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**FIGHTING WITH NO MILITARY BASES ABROAD: GLOBAL
JIHAD NETWORK AND CHINA'S ANTI-TERROR STRATEGY**

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FIGHTING WITH NO MILITARY BASES ABROAD: GLOBAL JIHAD NETWORK AND CHINA'S ANTI-TERROR STRATEGY

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Abstract

The global Jihad network in Eurasia is looming, and the world “hotbed” of terrorism is spreading from the Middle East to the geographically broader “Arc of Instability”, which covers a vast area of North Africa, West Asia, Central Asia and South Asia. Influenced and stimulated by the external environment, the terrorist groups targeting China begin to change new faces, and hold the banner of “liberty”, “freedom”, “human rights” and “global Jihad”. They attempt to challenge the legitimacy of China’s administration in Xinjiang and Tibet, and meanwhile advocate attacking civilians to arouse world-wide attention. Moreover, some separatist groups, particularly those related with Xinjiang and Tibet are driven increasingly radical, revealing some preliminary features of terrorism. Unlike the US and Russia, China has no military bases abroad, making it harder to counter terrorism. To address the “three-evil” forces of terrorism, separatism and extremism, Beijing has on the one hand placed emphasis on economic and social development in western China, and on the other hand upheld three-ring strategy for anti-terrorism, i.e., SCO, China-India-Israel anti-terror cooperation and probably Sino-U.S. cooperation. The coming 2010 Shanghai World Expo and its anti-terror endeavor will be the touchstone to test the efficacy of Beijing’s three-ring strategy.

Key Words: *Anti-terrorism; “Three-ring” Strategy; Global Jihad Network; Military Bases; “Arc of Instability”*

China has no military bases abroad, and its anti-terror campaign is mainly introvert and at home. However, in May 2010, China will embrace with open arms about 50 million visitors at home and abroad attending Shanghai World Expo. This great event will last for six months. As Yang Jiechi, China’s Foreign Minister, said on March 7, 2010, for China, one of the major tasks this year is to conduct “World Expo Diplomacy”. How can China guarantee the Expo security? What is its mechanism to counter terrorism? How can it cooperate with other countries? Basically, China’s anti-terror strategy is dependent on its perception of global jihad network.

I. The Looming Global Jihad Network

There is no deny the fact that a global jihad network is looming, and the world “hotbed” of terrorism is spreading from the Middle East to the geographically broader “Arc of Instability”, which covers a vast area of North Africa, West Asia, Central Asia and South Asia. ¹ On October 30, 2008, A

¹ According to Wikipedia, the “Arc of Instability” refers to a proposed, interconnected chain of politically unstable nation states in the Asia-Pacific region. The term came into vogue in the late 1990s, proving especially popular with Australian politicians and journalists. See also Clive Moore, *Happy Isles in Crisis*, Canberra: Asia Pacific Press, 2004, p. 9.

series of apparently synchronized explosions tore through four towns in the troubled state of Assam in northeastern India, killing at least 67 people and leaving more than 210 wounded.² Meanwhile, the political situations in Afghanistan and Pakistan are evolving from bad to worse in recent years, partly due to the budding global jihad network. In the years to come, it seems inevitable that the “Arc of Instability” will spread even further into Southeast Asia. The bomb attacks at two hotels in Jakarta, Indonesia on July 17, 2009, seemed to be the auspice of the coming era.³

The global Jihad network in Eurasia is a loose organization, guided by extreme and radical Islamic ideologies. The local Islamic terrorists and extremist groups in the Middle East, Central Asia, Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, Kashmir and China’s Xinjiang are interwoven in financing, personnel, training, information-sharing, etc. The network includes various terrorist and extremist groups, such as Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan and Hizb-ut-Tahrir in Central Asia, Army of God and Ayman Al Zawahiri (Al Qaeda or Egyptian Islamic Jihad) in the Middle East, Qaidat Al Jihad in the Land of Two Rivers in Iraq (under the leadership of Abu Musab Al Zarqawi), Taliban and Al Qaeda in Afghanistan, Jamaat ul-Fuqra, Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan (Guardians of the Friends of the Prophet), Lashkar-e-Toiba and Taliban in Pakistan, Jemmah Islamiya (JI) in Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines, Sikh Terrorism and Muslim United Liberation Tigers of Assam (MULTA) in India, Jammu & Kashmir Liberation Front and Harkat-ul-Ansar (HuA, presently known as Harkat-ul Mujahideen) in Kashmir, East Turkistan Liberation Organization (ETLO), East Turkistan Islamic Movement (SHAT, IMU, ETIM or Turkistan Islamic Party), United Revolutionary Front for Eastern Turkistan (URFET) as well as the World Uyghur Information Center (WUIC) and World Uyghur Youth Congress (WUYC) in Xinjiang, China etc.⁴

