazy enough to do another attack. It is right that the US is the most powerful nation, but they must realize that other nations do exist.

***Sami Alharbi, Saudi Arabia***