



Received: 24-06-2022

Accepted: 04-08-2022

International Journal of Advanced Multidisciplinary Research and Studies

ISSN: 2583-049X

The impact of the Corona pandemic on the spread of terrorism in the world

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Abstract

As a result of the world's preoccupation with confronting the new epidemic of Corona, with which many terrorist groups in more than one region sought to prove that they are still capable of action and movement. The terrorist organizations called on their elements to exploit the epidemic to carry out terrorist operations in the world; This is mainly due to the fact that the organization, which lost its main areas of influence in Iraq, Syria and other regions of the Middle East, where these organizations tried to exploit this epidemic to reorganize its ranks again, and gain new strengths, especially with the announcement of the international coalition against this US-led organization. On March 20, 2020, the United States withdrew some of its

forces in Iraq and repositioned them for fear of the outbreak of the new Corona virus among the coalition forces. Studies conducted by the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Maria Zakharova in May 2020, stated that the organization decided to exploit the conditions of the world under the pressure of "Covid-19" to escalate its attacks, as it carried out more than 20 attacks against the Kurds in separate areas, which led to the injury and death of dozens, and it succeeded. In smuggling elements from prisons, this is a very dangerous matter, because it confirms the organization's continued ability to recruit and include more elements, and what this means is the possibility of an escalation of its terrorist activities in the future.

Keywords: Corona Pandemic, Terrorist Groups

1. Introduction

Despite expectations that the emerging Corona virus "Covid-19" may lead to a decline in the threat of terrorism in many of the main areas in which extremist organizations are active as a humanitarian crisis facing all humanity, the recent developments indicate the opposite, and illustrate how these efforts sought. The organizations seek to use this epidemic to enhance their influence, especially in crisis areas. These groups also took advantage of the ban and closure measures implemented by most countries in the world to promote their ideologies, reorganize their ranks and carry out their terrorist activities in many regions of the world.

A recent study revealed the effects resulting from the outbreak of the Corona virus on the activity of terrorist organizations around the world, confirming that their rates increased significantly, despite the security precautions on the part of the authorities at the level of most countries to confront extremism and terrorism. The study, published by the Trends Center for Research and Consulting, under the title: "Trends of terrorist activity in 2022: growth or decline?", that "there are many complex and overlapping effects of the "Covid-19" pandemic, on terrorist activity globally, on the one hand, the pandemic provided some Opportunities that terrorist organizations can exploit, but on the other hand, they have contributed to reducing the activities of these organizations." The study published by the Trends Center for Research and Consultation under the title: "Trends of terrorist activity in 2022: growth or decline?", that "there are many complex and overlapping effects of the "Covid-19" pandemic, on terrorist activity globally, on the one hand, the pandemic provided some Opportunities that terrorist organizations can exploit, but on the other hand, they have contributed to reducing the activities of these organizations. Therefore, this article dealt with the impact of the Corona pandemic on the spread of terrorism in the world.

2. Headings

How did the closure policies imposed by the Corona pandemic constitute an opportunity to increase the rate of terrorism?

The closure policies and the resulting social isolation provided an opportunity to increase extremism in societies, as terrorist organizations sought to recruit some elements, especially among those affected by these policies, as a study issued by the German Foreign Ministry concluded that the extreme right in Europe sought to Attracting and recruiting anti-vaccine and

conspiracy theorists by criticizing government restrictions. According to this study, "the ban on going out and staying at home increased individuals' access to the Internet, and thus increased the possibility of accessing terrorist content, especially in light of the growing sense of social isolation and individual discontent with the closure policies."

As "the spread of the "Covid-19" epidemic directly affected efforts to combat terrorism, with some governments devoting a large part of their attention to responding to the epidemic, and achieving an effective public health response at the national level." Whereas the spread of the epidemic greatly contributed to the destabilization of the camps and prisons that hold persons suspected of links with terrorist organizations such as ISIS, and as a result of the fear of those concerned in these prisons from contracting the virus, the problems of escape and uncontrolled departure increased and exacerbated, all of which have increased in severity in the presence of Some of the difficulties related to these people, including with regard to, for example, the problem of returning some foreign ISIS elements held in camps in Iraqi Kurdistan to their country, according to the head of the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Office, Vladimir Voronkov, there is very slow progress in overcoming the legal, political and practical obstacles which prevents them from returning to their countries of origin.

On the other hand, the study warned of an increase in terrorist activity globally in 2022, as "the pace of activity of some terrorist organizations, such as the "ISIS" and "Al-Qaeda" organizations, which despite receiving painful blows over the past few years, may still exist and operate. To regroup the ranks, and to develop the means used to launch operations.

The evidence for this is that these two organizations are still present in Iraq and Syria, and in some other regions such as Afghanistan, and some African countries such as Mali, Nigeria and others. Hence, it is not envisaged that the activity of the two organizations will decline, especially since the previously presented indicators indicate that there is an opportunity for terrorist groups in general to move on the ground and carry out terrorist operations."