The above-mentioned terrorist groups in the “Arc of Instability” share similar tactics, logics and goals, and particularly, linking with each other via computer internet, migration, visits and people-to-people exchanges. They are all shouldering the “lofty cause” of spreading Islamic fundamentalism and destabilizing secular societies, all under the guidance of Al Qaeda spiritually. For instance, according to Martin I. Wayne’s book, *China’s War on Terrorism: Counter-insurgency, Politics and International Security*, the organizations such as East Turkistan Islamic Movement and Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) are al Qaeda affiliates in China and Central Asia respectively, and the founder and leader of East Turkistan Islamic Movement was allegedly Hasan Mahsum, who was shot and killed by the Pakistani Army on October 2, 2003

² Hari Kumar and Alan Cowell, “Bomb attacks in India kill at least 67,” *New York Times*, October 30, 2008.

³ Norimitsu Onishi, “Indonesia Bombings Signal Militants’ Resilience,” *New York Times*, July 17, 2009.

⁴ Degang Sun, “China-India-Israel Quasi-alliance Needed”, *Journal of Power Politics*, November 2009, p. 16.

in U.S. counter-al Qaeda campaign in Afghanistan.⁵ The personnel exchanges and physical contacts among those terrorist groups are quite frequent at the globalization age through internet, migration, tactical training and financing.

Specifically, how does the global jihad network interact with each other financially? The true story is probably always beyond the common people's knowledge. However, it is confirmed that there is an Informal Value Transfer System (IVTS) called Hawala, which frequently offers a channel for money laundering for the global Jihad network. Hawala (also known as hundi) is based on the performance and honor of a huge network of money brokers, which are primarily located in the Middle East, North and Northeast Africa, and South Asia as well. According to the Economist, the yearly financial transaction of Hawala among terrorist groups in Pakistan has reached two billion to five billion U.S. dollars after "9.11" terrorist attacks.⁶

Apart from frequent exchanges in personnel and finance, the exchanges of views and ideas seem to be more apparent in the network. Inside the global Jihad network, various terrorist organizations exchange their views and ideas within the cell or shelter of religious schools. In order to legitimize their action and arouse people's sympathy and support, terrorist tycoons tend to participate in various social works, such as running or financing religious schools and making use of the platform to spread radical Islamic ideologies. The above-mentioned terrorist groups and other radical Islamic organizations often support private and public religious schools in the "Arc of Instability". Take Pakistan as one example. In recently years, there are over twenty thousand religious schools throughout the nation which have not yet registered at the local and central governments, making it very hard to manage. These religious schools receive abundant financial, moral and personnel support from groups in Saudi Arabia and other rich Gulf nations, including some radical and extreme Islamic organizations in the Middle East. Some radical groups make use of religious schools in the regions to spread global Jihad, and the students there come from all corners of the world, particularly the Middle East, Pakistan, Central Asia, China's Xinjiang, Kashmir, Bangladesh, and Southeast Asian nations.⁷ It can be predicted that part of these students will probably become the candidates of global Jihad network guardians and followers in the near future.

The global jihad network has posed an overwhelming challenge to the regional political pattern in the "Arc of Instability", including the secular Islamic authorities in the region. In the long run, this broad region's secular

⁵ Martin I. Wayne, *China's War on Terrorism: Counter-insurgency, Politics and International Security*, New York: Routledge, 2008, Chapter one.

⁶ <http://www.economist.com/research/Economics/searchActionTerms.cfm?query=hawala>.

⁷ Degang Sun, "The Middle East Factor in Pakistani Terrorist Groups," *South Asian Studies Quarterly*, No. 3, 2008, p. 16.

societies will be the most vulnerable to attack. Within the background of global jihad network, big powers have adjusted their respective anti-terror strategy and tactics. For instance, the U.S. President Obama has, resolutely, shifted its focus from Iraq to central and south Asia in his counter-terror campaign.⁸ China and its neighbors in Central Asia and South Asia seem to be in the process of adjusting their anti-terror strategies as well.

II. The New Faces of Terrorist Groups Targeting China

China's anti-terror strategy hinges on the transformation of global jihad network and its own national conditions. It is a multi-ethnic state with 55 ethnic minorities representing about 9% of the total population, and its terrorist threat is interwoven with the "three evil" forces of terrorism, separatism and extremism. Sometimes, it's hard to tell them apart. For a long time since the end of the Cold War, China is one of the victims in the international community suffering serious terrorist attacks. According to China's official statistics, from 1991 to 2001, the "East Turkistan" terrorist groups initiated over 200 terrorist attacks from beyond China-Central Asia Border by means of explosion, assassination, poison spreading and arson, causing over 600 casualties.⁹ These Islamic groups are a loose organization consisting of several dozen mini-groups or informal organizations abroad.

