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## Security Council (SC)

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**PREVENTION OF KIDNAPPING AND  
HOSTAGE-TAKING COMMITTED BY  
TERRORIST GROUPS**

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**International  
Community**

**Memorable  
Experience**

**Challenges  
Skills**



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# PERSONAL INTRODUCTION

Dear Delegates,

The topic we will be debating on during the conference is an issue of utmost importance. During the past years, we have witnessed a great increase in the number of terrorism events occurring and, unfortunately, we do not see them meeting an end anytime soon. In order to suit the needs of theirs, terrorists have started developing a new tactic, namely hostage taking. By that they manage to provoke fear in the government and manipulate both forces and the government to do as the terrorist wants, for the sake of the hostage's life. In order for the hostage to be released, huge ransoms are usually demanded, without that being in any way binding. As a result, the hostages and the country itself is put into great danger. Over the last years, there have been 2000 such incidents. An example of great essence is the Iranian Hostage Crisis, which is fundamental to be taken into consideration. Having said that, it is crucial to analyze the topic in a more thorough way and consider how the issue can be limited, or even alleviated.

If you have any inquiries, do not hesitate to contact me at my email: [dennisbelezinis@gmail.com](mailto:dennisbelezinis@gmail.com)

Best regards,

**Dionisis Belezinis**



## DEFINITIONS OF KEY TERMS

- **Kidnapping**

The crime of taking someone away by force (*Collins Cobuild English Dictionary for Advanced Learners*)

- **Ransom**

a large amount of money that is demanded in exchange for someone who has been taken prisoner, or sometimes for an animal (<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/ransom>)

- **Hostage**

A hostage is someone who has been captured by a person or organization and who may be killed or injured if people do not do what that person or organization wants (*Collins Cobuild English Dictionary for Advanced Learners*)

- **Crisis**

A crisis is a situation in which something or someone is affected by one or more very serious problems (*Collins Cobuild English Dictionary for Advanced Learners*)

Accordingly, a hostage crisis describes an extreme situation in which people are being taken hostages in great numbers.



## TIMELINE

Date	Description of Event
1932	The earliest kidnapping attempt takes place with Colonel Charles Lindbergh's son being taken hostage by the German Bruno Hauptmann for ransom.
1951	The newly-elected Iranian President declares to have the oil industry nationalized.
1972	The "Black September" Group kidnaps the Israeli wrestling team at the Munich Olympic Games.
1978	The protests against the current Shah in Iran begin.
1979	The Iranian Hostage Crisis begins.
1979	The International Convention against the Taking of Hostages is voted.
1979	The Shah flees to Egypt.
October 1979	The Shah is allowed to enter the U.S to receive medical treatment for lymphoma.
1980	"The Canadian Caper" is conducted
April 24 1980	"Operation Eagle Claw" is conducted
January 20 1981	The hostages of the Iranian Hostage Crisis are released.
1982	The UK starts punishing hostage taking with life imprisonment.
1983	The International Convention against the Taking of Hostages is entered into force.
1986	Al-Qaeda begins its operations.
2001	The USA forces conduct offensive military operations against Al Qaeda- affiliated Islamic terrorists in several regions of the world.
2002	The patrons of the Dubrovka theatre in Moscow are taken hostage.



2011	Al-Qaeda's leader is killed by American forces.
2014	The UNSC Resolution 2133 on Hostage Taking is adopted.
April 2014	Anonymous European intelligence agents claim that Qatar was the intermediate, through which ISIS has often released foreign hostages taken captive.
October 2017	The "Anti-terrorism" law is voted by the French Authorities.



## TOPIC DISCUSSION

It was in 2001, when the new terrorism tactics would be adopted. After the military operations by the USA were led, terrorists started committing kidnapping and hostage-taking and soon became one of the most important weapons in a terrorist's modern arsenal. As for the action itself, kidnapping is the capture of a person by force, threat, or deceit with intent to keep them in custody. Terrorists' intentions vary according to their psychological state and/or religion. For instance, Muslims wish to spread their religion, by killing, if necessary. (Without meaning that terrorists are, mainly Muslims). It should also be remarked that hostages suffer a great deal of psychological and physical warfare, when abducted and their fate is not certain.

