TERRORISM IN GREECE AND COUNTERTERRORISM POLICY DURING THE METAPOLITEFSI PERIOD

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ABSTRACT

This study provides a comprehensive examination of the evolution of terrorism in Greece since the transition to democracy in 1974 (Metapolitefsi) and highlights the persistent shortcomings in the country's counter-terrorism efforts. It argues that the emergence of domestic terrorist organizations in Greece, particularly after the 1974 Turkish Peace Operation in Cyprus, increasingly adopted an anti-Turkish orientation. Focusing on the post-1974 period, the article analyzes Greece's counter-terrorism strategies across key domains, including criminal justice, terrorist financing, and law enforcement mechanisms.

The central argument of this research is that Greece, throughout the Metapolitefsi period (1974 to the present), has lacked a comprehensive counter-terrorism strategy and that the state's response to terrorism has been formulated inadequately within a coherent strategic framework. These structural deficiencies have not only hindered the effectiveness of Greece's counter-terrorism policies but have also eroded Türkiye's trust in the Greek state, thereby limiting the potential for bilateral cooperation in the region.

In response to these challenges, the study proposes new solutions aimed at fostering coordinated counter-terrorism efforts between the two NATO allies. It advocates for the integration of diplomacy into bilateral counter-terrorism collaboration between Türkiye and Greece, and for the implementation of joint diplomatic and intelligence strategies within the broader NATO framework.

Keywords: Terrorism, Counter-terrorism, 17 November Terrorist Organization, Greek Foreign Policy, Metapolitefsi.

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METAPOLİTEFSİ DÖNEMİNDE YUNANİSTAN'DA TERÖRİZM VE TERÖRİZMLE MÜCADELE POLİTİKASI

ÖZ

Bu çalışma, Yunanistan'da terörizmin demokratik sürece geçişten itibaren (Metapolitefsi:1974'ten itibaren) gelişimini ve Yunanistan'ın terörizmle mücadeledeki eksikliğini kapsamlı bir şekilde incelemektedir. Yunanistan'da yerel terör örgütleri 1974 Kıbrıs Barış Harekâtı sonrası Türkiye karşıtı bir çizgide oldukları belirginleşmiştir. Makale, Yunanistan'da terörizmin 1974 yılı sonrasına odaklanmakta ve Yunanistan'ın terörizmle mücadele stratejileri açısında (criminal justice, terörizmin finansı, kolluk kuvvetleri) ele almaktadır. Bu çalışmanın ana argümanı, Yunanistan'ın Metapolitefsi dönemi (1974'ten günümüze) sonrasında kapsamlı bir terörizmle mücadele stratejisinden yoksun olduğu ve Yunan devletinin terörizmle mücadele yöntemlerini stratejik bir çerçeve içinde yetersiz bir şekilde formüle ettiğidir. Bu yöntemsel eksiklik, bölgede Türkiye'nin Yunan devletine olan güvenini zayıflatmış ve ikili iş birliği potansiyelini engellemiştir. Çalışma, bu sorunların çözümüne yönelik olarak iki NATO müttefikinin terörizmle mücadele yöntemlerinde eş güdümlü hareket etmesini öneren yeni çözüm sunmaktadır. Ayrıca, terörizmle mücadelede Türk-Yunan ikili iş birliğinde diplomasinin kullanılmasını, NATO çerçevesinde diplomasi ve istihbarat stratejilerinin uygulanmasını önermektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Terörizm, Terörizmle Mücadele, 17 Kasım Terör Örgütü, Yunan Dış Politikası, Metapolitefsi.

Introduction

The study examines the evolution of terrorism and counter-terrorism strategies in Greece, focusing on the historical developments following the 1974 Metapolitefsi period. It aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of how the deficiencies in Greece's counter-terrorism efforts have impacted both its internal stability and bilateral relations with Türkiye. By addressing the intersections of terrorism and counter-terrorism, the research sheds light on the broader implications of Greece's approach to handling domestic and transnational terrorist threats.

The central argument of this study is that Greece lacked a comprehensive counter-terrorism strategy in the post-1974 period, and the state's counter-terrorism efforts were inadequately formulated within a strategic framework. These deficiencies not only undermined the

effectiveness of Greece's counter-terrorism initiatives but also weakened
Türkiye's trust in Greece and hindered the potential for bilateral cooperation,
particularly within the framework of *NATO* alliances.

To develop and substantiate this argument, the study seeks to answer
the following key questions:

In what ways did Greece's counter-terrorism strategies lack a
comprehensive framework after 1974? What are the main characteristics of
Greece's counter-terrorism strategies after the Metapolitefsi period? What
deficiencies can be observed in Greece's counter-terrorism strategy following
the Metapolitefsi period? What new counter-terrorism solutions can be
proposed to strengthen Turkish-Greek bilateral cooperation?

The scope of this research is limited to the historical period beginning
in 1974, encompassing the aftermath of the Metapolitefsi period and the
significant security challenges that followed. Particular emphasis is placed on
the role of local terrorist organizations, such as *the November 17 Group*, as
well as Greece's response to these threats within its broader counter-terrorism
framework. The study identifies several critical shortcomings in Greece's
counter-terrorism approach, including inadequate intelligence coordination,
limited judicial authority, and an over-reliance on reactive rather than
proactive measures.

