Terrorism in the Middle East podcast script

Radio Host: Welcome back to the world issues podcast. Today we have counterterrorism expert Michael Gallagher here to talk about the recent escalations in violent terrorism in the Middle East.

1. What is terrorism?

Terrorism, in its broadest sense, is defined as the use of violence, or threatened use of violence, in order to achieve a political, religious, or ideological aim.

1 ½.Where is the Middle East exactly?

The Middle East is the area where Europe, Africa, and Asia meet. When referring to the Middle East, most people mean the countries of Turkey, Syria, Israel, Iraq, Iran, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Yemen, Egypt, and the United Arab Emirates, among other countries. Pakistan and Afghanistan are sometimes included, as is Northern Africa.

2. Why is terrorism so prevalent in the Middle East?

There are many reasons why the Middle East has been a breeding ground for terror. Religious differences are a big cause. Also, dictatorships can sometimes be a big problem for people in the Middle East, causing the formation of terrorist groups against these leaders. In other cases, the terrorists view western cultures as evil and plan to oust or influence them to change their views.

3. Does terrorism only happen in the Middle East?

No, quite a few foreign terrorist groups have existed in Europe, Asia, and Africa. These include some groups in Greece, Ireland, the Philippines, and China.

Alright, well we are going to take a short break, we will be back after this quick message from our sponsors.

4. How is terrorism funded?

Some terrorist groups are involved with their government, which gives them money and power. Others are either privately funded or funded by their members. Surprisingly, the cost to execute a large scale terrorist attack is relatively low. Groups like ISIS, which control land and a population, get money by selling oil on their lands, taxing their people, and through ransom paid to them for people they have kidnapped.

5. What are the effects of terrorism?

The effects of terror are extensive. Immediate effects of terrorism include loss of life and property damage, but other consequences are too large to trace. For example, 9/11 caused the U.S.-and the world- to increase their security whenever possible. After 9/11 the United States also got heavily involved with the Middle East, and invaded Iraq, causing even more hostility against western culture in Middle Eastern countries. Large scale terrorist attacks can even affect everything from the economy to what leaders are elected in the future.

6. How do terrorists recruit?

Today, terrorists use social media to convert members to their cause. A lot of other people in their area can also simply support their point of view. If they aren’t in the group, they are helping to somehow fund it. Propaganda and other techniques are often used to convince less radical people with similar views to sympathize with the terrorist’s efforts.

7. How do you stop terrorism?

It would be impossible to bring terrorism to a halt. We can, however, educate children and adults, especially in the Middle East, the cost of terror in their community. In order to stop terrorism on a larger scale, we can increase intelligence in problem areas and also find ways to cut-off their funding. Sometimes, however, using military force is the only answer.

Alright, that’s all the time we have for today. Special thanks to Mike for his time and expertise.

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