In December 1999, over 40 representatives gathered together in Istanbul, Turkey, established a united front of "East Turkistan Islamic Movement", and formulated the guideline of founding a state in Xinjiang by violence and armed struggle. Some of them even advocated to seek "guerrilla war" in Southern Xinjiang.¹⁰ East Turkistan Islamic Movement holds the banner of self-determination, decolonialization and national independence. In order to win international sympathy and support in the Islamic world, they place emphasis on pan-Islamism and pan-Turkism, underscoring that the only urgent thing at present was and would be jihad. They propagandized that "one jihad for Allah is better than sixty years' Muslims worship".¹¹ In their pamphlet, East Turkistan Islamic Movement urged all Muslims in China to launch terrorist attacks, particularly in the regions with dense population, "including kindergartens, hospitals, schools and some other public places in order to create a strong atmosphere of terror".¹² In order to obtain fund, they

⁸ Liangxiang Jin, "On the Policy Adjustment of the U.S. Counter-terror Forces Deployment," *Journal of Arab World Studies*, No. 6, 2009, pp. 32-37.

⁹ Information Office of China's State Council, "The East Turkistan Terrorist Groups Are Responsible for the Crimes," *People's Daily*, January 22, 2002, A 6.

¹⁰ Bubghua Ying, "Analysis of International Terrorism and Its Implication to China," *Journal of Jilin Public Security Academy*, No. 5, 2009, p. 69.

¹¹ Binghua Ying, "International Terrorist Crimes and China's Public Security Department's Response," *Journal of Yunnan Police Officer Academy*, No. 6, 2009, p. 77.

¹² Lianhe Hu, *Viewing Terrorism from the Third Eye*, Beijing: the World Knowledge, 2002, p. 90.

rely not only on assistance of other terrorist groups abroad, but also on drug trafficking. In accordance with official statistics, in 1990s, the revenue from transnational drug-trafficking accounted for 20% of these terrorist groups' total expenditure, and after "911" terrorist attacks, the proportion has reached even over 50%.¹³

After the establishment of Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) in 2001 as well as the tense U.S.-led NATO anti-terror campaign in Afghanistan and Pakistan, China's external setting of anti-terror strategy has been drastically improved. Some terrorist leaders were either killed or caught. In 2002, East Turkistan Islamic Movement, the most brutal and influential terrorist organization targeting China, was listed on the UN terrorist groups, which was later on universally recognized as a terrorist group by most of the Islamic and western countries. Since then, China's anti-terror campaign is no longer local, but international. However, it is still too early to judge whether its anti-terror strategy is successful. For instance, round the period of Beijing Olympic Games in August 2008, China has witnessed a new wave of low-tense terrorist threat, such as terrorist attacks in Qeshqer, Xinjiang, killing 16 armed policemen and injured 16 more on August 4, 2008. Thereafter, in southern Xinjiang Autonomous Region, such as in Qeshqer and Hetian, there are more sporadic terrorist attacks on August 10, 12, and 27, 2008 respectively, which were all conducted by East Turkistan terrorist groups in both China's Xinjiang and Central Asia. The most violent and shocking attack happened in Urumqi, capital of Xinjiang Autonomous region on July 5, 2009, which killed 197 and injured over 1700 people and most of the victims are civilians. Moreover, the infrastructure was seriously destroyed. Terrorists and mobs smashed and then set fire on 331 shops and 1325 cars, including buses and ambulances, which is unprecedented since the founding of PRC in 1949.¹⁴ After the serious unrest and turbulence, in August and September 2009, Urumqi, Xi'an and southern Xinjiang Autonomous Region were enveloped by another wave of terror, i. e. Syringe Attacks. Infuriated, the citizens demonstrated on the street demanding the government to guarantee their physical safety. Wang Lequan, secretary of the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Regional Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC) ordered more than 7,000 government officials to walk door-to-door in Urumqi to calm people after five people died and 14 were injured during riotous protests by people demanding that something be done to stop the stabbings.¹⁵

¹³ Musa, "The Detrimental Drugs in China's Western Regions and the Political Issues of Building a Well-off Society in an All-round Way," *Liaowang Oriental Weekly*, September 15, 2004.

¹⁴ Information Office of China's State Council, "A White Paper of the Development and Progress of Xinjiang," September 21, 2009; Jing Yang, "On the Current Situation and Counter-measures of East Turkistan Terrorism," *Theory Research*, No. 11, 2009, p. 13.

¹⁵ Qiang Guo, "Urumqi Vows to Stem Syringe Attacks," *Global Times*, September 8, 2009.

