

Criminological Analysis of Terrorism Prevention

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Preventing terrorist activities is of significant importance, as these crimes are influenced by various factors, including political, economic, social, geographical, media-related, and natural elements. The perpetration of such acts greatly diminishes the sense of social security within a community. Terrorist crimes are often the result of criminal actions such as theft, arms and ammunition smuggling, espionage within security institutions, assassination attempts on officials, and sabotage of public facilities and equipment, which manifest in the form of terrorism. Preventing these crimes indirectly also hinders the occurrence of numerous other criminal acts. The findings of this study, conducted using an analytical-descriptive research method and library tools, reveal that it is imperative for the legislature of the Islamic Republic of Iran to enact comprehensive and exclusive criminalization of terrorism, distinct from other crimes against national security. Such an approach would enhance Iran's criminal policy in preventing terrorist actions. Additionally, fostering unity and alignment among security agencies regarding terrorism prevention is essential. This measure can reduce redundancy and time wastage in implementing security measures, thereby protecting national security from harm.

Keywords: terrorism, criminology, prevention, rebellion (Baghi), war against the state (Moharebeh)

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1. Introduction

Currently, on the one hand, postmodernism has cast its shadow over human life, complicating relationships and presenting challenges. On the other hand, the principles and rules of law were not initially designed to address these challenges. The logical consequence of this environment is the complexity of legal concepts, principles, and rules (Cinelli, 2019, p. 90). In this context, and due to various social, military, and security-related reasons, terrorist groups and activities have significantly expanded, with Iran, located in the Middle East, directly facing this challenge.

However, the question of what terrorism is and how to combat it remains unanswered by the global community. A review of definitions and events universally recognized as terrorism, alongside an analysis of the political nature of terrorism and its justification by states to achieve national interests, reveals a stark reality: terrorism is not only a concept devoid of legal value but fundamentally a hollow term that assists states in pursuing their national goals. Laws are enacted, conventions are adopted, and bilateral or multilateral treaties are signed to legally condemn terrorist actions. However, such condemnations are meaningful only in relation to others. The actions of lawmakers and rule-



makers are never subject to legal constraints. From this perspective, terrorism can be considered everything and nothing: everything, in the sense that it facilitates whatever we desire without imposing significant costs, and the ultimate label to define the worst individuals—those deemed bad are terrorists, and those considered good are anti-terrorists. Simultaneously, terrorism is nothing because, materially, it consists of general crimes studied within criminal law, and spiritually, it is merely a political spirit observable in many other crimes (Rezaei Balajadeh, 2019).

The growth of terrorism in recent years and its emergence as an international threat have engaged various fields and international mechanisms. Terrorism, a complex social, religious, and political issue, has historical precedence in human life. The calculated and systematic use of illegal violence or the threat of such violence to instill fear and coercion in states and societies for political, religious, or ideological purposes has been a recurring element throughout history. Terrorism is not regarded as an ideology or doctrine but as a strategy, method, or tactic of struggle. Employing violence or threats, committing murders, and creating insecurity against innocent individuals (women, men, children, and adults) without enmity, crime, or pre-defined time and place are central elements in defining and understanding the nature of terrorism. Thus, combating terrorism has become an urgent issue for the international system, as the chaos resulting from its occurrence not only undermines human security but also jeopardizes national and international peace and security. Therefore, a resolute global determination appears to be the only effective strategy in combating terrorism (Khamei, 2002).

Indeed, the concern and focus of this study are multi-faceted. A critical area of inquiry for scholars has been the reasons behind the emergence and empowerment of terrorism and terrorist groups, as well as the crimes they commit. Another area requiring attention is the strategies and methods for preventing this malign phenomenon in criminology. One solution is the response and measures by national and international legal systems. Although legal actions, including punishing and prosecuting terrorists, may constitute the final stage after preventive approaches or complement other strategies, the prosecution and punishment of

terrorist actions hold particular importance within legal systems (Mohammadi, 2013).

