

History of international terrorism

[History](#)



Building up to the timeline, there is some thought given to the word terrorism and how it has changed its meaning and interpretations through the course of history and how modern terrorism differs from that of the past. The perspective here is purely neutral, and not religiously or ethnically motivated. The report may be useful for those wishing to trace the history of terrorist acts throughout the world and how different religious-extremist or nationalist groups that are still active contributors to the history of international terrorism.

People often tend to think that terrorism did not exist before the 9/11 incident, that is not true. The roots of terrorism are deep-seated through the annals of history. The word itself has been given many different meanings. In an online article, “ The history of terrorism is as old as humans willingness to use violence to affect politics” (Zalman, n. d.). Based on what she says, we may trace the history of terrorism to the earliest of times when the common people used force to revolt against the tyranny of their monarch. As a term, terrorism isn’t quite simple to be limited by a definition. For some, it means to stand up for what you believe in and fight for it, to others it’s a crime. For some, it’s a strategy to break the hold of the tyrant, for others it may be tyranny in itself. For some, it’s their duty to God, to others it’s simply fanaticism by the name of God. Clearly, terrorism does not have an apparent definition. Although terrorism may not be new, its interpretations and definitions throughout history have changed. What was considered an act of terrorism in the past may not fit the modern definition of terrorism. Zalman mentions how terrorism is more of a modern trend and how the mass media facilitates its purpose to invoke fear among the masses and how it is part of <https://assignbuster.com/history-of-international-terrorism/>

the international system itself (Zalman, n. d.).

Let's now look at a few important time periods in the history of international terrorism and the events that occurred before 9/11, it is important to note that it was not always centered around Muslims, unlike modern terrorism. The phenomenon of terrorism has existed throughout history.

Firstly, 1793: It is said that the foundations for modern terrorism were laid during this time, Zalman mentions, " The word terrorism comes from the Reign of Terror instigated by Maximilien Robespierre in 1793" (Zalman, n. d.).

Robespierre was one of the 12 leaders who had all the enemies killed following the French revolution and claimed that it was a necessary act. It was through his acts that he encouraged the perspective that violence leads to betterment, which is among the fundamental beliefs of modern-day terrorists. From the point of view of contemporary terrorists, violence is a necessary thing as well as being positive for future good.

The 1950's: The rise of non-state groups across the world such as Irish Republican Army, Kurdistan Workers' Party and Liberation Tigers of Tamil (LTTE) and also the rise of guerrilla tactics fueled by the " flowering of ethnic nationalism" and " anti-colonial sentiments" (Zalman, n. d.).

The 1970's: The issue of international terrorism came to prominence as Israeli athletes participating in the 1972 Olympics in Munich were killed by
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Black September, a Palestinian group. Furthermore, terrorists got access to Soviet-produced weaponry through the black market. Moreover, the 1970s saw the emergence of terrorism in the United States, as groups such as the Weathermen turned violent (Zalman, n. d.).

The 1980's: During the 1980s, Nicaragua felt the aftermath of the US proxy wars which left massive violence and bloodshed in their wake, robberies, rape, arson, and mass killings (Chomsky, 1991). Besides that, there were massacres in El Salvador and Guatemala, the Lockerbie bombing in Scotland, an upsurge in militancy in Afghanistan as a result of the war against Russia and the killing of Indira Gandhi in a suicide bombing.

The 1990's: The rise to power of religious extremist groups such as Al-Qaeda, Hezbollah and Hamas, that would fuel dissent against Muslims worldwide.

The 2000's: The landmark event that has surely changed the face of the world forever, the 9/11 bombings that led to two wars and set off a wave of international terrorism, particularly in Muslim countries.