In recent years, the terrorist groups in Xinjiang as well as in Central Asia targeting China feature the following characteristics. First, East Turkistan terrorist groups, the major ones, haven't yet died down. They attempt to make use of every cross-regional link, so that it can effectively take advantage of global jihad network, obtaining fund, receiving personnel training and making use of other support morally and financially. Second, terrorists go to great length to make use of poor Muslims' dissatisfaction of the local government, particularly in southern Xinjiang Autonomous region, to spread radical and jihad ideologies. In July 2008, police in Urumqi discovered and destroyed a terrorist group in the guise of "Jihad Seminar", which aims at "killing the infidel of Han and establishing al-Khilafah". Among the ten suspects caught, five were women, who called each other "sisters". They were not only taught *the Holy Koran*, but also encouraged to be suicide bombers and martyrs. In 2008, China's security forces caught several suicide bombers who were also young ladies attempting to conduct terrorist attacks and were instilled radical ideologies.¹⁶ Third, the terrorist groups have gone to fragmentation due to Shanghai Cooperation Organization's anti-terror endeavors and U.S.-led NATO's war in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Some of them have disbanded themselves and joined World Uyghur Congress; others have got new identities and positions in relatively moderate political organizations; still others have got German, Turkish or American nationalities and abandoned terrorist activities temporarily. Fourth, the terrorist groups have targeted not only public servants and government infrastructure, but also civilians, and their top agenda is not to defeat "suppressors", but to arouse domestic unrest and attract world-wide attention, particularly the world mass media from the Islamic and the western world.

III. The Increasing Radicalization of Separatist Groups Abroad

China faces not only "East Turkistan" terrorist groups, but also increasingly radical separatist groups such as World Uyghur Congress (WUC), Tibetan Youth Congress, and Tibetan Women's Association etc.

The World Uyghur Congress was founded in mid-April 2004 at a meeting in Munich, Germany, as a collection of various exiled Uyghur groups including the Uyghur American Association (UAA) and East Turkistan National Congress (ETNC). The members were from over 13 countries and regions.¹⁷ According to statistics, there are currently about one million overseas Uyghurs, who mainly live in Central, West and South Asia, representing 80% of the total number of overseas Uyghurs. Among the one million Uyghurs, 540 thousand are in Central Asia, 210 thousand are in West

¹⁶ Guang Pan and Guojun Zhao, "The New Change and Its Dynamics of East Turkistan Forces since '9'11' Terrorist Attacks," *Journal of Contemporary International Relations*, No. 10, 2008, p. 48.

¹⁷ World Uyghur Congress, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_Uyghur_Congress.

Asia, 80 thousand are in South Asia. There are 100 thousand more in America and European countries too.¹⁸ Most of them have settled down and got their new nationalities in the foreign land. The World Uyghur Congress claims to be the sole entity representing all Uyghurs in China and abroad. Rebiya Kadeer is the current president, elected in 2006. On May 21, 2009, the third World Uyghur Congress was held in Washington D.C., the U.S.A. It summarized the Congress's achievement in the past three years and formulated the principles for the next period. At this meeting, the U.S. Congressmen such as Lincoln Diaz-Balart, Chris Smith, Frank Wolf, Bill Delahunt, James McGovern and some Senators such as Sherrod Brown have turned up. Dalai Lama and China's democratic movement associations also sent representatives to attend the conference. Rebiya Kadeer was reelected president of the Congress at the meeting.¹⁹

The World Uyghur Congress was originally moderate organization compared with East Turkistan Islamic Movement, the Chinese branch of Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU). The Congress attaches great importance to democracy, liberty and human rights, which are more or less in consonance with western political values. However, this organization has never abandoned its ultimate goal of "internationalization of Xinjiang problem" and finally "East Turkistan Independence". According to the organization, "East Turkistan", i.e. Xinjiang Autonomous Region is nothing but PRC's "colony", and Uyghur is an ethnic nation without a state, resembling Kurds in Turkey, Iran, Syria and Iraq. The World Uyghur Congress, however, is quite pragmatic to pursue incremental independence, aware that radical independence is absolutely out of the question at present. Moreover, it underscores the improvement of human rights of Uyghurs in Xinjiang, so that it can win universal moral and financial support of the west and the vast Islamic world, particularly Turkey. However, after the Afghan war and a series of joint anti-terror endeavors by Shanghai Cooperation Organization members, some terrorist groups such as World Uyghur Youth Congress and East Turkistan Information Center were forced to join World Uyghur Congress and have seized some key positions, so that the Congress has been driven to radicalization step by step. For instance, after being reelected president of World Uyghur Congress, Rebiya Kadeer, the candidate of the Congress's spiritual leader²⁰ and human right activist, was frequently criticized by the more radical sects inside the organization because she is "too

¹⁸ Ai mai-ti and Rui Feng, "On the Cross-national Habitation and Distribution of the Uygur Nationality," *Journal of Xinjiang University*, No. 4, 2008, p. 97.