Additionally, concerning the prevention of terrorist crimes, it should be noted that compared to other crimes, preventing terrorist activities carries greater significance due to their susceptibility to:

1. Political factors, such as adversarial sanctions aimed at hindering national growth and progress and the subservience of regional countries to adversaries' directives, facilitating terrorist actions within Iran.
2. Socio-economic factors, such as the large-scale influx of immigrants and nationals from neighboring countries and the spread of extremist ideologies among Iranian ethnic and racial groups.
3. Geographical factors, such as border areas (land and sea) and the presence of many religious and ethnic minorities in these strategically significant border regions.
4. Media factors, including the advancement and proliferation of the internet, social media, hostile satellite networks, and video games.
5. Natural factors, such as Iran's abundant energy reserves (oil, gas, nuclear resources) and attempts to assassinate influential figures and scientists in the energy sector.

The commission of such actions causes severe damage to national security and significantly undermines the sense of social security in society (Riassi, 2023).

Consequently, the necessity of combating terrorism and the failure of classical criminal law to address terrorist crimes and criminals have rendered differentiated policymaking not only acceptable but essential. As such, adopting policies on crime prevention, criminalization, substantive and procedural interventions before terrorist crimes occur, criminal justice responses, and military responses must follow specific frameworks and regulations.

2. Concepts and Definitions

2.1. Terrorism

Terrorism is defined as the unlawful use of, or threat to use, force or violence against individuals or property to coerce or intimidate governments or societies, often to

achieve political, religious, or ideological objectives (Firoozi, 2008, pp. 38-39).

In another definition, terror refers to an extreme state of fear caused by acts of violence, murder, and bloodshed committed by a group, party, or government to achieve political objectives or to gain or maintain power. Psychological or character assassination, therefore, involves intimidating individuals by targeting their morale, courage, and credibility (Aghabakhshi & Afshari Rad, 2010).

Similarly, terror is the method of those who consider killing, threatening people, and creating fear and intimidation by any means necessary to achieve political goals, such as changing the government or assuming power, as justified and permissible (Amid, 1988).

In political terms, terror is defined as the use of force, violence, or threats to achieve political objectives by instilling fear, intimidation, and coercion (Meyer, 2001). In practice, this term applies to violent and unlawful actions by governments to suppress and intimidate their opponents, as well as to acts of violence and intimidation by militant groups pursuing political goals. Particularly, terror is a method used by governments to suppress opposition through arrest, torture, execution, and other forms of unlawful persecution, often conducted covertly (Ashouri, 1994).

2.2. Terror

Repeated and similar definitions of terrorism as a method involving recourse to violence rarely lead to an analysis of terror itself. Hacker defines terror as "the use of tools of domination, i.e., intimidation by those in power" (Kaplan, 2008). This formulation mirrors the definition adopted by the French Penal Code in Article 1-421, which defines terrorism as "individual or collective acts aimed at severely disrupting public order through intimidation or terror." Such definitions, employing synonymous terms that are no clearer than the original, often result in shifting the problem rather than addressing it.

At best, as Professor Georges Levasseur rightly pointed out, it can be stated that "terror tends to produce physiological, physical, and psychological effects" (Shaheedeh, 2022). Investigating the meaning of terror seems to allow for transcending the misleading characteristics of terrorism's diverse aspects. Nevertheless, understanding the phenomenon is a

prerequisite for analyzing it and, thus, a foundational condition for implementing an appropriate societal response to it. However, in the realm of terrorism, adopting an approach that indicates understanding is often perceived as endorsing it. Generally, one is astonished by the lack of scientific objectivity in some studies, where fascination and aversion towards terrorism coexist. The particularity of terror may lie precisely in this point.

2.3. Prevention

The definition of crime prevention, which has dominated much of criminological literature in recent years, and its implementation and development, vary from one country to another. Some define it as an intervention through measures aimed at preventing or reducing the risks of committing crimes or minimizing their potential consequences.

Maurice Cusson, a Canadian criminologist, defines prevention as "the adoption of non-punitive measures to prevent the transformation of criminal thoughts into action by altering specific conditions under which crimes may occur." Based on this definition, if an offender, in their calculations, perceives the potential benefits to be negligible compared to the effort, risks, and dangers involved, they will refrain from committing the crime (Ebrahimi, 2013).

3. Elements of the Crime of Terrorism

From the perspective of criminal sciences and penal law, terrorism can be defined as follows: A violent criminal act committed by an individual, a legal entity, or an illegal group to intimidate or instill fear, panic, and anxiety among the public or to coerce or compel a government or an international organization to undertake or refrain from certain actions (Goldouzian, 2016).

