

HMDC Presents... TERRORISM: Video 2 Transcripts

These are the words spoken in the two Video 2 films for TERRORISM (The United Nations and International Efforts). We read along while we watch, pause at each time mark, and circle any word we do not know so we can look it up together.

VIDEO 2 (EXPLAINER)

[0:00] Welcome, model UN delegates. We are absolutely thrilled you're here. Today, we're going to give you the exact baseline facts you need for your upcoming committee session. This explainer is titled HMDC Presents... Special session on terrorism. What the UN and the world have done. Let's get you fully prepped and ready to debate. Okay, let's dive into this. Here is our mental roadmap for today's explainer. So go ahead and get your notepads ready. We're going to cover five main categories today. Number one, the UN toolbox. Number two, what is working. Number three, what is not working. Number four, international actors. And finally, number five, gaps and committee chance. The UN toolbox. Focusing on the baseline mechanisms, we're going to slowly and plainly establish exactly what tools the United Nations currently possesses to help out on this global issue. Right at the very center of these tools is the global counter-terrorism strategy.

[0:55] Now, according to the United Nations Office of Counterterrorism, last accessed in October 2026, you can find this strategy in resolution A-RES slash 60 slash 288. It is built on four main pillars designed to help states. These are address the root causes, prevent and combat terrorism, build state capacity, and crucially respect human rights. And this brilliantly illustrates how the strategy evolves over time. Looking again at the United Nations Office of Counterterrorism's records accessed in October 2026, we see it was first adopted in 2006. Since then, it has gone through nine different reviews to stay updated. The most recent one happened on July 1st, 2026, adopted under resolution A slash RES slash 80 slash 286. Aside from the General Assembly, we also have the Security Council. If we look at the United Nations Security Council records, last accessed in October 2026, we can see they've passed exactly 51 resolutions on terrorism.

[1:54] That is 51 sets of binding rules for the world. Now, to manage that massive web of rules, you really need a dedicated hub. The United Nations Office of Counterterrorism, according to their records last accessed in October 2026, was officially created on June 15th, 2017. Their entire purpose is to help coordinate all this work and build capacity across member states. Moving right along to section two, what is working, successes and desirable outcomes. Let's look at the desirable results when these UN mechanisms actually function like they're supposed to. Let's start with those binding domestic rules. According to the United Nations Security Council, last accessed in October 2026, we have two massive milestones to highlight. Resolution 1373 from 2001 requires states to criminalize terrorist financing. Then resolution 2178 from 2014 demands that states stop foreign fighter travel. These are highly desirable because they force governments to take clear local action. Then we have the sanctions list. United Nations Security Council records from October 2026 show the 1267 list actively freezing assets and banning travel, utilizing an Ombudsperson to review any requests for removal. But we also have to protect the vulnerable. United Nations Press document SC slash 15134 published December 9th, 2022 points to resolution 2664. This created a humanitarian exemption, which is incredibly desirable because it helps protect life-saving aid from getting caught in those asset freezes.

[3:26] Now, what's really interesting about this slide is the actual human impact of all these tools. According to the Vision of Humanity Institute for Economics and Peace published on March 19th, 2026, global terrorism deaths dropped to 5,582 in 2025. That is a deeply desirable decrease, officially making it the lowest fatality rate since 2007. But we have to look at the other side too. Section 3 is what is not working, systemic failures and undesirable realities. This is where we focus on the gaps, where the UN's tools fall short and, unfortunately, cause real harm. First off, according to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, last accessed in October 2026, there is still no agreed international definition of terrorism.

[4:13] This missing definition opens the door to the growing, undesirable misuse of these laws against peaceful critics. That same office also points to the thousands still trapped in detention camps in northeast Syria. And missions can just be cut short. United Nations Press document SC slash 15341 from June 30, 2023 shows the UN mission in Mali ended simply at the local government's request, an entirely undesirable reality for a region still facing violence. There's also an undesirable reality when it comes to the money. The United Nations Office of Counterterrorism's own data, last accessed in October 2026, shows a huge imbalance. Less than 20 percent of their budget comes from the regular UN funds. The vast majority relies entirely on voluntary donors, which makes long term planning incredibly fragile.

[5:01] That brings us to section four, international actors. Because of the gaps left by the UN, a whole landscape of non-UN coalitions and regional bodies has stepped up to help fill the voids. Let's move to and see how this builds into a wider global effort. Looking at their respective platforms, all last accessed in October 2026, we see groups helping outside the UN walls. We have the Global Coalition Against Daesh with its 90 partners focusing on military support. You've got the Financial Action Task Force or FATF handling the finance side. There's Interpol sharing critical police data and the Christchurch call working to tackle terrorist content online. Regional dynamics are shifting fast too. The African Union, accessed October 2026, has Article 4(h), which actually allows for intervention. Meanwhile, a Council on Foreign Relations report from July 29, 2026, notes the alliance of Sahel states completely left the ECOWAS bloc, shaking up West Africa's security. But we also have civilian groups stepping in to help, like the Global Counterterrorism Forum, the GCERF, and the Global Internet Forum to Counter Terrorism, all with records accessed in October 2026.

