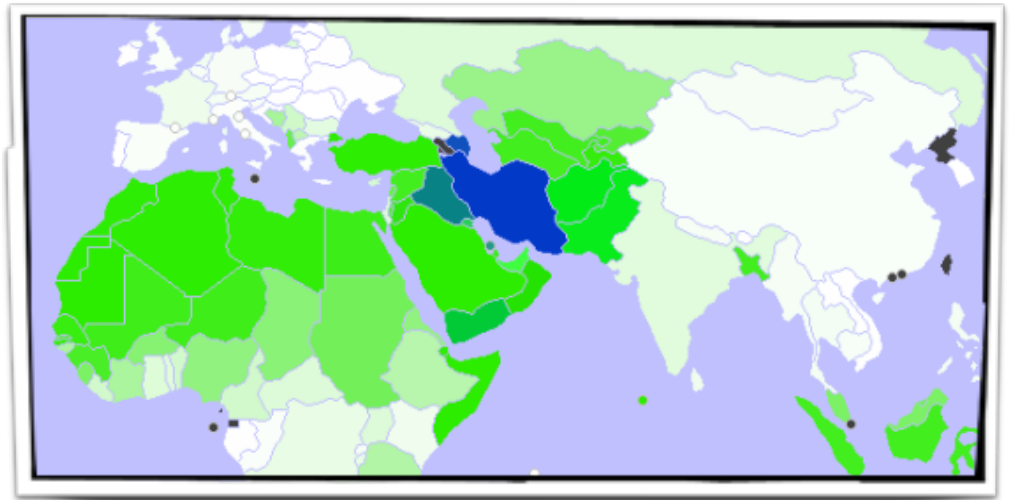


## A New Era, a New Enemy: The Background of Islamic Terrorism

As the Cold War ended, the World thought it was going to begin an era of peace and stability. Unbeknownst to even the best of forecasters, there was a storm brewing in the Middle East that was set to spill over into the rest of the globe: Extreme Islamic Terrorism.

About the Wahhabis... Islam is the second largest faith in the world, just behind Christianity. Islam is divided into two main sects: Sunni and Shia. This divide has been over who has authority within the faith and how is the Koran (Qur'an) to be interpreted/followed. Most of the Islamic world is Sunni. Iran (and most of Iraq) is Shia.



During the late 1800s, as Romanticism was spreading across the world, a religious fundamentalist movement grew

out of Saudi Arabia called Wahhabism. The Wahhabis are ultra-conservative Sunnis that believe that Islam has been corrupted and must be “purified” back to its pure version in the 900s AD and the Islamic Golden Age. A few key aspects of the Wahhabi belief system:

- Islam is a way of life that should rule over all social and political aspects of life with Sharia Law.
- Very strict restrictions of Women’s behavior and dress.
- Muslims should not decorate mosques or pray at tombs or religious sites. Doing so makes the people there “not true Muslims” and can be treated as Non-Muslims.
- Muslims should not participate in non-Muslim activities (drinking, smoking, dancing to recorded music, playing chess/checkers, acting in plays, shaving, etc) or have non-Muslim friends. Doing such things can result in beatings and even execution.
- Muslims must only obey a Muslim political leader to enter paradise after death.

By the late 1980s, Wahhabism was the primary form of Islam in Saudi Arabia.