The material element of terrorism involves providing and making available the necessary funds for terrorist activities. Based on the interpretation of Article 1 of the International Convention of December 9, 1999, which criminalizes and penalizes terrorism and specifies enforcement mechanisms, acts of terrorism include behaviors linked to illegal investments. Funds can encompass securities of any nature, tangible or intangible property, movable or immovable assets, or claims.

It is evident that the sources for obtaining funds for terrorist activities may be legal or derived from illegal sources, such as money laundering originating from activities like arms and drug trafficking, embezzlement, and others.

Regarding the mental element of this crime, it must be noted that general intent or deliberate intent, combined with material support for terrorist acts, suffices to establish the perpetrator's responsibility. Therefore, it is unnecessary for the provided equipment to be used in achieving a terrorist objective. Merely undertaking actions to supply terrorist equipment for participation in such crimes is sufficient.

From a comparative legal perspective, Swiss law, as a European legal system, aligns with the requirements of Article 2, Chapter 1 of the International Convention of December 9, 1999, on the criminalization and penalization of financing terrorism, consistent with paragraphs (a) and (b) of Resolution 1373 of the United Nations Security Council dated September 28, 2001.

3.1. *Comparative Study of Terrorism, Rebellion (Baghi), and War Against the State (Moharebeh) in Iranian Law*

Based on legislative, judicial, and executive policies in various societies, the constituent elements of the crime of terrorism can be summarized as follows:

First – Violent criminal behavior, which may include physical acts, the dissemination of dangerous pathogens, terrorism, bombings, arson, destruction, and the use of dangerous weapons.

For an act to qualify as terrorism, it must involve heinous and significant violence. In Iranian law, for an act to be considered criminal, it must be subject to the prescribed punishments for Moharebeh (war against the state), Baghi (rebellion), or Corruption on Earth (*Efsad-e-Fil-Arz*). Notably, intentional murder subject to *Qisas* (retaliation) is excluded from acts of terrorism.

According to Article 279 of the Penal Code of 2013, Moharebeh is defined as drawing a weapon with the intent to threaten life, property, or honor in a way that causes insecurity in the environment. If an individual brandishes a weapon for personal motives against one or more individuals without a public dimension, or if they fail to instill insecurity due to incapacity, they are not considered a Mohareb.

Furthermore, under Article 280 of the Penal Code, individuals or groups who take up arms to defend against Moharebs are not themselves considered Moharebs. Thus, Moharebeh applies to highway robbers, thieves, and smugglers who use weapons to disrupt public safety and security. Terrorist behavior, on the other hand, is characterized by secrecy, surprise, and ambush.

Victims of terrorist attacks are often influenced by ideologies or beliefs, imagining they are achieving divine satisfaction or securing a better afterlife through acts like suicide bombings or self-immolation. However, instead of resorting to terrorism, these individuals could contribute to societal welfare, alleviate the hardships of the underprivileged, and promote social justice and public well-being. Establishing justice and fairness in human relations has been a fundamental mission of divine prophets.

Second – Intimidation, coercion, and compulsion to submit or act:

Terrorism, in addition to violent criminal behavior or unlawful use of power, must aim to intimidate people or compel a government or international organization to act or refrain from an action desired by the terrorist. Thus, terrorism must involve violence of a particular intensity and intent to instill fear in the populace.

For instance, throwing a homemade incendiary device at a government building may not sufficiently intimidate the government into meeting the terrorist's demands. In such cases, the perpetrator may be charged with deliberate destruction of public property rather than terrorism, as the act lacks the magnitude of fear and terror required for terrorism. Nonetheless, such actions fall under crimes against public security and peace, which influence the competent court and legal procedures.

The intimidation element depends on the population targeted by the terrorist, typically involving a large number of victims who are often unknown or unspecified.

In some cases, victims of terrorism have been selfless individuals dedicated to serving humanity, upholding justice, and promoting societal welfare. The assassination of such individuals instills fear and anxiety in society, endangering freedom of thought and public security.

The type of court handling terrorism cases varies. For example, international courts may handle crimes against humanity, while domestic courts under national law address other forms of terrorism.

