Follow @g20rg   Tweet

G20 Summits | G20 Ministerials | G20 Analysis | Search | About the G20 Research Group
[English] [Français] [Deutsch] [Italiano] [Portuguesa] [Japanese] [Chinese] [Korean] [Indonesian]

G20 Information Centre

provided by the G20 Research Group

Analysis

G20 Hamburg Summit: A Strong Success for Counter-Terrorism

Hélène Emorine and Denisse Rudich, G20 Research Group
July 13, 2017

Against a background of raging fires lit by protestors in the streets of Hamburg and tensions and disagreements among world leaders regarding free trade, climate change and migration, in the days leading up to the G20 summit it remained to be seen if the club's members would address terrorism effectively.

Indeed, on the first day of the G7 Taormina Summit on May 26, 2017, the leaders of the world's seven most powerful democracies stood united against terrorism and violent extremism. Spurred into action by the horrific terrorist attacks in Manchester on May 22, 2017, the G7 firmly and decisively met the world's expectations in its **Statement on the Fight against Terrorism and Violent Extremism.** The G7 underlined its members' shared system of values and norms as the "beacon for our common action and the first and best defense against this common threat" and identified the importance of responding to terrorism by taking a comprehensive approach that linked together security, social inclusion and development.

G20 members also showed their ability to unite in action in response to serious, existential threats posed by radicalization, violent extremism and terrorism. In the three-page **Hamburg G20 Leaders' Statement on Countering Terrorism**, released on the first day of the summit, the G20 showed decisive, coherent and firm action against terrorism by condemning all terrorist attacks as a "global scourge that must be fought" with terrorist havens "eliminated in every part of the world."

The statement is divided into three sections: implementing international commitments and enhancing cooperation, fighting terrorism finance and countering radicalization conducive to terrorism, and the use of internet for terrorist purposes.

Implementing International Commitments and Enhancing Cooperation

On implementing international commitments and enhancing cooperation, the G20 illustrated its support of existing global governance tools to strengthen the fight against terrorism. Notably, the leaders highlighted the importance of implementing all existing international commitments on countering terrorism, including the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and related sanctions set by the UN Security Council (UNSC). It reaffirmed the centrality of the UNSC in countering terrorism, including UNSC Resolution 2178 (2014) on the foreign terrorist fighter threat and UNSC Resolution 2309 (2016) urging closer collaboration to ensure the security of global air services.

The statement also referred to various international organizations such as INTERPOL, the World Customs Organization's (WCO) Security Programme and Counter-Terrorism Strategy, the International Civil Aviation Organization and the Financial Action Task Force (FATF).

G20 leaders emphasized that all counter-terrorist measures need to be implemented in accordance with the UN Charter and all obligations under international law, including respect for international human rights law. For the first time, a G20 leaders' statement also stressed the importance of supporting the victims of terrorist acts.

Fighting Terrorist Finance

On fighting terrorist financing, enhanced international collaboration and information sharing between the private and public sector was identified as key to stifling terrorist financing, which takes many forms. These include, in addition to micro- payments, connections between terrorism and other crimes such as the diversion of weapons, including weapons of mass destruction, the looting and smuggling of antiquities, kidnapping for ransom, and drug and human trafficking. To this end, the G20 committed "to make the international financial system entirely hostile to terrorist financing." The statement singled out ISIS and al Qaeda and their affiliates, declaring that there should be no safe place for terrorist financing and widening the net to other terrorist groups worldwide.

The G20 recognized the pivotal role played by the FATF. It is a driving force for capacity building and global standard setting, which contributes to the development of regulations to counter money laundering and counter-terrorist financing at the domestic level through its international network. The declaration made several statements of support, including on the FATF's efforts to strengthen its traction capacity and the effectiveness of the FATF and FATF-style regional bodies.

All these statements were made in support of the FATF transitioning from a task force set up to fight the proceeds of drug trafficking by the G7 in 1989 into a permanent legal organization leading international efforts and maintaining as its highest priority the fight against terrorist financing. The G20 leaders welcomed this proposed transformation that "recognises that the FATF has evolved from a temporary forum to a sustained public and political commitment to tackle [anti-money laundering and terrorist financing] threats."

The G20 pledged to advance transparency of beneficial ownership of legal persons and arrangements, similar to the G7's own commitment. In contrast, however, the G20 statement shone a spotlight on the low cost and varying modes of transfers of funds employed by perpetrators of recent attacks, which were acts committed by "lone wolf" terrorists and small cells. G20 leaders called on the private sector to continue to strengthen efforts to identify and stop terrorist financing. They have asked a wide array of actors, including finance ministers and central bank governors, to work with the FATF, the Financial Stability Board, the financial sector, financial intelligence units, law enforcement and FinTech firms to:

- develop new tools such as guidance and indicators;
- harness new technologies to better track terrorist finance transactions;
- work together with law enforcement authorities to bridge the intelligence gap; and
- improve the use of financial information in counter-terrorism investigations.

Countering Radicalization Conducive to Terrorism and the Use of the Internet for Terrorist Purposes

The G20 followed the approach of the G7 in addressing the root causes of terrorism. The G20 emphasized the need to counter terrorism by promoting "political and religious tolerance, economic development and social cohesion and inclusiveness, to resolve armed conflicts, and to facilitate reintegration." In order to do this, the G20 highlighted the importance of knowledge sharing and collaboration on preventing and countering terrorism and violent extremism, deradicalization and disengagement programs, and threats posed by returning foreign terrorist fighters and home-grown radicalized individuals. The statement made it clear that underpinning these commitments in the fight against terrorism is the need for enhanced collaboration among G20 members and others in the international community, particularly the private sector, "media, civil society, religious groups and educational institutions." In May, the G7 stressed the importance of responding to terrorists' use of the internet and social media to spread their propaganda and promote radicalization. The G20 took up this task, stating its members should collaborate with the private sector and urging the communications industry to invest in technology and human capital to "aid in the detection as well as swift and permanent removal of terrorist [online] content."

Conclusion

Terrorism remains an issue of consensus among G20 leaders. While G7 initiatives have made their way onto the G20 agenda (particularly in the area of transparency of beneficial ownership to tackle terrorist financing, and the initiative to work with the private sector to tackle extremist content online), the G20's statement on counterterrorism stands on its own as a document that can continue to influence national governments in applying international standards, norms and regulations into local law and terrorist financing frameworks. It can thus be said that the G20 Hamburg Summit proved to be a success, at least in the area of terrorism.

[back to top]

This Information System is provided by the **University of Toronto Library**
and the G20 Research Group at the University of Toronto.

Please send comments to: **g20@utoronto.ca**
This page was last updated July 16, 2017 .

Create PDF in your applications with the Pdfcrowd HTML to PDF API

PDFCROWD