

YUNMUN XXXI

Counter-Terrorism Committee

Topic: Terrorist Financing

Terrorists and terrorist groups utilize the internet and social media in order to commit as well as facilitate a wide range of terrorist activities such as incitement, radicalization, recruitment, training, planning, collection of information and financing.¹

Today, one of the main ways in which terrorists raise and move funds is through the internet. As the internet becomes more popular, it becomes an increasingly common device used to conduct business. Additionally, the internet also provides a secure method for money transfers via services such as PayPal that can be done on a computer, or even just a cellphone. In countries in which the formal financial sector is not as developed, such as various African countries, the use of the internet to facilitate transfers on a cellphone is a very attractive and readily available option. Furthermore, the internet provides a degree of anonymity to terrorists. Younis Tsouli, a young British man more famously known for his internet code name “Irhabi 007” is perhaps one of today's best virtual terrorists. Despite recent internet security crack-downs from several countries including the United States, Tsouli and other terrorists are still able to exploit security gaps and continue conducting their illegal activity via the internet.²

Terrorists will continue to use the internet as a tool for their financing. This trend is only likely to increase as the scope and scale of the internet expands, and with other related technological developments. There is widespread agreement at this point among governments that the internet creates serious counterterrorism vulnerabilities and that action is needed to counter this growing threat. There is far less agreement, however, on what steps need to be taken.

Delegates should consider the following questions when writing position papers and working in committee sessions:

¹ <https://www.un.org/sc/ctc/focus-areas/information-and-communication-technologies/>

² <https://ctc.usma.edu/terrorist-financing-on-the-internet/>

1. What guidelines should the CTC create in order to better regulate and monitor terrorists' use of the internet?
2. Would such rules be an infringement on the right to free speech? Why/ why not?
3. How would the CTC be able to ensure that all member countries accept and institute the new regulations?
4. How can the CTC work with specific companies such as PayPal to limit their use for terrorists? If such companies refuse to cooperate with the CTC, what can be done?

I urge you to research this topic and your countries in depth so you can be prepared for the complex discussions we will be having. While analyzing this topic, please consider how your country reconciles terrorism and human rights. If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to email me at ljshowi@mail.yu.edu.

Best of Luck,

Leah Jshowitz

Chair, Counter-Terrorism Committee

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