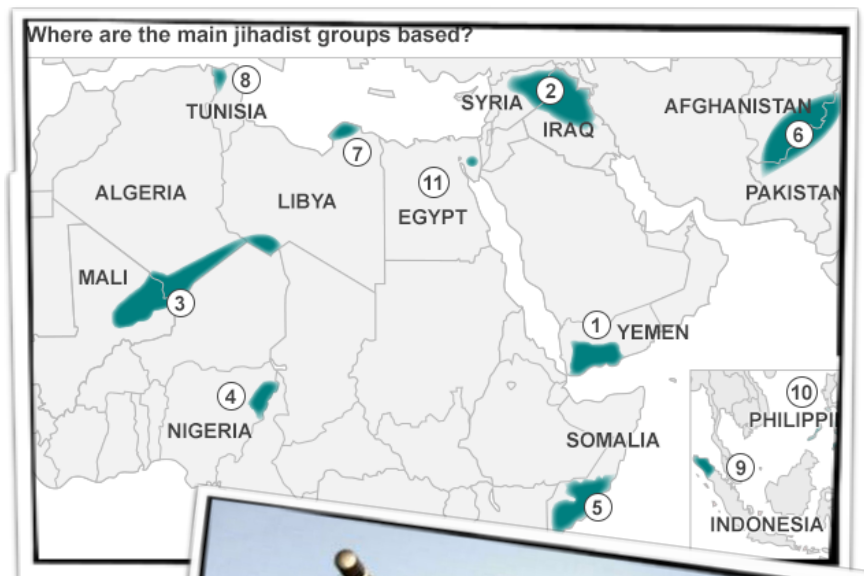
Cold War Islamic Anger... During the 1980s, the USSR had attacked Afghanistan, seeking to spread Communism further into the Middle East. Communism had very strong atheist/anti-religious policies and sought to remove anything religious from the government and education. It also promoted the empowerment and equality of women. This sparked a massive wave of anger across the Islamic world. A group called the Mujahideen, or holy warriors, came from all over the Muslim world to fight together to stop the spread of Communism and to protect Muslim values and Muslim lands.

The USA, not wanting to send troops to Afghanistan, sent CIA members to fund, equip and train the Mujahideen to fight the USSR. One of the key leaders of the Mujahideen was Osama Bin Laden. Bin Laden came from a rich-oil family in Saudi Arabia and was a firm believer in Wahhabism who came to head al-Qaeda: the Military wing of the Mujahideen group. When the USSR were defeated and left Afghanistan, Bin Laden returned home to Saudi Arabia as a hero and the Muslim fighters of the Middle East had been organized and trained.



*A New Target...* In 1990, when Saddam threatened to attack Saudi Arabia, Bin Laden wanted al-Qaeda to be used to fight the Iraqi forces. The Saudi king instead choose to accept the offer of the USA. Bin Laden was outraged: a Wahhabi-Muslim King inviting non-Muslims to come to Wahhabi land was unthinkable to Bin Laden. Bin Laden and al-Qaeda were banished from Saudi Arabia, which moved the group into poor, broken Muslim lands throughout Africa and the Middle East (Sudan, Yemen, Oman, Somalia, Afghanistan...) Bin Laden declared war on the USA and anyone who supports the USA. He called the USA & Europe the great evil that was spreading poverty and war around the world and that they were exploiting the Muslim world for its own selfish greed and gain. He said that Israel existed by the USA, for the USA to keep control of the Middle East. The continued US military presence in the Middle East was a new crusade against Islam. Bin Laden said that anyone who fought and died in this global jihad, or holy war, against the Western Crusaders would earn a privileged spot in paradise.

Entering the 1990s, al-Qaeda became recognized as an international terrorist organization. As al-Qaeda spread into impoverished places, they used their money to build roads and homes for the people, buy food, and make improve the quality of life for the people living there. This made Bin Laden very popular and helped spread his message of the USA being the evil corruptor of the world. This also helped with recruiting fighters. With use of the Internet, the group was able to communicate, organize, train, and build a base of loyal fighters willing to use violence, and even kill themselves, to wage this war against the powerful non-Wahhabis forces. With this multinational organization formed within the poor regions, Bin Laden made plans of how to strike out against the USA.



### **USA & Europe & Middle East: Big Guns & Invisible Enemies**

*The 90s...* Coming off the first Iraq war, the USA was feeling extremely confident in its global strength that it was not paying attention to the growing threats in the Middle East. Having defeated Saddam in 100 hours, what reason was there to be concerned about an angry group in the shadows of the Middle East and Africa?

As al-Qaeda unleashed its attack, it took the USA and the world a few years to take notice. In 1993, there was a failed car-bomb attack by al-Qaeda in the basement of the World Trade Center in New York City. There was also an assassination attempt of former President Bush. Then, in 1995, a car bomb demolished a government building in Oklahoma City. In 1996, there were explosions at the Olympic games in Atlanta. These bombings were initially thought to be from Middle East groups, but turned out to be home-grown terrorism. Al-Qaeda struck again, killing 19 US soldiers in Saudi Arabia (1996), bombing US Embassies in Africa (1998), a hostage situation in Malaysia (1999), a failed bomb attempt at Los Angeles Airport (2000), a successful bombing a US Warship in the Red Sea (2000). With each attack, the CIA's interest in al-Qaeda increased. Finally in 2000, Bin Laden made the FBI's top ten most wanted... but the average American knew very little (and cared even less) about this pesky Muslim group.