¹⁹ Guang Pan and Guojun Zhao, "Analysis of the Internationalization of World Uyghur Congress," *Contemporary International Relations*, No. 9, 2009, p. 22.

²⁰ There seems to be certain discord between Erkin Alptekin and Rebiya Kadeer, because the former was regarded as the "Uyghur Dalai Lama", the spiritual and political leader of the Congress. But since 2009, Erkin Alptekin has obviously been overshadowed by Rebiya Kadeer. See Rebiya Kadeer, "Not the Torch of Liberty", *The Washington Post*, April 1, 2008.

soft”.²¹ In order to show the tough side of World Uyghur Congress and her strong leadership, Rebiya Kadeer reportedly encouraged and guided the violence in Urumqi, Xinjiang on July 5, 2009, which was a sharp contrast to the organization’s guideline of peace, democracy and non-violence. Chinese government does not regard the Congress as a terrorist group now, and instead defines it as a separatist group. However, it’s a matter of fact that several leaders in the Congress are actually terrorists from the bankrupt East Turkistan Islamic Movement, Eastern Turkistan Liberation Organization, The World Uyghur Youth Congress and East Turkistan Information Center, and all of the four are regarded as terrorist groups by Beijing. Particularly, the last two terrorist organizations have recently joined the World Uyghur Congress lately.

In terms of Tibet separatist groups abroad, the radicalization is increasingly conspicuous too. On March 14, 2008, a large-scale riot broke out in Lasa, Capital of Tibet Autonomous Region, causing 568 casualties, which is habitually called “3·14” incident. Since then, some radical Tibetan separatist groups represented by Tibetan Youth Congress commented that they “would rather sacrifice blood and life for Tibetan independence”. “In order to achieve our ultimate goal, we are ready to sacrifice 100 more Tibetan fighters.”²² At present, Tibetan Youth Congress has 81 sub-branches throughout the world with over 30 thousand members in India, Nepal, Bhutan, Britain, Canada and the United States etc. This organization harshly criticized Dalai Lama-led government in exile for its inability and inaction in the past several years. These radical members make up 80% of all the staff in “Tibetan Government in Exile”, attempting to manipulate Dalai Lama leadership’s policy-making in the years to come. In 2008, Tsewang Rigzin, President of Tibetan Youth Congress, pointed out that non-violent and peaceful struggle can only meet Beijing’s need. When interviewed by *the Evening Post* of Italy, he pointed out that “in terms of the lofty cause of Tibetan independence, it is a new and inevitable trend to rely on suicide bombs for retaliation.” Tibetan Youth Congress has signed food and arms trade agreements with anti- Nepal government separatists, Tamil Tigers of Sri Lanka as well as other terrorist groups in Kashmir.²³

Apart from Tibetan Youth Congress, Dalai-led “Tibetan Government in Exile” has reportedly signed a covert agreement of mutual recognition with Basque, the terrorist group in Spain.²⁴ Moreover, “Tibetan Government in

²¹ Guang Pan and Guojun Zhao, “The New Change and Its Dynamics of East Turkistan Forces since ‘9·11’ Terrorist Attacks,” *Journal of Contemporary International Relations*, No. 10, 2008, p. 48.

²² Binghua Yin, “International Terrorist Crimes and Its Implications to China’s Public Security,” *Journal of Yunnan Police Officer Academy*, No. 6, 2009, p. 77.

²³ Jincheng Huang and Jiafu Bao, “On the Terrorist Threat Facing China in the New Era,” *Legal System and Society*, No. 6, 2009, pp. 210-211.

²⁴ Jincheng Huang and Jiafu Bao, “On the Terrorist Threat Facing China in the New Era,” *Legal System and*

Exile” has run over 80 schools in overseas Tibetan communities since 1960, and some of these students are brainwashed by radical separatists from Tibetan Youth Congress and Tibetan Women Association etc.²⁵

IV. China’s “Three Ring Strategy” in Anti-terror Cooperation

Considering its stern and worsening terrorist situation at home and abroad, Chinese government has spared no effort to combat terrorism, separatism and extremism. From Chinese perspective, terrorism hinges not only on social stability, but also on sovereignty and territorial integrity, for the internationalization of Xinjiang and Tibet issues will inevitably challenge Beijing’s legitimacy of rule in the region, which is more detrimental and impending than Taiwan problem. There are basically three rings in China’s international cooperation on anti-terrorism. The first is the mechanism within the framework of Shanghai Cooperation Organization, Sino-Pakistan anti-terror cooperation and the UN in general; the second is China-India-Israel cooperation, and the third ring is probably a tacit agreement between China and U.S.-led NATO anti-terror cooperation in Central Asia.

