

Trends in Terrorism and Violent Extremism

What is 'violent extremism', and how does it relate to 'terrorism' and 'extremism'?

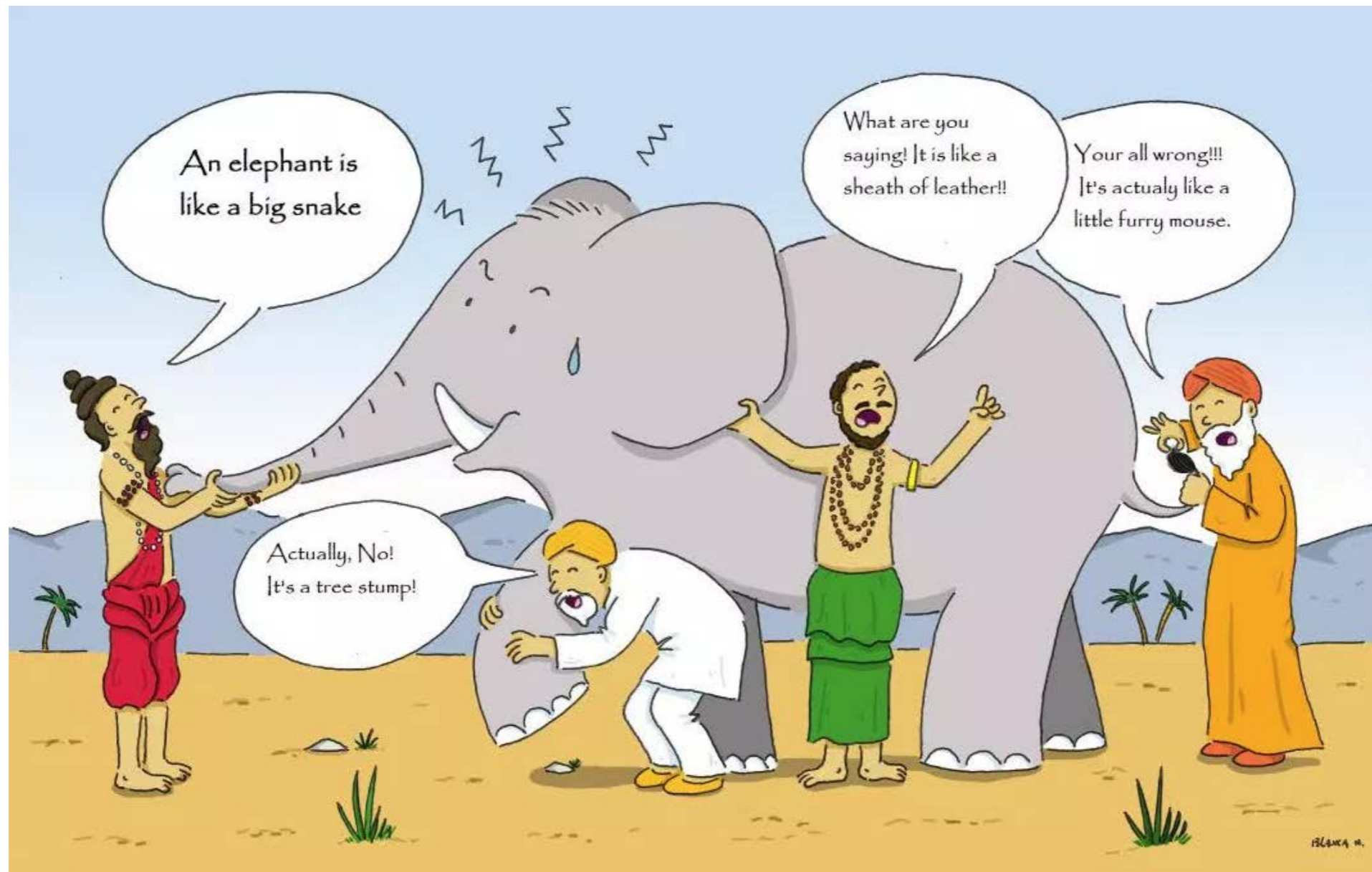
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Different words and meanings to explain the phenomenon