Terrorist groups and the political and religious exploitation of the "Covid-19" pandemic.

As soon as the outbreak of the new Corona epidemic was announced in the Chinese city of "Wuhan" in December 2019, the extremist and terrorist organizations worked to "religious" this virus, and to give it religious justifications that serve their interests; For example, ISIS interpreted the spread of the virus as a "punishment from God," and tried to interpret some Qur'anic verses that correspond to its erroneous idea, among them the twelfth verse of Surat Al-Buruj, in which God Almighty says: "The tyranny of your Lord is severely"; As an indication that the spread of this virus is a punishment from God for those who violated the teachings and principles of Islamic law.

The terrorist organizations have translated this religious vision of the emerging corona virus in their media publications, and disseminated it widely. The editorial of issue No. (226), which was issued on March 19, 2020, described the emerging corona virus as "a torment sent by God to his enemies."

While the bulletin of other terrorist organizations regarding dealing with the emerging corona virus from a religious standpoint, by issuing a document addressed to its cadres,

and its affiliates abroad, claiming that "this virus infected non-believers," in an attempt to win the sympathy of Muslims and recruit more supporters in its ranks.

It also published while other parties took advantage by publishing a document that showed the damage caused to the American economy as a result of the emerging Corona virus, and called on citizens of Western countries to review what he called "moral corruption and the usurious economy, and the injustice caused by their governments," in an attempt to exploit the religious, economic and political factor, to win hearts and minds.

Corona and terrorism... Cosmic challenges that require strengthening cooperation in confronting them

In light of the foregoing, it can be said that the "Covid-19" virus and international terrorism share several features, which can be clarified as follows: that they fall within the transnational global challenges whose impact is not limited to a specific country or region. There is no homeland or identity associated with it, as well as the new Corona virus, as it is one of the epidemics that spread across borders, as it has spread rapidly since its appearance in the Chinese city of "Wuhan", to cross to all countries of the world, developed, developing and poor, and casts negative shadows on everyone without exception.

They constitute a threat to international peace and security. Terrorism is a real and present danger, and it destabilizes security, peace, stability and development and drains billions of dollars annually. It is sufficient to note here that the cost of the war led by the United States on terrorism since the events of September 11, 2001 until the year 2019, is estimated at 5.9 trillion dollars, and this amount includes more than two trillion dollars spent on foreign operations, 924 billion dollars spent on internal security, and 353 billion dollars was spent on health care and caring for war-wounded and disabled members of US forces in conflict areas. It also represents, at the same time, a virus." "Covid-19" is a real threat to international peace and security, as the speed of its spread and the size of the losses resulting from it constitute an existential challenge not only to the international system, but to all humanity in light of the difficulty of controlling it until the present time, and its continued spread at accelerating rates, as well as its economic and social repercussions, both those related to the decline Growth, increasing unemployment, poverty and stagnation also pose a clear threat to security and stability in most countries of the world, especially if they are accompanied by violent demonstrations in protest. The failure of governments to deal with this epidemic and contain its various repercussions. Perhaps one of the indicators indicating the negative effects of the "Covid-19" pandemic, in this context, are the estimates of the International Monetary Fund in June 2020, in which it expected that the global economy would lose 12 due to this pandemic. trillion dollars, and that the global economy will shrink by 4.9% this year, which carries great risks for most of the world's economies.

3. Conclusion

If the "new Corona epidemic", and the accompanying precautionary and preventive measures such as closure policies and resorting to remote work and remote education, provided opportunities for extremist and terrorist organizations that helped them spread their ideas, reorganize their ranks and resume their terrorist activities, then the

international community should be aware of these developments, And not to postpone the war against extremism and terrorism, claiming that he is preoccupied with addressing the “Covid-19” pandemic, as the two pose a threat to international peace and security, and for this it is important and necessary that efforts to confront them go in parallel, because any complacency in this matter will have a great long-term cost at all levels.

Confronting terrorism and the “Covid-19” pandemic requires more international cooperation, given that no country or group of countries, regardless of their capabilities, can confront them, given the serious repercussions they pose. Therefore, any effective strategy to confront them requires the unification and coordination of international efforts. and to prevent them from being used negatively, whether by extremist groups, terrorist organizations or extremist right-wing forces, in undermining the foundations of security, stability and development at the regional and international levels, or in fueling tendencies of hatred and racism.

Both are employed in fueling hate and racist tendencies. If extremist and terrorist groups are always working on incitement and hatred against the West, and seek to revive the clash between different religions, the same applies to the extreme right-wing forces in the West that adopt a racist and arrogant view in dealing with the Corona epidemic, When you describe it as the “Chinese virus”, this is at a time when fears are increasing of the growth of so-called “white terrorism” in some countries, which mainly targets Chinese and Asian nationals, claiming that it is the source of the Corona virus and the reason for its spread.

4. Acknowledgements

Big thanks and respect to your esteemed magazine for allowing me the opportunity to publish my articles and facilitating the task for me.

5. References

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