

SEPTEMBER 11TH

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- On September 11, 2001 the United States of America was attacked by terrorists using hijacked commercial passenger airplanes, which were flown into the World Trade Center in New York City, the Pentagon in Washington D.C., and a field in Pennsylvania.
- The Twin Towers at the World Trade Center in New York City were destroyed, the Pentagon suffered serious damage, and a third target escaped damage when the passengers aboard United Flight 93 attempted to retake the plane, causing it to crash in Shanksville, PA.
- The attacks were carried out by 19 members of an international terrorist organization known as Al-Qaeda, founded sometime between 1988 and 1989 in Pakistan by Osama bin Laden. He continued as its leader until his death in 2011.
- 2,996 people died in the attacks, including the 19 hijackers.
 - About 266 people died on the four flights involved in the attacks.
 - An additional 125 people died in the Pentagon.ⁱ
 - Approximately three times as many men died as women.ⁱⁱ
 - A total of eight children, on two different flights, died.ⁱⁱⁱ
- Though there is no accurate measure of how many members of different religious denominations died, victims represented all of the world's major religions and hailed from approximately 90 countries.^{iv}
 - More than 400 rescue workers died on 9/11. Among them were 343 firefighters and 60 police officers from New York City and the Port Authority.^v
 - Approximately 1,400 first responders have died since the attacks, many from cancer.^{vi}

Following 9/11, there was an increase in hate crimes directed against Muslims and those perceived to be Muslim.^{vii}

- Al-Qaeda leaders claim to work in the name of Islam, but they do not represent the beliefs and practices of the vast majority of Muslims (see below).

ISLAM'S POSITION ON TERRORISM

According to Islamic scripture, teachings, and practice, Muslims view terrorism and suicide bombings as actions that are totally prohibited by their faith. Both the Qur'an (Muslim scripture) and *hadith* (prophetic sayings) place supremacy on the sanctity of life and the importance of security and peace. In fact, taking an

innocent life is considered one of the most condemnable acts in Islam. Terrorism is a modern day aberration that was adopted in the 20th century. In addition to being a tactic practiced by various extremist Islamic groups, it has also been used by others including the Tamil Tigers (Sri Lanka) and the Irish Republican Army (IRA, Ireland). Such actions are alien to Islam's 1,400 years of history, teachings, and tradition.

Terrorism – here defined as the use of violence and threats to intimidate, coerce, or terrify people, especially for political purposes – directly contradicts Islamic rules of conduct during war, which explicitly prohibit targeting civilians. These principles are based on the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad and his early successors, who forbade harming civilians during wartime, specifically women, children, clergy, and the elderly. These teachings also prohibit damaging churches, cutting down trees, poisoning wells, and slaughtering civilians' livestock. In a modern context, this means avoiding the destruction of any infrastructure that affects the lives of civilians, such as food sources, water, hospitals, roads, and bridges.

Suicide is also prohibited in Islam based on the belief that no one has the right to take away a life given by God, except God. A suicide bombing where one takes one's own life, as well as the lives of innocent people, is thus one of the acts that is most condemned in Islam.

Islam's laws of warfare are comparable to "Just War" beliefs from other traditions in that they stipulate that war should only be fought between combatants, not with civilians, and should be fought in self-defense or against oppressive forces, but not as an act of aggression.

Terrorists who maintain that their actions are based on Islam misappropriate the religion, just as many extremists and extremist groups from a variety of backgrounds misappropriate their religions to justify their actions.