9/11... On September 11, 2001, al-Qaeda set off its most aggressive and deadly plot. Four airplanes were successfully hijacked: two attacking the World Trade Center buildings, one flown to the Pentagon, and the fourth crashed in a field in Pennsylvania. This event served as the defining moment that made America officially declare war on terror. President George W. Bush (son of former President George H. W. Bush) said that America would attack terrorist wherever they may be and whomever lets the terrorist live in their borders will be subject to attack. The Patriot Act was passed in less than 24 hours, creating the Department of Homeland Security for the protection of the American people and increased the privileges of the CIA and FBI. America also setup Guantanamo Bay, near Cuba, to serve as a place to detain and interrogate suspected terrorist threats.

War on Terror... Much like the War in Vietnam, the War on Terror had a problem: it was a war of ideas. Despite having the world's most powerful military, America did not know who EXACTLY was a terrorist. They did not have a capital. They did not have a uniform. They were a group of people joined by an idea and the internet. The first step in fighting the war was using the spy-intelligence the USA already had and to begin arresting suspected terrorist and bringing them to Guantanamo Bay for interrogation.

President Bush decided on a two pronged attack: Iraq and Afghanistan. Al-Qaeda was known to be in Afghanistan and there was strong support from the United Nations for the attack. Iraq, however, did not receive the same support. Bin Laden was a self-declared enemy of Saddam and there was no connection between Iraq and al-Qaeda. Bush said there were Weapons of Mass Destruction in Iraq, that they supported al-Qaeda and would be invaded by a "coalition of the willing" that would join crusade against terrorism.

Iraq Part II... In May, 2003, the USA went against the will of the United Nations and invaded Iraq. Much like round one, the American military quickly defeated the Iraqi military. However, when President Bush reached the capital Baghdad, he was faced with the same decision as his father... but instead choose to invade. Baghdad quickly fell and by December, 2003 Saddam was a US prisoner. The USA went about attempting to install a functioning democracy and to rebuild Iraq.



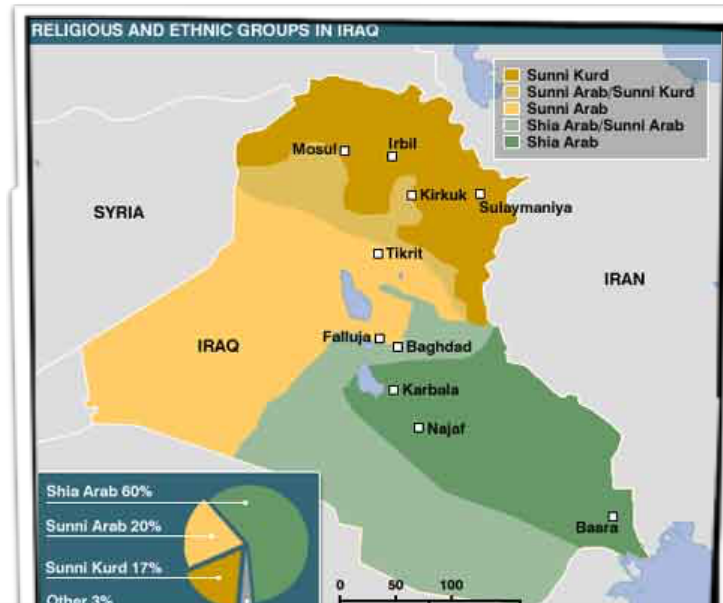


What was not anticipated was the tension and divisions that Saddam had brutally kept under control. Once Saddam was gone, the Sunnis, Shia, and Kurds began to fight a Civil War: against each other and against the USA. The USA was stuck in a war zone trying to keep a country together that did not want to stay together. The war effort was hurt as news came out that there were no weapons of mass destruction and there was no connection between al-Qaeda and Saddam: The USA had made up the documents to justify its invasion. This made countries around the world bitter-to-angry with the USA and many countries pulled out their military from Iraq.