The Law on Combating the Financing of Terrorism was passed by the Iranian Parliament on March 3, 2015, and approved by the Guardian Council on March 13, 2015. Financing terrorism constitutes an independent crime, as the perpetrator does not directly participate in the terrorist act but facilitates it by knowingly providing funds or resources to instill public fear and terror. Such acts are punishable as if the perpetrator directly committed the crime.

Instances of financing terrorism are outlined in Article 1 of the aforementioned law, encompassing categories (a) through (t) across eight sections. In some cases, the perpetrator is directly involved in the crime, while in others, they are considered an accomplice, yet treated as a principal under the law and subject to equivalent punishment.

Jurisdiction over terrorism financing cases lies with criminal courts of the provincial capital (Article 9). If such crimes occur outside Iran but target the Islamic Republic of Iran or international organizations based within its territory, jurisdiction falls to criminal courts in Tehran (Article 12). These crimes are not considered political offenses and are excluded from the provisions of Article 168 of the Constitution regarding political and press crimes.

Under criminal law, financing terrorism is punishable by imprisonment of two to five years and fines ranging from double to quintuple the financed amount if deemed *Moharebeh* or *Corruption on Earth* by the court.

Terrorist acts may be motivated by political, religious, or ideological goals. If such acts result in deaths, destruction, loud explosions, psychological and physical harm, and damage to public property, they unequivocally constitute terrorism.

Motivation, whether honorable or dishonorable, does not alter the material and mental elements of the crime. While motivation may influence the severity of punishment, it does not justify the criminal act or render it lawful. Even noble motivations, such as striving for democratic governance, human rights, or public welfare, cannot legitimize resorting to violence for regime change. Upholding the rule of law through public consensus is the most effective means of achieving

justice, supported by progressive and humane legislation (Goldouzian, 2016).

3.2. *Criminology and the Waves of Terror and Terrorism*

Terrorism, as a concept, has evolved over time, gradually transforming in meaning. While it often carries a negative connotation, it has occasionally been associated with positive interpretations. Initially, its usage indicated legitimate, beneficial actions aligned with public interests.

Historically, the concept of terror and terrorism can be examined through the infamous operations of the Ismaili sect, led by Hassan Sabbah, who orchestrated organized assassinations. The legacy of this movement has fascinated Western audiences, both historically and today, as some aspects of their operations resemble modern terrorist movements. For instance, the Western term "assassination," meaning targeted killing, originates from "Hashashin"—a term referring to those knowledgeable about the properties of herbs, as many Ismailis were apothecaries who used their knowledge to further their intentions (Firahi & Zahiri, 2008).

In modern times, Niccolò Machiavelli was the first thinker to explicitly reference terror in the 16th century. He described it as a tool to instill great fear and considered it an instrument of governance. For example, Ivan the Terrible, the Russian Tsar, used terror extensively in the 16th century to instill fear across populations without regard for their beliefs or religion (Firahi & Zahiri, 2008).

Throughout history, violence and terrorism have been recurring phenomena. While the origins of terrorism trace back to Cain and Abel, its interpretation has shifted over time. For example, groups like the Jacobins in France or the Thugs in India—who murdered individuals as sacrifices to the goddess Kali—once carried connotations of divine or revolutionary significance. However, over time, terrorism adopted a predominantly negative connotation. In 1795, Edmund Burke referred to "thousands of infernal predators calling themselves terrorists" who were terrorizing the populace. In 1793, the term "terror" was associated with the Reign of Terror during the French Revolution (Asadzadeh Benabi & Rasaei, 2021).

During the French Revolution (May 1793–July 1794), the Jacobins, as the most radical faction, used terror to establish social order, arresting 300,000 individuals and

executing 17,000. Others were killed in prisons or various locations (Hatami, 2001, p. 2). Thus, "terror" entered political discourse, gaining a distinct meaning during this period. The Jacobins associated terror with severe measures against counter-revolutionaries, utilizing revolutionary courts, espionage networks, and acts of murder, looting, exile, and property confiscation to create fear and maintain control. Consequently, the years 1792–1795 are known as the Reign of Terror (Bigdeli, 1998).