This research employs a qualitative methodology using the case study
approach to analyze security context of terrorism and counter-terrorism in
Greece. Drawing on primary sources, including academic literature, official
reports, and archival materials, the study evaluates the evolution of counter-
terrorism strategies and their effectiveness.

Within this framework, the study aims to analyze terrorism in Greece,
its association with state structures, and the gaps and deficiencies in counter-
terrorism strategies throughout the Metapolitefsi period, beginning with the
democratic transition in 1974. Utilizing a qualitative methodology and case
study approach, the research examines key dimensions of the issue.
Specifically, the article addresses the strategic shortcomings of Greece's
counter-terrorism policies and the evolving perceptions of terrorist threats
over time, highlighting the shifts in security discourse and state responses.

Ultimately, this study underscores the need for coordinated counter-terrorism efforts between Greece and Türkiye, advocating for enhanced intelligence-sharing, diplomatic engagement, and joint strategies within the *NATO* framework.

Existing academic studies on this topic reveal that the establishment of terrorist organizations in Greece is generally discussed from a broad perspective, with insufficient emphasis on historical contexts. Some studies, however, focus more on terrorist organizations operating in Greece rather than the country's counter-terrorism strategies. Key contributions in the literature include George Kassimeris's article, "Greece: Twenty Years of Political Terrorism" (1995), published in *Terrorism and Political Violence*, which stands as a foundational work in the field.[1] Another notable contribution is Kassimeris's chapter, "Terrorism," in *The Oxford Handbook of Modern Greek Politics*, edited by Kevin Featherstone and Dimitri A. Sotiropoulos (2020, online edn., Oxford Academic).[2] Additionally, Georgia Chantzi's research paper, "The Evolution of Terrorism in Greece from 1975 to 2009" (2012), published as Research Paper No. 158 by Coventry University, provides significant insights.[3] Another critical study is Pesto Haris. Haris Pesto's article, "The Role of Diplomacy in the Fight Against Terrorism" (2010), published in *Connections*, highlights the critical role that diplomatic efforts play in addressing terrorism, offering an important perspective on the international dimensions of counter-terrorism strategies.[4] Similarly, Angeliki Karakosta's paper, "Μια ιστορική ανάλυση του φαινομένου της Τρομοκρατίας" (*A Historical Analysis of the Phenomenon of Terrorism*), published by the Centre for Strategic Analyses (Athens, Paper No. 87, February 2022), is a valuable addition to the literature.[5]

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[1] George Kassimeris, "Greece: Twenty Years of Political Terrorism", *Terrorism and Political Violence*, Volume 7, Issue 2, Summer 1995, p. 125.

[2] George Kassimeris, "Terrorism", in *The Oxford Handbook of Modern Greek Politics*, (eds.) Kevin Featherstone and Dimitri A. Sotiropoulos, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2020, online edition.

[3] Georgia Chantzi, *The Evolution of Terrorism in Greece from 1975 to 2009*, Research Paper No. 158, Coventry University 2012, p. 9.

[4] Haris Pesto, "The Role of Diplomacy in the Fight Against Terrorism", *Connections*, Volume 9, Issue 3, 2010, p. 45.

[5] Angeliki Karakosta, "Μια ιστορική ανάλυση του φαινομένου της Τρομοκρατίας" (*A Historical Analysis of the Phenomenon of Terrorism*), *Centre for Strategic Analyses*, Paper No. 87, Athens February 2022, p. 3.

Furthermore, George Karyotis's article, "Securitization of Greek Terrorism and Arrest of the Revolutionary *Organization November 17*" (2007), published in *Cooperation and Conflict Journal*, provides an important analysis of the security discourse surrounding Greek terrorism and the pivotal arrest of *the November 17 organization*.[6] Together, these works form the foundation of this study's theoretical and analytical framework, addressing the gaps in the literature by linking the historical evolution of terrorism in Greece to its counter-terrorism strategies. Mairi Bosi's book, *Peri Tou Orismou Tis Tromokratias (On the Definition of Terrorism)*, published by Trablos in 2000, provides a theoretical framework for understanding terrorism, which is particularly relevant for analyzing the Greek context.[7] Furthermore, this article also draws on the work of former Greek Foreign Minister Theodoros Pangalos as a primary source, specifically his book *Imia, S-300, Öcalan: Struggling for Peace (ΙΜΙΑ, S-300, ΟΤΣΑΛΑΝ: Παλεύοντας για την Ειρήνη)*, which provides valuable firsthand insights relevant to the subject matter.[8]

In addition to these academic sources, reports by Greek state institutions and Hellenic Parliament, articles from the *Kathimerini, Elefteros Tipos* and *Apogeumatini* newspapers, and statements by the *17 November Terrorist Organization* are referenced in this study. This article argues that Greece's counter-terrorism strategies after 1974 have a legal framework but lack comprehensive implementation mechanisms, including judicial authority. To support this argument, the study systematically examines the concept of terrorism in Greece, its historical evolution, and the operations of terrorist groups such as the *17 November Organization* and *ELA (Revolutionary Popular Struggle)*. Furthermore, it highlights Greece's ineffectiveness in counter-terrorism efforts.

Greece's approach to combating terrorism, particularly in the 1970s and 1980s, was often criticized for its ineffectiveness and lack of political will.[9] Despite mounting evidence of *17N*'s activities and its repeated attacks on domestic and international targets, Greek law enforcement agencies failed

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[6] George Karyotis, "Securitization of Greek Terrorism and Arrest of the Revolutionary Organization November 17", *Cooperation and Conflict*, Vol. 42, No. 3, 2007, p. 271-293.