As the fighting waged on, the USA worked to install a democracy... and ran into a numbers problem. People from tribes/religious groups tend to vote for people from their same tribe/group. Thus, the larger tribe/group tends to win and others tend to lose. The Shia were the largest group and quickly filled the leadership roles in the new Iraq. The Sunnis, the group of Saddam and his military generals, were a minority. When the Shia were voted into power, the Sunni military leaders all lost their positions in the military... many were banished from the country. The Kurds, the smallest of the groups, had little say in the new government and feared being overrun by the larger groups.

By 2010, a fragile stability had returned to Iraq. There had been two "successful" elections... but the democracy was dealing with corruption and tribal loyalties. The civil war guerrilla fighting had reduced greatly. An Iraqi army was being trained and supplied to handle its own affairs. President Barack Obama declared the war a victory, and began to pull out troops.

Afghanistan ... Much like Iraq, the USA was quickly able to remove the Taliban from power in Afghanistan. However, they quickly ran into the same problem as Iraq: tribal groups that did not want anyone ruling over them. Afghanistan had a long history of invaders: Alexander the Great, Mongals, Mughals, British, USSR... Thus, to the many Afghans, the USA was just another superpower that wanted to rule its territory. There were over fourteen ethnic groups in Afghanistan that did not want to be ruled over. The lack of paved roads and advanced communication, plus the natural barriers in the mountains and deserts, have made military tasks difficult. Another difficulty has been tribal relations: how to eliminate the Taliban and al-Qaeda and build a democracy and functioning military... while not making the other Afghans angry and turn against the USA.







Al-Qaeda continued to strike those supporting the USA. In 2004 there was a bombing in Spain and in 2005 there was a bombing in London, England. Both bombings were claimed by al-Qaeda. Both bombings were executed because of the support given to the USA's War on Terror. Spain pulled out of Afghanistan after the bombing and stopped its support. England has kept in the fight.

In May, 2011 the War on Terror, and subsequently the War in Afghanistan, had a major turning point: Osama Bin Laden was assassinated. With Bin Laden gone, and the growing success of the Afghan Democracy, President Obama began working to reduce the number of soldiers in Afghanistan... assuming the worst of the War on Terror had past.

WikiLeaks... In 2010, the War on Terror took an unexpected twist: a group called Wikileaks published over 500,000 confidential USA documents. In the documents:

- Documents about USA assassination attempts on foreign leaders, computer hacking/virus attacks, and secret alliance agreements
- Records of the USA had been recording/spying on conversation of its allies (Great Britain, France, Brazil, Japan...) and its own citizens
- Evidence of failed attacks in Iraq and Afghanistan that resulted in the deaths of innocent civilians
- Records of mistreatment/abuse of prisoners in Guantanamo Bay and ignored torture in the Iraq War

These records have had a number of negative impacts on the USA. It has put immense tension on relationships with its allies that didn't know they were being spied on. It tarnished America's image abroad. The War on Terror and 9/11 put the world on America's side... now many countries have turned sour toward America and her efforts abroad. It has also helped promote the message of al-Qaeda, serving to some as evidence that Bin Laden had been right to speak and act out against American aggression and policies.



## **Middle East: Part 2 - Meanwhile...**

Israel & Palestine... Israel's existence is a constant point of tension in the Middle East. Since Israel had been created by the UN by taking land from the Palestinians, the Muslim Palestinians want Israel to give some of their land back to create the country of Palestine. The Israelis believe the land to theirs because their God had given it to Abraham who gave it to Isaac... thus it belongs to them. The relationship between the two parties has been tense. Every year, Palestinian Liberation Operations (PLO) and Hamas want the Israelis removed completely launch rockets at Israeli civilian areas. In response, Israeli armed forces put tighter restrictions on the Gaza Strip and other Palestinian areas.

The UN has been working to create a peace deal and a two country solution, but any Israeli or Palestinian leader that has shown support for a deal has been assassinated. With most Arab countries wanting Israel completely removed, and with the USA and Europe supporting Israel... it is a constant point of tension.

Iran & Nukes... Since the Iranian Revolution in 1978, Iran has been a source of tension to the United States and the Middle East. Iran overthrew "The Shah" who had been friendly to the USA was overthrown, being accused of making Iranian culture too much like the USA. The Ayatollah, a Shia Islamic Cleric, replaced the Shah - promoting nationalist, pro-Iranian policies.