terrorist Counter-Terrorism
political extremist practice
Rehabilitation psychological example
reduced
education radical **extremism** change influence
ideology susceptible religious ideological
persons role radicalization Conditions counseling
individual actions imply Countering control target
activity social **CVE** communal attitudes root terms
direct whereby causes interventions attack fear factors
difficult Resilience ethnic acts goals aim taken
cognitive local context different family result indicators
behaviour vocational vulnerability path divert characteristics
engagement risk networks recidivism usually means commitment
people group forms therefore actors aims broader
term Strategy De-radicalisation individuals
community support fundamental Disengagement
behaviours organisations
process citizens **terrorism** Recruitment
mainstream

Why do we have so many different words and concepts?



We can certainly agree on the following

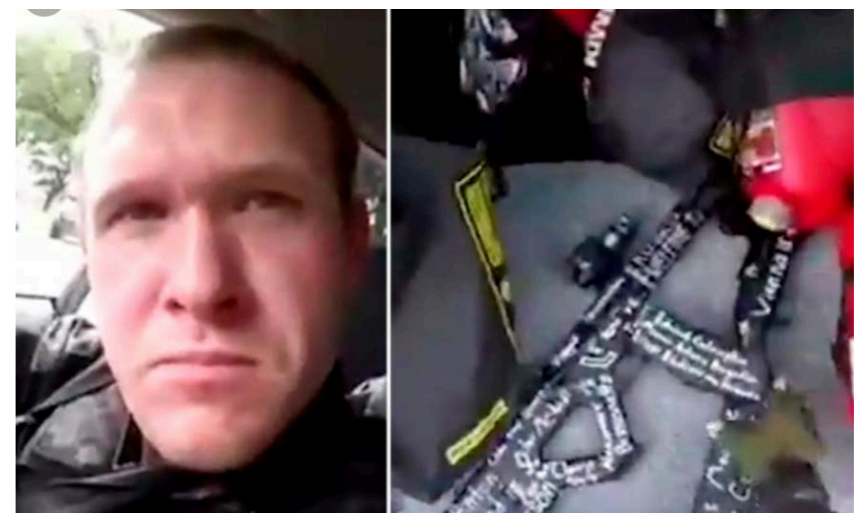
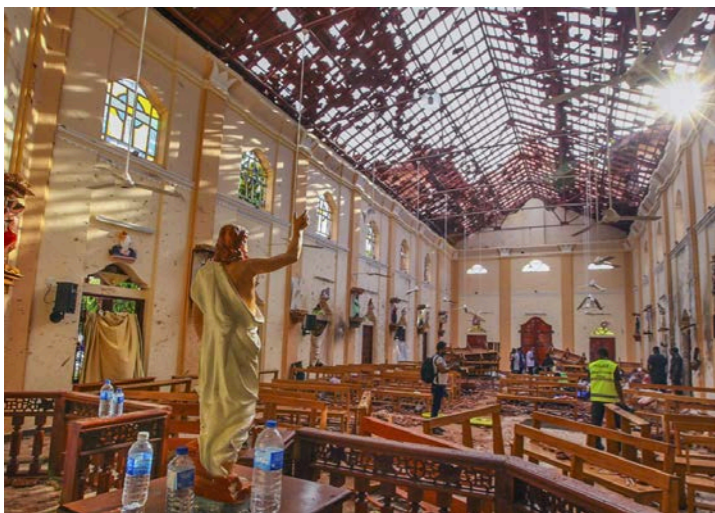
Words and their meanings are subjective; 'terrorism' is one of the most contested concepts in modern discourse

Understandings of terrorism change based on:

- The era we are in
- Which part of the world we are in
- Prevalent tactics and ideologies of violent actors
- The absence, presence and proximity of wider warfare
- Cultural perspectives on violence, politics and ideology

Terrorism and Violent Extremism occurs globally

- Therefore, it is hard to come up with a universally agreed definition...
- ...because the term has different meanings in different contexts
- ...because culture, perspective and profession will influence our definitions
- ...and because of sheer variety of perpetrators of terrorism, of their justificatory ideologies, and their modes of attack