The term "terrorism" gained broader recognition in 1972, when it was officially addressed as a global issue by the United Nations General Assembly. By the early 1990s, its interpretation had expanded to include:

- Unlawful acts against civil aviation security (1971).
- Crimes against internationally protected persons, including diplomats (1973).
- Hostage-taking (1979).
- Illicit possession or threats involving nuclear materials (1979).
- Violence at airports (1988).
- Attacks on offshore oil platforms (1988).
- Terrorist bombings (1997).
- Financing terrorism (1999) (Ahmadian & Bani Ashraf, 2020).

Terrorism has progressed through four waves, now entering a fifth:

1. Anarchist terrorism, targeting the overthrow of established governments.
2. Nationalist terrorism, defending national identity against colonial influences.
3. New Left terrorism, reacting to the Vietnam War.
4. Radical terrorism, epitomized by groups like al-Qaeda and the Taliban.
5. Idealistic radical terrorism, manifesting in more violent forms such as ISIS and Boko Haram.

The first wave of modern terrorism, led by non-state actors in the 19th century, included anti-monarchist and anarchist movements, particularly in Tsarist Russia, Europe, and eventually the United States. The second wave, spurred by anti-colonial efforts and the pursuit of self-determination, emerged after the Treaty of Versailles following World War I. This wave, viewed as legitimate in many cases, garnered global public support. The third wave occurred during the Cold War era, with

the Vietnam War significantly influencing its development. Leftist ideologies criticized Western approaches, leading to terrorist activities (Ahmadian & Bani Ashraf, 2020).

The fourth wave, described as religious terrorism, emerged in the late 1970s and emphasized creating a new world order based on religious principles (Rapoport, 2002, p. 10). Distinguishing features included suicide bombings and the establishment of organizations like al-Qaeda.

Each wave employed distinct tactics:

- The first wave utilized assassinations.
- The second wave focused on military targets.
- The third wave relied on hijackings.
- The fourth wave, still ongoing, emphasizes suicide bombings (Ahmadian & Bani Ashraf, 2020).

Jeffrey Kaplan highlights the fifth wave of terrorism, characterized by local idealistic visions of a utopian society. Unlike prior waves rooted in global ideological movements, these groups aim to construct a radically new society at the local level, detached from international ideologies (Kaplan, 2008).

In the 20th and 21st centuries, terrorism gained prominence as a political strategy. With advancements in technology and organizational sophistication, terrorism was legitimized as a revolutionary act, especially with the spread of Marxism and socialism. Post-World War II, terrorism became a focal point of foreign policy for some states, justifying its use for resolving political conflicts (Bigdeli, 1998).

Sociologists argue that societal tendencies toward terror and violence stem from fear, economic and political uncertainty, and manipulation by misleading liberation ideologies. Addressing these issues through social justice and equality is key to mitigating terrorism. Additionally, factors like urbanization, regional instability, lack of cohesion, and authoritarian governance contribute to the emergence of terrorism (Taghizadeh Ghozhdi, 2009). Finally, religious and ideological differences significantly drive terrorism, as they provoke intense emotional and collective actions, encouraging bold and sacrificial acts of violence (Khamei, 2002).

4. The Necessity of a Criminological Approach to Preventing Terrorism

Despite the numerous methods criminologists have proposed to control and prevent terrorist crimes, evidence shows that most adopted strategies have failed. Consequently, some criminologists, using the teachings of social prevention, aim to minimize potential harm by aligning prevention methods with the nature of terrorist crimes on one hand and the ideology and beliefs of perpetrators on the other. This section first explores religious and ethical prevention, followed by an examination of de-radicalization through religious persuasion methods (Goldouzian, 2016).

4.1. Religious Prevention

Religion, by emphasizing epistemology and moral principles, seeks to promote social cohesion, justice, peace, and security. Religion has a dual and contradictory role, acting as both a driver of violence and a variable for peace. In a world where the vast majority of people identify with a particular religion, religion can significantly influence the emergence or control of fundamentalism and extremism.

In recent years, the growth of extremist Islamic groups has led to Islamophobia becoming a primary strategy for criminal policymakers in combating terrorism. Within fundamentalist religious frameworks, radical ideologies are often identified as the main drivers of terrorist crimes. Adherence to higher commitments derived from religious teachings and a sense of belonging to terrorist groups often encourage individuals to commit crimes. As a result, improper religious approaches have contributed to the growth of radical violence.