[7] Mairi Bosi, *Peri Tou Orismou Tis Tromokratias (On the Definition of Terrorism)*, Trablos Publisher, 2000.

[8] Theodoros Pangalos, *Imia, S-300, Öcalan: Struggling for Peace*, Kerkyra Publications, Athens 2020.

[9] Kassimeris, *op.cit.*, p. 85.

to apprehend key members of the organization for nearly three decades. This failure was attributed to several factors, including inadequate intelligence coordination, limited resources, and a reluctance to confront terrorist groups that framed their actions as resistance against foreign intervention.

The turning point in Greece's counter-terrorism efforts came in the early 2000s, following international pressure -especially from the United States and *NATO* -in the lead-up to the 2004 Athens Olympics. The arrest of several *17N* members in 2002 marked the beginning of the group's decline, as key operatives were prosecuted and sentenced to life imprisonment. However, these successes came too late to prevent the long-term damage inflicted on Greece's domestic and international reputation.

The activities of *17N*, particularly its targeting of Turkish diplomats, reflected a broader trend of anti-Turkish sentiment in Greece during the late 20th century. This sentiment was not confined to fringe terrorist groups but also influenced mainstream political discourse and policy decisions. The use of anti-Turkish terrorist groups as strategic tools further exacerbated tensions in Greek-Turkish relations, undermining regional stability and complicating *NATO's* collective security objectives. The analysis highlights the importance of adopting a multidimensional approach to counter-terrorism that prioritizes intelligence sharing, law enforcement collaboration, and diplomatic engagement. Bilateral cooperation between Greece and Türkiye, particularly within the *NATO* framework, is essential to address transnational threats and promote regional stability. The assassination of Turkish diplomats underscores the need for stronger protections for foreign officials and greater accountability for states harboring or failing to prosecute terrorist groups.

The importance of this study focusing on Greece's support for anti-Turkish groups, this research reveals how ideological and nationalist motives intertwined to influence state behavior and regional dynamics.

In terms of literature review, existing academic research has often addressed the phenomenon of terrorism in Greek-Turkish relations separately, showing limited focus on how terrorism has been used as a strategic element. This study aims to fill this gap by integrating the historical context of the Greek-Turkish conflict with the analysis of terrorist support and its implications, and by offering strategic recommendations for counter-terrorism. While previous studies have typically concentrated on direct military confrontations or diplomatic tensions, this study provides a novel

perspective by exploring Greece's use of indirect influence methods. This approach contributes to a more nuanced understanding of the necessity for bilateral and multilateral collaborations among *NATO* allies and the impact of terrorism on Greece's internal and external policies.

A comprehensive analysis by *RAND* researchers Jones and Libicki of 648 terrorist groups worldwide from 1968 to 2006 highlights that effective counter-terrorism relies more on intelligence and policing than on broad military campaigns. This understanding underscores the necessity of a collaborative approach that combines diplomatic and intelligence efforts to address the global nature of the threat, especially as terrorism transcends national boundaries. In particular, the dynamics between Greece and Türkiye, as well as the role of *NATO*, emphasize the importance of intelligence sharing and diplomatic engagement in combating terrorism.

1. Security in the Democratization Process: Terrorism in Greece During the Metapolitefsi Period

Terrorism poses a significant threat to the security of states. However, there is no universally accepted definition of the term 'terrorism.' According to one definition, terrorism is the intentional use of violence or brutality, or the threat of such actions, to intimidate or instill fear in pursuit of a political objective.[10] It is often understood as violent acts carried out against civilian populations to achieve political or ideological goals. While the international community has yet to agree on a comprehensive legal definition of terrorism, various declarations, resolutions, and universal sectoral agreements define certain aspects and essential elements of terrorism. In 1994, the Declaration on Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism, proclaimed in General Assembly Resolution 49/60, defined terrorism as criminal acts carried out by individuals or groups with the intent to create a state of fear for political purposes. It also emphasized that such acts are unacceptable under any circumstances, regardless of the political, philosophical, ideological, racial, national, religious, or other motivations behind them.[11]

The first terrorist organizations on Greek territory emerged after the fall of the Greek military junta in 1974, nearly fifteen years after the

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[10] Helen Gazopoulou, *Assessing the Impact of Terrorism on Travel Activity in Greece*, Bank of Greece, Athens 2011, p. 7.
[11] Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, "About Us", United Nations, 2008, https://www.ohchr.org/en/about-us, 16 May 2024).

phenomenon began to appear and evolve in other European countries.[12] This delay in the development of terrorism in its current form was due to the seven-year dictatorship (1967-1974), which hindered its growth. The emergence and actions of Greek terrorist organizations, beyond a shared theoretical and ideological foundation, are also marked by a long-lasting presence[13] a characteristic that differentiates them from similar groups abroad.

In the early 1970s, and especially following the collapse of the military dictatorship regime, terrorism in Greece emerged with the *17 November Organization*.[14] Moreover, the persistent issue of terrorism in Greece, particularly with the emergence of new radical groups, highlights the complex interplay between domestic political dynamics and the broader regional context. This ongoing challenge underscores the necessity for continuous adaptation in counter-terrorism strategies to address both local and international dimensions of the threat. However, the collapse of *17 November* did not lead to the end of terrorism in Greece, as new terrorist organizations emerged. The state's initial response to *17 November* was inadequate, leading to the emergence of new organizations.[15]

Greece has experienced a terrorism phenomenon shaped by political instability and ideological conflicts throughout its modern history. Particularly from the 1970s onward, the emergence of leftist and nationalist terrorist organizations has had profound impacts on the country's internal politics and external relations. While the roots of terrorism in Greece are grounded in the ideological polarizations of the Cold War period, they are also intertwined with the national identity and independence struggles that developed during this era. This article will provide an in-depth examination of the historical development of terrorism in Greece, the main terrorist organizations, and the ideological objectives of these groups.