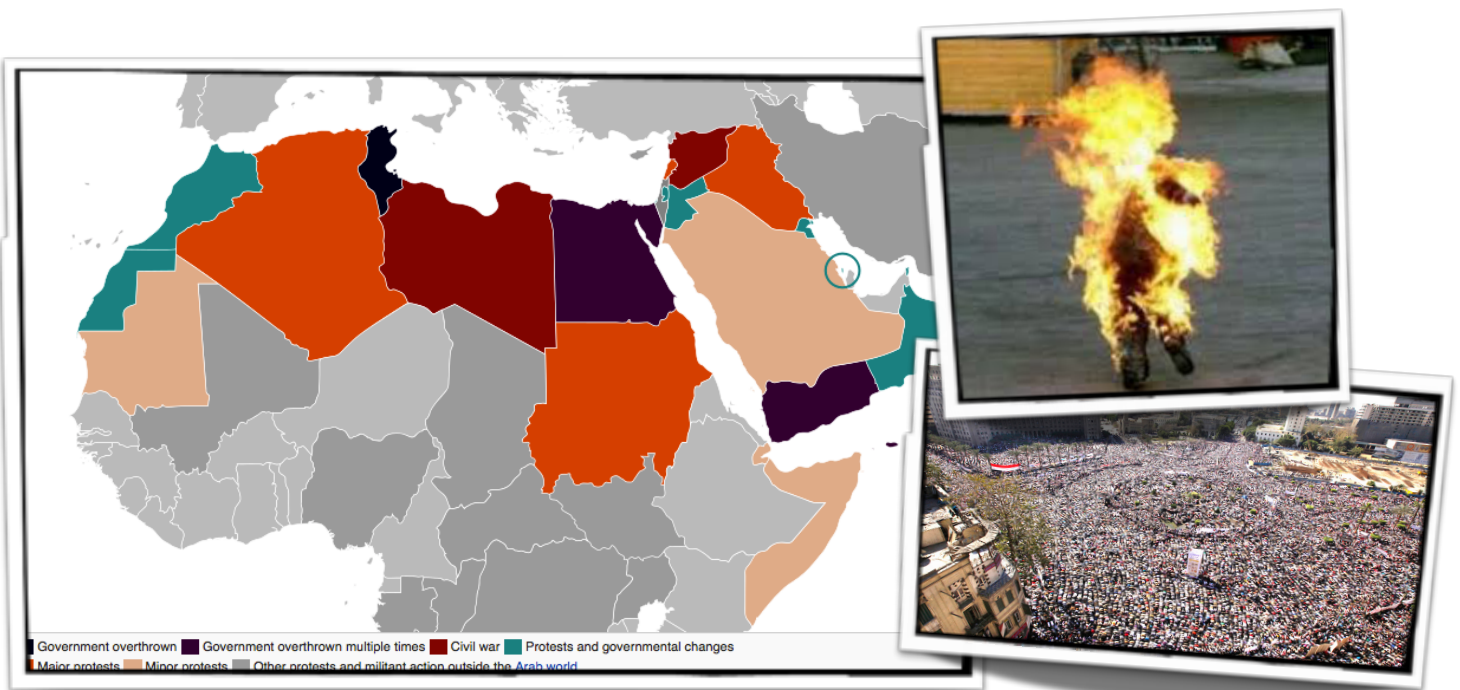
As the only Arab nation that is a Shia majority, Iran is very protective. There is a long history of wars between Sunni and Shia countries. After the 1978 revolution, Iran sought to protect itself by trying to develop nuclear weapons and long range missiles. Along with the nuclear program, many Sunni Arab nations accused Shia Iran of spying and using Espionage to undermine/destabilize their countries. Iran also made threats against Israel, that it wanted to completely destroy Israel - pushing all the Jews into the Mediterranean Sea.

In response these actions, plus the accusation that Iran has been supporting terrorist organizations, the USA and Europe put economic sanctions on Iran. Sanctions are when one or more countries refuse to buy/trade goods with another country. The purpose of the Iran sanctions was to bankrupt the country and keep it from developing nuclear weapons. These sanctions have done great damage to Iran's economy, forcing many of its companies into bankruptcy and causing large portions of its population to nearly starve.