However, despite Islamophobic policies in some countries, Islam prohibits all forms of violence against humanity. Islamic teachings reject extremist views, emphasizing that the message of all divine religions is based on peace, friendship, and equality. For religious leaders, equality and peace are the two central ideas purposefully adopted to counteract violence and extremism.

Radical groups often rely on violence to establish a hierarchical superiority over citizens, resulting in innocent civilians becoming victims of their actions. Religious institutions combat these fundamentalist ideologies by emphasizing equality and peace. However, simply advocating for peace and equality by religious leaders is insufficient to prevent extremism. Religious

leaders must provide strategies and mechanisms in this area.

Since Salafist/Takfiri groups constitute a significant portion of global terrorist organizations, the current dominant form of terrorism can be characterized as a war among religions and sects. The first step in preventing radical violence is fostering interfaith dialogue (Douridian, 2003). Religious leaders attempt to strengthen interfaith unity by organizing scholarly and specialized conferences. For instance, meetings between the Pope, the leader of Catholics, and Islamic religious leaders serve as an example of such efforts.

These gatherings allow religious leaders to highlight shared principles and teachings, spreading peaceful messages and reducing divisions among faiths. By fostering a sense of closeness, leaders can convey these ideas to their followers, promoting mutual respect and peaceful relations between different religious groups.

The second step is addressing religious extremism as a reflection of sectarian divisions within Islam. For instance, the deepening divide between Shi'a and Sunni branches has fueled fundamentalist ideologies, with extremist groups labeling the opposing sect as legitimate targets for attacks. To address this, religious leaders have proposed the concept of sectarian rapprochement. This approach emphasizes commonalities, such as the Prophet Muhammad and the Quran, while avoiding divisive topics like debates over Imamate and Caliphate. Strengthening the idea of sectarian rapprochement fosters friendly relations among Islamic sects and reduces hatred stemming from radical ideologies.

4.2. Ethical Prevention

For some individuals, committing heinous and violent crimes such as terrorism is unimaginable. Strong human emotions and moral values often prevent individuals from engaging in extreme acts of violence. This explains why people empathize with the victims of such crimes, highlighting the preventive role of ethical and moral standards.

An ethical prevention framework, independent of punitive calculations, serves as a barrier against crime. When cost-benefit analyses suggest that the benefits of crime outweigh its costs, ethical prevention mechanisms can deter religious terrorism. For example, the presence of an inner moral compass, high self-control, and the

ability to overcome crime-facilitating factors can significantly reduce the likelihood of terrorism. Strengthening social bonds and increasing societal sensitivity to moral issues appear to lower terrorism rates (Riassi, 2023). Additionally, fostering an internal "moral police," rooted in self-awareness and ethical values, helps individuals resist temptations to commit violent acts.

By emphasizing the importance of social justice and addressing inequalities, society can address the root causes of terrorism, ensuring that ethical and moral principles serve as powerful tools for crime prevention.

4.3. *Ethical Prevention Through Inner Control*

While some individuals resist political injustice and oppression through peaceful means, others resort to terrorism and violence. For those who engage in terrorism, such acts are often perceived as decisive responses to discrimination and religious domination. However, the perpetration of terrorist acts frequently attracts public condemnation. Public criticism alone, however, is not sufficient to deem such acts unethical, as such condemnation may stem from biases, hatred, or discrimination, complicating the distinction between morality and societal prejudice.

Although many people may be dissatisfied or angered by political injustice, their adherence to normative boundaries and strong self-control prevents them from engaging in political violence or terrorism. Criminologists believe that self-control and adherence to ethical values are the most significant factors in refraining from criminal behavior. While social environments may at times encourage individuals toward criminal acts, a strong internal force serves as a preventive barrier. Conversely, low self-control is often considered a primary cause of crime.

The theory of self-control, emphasizing inner strength and moral principles, posits that self-control plays a more critical and effective role in preventing criminal behavior than formal social control or penal sanctions. Accordingly, nothing inherently deters terrorists from committing crimes, and thus, all individuals are considered potential offenders. At the moment a terrorist decides not to commit a crime, it is due to their self-control (Ebrahimi, 2013).

Self-control is therefore a voluntary process by which an individual chooses not to commit a crime. It involves

resisting criminal impulses through self-discipline. In the context of religious terrorism, self-control acts as a barrier against revenge, perceived divine obligations, and similar motivations. Individuals face a dilemma: on one hand, revenge, fear, or religious duties drive them toward criminal behavior or joining extremist groups; on the other, strong and stable personalities deter such actions.