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[12] Adriana Maria Korasidi, *Yfometrik prosengisi grapton apotupomaton ellinikon teroristikon organoseon meso ypologistikon technikon. (A Stylometric Approach to Written Traces of Greek Terrorist Organizations Through Computational Techniques. An Ideological Map of Terrorism in Greece)*, Doctoral Dissertation, Department of Italian Language and Philology, Faculty of Philosophy, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Athens 2023, p. 44.

[13] Bosi, *op.cit.*, 22.

[14] Kassimeris, *op.cit.*, p. 85.

[15] Georgios Karyotis, "Securitization of Greek Terrorism and Arrest of the Revolutionary Organization November 17", *Cooperation and Conflict*, Vol. 42, No. 3, 2007, p. 271-293.

The most significant period in shaping the modern form of terrorism in Greece was the military junta period from 1967 to 1974. Known as the "Colonels' Junta", this military regime implemented a harsh policy of repression against leftist movements and opposition, which played a crucial role in the radicalization of terrorism. Particularly, the 1974 Cyprus Operation and the fall of the junta regime led to an increase in regime-related violent actions among leftist and anarchist movements.[16]

The inability of the middle class to become an active element of Greek society resulted in a concentration of privileges among the elite. Moreover, in order to maintain their social position, the elite granted authorities power to suppress the middle class. In this context, Greek society developed a sense of discontent that, when international and domestic transformations finally allowed, erupted in the form of violence. The inefficiency of Greek authorities, coupled with the exceptional operational structures of the groups, enabled them to persist for several years and laid the groundwork for the emergence of new terrorist organizations.[17]

During the dictatorship, two distinct phases can be observed, differing both in terms of generational involvement and methods of action. While individual action dominated the early years of the dictatorship, the generation that was in its adolescence in 1967 began to favor mass protest by the early 1970s, utilizing the openings created by the regime after 1969.[18] Although there were not many significant actions against the regime during the dictatorship, with the notable exception of the assassination attempt against Georgios Papadopoulos by Alexandros Panagoulis, one hundred seventy-four bombs and explosive devices were either placed or detonated in the Athens area alone by various organizations of the period (e.g., the "*October 20th Movement*", "*Democratic Defense*", and "*Democratic Resistance Committees*").[19] According to Sotiris Karampampas, the Greek case is distinct from others based on existing studies, which identify the creation of far-left radicalization and the formation of extremist/terrorist groups either at the peak

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[16] George Kassimeris, "Terrorism", in Kevin Featherstone and Dimitri A. Sotiropoulos (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Modern Greek Politics*, Oxford Handbooks, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2020, online edition,
https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780198825104.013.27, (18 August 2024).
[17] Chantzi, *op.cit.*, p. 15-16.
[18] Kostis Kornetis, *The Children of the Dictatorship*, Athens: Polis Publications, 2015, p. 28.
[19] Giorgos Karampelas, *The Greek Guerrilla Cities 1974-1985*, Grafes Publications, Athens 2002, p. 15.

of protest cycles or after the decline of movements. In contrast, in Greece, such groups were formed at the beginning of protest cycles as a continuation and evolution of previously existing organizations.[20]

The military junta period from 1967 to 1974, in particular, provided fertile ground for the development of left-wing resistance movements and the emergence of terrorist groups.[21] The repressive policies of the junta fueled social unrest and led to the radicalization of leftist ideologies. In this context, terrorist groups identified themselves as agents of resistance against state repression and as instruments for political change. This process in Greece mirrors the rise of leftist radicalism across Europe but also reflects the specific internal dynamics of political violence within the country. The Athens Polytechnic uprising in 1973 and the fall of the junta in 1974 further solidified the motivations of these terrorist groups, which sought to overthrow the existing order and eliminate social inequalities. Furthermore, the rise of terrorism in Greece during this period can also be viewed as a consequence of Cold War international relations, particularly the influence of the United States in the region and the Western bloc's support for authoritarian regimes.

The evolution of terrorism in Greece, particularly during and after the dictatorship, not only reflects internal political dynamics but also intersects with regional geopolitics. The support provided by Greece to anti-Turkish terrorist organizations, especially during and after the Cyprus conflict, significantly shaped the political landscape in the region. In the context of Turkish-Greek relations, the period following the 1974 Turkish invasion of Cyprus saw Greece's support for groups hostile to Türkiye as a strategic counterbalance. This support was manifest in both direct assistance and through fostering a broader network of anti-Turkish factions. The alignment with terrorist groups such as the *17 November Organization* (17N) and others was part of a broader strategy to undermine Turkish influence and promote Greek geopolitical interests in the region. This support for terrorism was not only a response to immediate political events but also part of a long-term strategy to challenge Türkiye's regional dominance and influence. The continued animosity and support for anti-Turkish activities contributed to a complex and often adversarial relationship between Greece and Türkiye,

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[20] Sotirios Karampampas, "How Has the Phenomenon of Revolutionary Groups Been Resilient in Greece? A Relational Study of Two Contentious Episodes (1965-2002)", Ph.D. Thesis, University of Sheffield, Department of Politics, Sheffield 2017, p. 19.