Trends in Jihadist Terrorism

- Almost two decades since 9/11
- Al Qaeda used skilled operatives
- ISIS relies on inspiring followers
- Both thrived in war zones
- Both rely on local affiliates
- ISIS attracted many foreign fighters
- Globally, and online, the movements live on



Trends in Far Right Terrorism

- Anders Breivik, Norway (2011)
- Far right terrorists often older, often lone attackers
- Ideologically waging war in defence of their nation
- Brenton Tarrant, New Zealand attack (2019)
- Other cases include US Coast Guard officer
- Overall, far right attacks are on the rise
- They can contribute to retaliatory cycles



The New York Times

Coast Guard Officer Called a 'Domestic Terrorist' Pleads Guilty to Gun and Drug Charges

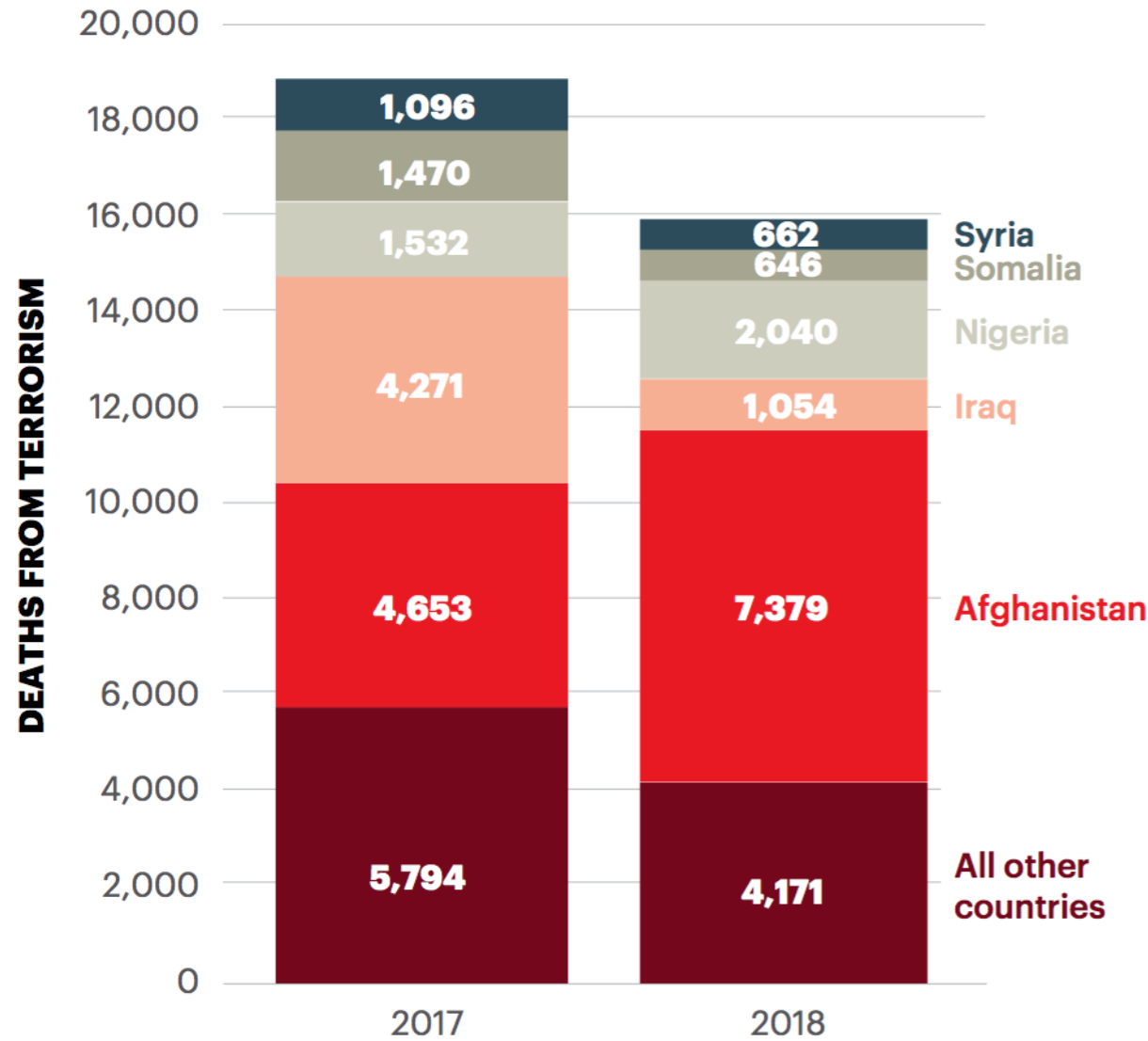
Lt. Christopher P. Hasson of Silver Spring, Md., had described himself as a white nationalist who wanted to kill innocent civilians, prosecutors and court filings say.