As a result, a relevant study has been made in order to predict a hostage's fate according to specific factors. The first result was that a hostage is bound to return safe, as long as there is a demand by the terrorist. Secondly, the hostage's fate is decided regardless of whether the terrorist is Islamic or not and regardless of the event's historical background. The author of the research paper points out that Islamic executions are only exaggerated by the media. Finally, there is no relationship between the length of the detention and the hostage's fate.

Psychological effects come in three different types of reactions. The first are the cognitive ones, which refer to memories and flashbacks of the event, as well as a denial of everything that has occurred. The second are the emotional ones, namely shock, fear, anxiety, or even depression. Finally, examples of the social effects are withdrawal and an arrogant attitude, that leads to exclusion from the society. As for physical effects, they are either the harshening of issues, such as diabetes or asthma, or some newly-introduced ones, due to the inhuman living conditions while taken hostage.

Having fully considered the above and having been completely familiarized with all aspects of the topic, the house will be asked to find innovative means of countering hostage-taking by any kind of terrorist. Apart from that, possible hostage crises should be taken into full consideration and proper clauses should be written to avoid such issues, as terrorists can always be responsible for a similar one to the Iranian Hostage Crisis. Finally, it is suggested that the measures proposed comply with the P-5 policies, since constructive clauses should not fail, because of a veto.



# CAUSES

## General Facts

Hostage taking is a tactic, implemented by terrorists for economic or political reasons, or even due to religious nationalism! From another insight, motives for hostage-taking could be divided to “expressive” or “instrumental”. By expressive it is meant that someone is taken hostage, through which the terrorist can express his disapproval of the political situation or express a feeling of theirs. Instrumental motives are considered those that refer to a rather focused hostage-taking act, with a pursuit, such as obtaining a ransom. Unfortunately, there has been an increase in the ransoms obtained by terrorist organizations, mostly by Al-Qaeda. As a result, the ransoms are a major tool used by them, in order for them to carry out their actions. Clearly defining a motive, remains a difficult task, though.

- **The Iranian Hostage Crisis**

Although the topic mentions hostage-taking committed by terrorists, it is of utmost importance to highlight what led to a past hostage crisis, as terrorist organizations could commit one of their own, as well as how one could be prevented or alleviated.

The Iranian Hostage Crisis refers to the capture of 66 American citizens, 52 of whom were kept hostage for more than a year, starting 1979. Sixty-three of them were seized at the United States Embassy in Iran, where another three diplomats were taken away at the Iranian Foreign Ministry. As a result, the crisis greatly influenced the American politics and became another factor responsible for undermining the U.S-Iran relationships.

Iran’s actions can be justified, considering their identity as an “Anti-American nation”. The conflict between America and Iran dates back to the times when the British and American authorities-controlled Iran’s oil reserves. In 1951, the newly-elected Iranian president declared to have the oil industry nationalized. That did not appeal at all to the Americans. Therefore, he was secretly overthrown and replaced with someone who would act according to their interests. The new leader was Mohammed Reza Shah Pahlavi. He turned out to be a dictator favoring the American economy and torturing thousands of people through SAVAK, his secret police.

The Iranian people were disappointed with Pahlavi and turned to Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, a fanatic Islamist, who promised autonomy and a radical change. In 1978, the protests against the Shah have already begun and in 1979, he fled Iran and went to Egypt. One month later, Khomeini returned to Iran after fourteen years in exile, to lead the country. In October 1979, the Shah was allowed to enter the United States of America to receive medical treatment for lymphoma. The Iranian revolutionaries considered the action to be an attempt to reinstall the Shah and occupied the American Embassy, demanding the return of the Shah to stand for trial in Iran.

At that time, the American President was Jimmy Carter. His administration tried to promote a new relationship with the Iranian government, in order to mitigate “Anti-American” feeling. He failed, when the Shah was admitted for medical care in the USA. The U.S Embassy in Tehran warned Washington that the embassy would be attacked. However, Jimmy Carter accepted the Shah in the U.S, in spite of his initial hesitation.





There have been two rescue attempts. On the day the hostages were seized, a Canadian diplomat hid six American diplomats at their house. With the help of the Central Intelligence Agency (C.I.A) they fled to Zurich in 1980 and their rescue is known as the Canadian Caper. On April 24, 1980, the U.S President, Jimmy Carter, sent eight helicopters to eastern Iran, in an attempt to rescue the hostages. This is known as “Operation Eagle Claw”, or “Operation Tabas”. It failed, the U.S prestige was damaged and president Carter himself blamed his loss in the presidential election on his failure to release the hostages. Eight servicemen were killed, and a transport aircraft was destroyed.

On January 20, 1981, at the moment when Ronald Reagan became the new U.S President, the fifty-two American hostages were released, flown from Iran to Algeria then to Germany, Ireland, New York.



## **POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS**

Having noticed how devastating the issue of hostage-taking by terrorists is, it is essential to act preventively and, if such an event takes place, the hostage must be liberated as soon as possible. As for the preventive actions, there could be an increase in the number of policemen and task forces roaming the remote locations of a region, where terrorism incidents, or black-market sessions may take place, in order to detect an incident before it takes place, or spot and condemn any corruptive action. It is essential to remember that terrorists tend to communicate through the dark web and the black market, thus both should be discovered and shut down for good. If an incident does take place, though, States should collaborate, while trying to calm the terrorist down and ensuring the hostage will not get tortured. That is even more important, if the hostage was taken abroad. Psychologists can also get actively involved in the process of deliberation with the terrorist, by winning time and trying to avoid paying a ransom. In parallel, the terrorist's location could be tracked down by a strong enough security system to be sent to the task forces. Other than that, delegates should keep in mind that terrorism and insurgence acts are two terms, which are often intentionally mixed up. Therefore, both need to be defined, for a terrorist to receive the appropriate penalty. Finally, the delegates should be conscious of the issue of State Terrorism, namely the funding of terrorism by the State itself, which is a prevalent issue in today's world.

It is of outmost importance to stress out how the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) can achieve the goal of minimizing kidnapping incidents by terrorists. It is through strict sanctions that the UNSC can impose discipline to countries funding and supporting terrorism, or to those that do not abide by any decisions made by the UN. Other organizations should also be equally respected, such as the African Union. Other than that, the UNSC should send more peacekeepers to fight against terrorists and corrupted soldiers, so as to prevent any terrorism event. To conclude, the delegates will also need to reaffirm passed resolutions on the topic and underline the importance of the constructive clauses outlined.



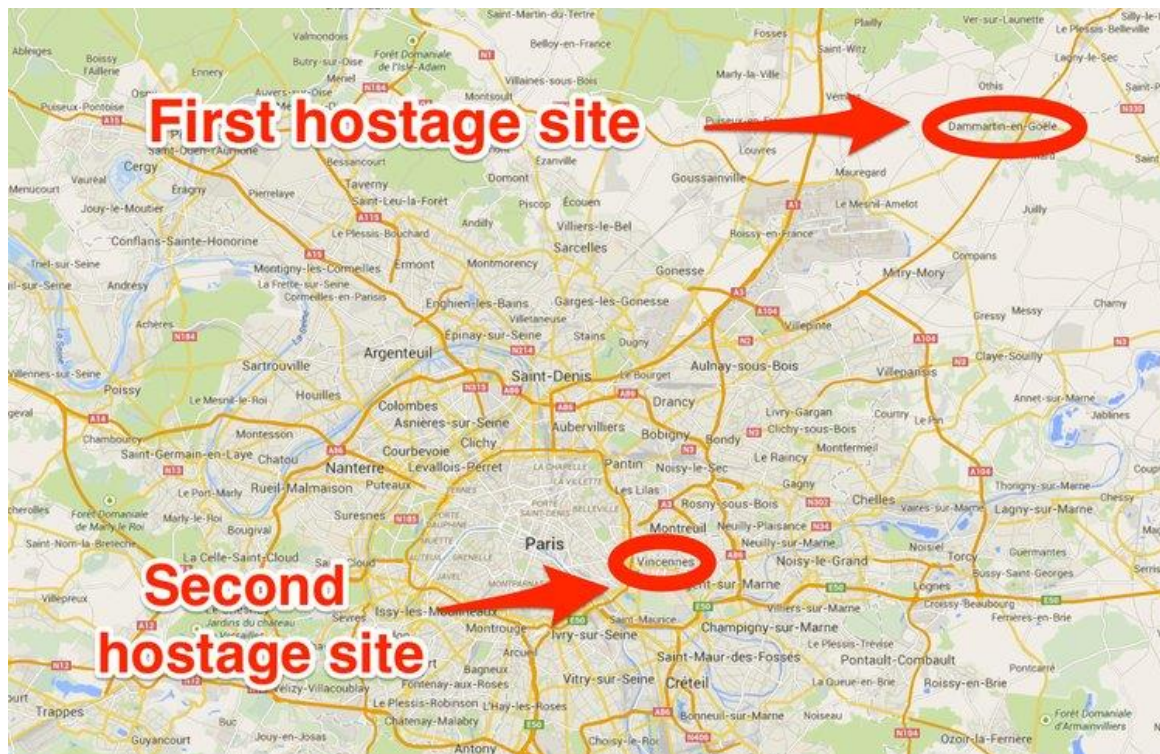
## MAJOR COUNTRIES & ORGANIZATIONS INVOLVED

### United States of America (USA):

The USA have reformed their policy on hostage taking, according to the increase of hostage takings globally committed. The taking hostages is now punishable by life imprisonment, or even by death (18 U.S. Code § 1203 - Hostage taking). Equally essential is the PPD-30, which urges the government to use all resources at its disposal to safely recover hostages, especially those taken abroad. The government also ensures that travelers have been subject to appropriate security checks, while preventively training the personnel abroad. Finally, the government will cooperate with the hostage's family and anyone responsible for the taking will be charged with financial sanctions

### France

France is vastly known as a country plagued by terrorism, with hostage taking events having occurred as well. In October 2017, the French authorities voted a new "anti-terrorism" law, which was disapproved by the French, as it forced France to a constant emergency state. The law now allows police officers to freely investigate houses, even at night. Officials can also arrest people without judicially proving them guilty. Finally, public gatherings and worship feasts were also restricted.



**Figure 1:** This is a map depicting the location where two kidnapping events in France took place.



## United Kingdom (UK)

Since 1982, hostage taking was an offense punished with life imprisonment. When the terrorism events in France took place, though, the United Kingdom started considering how their forces could respond to such an attack and got involved to a larger extent. The army is now allowed to use any type of force against a terrorist, in order to weaken them. However, shots on the chest usually seem fatal, which is why the “shoot-to-kill policy” was and is not appreciated.

## Colombia

Colombia is a country, that is greatly affected by terrorism events. The Colombian Revolutionary Armed Forces (FARC) and the National Liberation Army (ELN), so-called guerillas, have established a solid kidnapping system, as well as a decent drug business. Sadly, Colombia is yet to join the 65-member alliance opposing the Islamic States groups. Terrorists’ motives there are mostly financial ,and not political. As its special forces are incapable of responding to a possible attack by the Guerillas, there is much debate on whether the United States of America should get involved or not. That , in conjunction with the lack of necessary funding, led to Colombia becoming a weak country, completely vulnerable to terrorists’ attacks.

## Iran

Unfortunately, Iran is a State sponsoring terrorism and responsible for many terrorism attacks occurring in Iraq. Other than that, Iran provides terrorist organizations with the necessary weaponry and training, for an attack to be successfully executed. For instance, organizations such as the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps and Ministry of Intelligence and Security were actively supporting the HAMAS.

## Pakistan

Pakistan is the main sponsor of terrorist activities, mostly in India and Afghanistan, through its military and hidden spying system. The system is actually that powerful, that Pakistan is able to deny any such information against it. However, there have been many references to Pakistan, being negatively involved in the situation in Afghanistan, were people are killed or escape and seek asylum in Pakistan. Finally, the organization Al-Qaeda is also financed by Pakistan, where it is based as well.

## Al-Qaeda

Al-Qaeda was based in 1986 by Osama bin Laden. The organization began as a logistical system to support Muslims fighting against the Soviet Union during the Afghan War. The organization further grew, while merging with other Islamic organizations including the Egypt’s Jihad and eventually moved to attacks at the U.S Embassies in Nairobi, Kenya, and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania in 1998 and to suicide bombings against the U.S. warship Cole in Aden, Yemen in 2000. It was soon proven responsible for the September 11 of 2001



attacks against the United States, as well as for other actions of the past. In 2011, the leader of the organization was located and killed by the U.S forces and replaced by Ayman al-Zawahiri. Al-Qaeda has now evolved to a full-scale terrorist organization involved in many attacks, as well as kidnapping and hostage taking.



**Figure 2:** Depicted is Osama bin Laden, the founder of Al-Qaeda (1957-2011)

### Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS)

ISIS is an equally powerful and devastating terrorist organization, ruling several regions of the Middle East. The organization was founded in 2004 by Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, who was previously a member of the Al-Qaeda. The organization is not only responsible for its massive terrorist attacks and the loss of human lives, but for the destruction of historical sites and precious works of art and antiques, as well. It is known with three other names as well. It has been named “Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant” (“ISIL”) by experts, because they think ISIL corresponds more to the group’s goal. The Levant is a wider geographical region that includes Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, Israel and Jordan. Daesh has been used by Middle East and European governments as the acronym for “al-Dawla al-Islamiya fi al-Iraq wa al-Sham”, which is the “Islamic State of Iraq and Syria” translated in Arabic. However, ISIS objects to being called “Daesh” and ,in 2014, they threatened to cut the tongue of whoever used the acronym. “Islamic State” (“IS”) is preferred, because ISIS wishes to create an Islamic State, which is not limited to Iraq and the Levant.



## UN INVOLVEMENT: Relevant Resolutions & Treaties

- **UNSC Resolution 2133 voted at 2014:**

In 2014, the Security Council voted the aforementioned resolution, according to which States must prevent the financing of terrorism and prohibit its citizens to do so. The UNSC also called upon all Member States to cooperate, for the issue to be alleviated. The need for Expert Discussions to be continued was also stressed, with their topic remaining terrorists' benefits through hostage taking, such as the ransoms, or the acquisition of political bestowals. Finally, the Counter-Terrorism-Committee established in 2001 was urged to hold a meeting, discussing how States can act preventively and reporting the results to the UNSC.

- **International Convention Against the Taking of Hostages**

The International Convention Against the Taking of Hostages was voted in 1979 by the General Assembly and entered into force on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of June, 1983. First of all, the Convention defines the nature of hostage taking and asks for the implementation of appropriate penalty, when this action is committed. Secondly, the resolution states that States should collaborate and prohibit any terrorist actions in their territories, while sharing the necessary intelligence. Should an event occur, the whole situation shall be submitted in great detail to the Secretary General of the United Nations. The one responsible for the event must establish communication with their home country, or the country they reside in, either with the government itself, or with a representative of the State. However, this Convention does not apply on cases, where both the hostage and the offender are nations of the same country, with the event taking place in that very country. Finally, the Convention considers each State's laws, according to which each State may examine a case on its own merits, as well.



## Research Questions

In order to gain a deeper insight into the topic, search another example of a hostage crisis, such as the one in Lebanon. Use the following link:

- [https://www.faiobserver.com/region/middle\\_east\\_north\\_africa/syrian-civil-war-lebanons-hostage-crisis-99285/](https://www.faiobserver.com/region/middle_east_north_africa/syrian-civil-war-lebanons-hostage-crisis-99285/)

The delegates can also acknowledge possible strategies when negotiating with terrorists, who have taken someone hostage. The link below will provide you with the necessary information.

- <https://theconversation.com/should-we-negotiate-with-terrorist-hostage-takers-78390>

Finally, delegates can consider how the media influence terrorist organizations' behavior and actions, as well as if, and how children are more prone to psychological warfare than adults. What possible solutions may my country propose/support?



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