[21] Can Kızılkan, *Greece's Regional Strategy and Maritime Security in the Aegean from 1974 to the Present*, Nobel Bilimsel Eserler, Ankara 2024, p. 26.

highlighting the intersections between domestic terrorism, regional politics, and international relations.

An analysis of the categories of terrorist organizations makes it necessary to refer to the terrorist organization *November 17* and to terrorism in Greece more generally. Terrorism in Greece is notable for its longevity, although it emerged later compared to the international scene due to the dictatorship from 1967 to 1974. Immediately after the fall of the Colonels' Junta, the activity of Greek terrorist organizations began. The most significant were the *Revolutionary Organization November 17* (1974 - 2002), the *Revolutionary Popular Struggle* (1975 - 1995), *the Revolutionary Struggle* (2003 - 2017), *the Conspiracy of Fire Nuclei* (2008 - present), and *the Sect of Revolutionaries* (2009 - present), all of which are responsible for numerous terrorist acts.[22]

The key to the emergence of leftist terrorism in Greece during the 1970s and 1980s lies in the internal dynamics within anti-dictatorship organizations, particularly in the context of escalating to armed action against the dictatorship following the overthrow of Papadopoulos and the takeover of the junta by Ioannidis. Organizations such as the *ELA* recognized the utility of armed struggle against the dictatorship, as they believed that armed resistance played a role in activating popular movements, especially students. They further argued that additional armed actions were necessary to protect the mobilized masses, basing their analysis on the actions of dictatorships in Spain and Latin America against protesters, and drawing inspiration from Latin American urban guerrilla movements.[23] In the discussions that followed within the organizations after the fall of the junta, the majority considered their work to be complete. However, the most radical factions insisted on the choice of 'armed struggle,' contending that the end was not merely the formal restoration of democracy, as it did not redefine the socio-economic system or the international orientation of the country, but rather revolution and the establishment of a popular democracy. The 'Directorate' formed within these dynamics became the nucleus of the *'Revolutionary Popular Struggle*,' which is considered the progenitor of the post-transition urban guerrilla organizations.[24]

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[22] Karakosta, *op.cit.*, p. 18.

[23] Alexis Papahelas and Tassos Telloglou, *File November 17*, Estia Publications, Athens 2003, p. 44-45.

[24] Papahelas and Telloglou, *op.cit.*, p. 52.

The November 17 organization, named after the 1973 Athens Polytechnic uprising against the Greek military junta, emerged in 1975 as a far-left terrorist group. It combined Marxist-Leninist ideology with a strong anti-imperialist stance, initially targeting symbols of foreign intervention, such as U.S. officials and institutions, before expanding its operations to include attacks on Turkish, British, and Greek individuals and entities. *17N*'s (*17 November*) stated objectives included dismantling foreign influence in Greece, redistributing wealth, and opposing capitalism. Over the course of its operations, the group claimed responsibility for numerous assassinations, bombings, and armed robberies, making it one of the most notorious terrorist groups in Europe.

A significant aspect of *17N*'s activities was its focus on Turkish targets, which aligned with its nationalist and anti-Turkish rhetoric. Among the most notable attacks were the assassinations of Turkish diplomats stationed in Greece.[25] These attacks included the 1980 assassination of Turkish Press Attache Galip Özmen and his 14-year-old daughter in Athens, as well as the murder of Turkish Consul General Çetin Görgü in 1991.[26] Such actions not only escalated tensions between Greece and Türkiye but also underscored the inadequacies in Greece's counter-terrorism framework at the time.

As previously noted, unlike *"17 November"*, the *ELA (Ethniki Laiki Anagnostiki)* maintained contacts abroad, as evidenced by the seizure of files from the Stasi archives by the *Greek Police*. Within the framework of these international connections, the *ELA* established contact with Johannes Weinrich, a German associate of Carlos, aiming to enhance the *ELA's* arsenal. In exchange, the *ELA* agreed to function as an intermediary for the transfer of weapons and explosives from Hungary to the Middle East. To substantiate its desire for cooperation, the *ELA* planted a bomb on the vehicle of a Saudi businessman on April 17, 1981. This action is justified based on the fissures and differentiations in the Middle East, as Saudi Arabia was a target of the Gaddafi regime, which opposed maintaining low oil prices, with the latter being Carlos's main financier. Moreover, Riyadh's support for Arafat elicited

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[25] *November 17*, "Proclamation, Attacks on Cars of Turkish Diplomats", in *17N: Proclamations 1975-2002*, Kaktos, Athens 2002, p. 322-331.
[26] Republic of Türkiye Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Assassinated Turkish Diplomats/Officials", https://www.mfa.gov.tr/sehit-edilen-diplomatlarimiz-ve-vatandaslarimiz_en.en.mfa, (21 June 2024).

the displeasure of the *PFLP* (which also collaborated with Carlos), due to the Palestinian leader's moderate stance following 1974.[27]