To begin with, It’s a cliché to academicians that SCO was founded in 2001 by China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan, which is the sole multi-national organization dominated by China. The underlying purpose of the organization is to combat terrorism in Central Asia. On October 10, 2002, China and Kyrgyzstan had joint military exercises for anti-terrorism; from August 6 to 12, 2003, the armed forces from China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan gathered in Kazakhstan and had a large-scale military exercises named “Union-2003” for the first time since the founding of SCO; from August 18 to 25, 2005, China and Russia had joint military rehearsal named “peace mission-2005”; from August 24 to 26, 2006, China and Kazakhstan held joint military exercises of “Tianshan-1”; from September 22 to 23, 2006, China and Tajikistan had joint military rehearsal of “collaboration-2006”; and from August 9 to 17, 2007, the SCO members held joint military rehearsal of “Union-2007” again.²⁶ Besides, as the only all-weather friend of China and the observer of SCO, Pakistan acts as the staunch force in China’s international anti-terror collaboration. For instance, Pakistan is one of the few countries disagreeing to have an urgent conference in the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) after July 5, 2009 riot in

Society, No. 6, 2009, p. 210.

²⁵ Lifang Fan, “On the Characters of Transnational Crimes in China,” *Journal of Chinese People’s Armed Police Force Academy*, Vol. 25, No. 9, 2009, p. 89.

²⁶ Li Lin, “Terrorist Crimes and Combat in China’s Xinjiang and Its Neighboring Countries Within the Framework of Shanghai Cooperation Organization,” *Journal of Bingtuan Education Institute*, Vol. 19, No. 3, 2009, p. 17.

Urumqi, Xinjiang. Moreover, China is increasingly relying on the UN mechanism to combat terrorism.²⁷

Compared with the scope and frequency of SCO anti-terror cooperation however, China, India and Israel, the frontlines of global jihad network aggression, have also initiated preliminary cooperation too. Confronted with the common threat, are the three countries likely to form an anti-terror triangle like SCO? What mechanism can the three countries rely on? Are there any barriers in the way?

China has already engaged in deep and broad bilateral anti-terror cooperation with India and Israel respectively, ranging from intelligence cooperation, extradition, intellectual exchanges, anti-terror equipment sales etc. In recent years, there are several joint military rehearsals on anti-terrorism between China and India, symbolizing the improving strategic cooperation between China and India. From Chinese perspective, the overwhelming terrorist threat is the so-called East Turkistan Islamic Movement, which has a close tie with Al-Qaeda and Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, and it has undermined the social stability in Xinjiang, China. However, Beijing seemed to be reluctant to cooperate explicitly with India due to the lack of mutual trust between the two countries. Although most of the disputed territory is barren and is of little economic or strategic significance, the area in dispute between China and India is over 120 thousand square kilometers, the size of North Korea, which is quite vast geographically. Moreover, China is not willing to infuriate Pakistan due to its strategic cooperation with India, otherwise Beijing might be put on the opposite bloc of the Islamic world. As to Sino-Israel cooperation in anti-terrorism, it is by and large sporadic, for China does not want to impress the Islamic countries that China will side with Israelis to oppose Muslims. Up till now, China's anti-terror campaign is mostly confined within the framework of Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). However, the riot in Urumqi, capital of Xinjiang on July 5, 2009, caused over one and a half thousand casualties, which shocked Chinese top officials and common residents, revealing that the anti-terror situation in North-west China is more serious and substantial than expected and must be tackled with on a broader basis.

Therefore, there seems to be of great necessity for China, India and Israel to establish a consultative mechanism in anti-terrorism. First, the three countries are confronted with increasingly serious and extensive threat of global jihad and they are all the victims. For instance, from January to November of 2008, India witnessed over 800 terrorist attacks, exceeding all

²⁷ Cheng Bao, and Gulxadi Turxun, "An International Cooperative Strategy of China's Crackdown on Separatism and Terrorism," *Journal of Xinjiang University (Philosophy, Humanities & Social Sciences)*, Vol. 37, No. 5, 2009, p. 103.

the terrorist attacks in the past three years.²⁸ The terrorist groups targeting Israel are mainly in the Middle East, but they have already had close ties with that in Central Asia and South Asia. When Islamic jihad is increasingly global in the “Arc of Instability”, China, India and Israel, the most important non-Muslim and secular societies on the periphery of Eurasia, have to join their hands to fight terrorists from three different fronts towards the same goal.