Stable or situational self-control, combined with adherence to ethical principles, can prevent criminal behavior. In this process, individuals are simultaneously exposed to criminal motivations—such as perceived injustice and oppression—and ethical mechanisms that deter crime. This dynamic creates a struggle between inhibiting and accelerating factors. Ultimately, if an individual possesses a stable personality and commitment to ethics, they will overcome these criminal impulses, making ethical approaches a powerful deterrent in this domain.

4.4. *De-Radicalization Through Religious Persuasion*

Given the connection between terrorist crimes and religious beliefs, extremism is one of the primary drivers of terrorism. Extremist beliefs rooted in bias and hatred serve as fundamental variables in fostering terrorist acts. Broadly defined, extremism encompasses not only the radical thoughts of terrorist group members but also the process by which individuals at risk of committing terrorist crimes are influenced.

In contrast, de-radicalization refers to employing methods and techniques to counter or reverse extremism. This approach seeks to reduce or eliminate the risks of terrorism through effective measures. While all individuals in society could potentially be targets of de-radicalization programs, these initiatives primarily focus on those at high risk of committing terrorist acts due to their misguided religious beliefs.

At-risk individuals often possess dangerous tendencies and criminal capacities. However, criminal justice systems cannot arrest or detain individuals solely based on dangerous ideologies without the commission of a crime. Consequently, de-radicalization programs prioritize these individuals.

Religious ideology often plays a pivotal role in terrorist crimes. Leaders of terrorist groups act as the primary advocates of religious extremism, encouraging members to fight for their ideological objectives. Violent terrorist

crimes in this context are rooted in ideologies instilled by charismatic leaders who influence group members. The more effective the leader, the higher the likelihood of terrorist activities within the group (Doosje, 2013).

Considering the influential role of terrorist leaders, social prevention can be achieved through persuasion and negotiation. Religious and political leaders may organize debates or negotiations with leaders of opposing groups. A direct method for preventing terrorism involves persuasion processes, where influential groups and opposing factions use persuasive and deterrent means to convince terrorist leaders to abandon violent activities.

In such negotiations, terrorist leaders temporarily distance themselves from their violent personas and engage in ideological or political discussions. These encounters bring terrorist leaders face-to-face with opponents of terrorism (Cinelli, 2019).

5. Conclusion

A precise and universally accepted definition of "terror" and "terrorism" remains elusive, although there is some consensus on specific examples and elements. Terrorism can be defined as "the unlawful and illegitimate use of violence, primarily for political purposes, aimed at creating public fear through unexpected and arbitrary actions." Both international law and Islamic jurisprudence condemn such acts.

Disagreements often arise from political stances, although factors such as poverty and psychological motives like revenge also contribute. Legal violence, punishment of criminals, legitimate self-defense, and responses to insults against prophets and religious values fall outside the scope of terrorism.

Terrorist acts are criminal behaviors that, due to their broad consequences, are considered dangerous, violate human rights, and instill fear in societies. Despite numerous international efforts and conventions aimed at combating terrorism, the results have been insufficient. Various national approaches, such as criminalization, military actions, or democratic responses, have each faced limitations in resolving the issue.

In preventive criminal policymaking, transforming abstract models into practical strategies is essential. Effectiveness depends on program efficiency, implementation methods, key actors, objectives, and the

strengths and weaknesses of mechanisms. Social institutions like families and schools must play a central role, as traditional punitive approaches have proven inadequate in controlling terrorist crimes.

Given the ideological nature of these crimes, the involvement of religious and political leaders in preventive programs like de-radicalization is crucial. Emphasizing shared human values and cultural heritage in educational systems can significantly reduce extremism. A multi-agency approach to preventive policymaking is necessary, as the specific motives of terrorist offenders render traditional methods ineffective. Coordinated collaboration among various institutions, including international organizations like UNESCO, can enhance the control and mitigation of these crimes.

Authors' Contributions

Authors contributed equally to this article.

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In order to correct and improve the academic writing of our paper, we have used the language model ChatGPT.

Transparency Statement

Data are available for research purposes upon reasonable request to the corresponding author.

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