

Task Force on Terrorism and Ideology



For the past 15 years, the United States has applied vast financial and human resources to thwart the threat posed by terrorism. In the homeland, and on the battlefield, the legacy of post-9/11 counterterrorism efforts is in many respects a successful one. The combined efforts of the U.S. government have degraded terrorist leadership, disrupted terrorist financing, and thwarted hundreds of terrorist plots. Thanks to these efforts, the threat of another attack on the scale of 9/11 seems remote. Yet for all this progress, the terrorist threat shows no sign of abating. As terrorist groups take root in and strike at ever more countries, Islamist terrorism has become a spreading disease eating away at the foundation of the free, open, and lawful international system and the alliances that the United States depends on for its prosperity and security.

Force has its role to play, but force alone cannot eliminate the terrorist threat and the ideology that animates it. Yet, the attempts made thus far to counter terrorist ideology have failed. What appears to have been missing from U.S. policy is a focus on extremist ideology itself rather than the violent extremism it produces. As long as extremist voices predominate in Muslim societies, the distance between socially acceptable beliefs and violence will remain far too short. Progress will come only when large portions of societies around the world no longer support the extremist ideologies that undergird the call to violence. Finding effective solutions to counter the threat posed by extremist groups and the ideology that animates them is now more urgent than ever.

Task Force Purpose

BPC's Task Force on Terrorism and Ideology will seek to **define the threat posed by extremist groups, identify gaps in U.S. strategy** or understanding of the problem, and **provide a set of policy recommendations** for prevailing in the struggle against the ideology that fuels terrorism.

Leadership



Gov. Thomas Kean

Former Governor of New Jersey
Former Chairman, 9/11 Commission



Rep. Lee Hamilton

Former Congressman from Indiana
Former Vice Chairman, 9/11 Commission



Task Force Members

Cheryl Benard

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Christopher Kojm

Professor of International Affairs, Elliot School of International Affairs,

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Former Chairman, National Intelligence Council

Kristin Lord

President and CEO, IREX

Next Steps

The Task Force on Terrorism and Ideology issued its first paper, *Defeating Terrorists, Not Terrorism: Assessing U.S. Counterterrorism Policy from 9/11 to ISIS in September 2017*, which assesses the past 16 years of post-9/11 counterterrorism and counter-radicalization efforts, and examines the role of ideology in fueling terrorism. A future paper by the Task Force will offer recommendations for defeating extremist ideology over the long term.

The Task Force will be engaging in a range of activities, including:

Research and analysis including the development and dissemination of white papers, reports, and infographics that support the Task Force goals.

Private roundtables with experts in counter-terrorism and middle eastern society and politics to develop policy ideas.

Public events that bring together key stakeholders, issue experts, and media to raise awareness to the role of ideology in fueling terrorism.

Educational briefings with staff and policymakers on Capitol Hill that bring attention to and generate support for legislative actions that promote comprehensive strategy to combat extremism.

About BPC

The Bipartisan Policy Center is a non-profit organization that convenes voices from both parties to put forward their best ideas, debate their differences and forge hard-fought compromises on issues crucial for all Americans—health, the economy, energy, security, and governance. BPC's approach of rigorous analysis and respectful negotiation produces politically viable policies that have real impact. What sets BPC apart from other think tanks is that we bring together all sides, regardless of party affiliation, position, or perspective, when tackling a problem. That cornerstone principle was established by BPC's founders; former Senate Majority Leaders Howard Baker, Tom Daschle, Bob Dole, and George Mitchell.

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