After the arrest of the members of *November 17*, the cycle of 'old' terrorism ended, and from 2003, with the emergence of the *Revolutionary Struggle* organization (which operated from 1975 to 1995 and ceased its activities following a clear political decision made by its members), the second, 'new' wave of domestic terrorism emerged. During this same period, groups such as '*Popular Revolutionary Action*,' '*Conspiracies of the Cells of Fire*,' and '*Sect of Revolutionaries*' continued to operate. These groups occupy a central position in the so-called urban 'guerrilla' movement and are also characterized by left-wing extremist ideology and anti-imperialist ideas. After 2008, domestic terrorist groups were distinguished by both anarchist and nihilist views, which justifies distinguishing the phenomenon into two categories: a) classical anarchist terrorism and b) nihilist terrorism. According to Lampropoulou[28], the primary target of this new generation of terrorists is no longer to gain the sympathy of the people, although they seek media attention for their attacks. Their ideology is not clearly defined, and their targets mainly revolve around the police, justice, and politics, with their methods ranging from explosive devices to firearms. Bosi states that the goals of the new terrorism organizations in Greece vary depending on what they consider a threat, with the police being their greatest enemy. These organizations consist of new, flexible, and hard-to-detect structures, composed of individuals from various social backgrounds.[29]

The Greek government's anti-American stance emerged as a reaction against U.S. policies supporting Türkiye and its position on the Cyprus issue. Another factor contributing to anti-Americanism in Greece was the U.S. support for Türkiye and its alignment with Türkiye on the Cyprus issue. In this context, anti-Turkish and anti-American sentiments gained substantial traction in Greek society, leading to a hostile attitude towards both countries. Terrorism also played a significant role during this period in Greece. Leftist-oriented terrorist groups in Greece, combining anti-American and anti-Turkish rhetoric, further complicated relations with these countries. For

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[27] John Brady Kiesling, *Greek Urban Warriors: Resistance & Terrorism 1967–2014*, Lycabettus Press, Athens 2014, p. 95.
[28] Efi Lampropoulou, "Palaia kai Nea Tromokratia stin Ellada (Old and New Terrorism in Greece)", *Liberal.gr*, 2018, https://www.liberal.gr/apopsi/palaia-kai-nea-tromokratia-stin-ellada, (25 December 2024).
[29] Bosi, *op.cit.*, p. 26.

example, Marxist terrorist groups such as *the November 17 Organization* targeted both the U.S. and Türkiye, which deepened the hostility towards these countries in Greek society. These organizations, through terrorism supported by anti-imperialist and anti-American rhetoric, increased the challenges faced by the Greek government in both domestic and foreign policies.

During this period, terrorism was seen by the Greek public and government as a form of protest and resistance, particularly against American and Turkish influences. In this context, anti-American and anti-Turkish sentiments within Greek society, combined with the political and social dynamics of the time, were reinforced by terrorism and played a decisive role in shaping Greek foreign policy.

2. Greece's Approach to Countering Terrorism

The Metapolitefsi period, which began with the overthrow of the Colonels' Junta in 1974, marks the transition to democracy in Greece following the dictatorship that started in 1967. According to modern Greek historiography, the Metapolitefsi period covers the era from 1974 to the present and includes the fall of the Colonels' Junta.[30]

The Metapolitefsi period signifies the transition to democracy in modern Greek history, beginning with the fall of the Colonels' Junta in 1974. This period is crucial for understanding the changes in Greece's counter-terrorism strategy. Notably, until the late 1990s, Greek authorities did not view terrorism as a security issue, treating terrorist attacks as isolated acts by individual groups, which made effective counter-terrorism challenging. The lack of political consensus on the definition of terrorism and the nature of terrorist organizations played a critical role in shaping Greece's counter-terrorism strategy. Understanding the relationship between the Metapolitefsi period and terrorism is thus an essential part of evaluating Greece's counter-terrorism efforts.

Towards the late 1990s, terrorism in Greece began to be politicized, albeit somewhat belatedly compared to other European countries, and still was not fundamentally seen as a security issue. This politicization practically started with the "securitization" of terrorism during the 1999-2001 period.

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[30] Kızılkan, *op.cit.*, p. 10.

TERRORISM IN GREECE AND COUNTERTERRORISM POLICY DURING THE METAPOLITEFSI PERIOD

The influence of European norms, pressures for counter-terrorism, the modernization of the country's security policy, and an increased focus on Europe led the Greek political elite to view terrorism as the country's top priority from 2001 onwards, thus transforming it into a security issue.

By the end of the 2000s, Greece had signed twelve United Nations counter-terrorism conventions and ratified ten of them. Additionally, Greece sought closer cooperation for counter-terrorism under British and American pressure. Beyond this, from 2001 onwards, Greece signed and ratified European conventions. On this basis, from 2001, Greece undertook a series of Presidential Decrees and laws to create and update its counter-terrorism policy. Consequently, Greece's counter-terrorism profile significantly improved from the 2000s onwards, increasing its chances of preventing and suppressing new forms of terrorism.

Despite the dismantling of major terrorist organizations that emerged and operated during the Metapolitefsi period (e.g., *November 17*, *ELA*) and the arrests of key members of the newer generation of terrorist groups (e.g., Revolutionary Struggle, Conspiracy of the Cells of Fire, Revolutionary Self-Defense), the most significant threat to Greece remains 'far-left anarchist' terrorism. Furthermore, the majority of extremist actions in the country originate from far-left and anarchist circles, which also maintain strong international connections with extremist groups in Europe and Latin America.[31]

However, Greece's counter-terrorism policy primarily focused on reshaping the legal framework rather than investing substantially in counter-terrorism infrastructure. The economic crisis of 2010 might have resulted in reduced investments in these resources. The absence of significant terrorist attacks in Greece (such as those seen in other European cities or the U.S.) is likely another reason. As a result, Greece's counter-terrorism policy is characterized more by extensive legal regulation and cooperation with European and international organizations.