Muslim groups and leaders across the globe have denounced Al-Qaeda, other terrorist groups and their actions as un-Islamic. Muslim religious leaders, politicians, academicians, journalists and public figures are among those who have denounced those perpetrating terror in the name of Islam.^{viii}

- On September 17, 2001, dozens of scholars of Islam issued a statement condemning the violent attacks of September 11th. "We are grief-stricken at these horrifying events," they wrote; "the murder of innocents can never be justified and must not be tolerated." The co-signers of the statement include the steering committee and members of the Section for the Study of Islam at the American Academy of Religion. They represent many scholarly societies in the United States and Canada.^{ix}
- On September 27, 2001, a fatwa^x (religious opinions concerning Islamic law traditionally given by a scholar of Islam) was issued by six senior Middle Eastern Muslim clerics who called the 9/11 attacks un-Islamic and gave permission to Muslims in the U.S. armed forces to fight in the war in Afghanistan. The ruling was requested by the U.S. military's top Muslim chaplain.
- Among those who spoke out is Dr. Ingrid Mattson, the London and Windsor Community Chair in Islamic Studies at Huron University College at the University of Western Ontario, and former president of the Islamic Society of North America. In October 2001, Dr. Mattson stated:

"Islamic law is very clear: terrorism is not permitted. Even in a legitimate war — even if Osama bin Laden were a legitimate head of state, which he's not — you're not permitted to indiscriminately kill civilians, just to create terror in the general population."^{xi}

- Shaykh Hamza Yusuf, scholar, author, religious leader, and renowned media figure, and founder of Zaytuna College, agreed:

“These are mass murderers, pure and simple...there's no Muslim who understands his religion at all who would condone this [suicide bombing]...Suicide bombers have cited a Koranic verse that says, ‘Think not of those who are slain in Allah's way as dead. Nay, they live, finding their sustenance in the presence of their Lord.’ That is meant for people who are legitimately defending the lands of Islam or fighting under legitimate state authority against a tyrannical leader. There is no vigilantism in Islam. Muslims believe in the authority of government.”^{xii}

In addition to fatwas and statements put forth by Muslims and Islamic scholars regarding 9/11, Muslims across the world have repeatedly denounced terrorism. For example, the permanent observer mission to the United Nations of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, an umbrella organization that serves as the “collective voice of the Muslim world” with 57 member states in four continents^{xiii} has repeatedly denounced terrorist attacks committed in the name of Islam.^{xiv}

In addition, Muslim leaders across the world have issued joint statements on behalf of Islam and with leaders from other traditions condemning terrorism, violence and mistreatment of people from different faiths in the name of Islam including:

- [The Common Word](#), a joint statement by Muslim and Christian leaders calling for a constructive relationship towards peace:
 - “So let our difference not cause hatred and strife between us. Let us vie with each other only in righteousness and good works. Let us respect each other, be fair, just and kind to another and live in sincere peace, harmony and mutual goodwill.”^{xvi}
- In 2015, around 1.5 million attendees at an annual gathering of South Asian Sunni Muslims in India signed a fatwa against global terrorist activity, specifically including the activities of ISIS, the Taliban, and Al-Qaeda and deeming them to be un-Islamic.^{xvii}

THE WIDER CONTEXT: WORLDWIDE TERRORISM

There are many resources that provide information about terrorism around the world and in the U.S. According to Europol’s 2016 European Union Terrorism Situation and Trend Report:

- In 2015, 151 people died and over 360 were injured as a result of terrorist attacks in the EU.
- In 2015, attacks in France increased after four years of decline. This was attributed to “jihadist terrorist attacks” and “seven-right wing attacks,” which had not occurred in the previous five years.
- In 2015, arrests for separatist (168) and left-wing terrorism (67) rose compared to 2014 (154 and 54 respectively).^{xviii}

Each year, the U.S. Department of State's *Country Reports on Terrorism* includes an Annex of Statistical Information that provides data about the number of individuals, including U.S. citizens, who were killed, injured or kidnapped by terrorist groups in the preceding calendar year.

Federal law (Title 22 of the U.S. Code) defines terrorism as “premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against noncombatant targets by subnational groups or clandestine agents.” The 2015 Annex of Statistical Information dataset thus includes violent acts carried out by non-state actors in which:

- “1. The violent act was aimed at attaining a political, economic, religious, or social goal;
2. The violent act included evidence of an intention to coerce, intimidate, or convey some other message to a larger audience (or audiences) other than the immediate victims; and
3. The violent act was outside the precepts of International Humanitarian Law insofar as it targeted non-combatants.”