Global Terrorism Index 2019

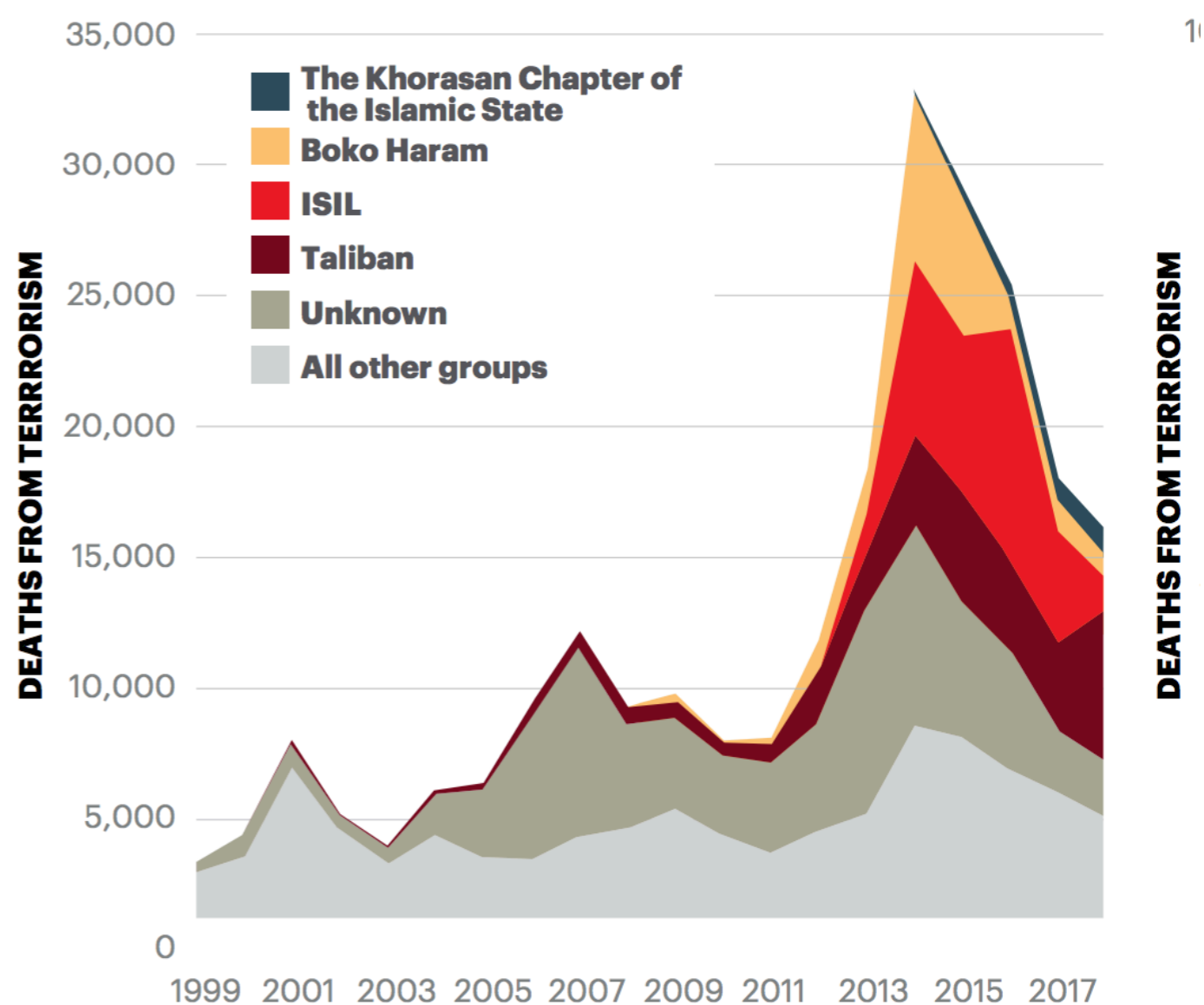
Total terrorism deaths by country, 2017–2018