Nevertheless, a comprehensive plan for preventing and combating terrorism is also necessary, alongside the legal framework. This specific plan

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[31] Panagiotis Tsakonas and Triantafyllos Karatrantos, *Designing the "Internal Security Strategy": Challenges and Prospects*, Policy Paper No. 130/2023, Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy (ELIAMEP), Athens March 2023, p. 21.

can be based on international practices and literature. This topic is addressed in the following section.

Additionally, a successful counter-terrorism policy is one that reduces the volume of terrorist violence.[32] Therefore, the effectiveness of a particular policy can be evaluated by examining whether the level of terrorist activities decreases over time within that policy framework. Moreover, given that different policies may have varied impacts on combating terrorism, it is crucial to establish specific policy goals and objectives, identify specific actions to achieve these goals and objectives, and determine criteria and methods/tools to evaluate the effectiveness of these implementations. In this way, it will be possible to identify the strengths and weaknesses of policies and actions, assess the realism and appropriateness of policies and goals, and monitor the degree of achievement of individual objectives.

In this context, assessing the effectiveness of the implemented counter-terrorism policy is also important.

2.1. Special Anti-Terrorism Unit in the Police Force

The Special Anti-Terrorism Unit (EMAB) is a special unit of the *Greek Police*, subordinated to *the Special Forces Directorate* (Δ.Ε.Α.Δ.) of *the Greek Police* and supervised by the *Deputy Chief of the Greek Police*. Since 1978, the first anti-terrorism units in the Greek Police, *the Special Task Force of the City Police* (MEA) and *the Special Task Force of the Hellenic Coast Guard* (TEIΔΑ), have been established. Following the merger of the *Hellenic Coast Guard* and the *City Police* in 1984, both anti-terrorism units were combined under *the Greek Police Headquarters* as *the Special Anti-Terrorism Unit*.[33]

The primary mission of the unit is to effectively handle severe and extraordinarily dangerous situations, such as terrorist acts, hijacking in transportation vehicles, hostage takings, apprehension of dangerous criminals, capturing strongholds, and protecting high-risk individuals. Additionally, the unit is responsible for interventions in hazardous areas

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[32] Christopher Hewitt, *The Effectiveness of Anti-Terrorist Policies*, University Press of America, Lanham 1984, p. 6.

[33] Elliniki Astinomia (Greek Police), "Η Ειδική Κατασταλτική Αντιτρομοκρατική Μονάδα (Ε.Κ.Α.Μ.) / The Special Anti-Terrorist Unit (E.K.A.M.)", Greek Police, Athens 2021.

contaminated with chemical or biological agents or polluted with radiological or nuclear materials.[34]

This unit consists of specially trained volunteer police officers, and the special training areas include special forces operatives, free snipers, special penetration specialists (doors, walls, etc.), paratroopers, underwater operators, climbers-abseilers, skiers, battlefield nurses. The unit's equipment includes vehicles (fast Jeeps, motorcycles, trucks, buses, self-propelled ladders, etc.), inflatable fast boats, various climbing-abseiling materials, Fast Rope collections for all helicopters, special materials for door penetration (hydraulic systems, corrosives, etc.), standard explosive charges, endoscopes, thermal imaging cameras, infrared observation devices, noise and light bombs, chemical substances, smoke bombs, etc.[35]

The significance of this unit is evident in its effective involvement in the apprehension and transfer of *November 17* members, the dismantling of *ELA*, and the suppression of other terrorist organizations in Greece. Furthermore, in March 2003, the unit effectively responded to the hijacking incident of flight TK 160, an Airbus A-130, en route from Istanbul to Ankara. *EMAB* also participates in global events and organizations to protect high-risk officials. In this context, it collaborates with both similar national groups *(Greek Security Forces Special Units and Greek Armed Forces Special Units)* and foreign counterparts *(New Scotland Yard / SO19, G.E.O. Spain, R.A.I.D. France, S.E.K. Berlin Germany, Cobra Austria, FBI / Hostage Rescue Team, U.S. Federal Courts / Special Operations Group, U.S. Army Special Forces)*. Moreover, *EMAB* is a member of the *ATLAS* network, the network of national police special forces of the *European Union* member states.[36]

The case of Abdullah Öcalan's covert entry into Greece in the late 1990s reveals critical aspects of the Greek state's internal security architecture and the operational dynamics between political leadership, intelligence services, and special units involved in anti-terrorism efforts. According to former Foreign Minister Theodoros Pangalos, *the National Intelligence Service (EYP)* was directly responsible for smuggling Öcalan into the country without any official documentation or border control records.[37] This high-level covert operation was executed by clearing airport personnel and

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[34] *Ibid.*

[35] Greek Police, *op.cit.*

[36] *Ibid.*

[37] Pangalos, *op.cit.*, p. 55.

transferring Öcalan discreetly to a private residence, highlighting the degree of secrecy and informality in the handling of terrorist-related threats at that time.