Second, China, India and Israel have strong mutual complementarity in anti-terrorism. The three countries are big powers economically, militarily and politically in East Asia, South Asia and West Asia respectively. China is the major sponsor of SCO and a permanent member of the UN Security Council. India is the largest and the most powerful and influential state in South Asia, without whose participation, there is no cooperation to speak of in South Asian and Central Asian affairs. Israel is presumably the most powerful state in the Middle East in terms of military capability and mobility, and possibly the only nuclear power in the region. Moreover, since the founding of Israel in 1948, Israelis have been living in the state of terror and they have launched numerous anti-terror campaigns in the past six decades. Israel is one of the few countries with the richest anti-terror expertise tactically and strategically. The three countries, consequently, can share their experience and compensate each other in the same field.

Third, the three countries have already laid a preliminary political foundation for the future anti-terror cooperation. It's known to all that India and Israel have quite close-knit cooperation in military intelligence²⁹, especially since the Mumbai attack in November 2008. During 2008 Beijing Olympics Games, Israeli anti-terror experts reportedly contributed a lot to China's security system. With the coming Shanghai World Expo of 2010, Israel seems more willing to contribute to Chinese counterpart in anti-terrorism. In terms of Sino-Indian relations, the top leaders should have sufficient reasons to be optimistic. On August 7, 2009, the border dispute negotiation was held in New Deli. Despite the fact that the two countries still have a long way to go before they settle their territorial dispute, the mutual trust has been effectively consolidated. Both Chinese and Indian elites have realized that the two largest and emerging powers have more to share and cooperate with than before. Hence, by adhering to the principle of seeking common ground while shelving differences, China-India-Israel security quasi-alliance in anti-terrorism is not out of the question, but an indispensable call of times and mission.³⁰

²⁸ Gang Luo and Jincheng Huang, “On the New Trend of International Terrorist Crimes and China's Strategy,” *Journal of Yunnan University Law Edition*, Vol. 22, No. 3, 2009, p. 132.

²⁹ Efraim Inbar, “The Indian-Israeli Entente,” *Orbis*, Vol. 48, No. 1, 2004, p. 102.

³⁰ Degang Sun, “China-India-Israel Quasi-alliance Needed”, *Journal of Power Politics*, November 2009, p. 17.

How would the three sides cooperate? What are the top agenda and mechanism? As the first step, the three sides' top officials should establish a tri-lateral platform for dialogue to exchange their views in a frank fashion, so that they could further improve their mutual trust. Second, the three countries' military officials should promote communications, so that they could exchange intelligence on radical Islamic groups' activity in the "Arc of Instability". Third, the three countries should be offensive enough to fight global jihad network from three different directions and stabilize their own regions, rolling back the jihad network's influence. Finally, the three countries' academic circles and institutes in anti-terror studies should promote their interaction and exchanges, so that they can act on "the second track".

As to the third ring, has China cooperated with the U.S. and NATO in Afghanistan and Pakistan in anti-terrorism? Have they shared intelligence? To what extent are they cooperating and collaborating with each other? It is hard to make a judgment and draw a conclusion by now. On January 23, 2010, the Turkistan Islamic Party, i.e. East Turkistan Islamic Movement, said that 15 of its members, including 13 Uighurs and two Turks, were killed during a U.S. Predator airstrike in Afghanistan.³¹ Abdul Haq al-Turkistani, the head of the Chinese terrorist militant group, was confirmed to have been killed in a U.S. drone strike on Feb. 15, 2010, according to Pakistani security officials who spoke to CBS News on condition of anonymity.³²

China has a complex feeling towards U.S. and NATO's military presence in Central Asia. On the one hand, despite the heavy humanitarian disaster, Obama administration's recent military maneuver in Afghanistan and Pakistan has, objectively speaking, stabilized China's external environment, which is naturally conducive to peace, stability and development in Xinjiang and Tibet. Beijing seems to have encouraged Pakistan, its best friend, to cooperate with the U.S. in combating al Qaeda and Taliban. On the other hand, Beijing is undoubtedly concerned about the political implication of the U.S. military presence in the long run, and is worried about westernization and Americanization of Central Asia by supporting "Color Revolution" in the region. The U.S. encroachment of Central Asia will inevitably worsen China's geopolitical setting in the next decade. Consequently, China and Russia urged the U.S. to set up a timetable to withdraw troops and close military bases in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan in 2005.³³ In a broad sense, China-NATO anti-

³¹ Bill Roggio, "US Airstrik Killed 15 Turkistan Islamic Party Fighters in Afghanistan," *The Long War Journal*, January 23, 2010.