Total deaths from terrorism fell 15.2 per cent from 2017 to 2018.



Four deadliest terrorist groups in 2018 (1999–2018)

For the first time since 2013, ISIL was not the deadliest terrorist group.

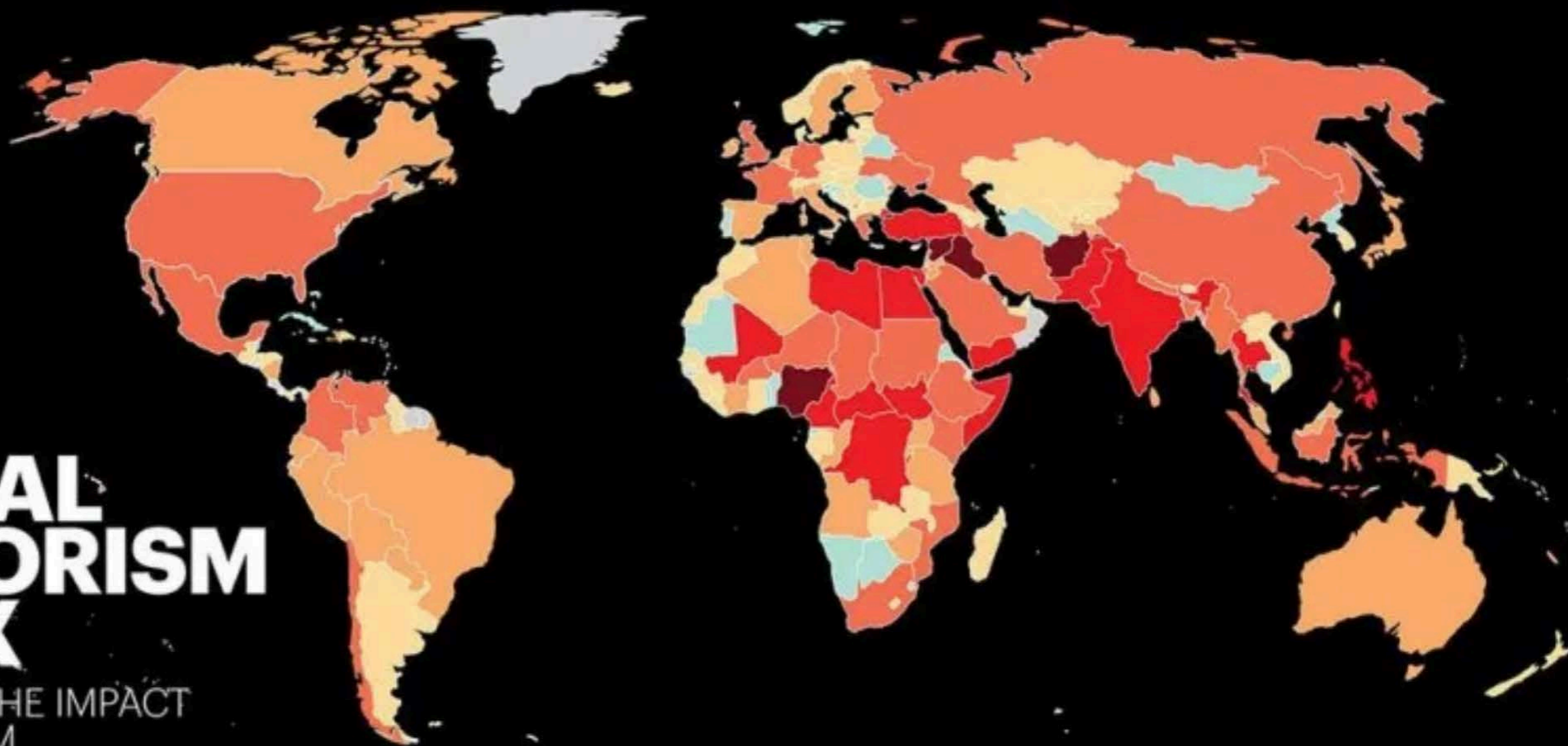


Global Terrorism Index 2019

2019 GLOBAL TERRORISM INDEX

MEASURING THE IMPACT
OF TERRORISM

THE IMPACT OF TERRORISM



Agreeing on concepts and definitions

- **The importance of respect:** we must first of all agree to disagree. One person's understanding of terrorism and violent extremism may differ from another person.
- **The importance of terminology:** nevertheless, it is important for us to share a common understanding of the concepts and terminology we will be using.
- What follows is a practical guide to terminology

'Terrorism' and 'Violent Extremism'

Terrorism, as we generally understand it, relates to violence. It involves the *use of violence to coerce and intimidate governments and populations for some sort of political and ideological goal.*

For terrorism to be in occurrence, the threat and actuality of violence needs to be present.

Violent extremism *is related to but distinct from terrorism*

- What do we mean by 'violent extremism'?
- Why don't we just say 'extremism'?
- How does this relate to terrorism?

‘Violent Extremism’, ‘Extremism’ and ‘Radicalization’

‘Violent extremism’ may be possible to define - **as we shall see**

‘Extremism’ is unlikely to be defined – **and it would unwise to**

‘Radicalization’ is a related concept – **and it can lead to the above**

Remember, unless there is some relationship to violent action, whether this is emotional or practical support, it is unlikely that a person could credibly be considered a threat.



Cognitive versus Violent Radicalization

- Quintan Wiktorowicz: a terrorism scholar, writes of the ‘**cognitive opening**’ required within individuals for the propaganda messages of a terrorist group to have traction

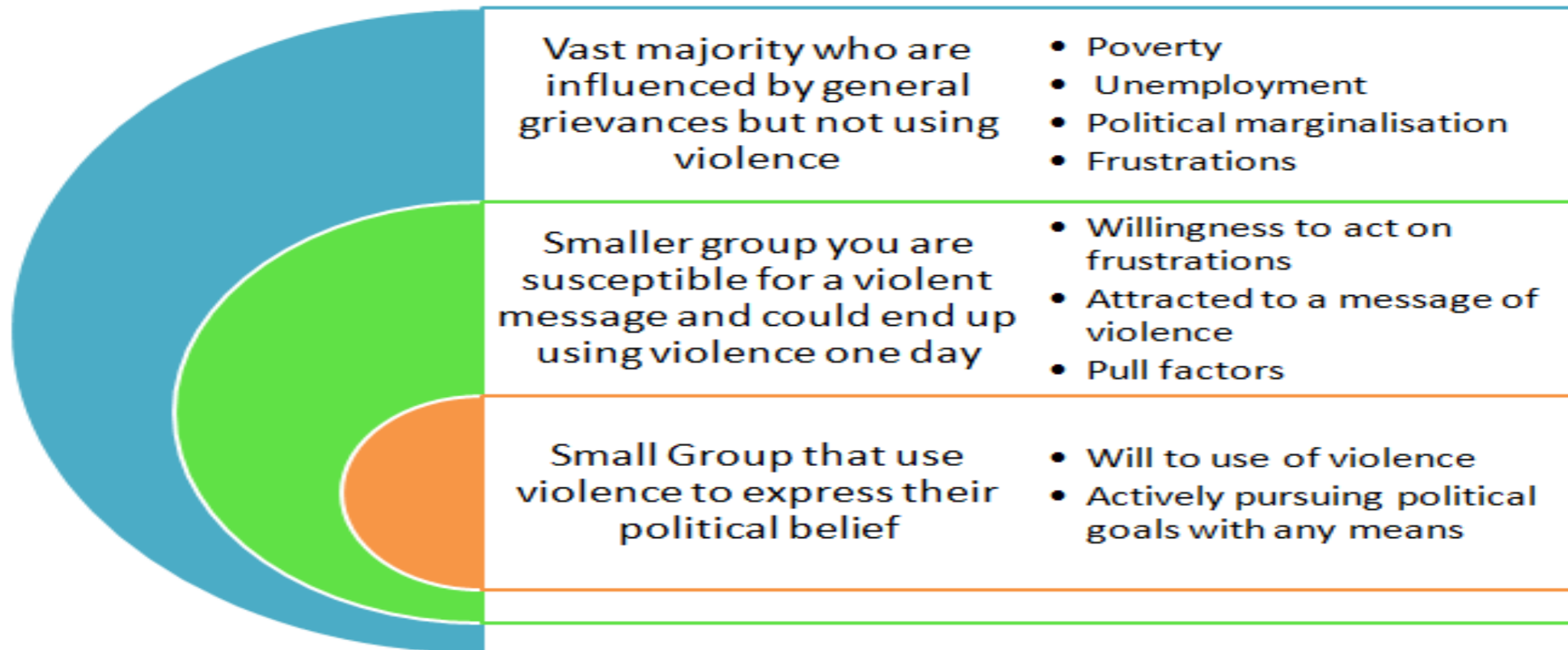


Cognitive radicalization – holding extremist views

Violent radicalization – acting violently on these beliefs

- From a personal sense of disgruntlement, to sympathy for terrorism, to action – there is no one path and no certain predictive tool

The EU's STRIVE model for conveying push and pull factors



Violent Extremism

“The use of and support for violence in pursuit of ideological, religious or political goals”; wider than terrorism

Radicalization

“A process where an individual’s beliefs move from being relatively mainstream to seeking a drastic change in society. Radicalisation does not necessarily mean these people will become violent. But once an individual decides that terror and violence are justified to achieve ideological, political, or social change, he/she has become a violent extremist.”

Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (P/CVE)

“a broad range of non-coercive and preventative activities that are united by the objective of counteracting the drivers of violent extremism specific to the locations in which these initiatives occur. P/CVE includes activities that target individuals specifically identified as ‘at risk’ of being drawn into violence to the extent that this is feasible in each location.”

Counter-Terrorism

“The use of ‘hard’ or coercive measures, such as law enforcement or the military, to prevent, mitigate or respond to terrorist threats.”

Recruitment

“The process of indoctrinating or enrolling individuals into violent extremist groups.”

Risk Reduction

“A wide range of non-coercive activities applied with the aim of ensuring that individuals who previously contributed to violent extremism do not return to such activities.”

Deradicalisation

“The social and psychological process whereby an individual’s commitment to and involvement in violent radicalisation is reduced to the extent that they are no longer at risk of involvement in violent activity.”

Conclusions: characterising the threat

- *Terrorism* is generally understood to relate to violence
- *Violent extremism* relates to beliefs supporting the above
- *Cognitive radicalization* means holding extremist views
- *Violent radicalization* means acting on these beliefs

Conclusions: characterising the response

- *Counter Terrorism* relates to stopping terrorist attacks
- *Countering Violent Extremism (CVE)* means countering the vulnerability of people to being radicalised by terrorist groups and their associated ideologies
- *Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE)* is the term favoured by the United Nations to describe the same actions
- *Therefore, it may be easier to write 'P/CVE'*

Closing thoughts

- Terrorism and violent extremism vary in form and in nature from one era and one place to the next. They present dynamic and ever-evolving challenges
- Therefore, while attention can be focussed on the nature of the threat at a certain time and in certain localities, bear in mind that in our globalized world, different terrorist actors around the world readily influence each other
- We will now explore how these themes relate to the nuclear sector; but we must keep in mind more general global trends in terrorism and violent extremism