Arab Spring... During 2003-2008, President Bush took many trips through Northern Africa and the Middle East promoting the seeds of Democracy and Human rights; echoing the words of Locke and Rousseau about the rights of man and self determined government. The hope was that the the Arab Nations would rise up, overthrow their dictators and work to install a democracies (that were more friendly to the USA then their current dictators). In 2010, the seeds that had been sown began to grow roots.

In December, 2010 rioting began in Tunisia. Tired of the poverty and corruption a man set himself on fire (literally) in protest. People took to the streets demanding better rights and freedoms. People were using Facebook and Twitter to organize protests and avoid police. Videos were sent from Satellite phones for the world to see this Facebook Revolution. By January, 2011 the Dictator of Libya stepped down from power and elections.

Inspired by the success of the Tunisians, riots broke out in 20 other Arab countries. Some were peaceful and highly successful like Egypt and Yemen, bringing about complete change in their governments. Others were partially successful with minimal violence, bringing about changes in laws, like in Algeria, Jordan and Oman. Others ended in bloody violence, where the leaders decided to bring in foreign troops to kill all the protestors, leading to civil war, like in Libya and Syria that are still going on today.





## Clarifying Terrorism: Terror Around the World

Terrorism is a global phenomena that is not confined to any one culture, religion or location. While there is no official definition, terrorism is typically understood as the use of violence to intimidate and create terror, in pursuit of political goals. 21st Century terrorism has common causes:

- **Self Determination.** During the Cold War, many empires shattered into new countries. However, within these new countries, there was an imbalance of power between the ethnic groups making up the new country. The ethnic majorities secured power and privilege for themselves. Many ethnic minorities felt powerless, needing to resort to violence in hopes of starting a revolution that would result in being able to establish their own independent country.
- **Discrimination.** Many ethnic minorities feel their governments have policies aimed at restricting their livelihood and freedoms. When the group is too small to start a revolution, they turn to terrorism to give notice to their cause to try to create change. Discrimination can take the form of ethnicity, culture, or religion.
- **Poverty.** In the modern economy, every country has a small group of “rich” and a large number of “poor.” When the impoverished reach a point of extreme poverty, groups turn to violence to try an improve their situation.
- **Weak Government.** In some countries, the government is weak and dysfunctional to provide the needed services to the people. When the government does not fulfill its responsibilities, groups may arise to organize and provide for the people in their area.

Terrorism creates a tremendous cost for a society. In 2014, the cost of security and fighting terrorism reached over \$52.9 billion dollars. Terrorism also effects the global supply chain: the ability to get goods and resources around the world effectively. Countries also struggle from the perception that terrorism brings, causing businesses and tourists to stop coming because the area is “unsafe.”

The following are dominant terrorist groups of the modern era, including their location and cause:

**Tamil Tigers** In 1945, Sri Lanka was a multi-ethnic country setup by the British as the British empire collapsed. The ethnic group known as the Tamil made up only 18% of the population. Being unable to gain a political voice in the Sri Lanka democracy, the Tamil people organized to revolt and separate from Sri Lanka - seeking to create the Country of Tamil. The Sri Lankan government refused, and violence erupted. The Tamil Tigers committed illegal crimes and engaged in guerrilla warfare (including suicide bombings). By the 1980s, the Tamil Tigers had formed a mini-military, including ships and helicopters. Between 1970 and 2000, the Tamil Tigers committed more terrorist attacks then any other “terrorist” organization in the world.

Many peace treaties were attempted, but few worked. In 2009, the Sri Lankan military “conquered” the home cities of the Tamil Tigers, ending the conflict.



**Basques ETA** In the 1950s, the leader of Spain began to use violence against non-Spanish ethnic groups in Spain. The Basque people live the mountains bordering Spain and France, with a language and culture that are extremely unique - with no other related language in all of Europe. As a result, the Basques

formed a group called the ETA that used assassinations and bombings in an attempt to create their own independent country. In 2017, the ETA chose to disarm, in an attempt to bring more financial and economic help to the struggling region. Although the violence has ended, 81% of the people of Basque have voted in favor of independence... laying a tense foundation for future conflicts.