³² "Abdul Haq al-Turkistani is dead", *World Affaris Board*, March 1, 2010. <http://www.worldaffairsboard.com/rise-china/54889-abdul-haq-al-turkistani-dead.html>.

³³ Chenghong Li, "Limited Defensive Strategic Partnership: Sino-Russian Rapprochement and the Driving Forces," *Journal of Contemporary China*, Vol. 16, No. 52, 2007, p. 495.

terror cooperation in Central Asia serves their mutual interest, so long as they can find an ideal mechanism and meet their respective primary concern.

V. Conclusion

China's anti-terror campaign is different from that of the United States. The latter attempts to counter terrorist and radical groups abroad by establishing a network of "lily pads-like military bases" on the periphery of the "Arc of Instability"³⁴, and it has so far launched a series of anti-terror campaigns against al-Qaeda, Taliban and other radical groups in Afghanistan and Pakistan by only military means. China's anti-terror battle is not overseas, but at home. China has never had military bases abroad, nor has it launched any unilateral military campaign in Central Asia. Instead, it places emphasis on eradicating terrorism by means of social and economic development at home, which is regarded as the root cause of terrorism.³⁵ Hence, the U.S. anti-terror campaign, like Western Medicine, seeks quick remedy; while Chinese anti-terror Campaign, like Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), pursues long-term, overall and comprehensive treatment and the eradication of the root cause instead.

Anyway, China not only relies on economic, social and political endeavors at home, but also international cooperation abroad in combating terrorism. By the end of October 2008, China has signed eleven treaties among thirteen UN anti-terror Conventions. It has ratified International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism and would ratify the Amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material.³⁶ Therefore, it can be estimated that in the next few years, there will be three paralleling but interlinking grand anti-terror mechanisms in Eurasian "Arc of Instability"---SCO, U.S.-led NATO, and China-India-Israel consultative triangle. The establishment of a three-ring security mechanisms will reshape geopolitics of Eurasia and will promote interactions between China, Central Asia, the U.S., Russia, India, Pakistan and other countries beyond the region in combating terrorism.

Nevertheless, in its anti-terror campaign, China still faces big challenges and dilemmas. To begin with, up till now, Beijing is lack of a definite anti-terror law and regulation, and currently it can only rely on several articles of PRC Criminal Law, making it hard to cooperate with other countries

³⁴ Alexander Cooley, *Base Politics: Democratic Change and the U.S. Military Overseas*, Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2008, p. 6.

³⁵ Lianzhong Li, "The Art of War and China's Anti-terror Tactics," *Journal of Political Science and Law*, Vol. 26, No. 5, 2009, p. 110.

³⁶ Lixin Zhu, "International Cooperation on Countering Terrorist Crimes and the Improvement of China's Legislation," *Journal of National Prosecutors College*, Vol. 17, No. 6, 2009, p. 25.

tactically, such as on the issue of the extradition of terrorists.³⁷ Second, China's armed police have limited privileges compared with that of Britain, the U.S. and Germany, such as preemptive strike, interception, and searching the civilians shelters etc. Beijing has no special force for countering terrorism.

Third, China is a transitional society, not a western democracy and its legitimacy is frequently challenged by western countries and regions in countering terrorism. Some terrorist groups claim that they are not terrorists, but freedom fighters for national and ethnic liberation. The majority of terrorist groups and radical separatists know how to play the card of "human rights", and attempt to internationalize Xinjiang and Tibetan problems with the banner of freedom, democracy and individual dignity, and divert observers' attention from their terrorist essence. Any crackdown on terrorism by the Chinese government might be harshly criticized by radical separatist groups, human rights observers, mass media, west and even Islamic countries, for it's regarded as the violation of human rights and persecution of ethnic minorities, not countering terrorism. Fourth, China has encountered with frequent intelligence failures so much so that it has to tackle with serious consequences passively after the terrorist attacks happened. Finally, Beijing is quite inexperienced in coping with internet terrorism. China hasn't yet found an effective countermeasure to defeat cyber terrorists who communicate with each other via internet.

In 2010, the six-month-long World Expo will be held in the metropolis of Shanghai, and China's anti-terror task is more overwhelming than that during Beijing Olympic Games in 2008. Judging by its long span of time, large extension of Shanghai's geography and huge number of floating population, it can be predicted that the anti-terror situation is quite demanding. As a green hand in combating terrorism, Beijing will inevitably encounter a series of thorny terrorist-related issues and experience various forms of "growing pain".

³⁷ Nowadays, Hong Kong and Macau have already got Anti-terror laws, but the Mainland China hasn't yet. See Yunyun Sun and Huiyun Duan, "On the Situation and Improvement of China's International Cooperation on Anti-terrorism," *Economy and Law*, No. 1, 2010, p. 63.

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