According to this report:

- There were 11,774 terrorist attacks worldwide in 2015, a decrease of 13% from 2014.
- The total deaths due to terrorist attacks also decreased by 14% from 2014. There were fewer attacks and deaths in Iraq, Pakistan, and Nigeria. This is the first decline in worldwide terrorist attacks since 2012.
- In 2015, more than 32,700 people were killed in terrorist attacks, an 81% increase compared to 2013. This increase in fatalities reflected the lethality of certain attacks. According to the report, there were 20 attacks that killed more than 100 people in 2014, compared to two in 2013.
- In addition to the 32,700 killed in terrorist attacks in 2014, more than 34,700 were injured, and more than 9,400 were kidnapped or taken hostage.
- The number kidnapped or taken hostage was three times as many as in 2013, and this increase was concentrated in certain countries, particularly Iraq, Nigeria and Syria. In 14 separate attacks, more than 100 victims were kidnapped or taken hostage. These include attacks against Yazidi civilians in Iraq as well as students in Nigeria, Pakistan, and Syria.
- Although terrorist attacks took place in 92 countries in 2015, more than 55% took place in only five—Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, and Nigeria. Four of these five were the same as those that experienced the most terrorism in 2014.

- In 2015, terrorist attacks by the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) in Syria increased by 39%. In contrast, Iraq experienced 31% fewer terrorist attacks by ISIL. Overall, the geographic reach of ISIL expanded, as other terrorist groups aligned with ISIL and pledged their loyalty.
 - Iraq had the largest overall number of terrorism victims with 6,932 deaths and 11,856 injuries.
 - Afghanistan had the second largest number of terrorism victims with 5,292 deaths and 6,246 injuries.
 - Pakistan had 1,081 deaths and 1,325 injuries. The total number of terrorist attacks reported in Pakistan decreased by 45%.
- More than half of all targets attacked in 2015 were private citizens and/or property or police.
- In 2015, of the 28,328 people killed in terrorist attacks, 24% (6,924) were perpetrators of the attacks, whose deaths were either intentional (in suicide attacks), accidental, or as a result of action taken by security forces or victims responding to attacks.^{xix}

MORE RESOURCES

- [9/11 in Numbers](#) – Includes statistics reflecting the impact on the U.S. and Britain one year later
- [How 9/11 Changed America: In Statistics](#) – This account of 9/11 statistics includes graphs created five years after the event.
- [KidsPost Explains the Death of Osama Bin Laden](#) – Q&A from the Washington Post providing a kid-friendly explanation of the death of Osama Bin Laden.
- [Five myths about Osama Bin Laden](#) – Opinion piece from the Washington Post
- [Tribute World Trade Center](#) – Offers visitors to the World Trade Center site the opportunity to connect to members of the September 11th community.
- [September 11th Statistics](#) – Looks at a wide range of statistics related to death, destruction, charity, salvation, war, money, real estate, spouses, babies and more.
- [Muslim Voices Against Extremism and Terrorism](#) – Webpage on The American Muslim (TAM)
- [America, Muslims and the Ground Zero Controversy](#) – Unity Productions Foundation elevates the conversation around Park51, promoting civil, informed discourse around some of the broader questions (PBS).
- [Divided We Fall: Americans in the Aftermath](#) – A 20-year-old college student travels across America in the aftermath of 9/11, camera in hand, documenting hate violence against the Sikh community (New Moon Productions).