The situation prompted the formation of a special task force within the *EYP*, composed of senior government officials including Alekos Papadopoulos and Filippos Petsalnikos, and led by Pangalos himself. The unit was tasked with developing a strategy to remove Öcalan from Greek jurisdiction as swiftly and discreetly as possible, in order to avoid a diplomatic crisis with Türkiye and broader international repercussions.[38] Although this special unit operated within an intelligence framework, its mission intersected with national counter-terrorism objectives, emphasizing the fluid boundary between intelligence operations and anti-terror policing in extraordinary cases.

Two options were devised: the first involved transporting Öcalan by a high-speed smuggling vessel from Preveza—an option reflective of irregular, clandestine methods rather than official extradition procedures. The second, more structured proposal involved flying Öcalan to Brussels aboard a diplomatic aircraft posing as part of a *European Council* delegation. This method would have leveraged diplomatic immunity and procedural loopholes within EU institutions, demonstrating how counter-terrorism and intelligence actors often operate within legal grey zones when addressing transnational threats.[39]

Ultimately, both plans were rejected by the Greek Prime Minister, revealing internal divergences within the state's leadership on how to approach high-profile terrorism-related crises.[40] The lack of coordination and the absence of a centralized counter-terrorism policy framework exposed operational vulnerabilities. Subsequent attempts to relocate Öcalan- to Belarus, the Netherlands, and eventually Corfu- further illustrate the ad hoc nature of Greece's response and the limitations of its security apparatus in managing international terrorism cases under pressure.[41]

This incident underscores the need for a coherent and institutionalized special anti-terrorism unit within the police force that can act swiftly, legally,

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[38] Pangalos, *op.cit.*, p. 56.

[39] *Ibid*., p. 56.

[40] *Ibid*., p. 56.

[41] *Ibid.*, p. 56.

and in coordination with intelligence services. It also reflects how political considerations and diplomatic constraints can undermine operational efficiency in critical moments of counter-terrorism enforcement.

2.2. Criminal Justice System and the Fight Against Terrorist Financing in Greece

In Greece, criminal law regulations, such as the amendments made on November 13, 2019, aim to strengthen the functionality of the *Criminal Justice System (CJS)* in counter-terrorism. Such legal regulations intend to increase the penalties for terrorist acts and enhance the CJS's capacity to prevent, detect, investigate, and prosecute terrorist activities. Greek law enforcement and border security officials effectively utilize the tools provided by the CJS to detect and prevent terrorist acts. These tools include watch lists, databases, and biometric methods. The CJS plays a crucial role in monitoring, investigating, and prosecuting terrorists, ensuring they are brought to justice. Furthermore, measures like the PNR law adopted in 2018 further bolster the CJS's role in counter-terrorism. Such laws aid in preventing terrorist activities and identifying terrorists by enhancing intelligence gathering and analysis capabilities.[42]

In conclusion, *the Criminal Justice System* (CJS) plays a significant role in counter-terrorism, and countries like Greece aim to be more successful in counter-terrorism by increasing the effectiveness of the CJS through criminal law regulations and appropriate legal frameworks. In May, Greek authorities, under a European arrest warrant issued by German authorities, arrested an Iraqi national accused of terrorism, genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes against humanity. Greece extradited this individual to Germany in September as part of international cooperation in counter-terrorism based on bilateral cooperation between countries.[43]

In November, the *Greek Police* launched a large-scale operation to arrest three suspects linked to the local terrorist group "*Revolutionary Self-Defense*", responsible for five attacks since 2014 and associated with secret arms depots. This group is known as a continuation of the *ELA organization*. In December, the *Greek Police* identified and neutralized a homemade

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[42] U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports on Terrorism 2019: Greece", https://www.state.gov/reports/country-reports-on-terrorism-2019/greece/, (7 April 2024).
[43] *Ibid*.

explosive device placed near a police station and a university campus in central Athens. Authorities noted the absence of the usual warning message sent by local groups and identified the device, referred to as a "nail bomb", as intended to kill or maim. However, no organization claimed responsibility for the device.[44]

In the context of combating the financing of terrorism, the establishment of a solid legal and institutional framework aligned with international and European standards is of paramount importance. Greece has taken notable steps in this direction by transposing key EU directives into its national legal system and aligning itself with global anti-money laundering and counter-terrorism financing (AML/CFT) mechanisms. As highlighted by Tsakonas and Karatrantos, "Greece has transposed the relevant EU Directives […] into its national legal framework," and was classified under the Regular Follow-Up category by the *Financial Action Task Force (FATF)*.[45] Due to its formal compliance and institutional presence. However, despite these legislative efforts, Greece has not made sufficient progress in implementing these standards effectively. The gap between legal alignment and practical application remains significant, indicating the need for more concrete policy actions and stronger enforcement mechanisms to meet the evolving challenges of terrorism financing.

As a member state of the *European Union*, Greece has transposed the relevant EU Directives into its national legal framework (namely, the 4th AMLD/Directive 2015/849, the 5th AMLD/Directive 2018/843, and Article 3 of Directive 2019/2177). The foundation of Greece's current institutional framework is Law No. 4557/2018 (Official Gazette A' 139), as amended primarily by Law No. 4734/2020 (Official Gazette A' 196) and Law No. 4816/2021, which incorporates Directive 2018/1673.[46]

Law 4557/2018 transposed into Greek legislation Directive 2015/849 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 May 2015 "on the prevention of the use of the financial system for the purposes of money laundering or terrorist financing", along with the partial incorporation of the amending Directive 2018/843. Law 4734/2020 achieved the full transposition

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[44] U.S. