

The New Face of Al Qaeda: Understanding the Generational Gradient in Local and Global Jihad Campaigns

Rohan Gunaratna

Introduction:

After 9/11, the terrorist threat has clearly moved beyond Al Qaeda. In the last two years, Al Qaeda, the proclaimed vanguard of the Islamic movements, has suffered gravely. Who will continue the fight? History suggests that the generational gradation within violent Islamist groups will ensure the continuity of the global and local jihad campaigns. If so, what are the principal differences in outlooks among the different jihad generations? To examine the evolution of the threat, this paper examines the shifting priorities and changing strategies in the global and local jihad campaigns.

Since Al Qaeda attacked America's most outstanding landmarks, the overwhelming majority of the terrorist attacks are not being conducted by Al Qaeda but by Islamist groups. The bulk of these Islamist groups have been ideologized, financed, and trained by Al Qaeda and the Taliban in Afghanistan and other conflicts zones throughout the 1990s. Al Qaeda conducted as well as coordinated two waves of attacks in May 2003 and October 2002. Of the five attacks staged in May 2003, only the May 12 attack – a coordinated simultaneous attack on Western residence complexes in Saudi Arabia – was by Al Qaeda. The associated groups in Chechnya, Pakistan and Morocco were responsible for the other attacks. Of the attacks staged in Yemen, Kuwait and Indonesia in October 2002, the worst attack where 202 people were killed was in Bali by Jemaah Islamiyah and not Al Qaeda. Furthermore, Al Ansar Al Islami, an Al Qaeda associated group, has become the most active group in Iraq. These associated groups located in Asia, Middle East, Africa, and in the Caucasus are targeting the interests of the US, its allies and friends.

To compensate for the lack of its own operational capability, Al Qaeda is working together with these associated groups. Al Qaeda ideologues are transforming the thinking of their associated members both to fight the near enemy (Muslim governments) and the distant enemy (the US and its allies) as well as providing them specialist technologies and trainers to increase their capabilities. Furthermore, an operationally weakened Al Qaeda is investing in propaganda and concentrating on ideological indoctrination to inspire and instigate the wider Muslim community to sustain the fight. In addition to Al Qaeda's main website, [alned.com](http://www.alneda.com/), numerous pro-Al Qaeda web sites¹ urging Muslims to strike the West, especially US interests. Although the Internet is the mainstay of post 9-11 Al

¹<<http://www.alneda.com/>>

<<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/globalislamicmedia/>>

<<http://forum.jihadunspun.net>>

Qaeda propaganda, some influential imams continue to support Al Qaeda “causes” openly. Some imams have declared the confrontation in Iraq as a jihad and are openly urging Muslim youth to go to Iraq.

Traditionally, the associated Islamist groups fought secular Muslim governments either to replace them or to form a separate state. By infusing its ideology of a global jihad, Al Qaeda has successfully transformed the parochial thinking of these groups. Today, these associated groups, the newest generation, have gone beyond narrow territorial confines to pursue a more pan Islamic agenda. They target both opposing local governments as well as the interests of the US and its allies. For instance, the world’s worst terrorist atrocity after 9/11 was conducted not by Al Qaeda but by Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) in Bali on October 12, 2002. Nonetheless, Al Qaeda financed the operation. Similarly, the Salafi Group for Call and Combat (GSPC), fighting the Algerian regime, produced ricin in the UK in January 2003. Al Qaeda specialists also trained GSPC members to manufacture ricin in the Pankisi Valley in Georgia to target “infidels.”

Two years after 9/11, Al Qaeda’s strength has diminished from about 4000 to under 1000 members. As such Al Qaeda’s capacity to replenish its human losses and material wastage has been reduced. Although Al Qaeda will become operationally ineffective with time, the associated groups “infected” by Al Qaeda will ensure the continuity of the fight. Al Qaeda’s most enduring contribution towards sustaining the global jihad has been to create a new generation of mujahidin. Despite a shift in the threat from Al Qaeda to its associated groups, however, the US counter terrorism community is allocating overwhelming human and material resources to target Al Qaeda.

The Context:

There has been an overall failure by the counter terrorism community to recognise that the fight against the US, its allies and its friends is a multi-generational campaign by the Islamist organisations. Therefore, the government and societal responses to the Islamist groups and their support bases have been partially effective in the short-term and ineffective in the mid- and long-term. Generation-after-generation, the mujahidin reinvent themselves by adapting to the changing political, geographic and strategic realities. With the failure of every generation to achieve its political aim, a new generation emerges. Each time, the ideology has become potent, the organisation more secretive, and tactics increasingly lethal.

The secret of survival is the adherence to the strictest Islamist principles of patience, perseverance, and persistence. Dependent on the political and security environment facing them, the mujahidin invest on operational and ideological elements. When the

environment is safe, they plan, prepare and execute attacks, and when hostile, they lie low but recruit and build their strength through propaganda and ideological indoctrination. The death or incarceration of their leadership and severe losses to their membership on earth is not terminal to their struggle. As their allegiance is to God, the essence of the struggle is passed down to the next generation to full fill their objectives.

The success of every campaign depends on support. The support bases of the mujahidin generations do not emerge, grow, and fade away in a vacuum. They emerge in a historical context or as a result of historical events. These events could be triggered either by external (Soviet and US occupations of Afghanistan and Iraq) or internal factors (Al Qaeda attacks on America's iconic targets on 9/11). These events provide the ideological fuel and the material resources essential to spawn and sustain their campaigns.

The leadership requires either public or state support to sustain a violent campaign. Although a nucleus group of leaders is pivotal to provide ideological and strategic direction to the broad struggle, the sustainability and effectiveness of the campaign is determined by the strength of their support bases. To succeed in any campaign, it requires semi-open and open political work, to generate an organised mass movement at some stage. Most Islamist movements that have found political accommodation in the Middle East and in Asia engage in open politics. Although they campaign for the imposition of Islamic law, most of them are sensitive to the reality that they live amidst non Muslims. Muslims unhappy with the Islamist movements that co-exist with secular political parties are vulnerable to terrorist recruitment.

Generational typology:

The world has witnessed multiple generations of mujahidin. In the generational spectrum, the newer generations become more violent, and with experience, develop a tendency to escalate. Each time, they bring new energy, tactics, and passion into the struggle. To ensure the continuity of the fight, the Islamists have not been event but opportunity driven. To survive and fight, they retreat, recruit, resupply, revamp, and, restructure. The world has witnessed four mujahidin-generations:

<The first generation are the members of the Muslim Brotherhood. The bulk of active members today have embraced open politics.

<The second generation are the veterans of the anti-Soviet multinational Afghan campaign. Except a few hundred members that form the core of Islamist groups worldwide, the bulk of the veterans have returned to civilian life.

⟨The third generation are members of Al Qaeda and three-dozen Asian, Middle Eastern, African and Caucasian Islamist groups trained in Afghanistan. Compared to Al Qaeda, the associated groups are operationally inactive transnationally as they were interested only in their local conflicts.

⟨The fourth generation are post-Afghanistan surviving Al Qaeda members working with its associated groups as well as associated groups. In the post 9-11 environment, the threat has clearly moved beyond Al Qaeda where its associated groups conduct the overwhelming number of terrorist attacks.

The generational approach of these groups is evident in the September 2003 arrest of 13 members of the Karachi cell of Jemaah Islamiyah. They are the sons and relatives of existing Jemaah Islamiyah and Al Qaeda members.

These very young Muslims had become true believers. They desperately needed to belong to a group to express themselves especially after what happened to their fathers, brothers and uncles. The global events have provided the context for the next generation to become exposed to significant ideological indoctrination and training. Immediately before the US intervention in Iraq, officials in the United States, Europe and Africa said: "they had seen evidence that militants within Muslim communities are seeking to identify and groom a new generation of terrorist operatives. An invasion of Iraq, the officials worry, is almost certain to produce a groundswell of recruitment for groups committed to attacks in the United States, Europe and Israel. "An American invasion of Iraq is already being used as a recruitment tool by Al Qaeda and other groups," a senior American counterintelligence official said. "And it is a very effective tool."² In contrast, a Kashmiri Muslim told Jessica Stern, a terrorism analyst: "When I see young Kashmiris donating their lives to what they think of as a jihad I feel a deep sense of regret. I feel that we initiated this violence. We initiated this destruction. I regret my decision to put people onto that course. With each generation Islamic fundamentalism becomes uglier and uglier. When I look at fundamentalists today, I see a bleak future for them. The first generation of fundamentalists – Qutb and Maududi – was focused on Dawa – education.

We focused on freedom. This generation is much more rigid, stricter, than my generation. They are focused on hate. It is a painful journey. Bitter and sour, like eating a lemon. To hate is venom. When you hate, you poison yourself. This is the typical mentality of the fundamentalist movement today. Hate begets hate. You cannot create freedom out of hatred. Today's jihadis are confused – they are trying to revive old structures. We shouldn't be seeking structures, but something more spiritual."³

² Don Van Natta jr. and Desmond Butler, "Threats and Responses: Terror Network; Anger on Iraq seen as New Qaeda Recruiting Tool," New York Times, March 15, 2001.

³ Jessica Stern, Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, Personal communication, October 10, 2003.

Unlike the previous generation, age appears to be of little relevant in Sunni transnational terrorism. In the non-Islamist categories, when terrorists age - if they are not captured or killed - they get married, settle down, become irrelevant, get passed over, and hang up their weapons. As “Islam” is the guiding light, and religion stays relevant to all ages, the generational exchange is inevitable.

First Generation:

In the backdrop of the failure of the secular Muslim states, the Muslim Brotherhood emerged. Throughout the 20th century, the Muslim Brotherhood struggled to create Islamic States. Its ideology was fashioned by Hasan Al Banna (1906-49) and Sayyid Qutb (1906-56) in the Middle East and shaped by Abdul Ala Maududi (1903-79) in Asia. Most states unleashed their intelligence, police and military to suppress and repress the Brotherhood. The failure of the Brotherhood to politically succeed led to the creation of Islamist groups willing to use violence. As the mainstream Brotherhood found political accommodation within the secular regimes, the hardline Islamists and their supporters regarded the Brotherhood as compromised.

Similar to the US invasion and occupation of Iraq, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979, created the opportunities and conditions for disparate Islamist groups to grow in strength, size and influence. Furthermore, they mastered the art of warfare during the Afghan campaign. Abdullah Azzam, a Palestinian-Jordanian, who rejected the Brotherhood, politically articulated and operationalized the concept of jihad. In addition to Western assistance to the mujahidin groups fighting in Afghanistan, the fall out from the revolution in Iran (1979) and the Iran-Iraq War led Western governments especially the US to assist Iraq and the Sunni groups worldwide. Furthermore, the Saudi campaign against the Shias, empowered the Sunni groups throughout the 1980s leading to the emergence of Sunni fundamentalism. It was an unintended consequence with severe implications for international security.⁴

Second Generation:

⁴ Its effects are discussed by Dore Gold, “Hatred’s Kingdom: How Saudi Arabia Supports the New Global Terrorism” (Washington DC; Regnery Publishing, 2003) and Robert Baer, “Sleeping with the Devil: How Washington Sold Our Soul for Saudi Crude” (New York; Crown Publishers, 2003).

The need to build a coalition to fight the Soviet invader created a platform to unify these disparate groups in Pakistan. As the launching pad to fight the Afghan jihad, Pakistan hosted Islamist groups from around the world. In 1984, Azzam founded Maktab-lil-Khidamat (MAK), the principal transnational organisation that disseminated propaganda, recruited, raised funds, trained, and armed the mujahidin as well as provided welfare to the mujahidin families. After the victory over the Soviet army, the largest land army in the world, MAK evolved into Al Qaeda al Sulbah (1988).

Those who fought Soviets did not employ martyrdom operations or suicide terrorism. They did not believe in killing civilians but only combatants. When the Soviet military withdrew and the jihad against the Soviets ended several tens of thousands of foreign mujahidin returned to their home countries. Although the bulk of the Arab and Asian mujahidin returned to civilian life, a few mujahidin either founded or joined Islamist groups in their home countries for the purpose of creating Islamic states. A few thousand mujahidin who had come to the adverse attention of the security services of their home countries remained in Pakistan. They were members of Islamist groups such as the Egyptian Islamic Jihad and the Islamic Group of Egypt that had employed violence against their home governments. With time the Pakistan and Afghanistan based mujahidin travelled to other lands of jihad. In Tajikistan, Kashmir, Bosnia, Chechnya, Dagestan, Somalia, Algeria, Mindanao, and Afghanistan they worked with the local Muslim groups, enhancing their capabilities.

Third Generation:

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the decline of communism, and the ending of the Cold War, the international community neglected Afghanistan and Pakistan, a frontline state in the fight against communism. Al Qaeda recruited from the abandoned mujahidin pool free floating between the conflict zones of the world. Al Qaeda provided them a home and more importantly a purpose in life – a mission.

Al Qaeda was specifically created to support the Muslim struggles worldwide. As the vanguard of the Islamic movements, wherever Muslims were suffering Al Qaeda was duty bound to play a pivotal role by providing arms, weapons, finance, trainers, and fighters. Al Qaeda was able to achieve this pre-eminent status because it inherited the Western and Middle Eastern sponsored state-of-the-art guerrilla training and operational infrastructure. Furthermore, Al Qaeda merged with the Egyptian Islamic Jihad led by Dr Ayman Al Zawahiri, the most ruthless Sunni terrorist group in the 1990s. This merger gave Al Qaeda, a group that hitherto fought a guerrilla campaign against a standing army,

terrorist capabilities, especially to attack civilians in an urban environment. Not only did Al Qaeda develop global jihadist orientation and truly lethal and sophisticated capabilities, but imparted them to Islamist groups worldwide. At least 70,000 Muslims from Islamist groups around the world were trained in various camps in Afghanistan from February 1989-October 2001.⁵ Although Al Qaeda trained between 15,000 to 20,000 mujahidin, Al Qaeda recruited only 4,000 members.⁶

Upon Azzam's death in 1989, when his protégé and successor Osama bin Laden took over Al Qaeda, the group began to target not only military but civilian targets. From February 1993, beginning with the attack on the World Trade Centre in New York and Oplan Bojinka in the Philippines, Al Qaeda extended its operations to include American civilians and civilian infrastructure. In the aftermath of 9/11, US intervention in Afghanistan and the US led global coalition against terrorism led to the arrest or capture of at least three fourth of Al Qaeda's numerical strength. Considering the past progress, if the US, its allies and friends can maintain the same level of pressure on Al Qaeda, the group will be destroyed within the next 48 months. Although US intervention in Iraq has increased the staying power of the group, the loss of high quality operatives and sustained global targeting has weakened Al Qaeda gravely.

As the group's key members arrested or killed in the last two years will be hard to replace, some generational exchange has been inevitable. Although new capable members are filling their positions, especially from people close to bin Laden – such as his bodyguards - it will take some time before they can fully establish themselves. As their knowledge of the West is limited, and considering the tough security measures enforced in the West, they will pose a different nature and scale of threat. As long as the pressure is maintained, they are unlikely to go down the road of spectacular operations in Western countries in the immediate term.

Fourth Generation:

The second half of the 1990s created the conditions for the emergence of a fourth generation. These include the US pressure on Pakistan to expel the Arab mujahidin after the first World Trade Centre bombing (1993), relocation of Al Qaeda from Sudan to

⁵ Rohan Gunaratna, "Inside Al Qaeda: Global Network of Terror" (New York; Columbia University Press, 2002)

⁶ There is no detainee debriefing that suggest the strength of Al Qaeda to be over 4000. "Information Derived from Mohammed Mansour Jabarah," Federal Bureau of Investigations, US Department of Justice, 2002.

Afghanistan in May 1996, the emergence of the Islamic Movement of Taliban (1995), the establishment of an Al Qaeda-Taliban state-of-the-art terrorist training infrastructure in Afghanistan, co-option of local and regional groups, and the creation of the World Islamic Front for Jihad Against the Jews and the Crusaders. For the purpose of establishing a common front, bin Laden created the World Islamic Front, a coalition of terrorist groups in February 1998.

Within the coalition, Al Qaeda retained its status as the pioneering vanguard of the Islamic movements. Unlike the other guerrilla and terrorist groups trained to take tactical targets, Al Qaeda members were trained to take strategic targets. As they had to take on much more difficult targets, Al Qaeda members were trained, ideologically and operationally, to sacrifice their lives. With the dispersal of Al Qaeda organisers of attacks, financiers, operatives and other experts from the core of Afghanistan-Pakistan into the periphery of lawless zones in the global south, the threshold for terrorism increased in Asia, Middle East, Horn of Africa and in the Caucasus. With Al Qaeda members working closely with its associated members, the associated groups have become stronger and are able to mount attacks as lethal as Al Qaeda. Al Qaeda's most enduring success was its ability to influence these associated groups within their local and regional jihad agendas. As a result, to different degrees the associated groups share the burden of waging a global jihad. As the groups are scattered throughout the global south, some with support networks in the west, the threat is more diffused. The inevitable generational exchange has created initially less capable and subsequently more sophisticated, more disparate, younger, but angrier groups thirsting for revenge at whatever level they can get at.

Changing Priorities and Strategies:

Contrary to public and specialist thinking, most terrorist groups survive and attack on opportunity and not choice. Terrorist groups are opportunity driven, especially when they operate under constraint. Most often the terrorist groups themselves have not consciously changed their priorities, but the changing security environment has forced them to re-prioritize and re-strategize their campaigns. To survive and succeed in the post-9-11 environment, terrorist groups have changed terrorist priorities and strategies. Ten of the most significant changes are:

First, identification of the US as their enemy: Due to the Arab-Israeli conflict over Palestinian issue, Israel was always perceived as the principal enemy of Muslim religious and secular groups. As the United States was perceived as the principal supporter of

Israel, the US was perceived as an enemy but not the principal enemy until Al Qaeda shifted its strategy from near targets to distant targets beginning with the attack on the US embassies in East Africa in August 1998. Al Qaeda shifted its strategy because of high cost of targeting the “false Muslim rulers” and “corrupt Muslim regimes” of the Middle East and the difficulty of attacking Israeli targets at home or overseas. After 9/11, especially after US intervention in Iraq, hating and resenting the United States itself has become an ideology that has significant appeal throughout the Muslim world. After 9-11, the latest generation of the jihadis has identified the US as their enemy, especially with the US providing and increasing anti- and counter terrorism assistance to governments worldwide.

Second, a shift in ideology: Al Qaeda’s ideology was distinct from the ideology of its associated groups. While Al Qaeda, a global network, called and wages a universal jihad, its associated groups, the territorial Islamist groups, waged local jihads. By closer association, post 9-11 Al Qaeda was able to “infect” the minds of the leaders of associated groups of Al Qaeda to fight at two different levels. First, at a local level against their domestic enemies – opposing governments – and, second, at an international level, against the US and its allies.

Third, a shift in target location: With US led coalition intervention in October 2001, the geographic center of terrorist training and operations has shifted from the core of Afghanistan into lawless zones in the global south. Due to increased human vigilance; unprecedented security, intelligence, and law enforcement cooperation; and the aggressive hunt against Al Qaeda inside the United States, targeting the United States mainland has become difficult. Therefore, the bulk of the targets attacked after 9-11 has been the interests of the US, its allies and friends in the global south.

Fourth, a shift in target selection: The United States of America remains the primary enemy of Al Qaeda and some of its associated groups. As it became difficult for terrorists to attack hardened Israeli targets after Munich (1972), it has also become increasingly difficult for Islamist terrorists to attack hardened US targets after 9-11. The threat from Al Qaeda and its associated groups have shifted from attacking US targets to attacking the targets of its allies and friends. The bulk of the targets attacked by Islamist groups after 9-11 was not the interests of the US but those of its allies and friends.

Fifth, a shift in target classes: With the terrorist threat shifting from the US to its allies and friends after 9-11, the targeting shifted from hard to soft targets. The bulk of the targets attacked were not military, diplomatic and other protected targets but civilians,

residences, hotels, places of religious worship and other soft targets. The shift reflected a weakening of Al Qaeda's capabilities as well as the difficulties of its associated groups from striking hardened targets.

Sixth, a shift in terrorist weapons: With enhanced government security measures and counter measures, especially at land, sea and air border crossings, terrorists are increasingly developing, acquiring and using dual user technologies – civilian technologies with military application. They include fuel laden commercial aircraft and explosive laden land vehicles, boats and ships as missiles; chemicals and commercial fertilizer purchased from chemist stores, pharmacies and agricultural farms as explosive material; and liquid nitrogen and petroleum gas land and sea vehicles, open, closed and semi closed scuba gear to access mobile and stationary maritime assets to plant underwater explosive devices; and radiological material from hospitals and industrial complexes.

Seventh, a shift in terrorist tactics: Al Qaeda has demonstrated and repeatedly urged its associated groups to the value of employing suicide tactics.⁷ Increasingly, more groups, particularly of the Islamist variety, have begun to use suicide to strike more difficult targets. As it is a proven cost effective tactic, suicide terrorism will grow in popularity both among groups and their support bases.

Eight, higher threshold for terrorism: After 9-11, an attack that produced over three thousand fatalities, the propensity for groups to engage in mass casualty violence has increased. The third and the fourth generations of terrorists will creatively strive to develop, use, and acquire mass casualty conventional and unconventional weapon systems to produce mass casualties and fatalities. Ideologically and operationally, 9/11 has "raised their potential" and "widened their horizons of what is possible!"⁸

Ninth, greater co-operation and coordination between terrorist groups: With the dispersal of Al Qaeda members and the diffusion of the threat, there will be greater interaction between different terrorist groups. As technology is usually exchanged at a low level, with the movement of trainers and fighters, there will be new technologies, tactics and techniques emerging in conflict zones.

⁷ Almost all the Al Qaeda attacks have been suicide. The sustained call to suicide is explicit in, Ayman Al Zawahiri, "Knights Under the Prophets Banner" Released in November 2001.

⁸ Andrew Tan, Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies, Singapore, October 20, 2003, personal communication

Tenth, greater propensity to use unconventional agents: Al Qaeda and its associated groups have invested in significant chemical, biological and radiological research including in anthrax and ricin.⁹ It is a question of time that terrorists will use these lethal agents.

The Future:

After 9-11, an era of perpetual conflict has emerged. Like fighting crime (economically motivated violence), governments will have to develop the organisations to fight terrorism (politically motivated violence) every day.

For a protracted campaign of violence, the support required by the mujahidin need not be overwhelming. A low level of support, even from a geographic location far away from the target zone, is sufficient to maintain periodic attacks. Nonetheless, the degree of support determines both the sustainability and the scale of violence. As it is a global struggle, Muslim diaspora and migrants are equally vulnerable to terrorist ideological penetration. Although the primary enemy of the Algerian, the Egyptian, the Moros, and the Chechen groups were their opposing governments, as they developed transnational networks into Europe, North America and to Australia, they developed a capability to operate overseas. As pockets of support exist even in the West, the threat to Western targets will not diminish. Unless all states deny active and passive sanctuary to mujahidin, their groups will identify weak states and relocate their cells for rest, recuperation, and regrouping. Only by formulating and implementing robust counter terrorism policies and practices, governments will be able to deny the mujahidin the time, space and resources to plan, prepare and execute operations. Failure by states to develop zero tolerance policies against terrorism, failure to harmonise counter terrorism legislation and uneven counter terrorism responses will help terrorist groups to recuperate, regenerate, and recreate structures to fight back.

⁹ On Al Qaeda's anthrax project, see: Debriefing of Riduan Isamuddin alias Hambali, Central Intelligence Agency, Washington DC, August 2003. On GSPC's ricin project: Keith Weston, Police International Counter Terrorism Unit, Thames House, London, October 18, 2003, personal communication.

Implications for the counter-terrorism community:

After 9-11, Al Qaeda has transformed itself into a vanguard movement with many new smaller organizations in its service. While the differences between the groups will always remain, there will be greater cooperation and coordination among the groups. Some of these groups operate under the radar screen of many security services. History suggests that newer generations have a tendency to escalate the level of violence. The new generation is likely to bring new energy and passion into the struggle. They will also build on Al Qaeda's successes and learn from its mistakes. They are learning how to operate efficiently in a globalized world. With time, the new generation is likely to pose even bigger challenges to the security, intelligence and law enforcement communities.

After 9-11, an operationally weakened Al Qaeda continues to bring significant pressure on the associated groups to target not only their local governments but also the United States and its allies.

In some cases, due to target hardening, it has become difficult to attack the interests of the United States. Therefore, Al Qaeda's associated groups continue to attack the interests of America's allies and friends. To protect its allies and friends, the US intelligence community in the global south will have to share more intelligence and provide greater assistance to the affected countries or risk the spill over of conflict to the West, including to the US. With the dawn of the age of networked terrorism, regional governments will have to develop common databases, engage in exchange of personnel, joint training and operations, sharing of resources and expertise and more importantly, the sharing of experience. Governments have no option but to invest in greater human source penetration by implanting or recruiting from within terrorist groups.

After 9-11, the US government and other Western governments are developing zero-tolerance policies against terrorism. As long as the terrorist ideology that "it is the duty of every good Muslim to wage jihad" has validity, terrorist groups will appear and disappear. Although the military response is effective in the short term, it will not stop the terrorist production line. Western governments working together with the Muslim countries to break the ideology of Al Qaeda and its associated groups by sending the message that violent Islamist groups are not Koranic but heretical. To succeed, the strategy to fight terrorism must become truly multi-pronged, multi-dimensional, multi-agency, multi-jurisdictional and multi-national.

Rohan Gunaratna is head of terrorism research at the Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies in Singapore and honorary fellow at the International Policy Institute for Counter Terrorism Research. He led the specialist team that designed and built the UN Terrorism Database on the Mobility, Finance, Weapons of Al Qaeda, Taliban and Their Entities. In 2003, he was invited to testify before the 9/11 US government Commission, Capitol Hill. He is author of the international bestseller *Inside Al Qaeda: Global Network of Terror* (Columbia University Press).