ⁱ Templeton, T. (2002). Statistics from 9/11 and the aftermath. Retrieved September 09, 2016, from <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2002/aug/18/usa.terrorism>

ⁱⁱ September 11 by Numbers. (n.d.). Retrieved September 09, 2016, from <http://nymag.com/news/articles/wtc/1year/numbers.htm>

ⁱⁱⁱ Diana Lynne. (n.d.). Littlest victims largely overlooked. Retrieved September 09, 2016, from http://www.wnd.com/news/article.asp?ARTICLE_ID=25771

^{iv} Jael Goldstein. Phone Interview with Official from Tribute WTC Visitor Center, May 26, 2011

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- ^v Nation Marks 9/11 Anniversary With Ceremonies, Demonstrations. (n.d.). Retrieved September 09, 2016, from <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2010-09-11/new-york-u-s-commemorate-sept-11-anniversary-with-ceremonies-protests.html>
- ^{vi} Oh, I. (n.d.). 16 Sobering Numbers That Remind Us To Honor The Sacrifice Of 9/11 Responders. Retrieved September 09, 2016, from http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/09/11/911-first-responders_n_5797398.html
- ^{vii} BBC NEWS | Special Reports | 629 | 629 | How 9/11 changed America: In statistics. (2006). Retrieved September 09, 2016, from http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/in_depth/629/629/5305868.stm
- ^{ix} CAIR - Council on American-Islamic Relations - CAIR. (n.d.). Retrieved September 09, 2016, from <http://www.cair.com/AmericanMuslims/AntiTerrorism/ScholarsofIslamspeakoutagainstterrorism.aspx>
- ^x Fatwas are religious opinions concerning Islamic law traditionally given by a scholar of Islam. Fatwas from various scholars can offer differing interpretations about the same issue or question. Muslims are not obligated to follow any particular leader or fatwa, and independently choose which fatwa to follow or whether they accept a particular fatwa or the decision of a particular scholar as binding. From George Makdisi, "Scholasticism and Humanism in Classical Islam and the Christian West," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 109.2 (1989): 175-182. Web. 28 June 2011. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/604423>
- ^{xi} Steinberg, J. (2001). Experts Say Bin Laden Is Distorting Sacred Text. Retrieved September 09, 2016, from <http://www.nytimes.com/2001/10/08/us/a-nation-challenged-the-koran-experts-say-bin-laden-is-distorting-sacred-text.html>
- ^{xii} Imam Hamza Yusuf Condemns Attack. (n.d.). Retrieved September 09, 2016, from <http://www.jannah.org/resources/hamza.html>
- ^{xiii} National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism: Annex of Statistical Information. (n.d.). Retrieved September 09, 2016, from <http://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/crt/2014/239416.htm#>.
- ^{xiv} Organisation of Islamic Cooperation. (n.d.). Retrieved September 09, 2016, from http://www.oic-oci.org/oicv3/page/?p_id=52
- ^{xv} Two examples include: 1. Organisation of Islamic Cooperation. (n.d.). Retrieved September 09, 2016, from http://www.oic-oci.org/oicv3/topic/?t_id=11366
2. Organisation of Islamic Cooperation. (n.d.). Retrieved September 09, 2016, from http://www.oic-oci.org/oicv3/topic/?t_id=11536
- ^{xvi} The Rights of Religious Minorities in Predominantly Muslim Majority Communities: Legal Framework and a Call to Action Marrakesh, Morocco. (n.d.). Retrieved September 09, 2016, from <http://www.marrakeshdeclaration.org/>
- ^{xvii} A Common Word Between Us and You. (n.d.). Retrieved September 09, 2016, from <http://www.acommonword.com/>
- ^{xviii} Colombia, B. (n.d.). 70,000 clerics issue fatwa against terrorism, 15 lakh Muslims support it - Times of India. Retrieved September 09, 2016, from <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/70000-clerics-issue-fatwa-against-terrorism-15-lakh-Muslims-support-it/articleshow/50100656.cms>
- ^{xix} European Union Terrorism Situation and Trend Report (TE-SAT) 2016. (n.d.). Retrieved September 09, 2016, from <https://www.europol.europa.eu/content/european-union-terrorism-situation-and-trend-report-te-sat-2016>
- ^{xx} National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism: Annex of Statistical Information. (n.d.). Retrieved September 09, 2016, from <http://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/crt/2015/257526.htm>