[6:12] And finally, we've reached section five, gaps and committee chance. Delegates, this is where we take all these unresolved gaps and drop them directly into your laps. This is your chance to create some truly desirable change in your upcoming session. So the crucial point is how you'll handle funding. United Nations Press Document SC slash 15544 from December 21, 2023, explains that under Resolution 2719, the UN can cover 75% of African Union-led operations, but that leaves a 25% funding gap remaining. Your committee gets to decide how to help fill that void to ensure regional missions can actually succeed. Next, you absolutely have to tackle that missing definition of terrorism. Making incorrect claims about who is a terrorist can cause severe harm. But there's a path forward. The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights on January 8, 2026, highlighted a model definition in Document A-HRC slash 61 slash 52. Promoting this model definition would be a highly desirable baseline to protect human rights and prevent further harm. And I'll leave you with this final provocative thought to take into your session.

[7:20] According to the Security Council report, last accessed in October 2026, the mandate for the mission in Somalia is due for renewal in December 2026. How will your committee handle this? You have the facts, you understand the tools, you've seen what's desirable, and you know the harm these systemic gaps can cause. Now, it is on you to debate and find a solution. Good luck out there.

VIDEO 2 (CINEMATIC)

[0:00] To understand how the international community fights terrorism, we first have to look at the massive architecture it has spent decades trying to build. The United Nations faces a highly specific challenge. It has to coordinate a global response to violent groups that cross borders, while strictly respecting the sovereignty, the independent authority, of its 193 member states. The UN Global Counterterrorism Strategy was adopted in 2006 and continuously updated through its 9th review in 2026. It rests on four pillars, addressing root causes of extremism, preventing attacks, building state capacity, and upholding human rights. Over in the Security Council, the approach is strictly regulatory.

[0:45] The Council has passed 51 binding resolutions, instructing member states exactly how to handle weapons, aviation security, and border controls. Resolution 1267 is the sharpest tool in this system. It requires all member states to identify specific terrorists and immediately freeze their assets, cutting off their access to the global financial system. But choking off terrorist funds accidentally choked off civilian aid. In 2022, the UN passed Resolution 2664, creating a humanitarian exemption so that essential food and medicine could legally bypass the asset freezes. On paper, this framework balances aggressive security measures with human rights protections. In practice, the entire machine relies on the compliance and stability of individual host governments to function.

[1:33] That legal architecture hits a wall the moment a host government fractures, loses control of its territory, or simply says no. UN peacekeeping operations require absolute consent from the host state. In 2023, Mali's transitional government demanded the withdrawal of the UN mission. The peacekeepers had to pack up and leave, even as violent insurgent attacks across the country escalated. This pie chart illustrates another major limitation, funding. Under Resolution 2719, the UN agrees to use its assessed contributions to cover up to 75% of African Union-led peace operations. The system leaves a massive 25% shortfall that has to be raised separately, creating constant budget deficits for regional troops. The UN's own Office of Counterterrorism faces similar instability.

[2:22] It receives less than 20% of its budget from the UN's regular fund. The rest relies entirely on unpredictable voluntary donations from a small handful of countries. The most dangerous void is entirely legal. The international community has never formally agreed on a definition of terrorism. Because the term is undefined, individual governments can write their own rules. State authorities frequently misuse counterterrorism legislation to arrest peaceful political opponents and environmental rights defenders. Without guaranteed host consent, reliable funding, or a shared legal definition, the UN's framework routinely stalls right where the violence is highest. Because the UN has strict rules on when it can use force, a complex patchwork of non-UN actors has stepped in to bypass political deadlock.

[3:08] This map shows the global coalition against Daesh's 90 partners conducting military interventions outside UN constraints. Regional bodies like the African Union also write their own rules, allowing intervention for war crimes. But cooperation is fragile. In 2025, Mali, Burkina Faso, and Niger abandoned ECOWAS, leaving a massive security vacuum. Non-military tools operate in a similar gray area. The Financial Action Task Force bypasses the UN to evaluate banking standards, choking off funding networks globally. Meanwhile, law enforcement networks like Interpol share biometric data to track suspects, and tech coalitions pressure social media platforms to remove violent propaganda online. These decentralized tools provide crucial enforcement, but they operate without a unified legal anchor.

[3:54] The ultimate responsibility for setting global standards remains completely unresolved. The result of these unresolved gaps is a severe human cost. Thousands of people, including women and children, are currently stranded indefinitely in Syrian detention camps following the territorial collapse of ISIS. UN human rights experts consistently urge states to bring their citizens home. But widespread political reluctance means detentions continue without trial, creating long-term humanitarian risks. The operational pressure is building. The massive regional support mission in Somalia faces a critical mandate renewal in December 2026, forcing a decision on how foreign troops operate in fragile states. The responsibility now falls to you. You have to determine the exact conditions that justify military intervention, who pays for regional operations, and how a nation's sovereignty is balanced against global security.

[4:49] A functional system has to connect the UN's ideals with real-world enforcement. Where will your resolution fill the gap?