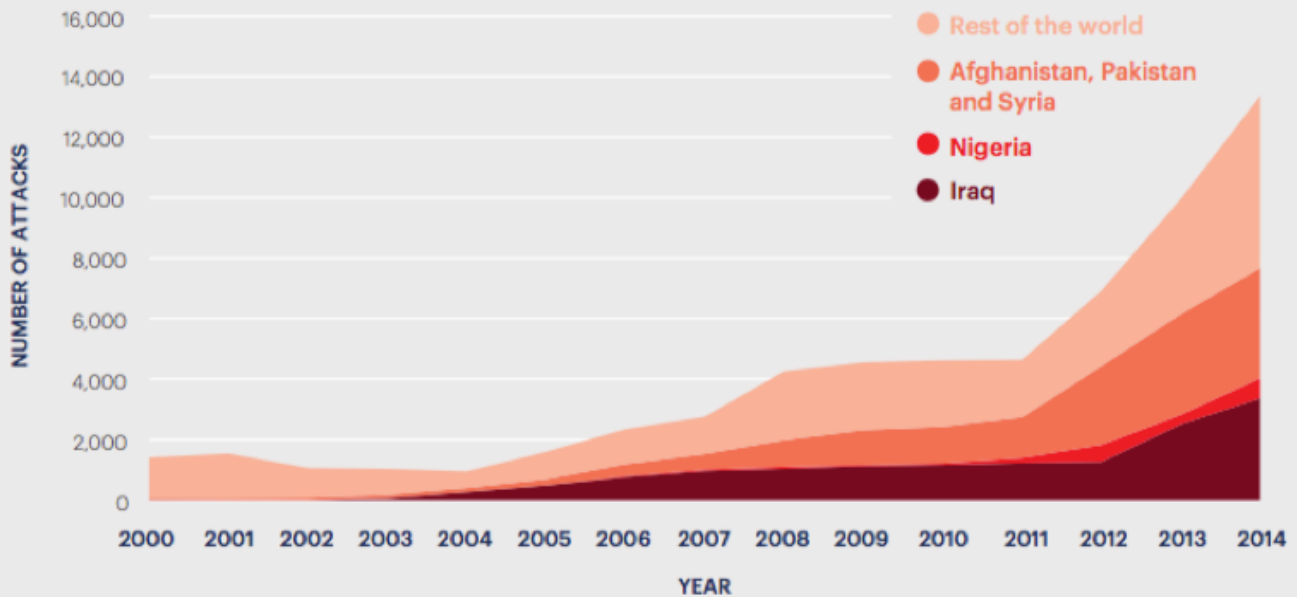


*The Irish Republican Army (IRA)* The IRA were a terrorist group that arose to opposition to the British rule in Northern Ireland. The British and Irish fought a war in 1919, that resulted in the creation of a Free Ireland on the Southern (and Catholic) side of the Island. The Northern (and Protestant) half remained as a part of Great Britain. For many Irish, this division was unacceptable. The IRA used violence to pursue the complete removal of the British from the island, unifying all of Ireland. The IRA used protest, shootings and bombings to gain attention to their cause. However, in 1995, with little success and shrinking support, the IRA agreed to peace terms and officially “disarmed” in 2005.



**FIGURE 2** TERRORIST ATTACKS, 2000–2014

The majority of terrorist incidents are highly centralised. In 2014, 57 per cent of all attacks occurred in five countries; Iraq, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Nigeria and Syria. However the rest of the world suffered a 54 per cent increase in terrorist incidents in 2013.



Source: START GTD



## ASSIGNMENT

1) Fill out this chart with the the strengths/positives and weaknesses/negatives of each region.

Region	Strengths	Weaknesses
Europe		
Russia		
South America		
North America		
South Asia		
East Asia		
Australia		
Middle East		

2) Create an impact chart. As you read you are to evaluate each area on the level of impact the people in that region had on the world culturally, militarily, and economically.

- Rate each area as to how impactful you believe them to be at the at 1992 AD (■) and at 2018 AD (▲).
- Draw arrows to show whether they grew or shrunk in impact and influence.
- If there is change, ask yourself “What caused them to grow or shrink or stagnate in their influence?” and make note of it on your chart

### Example

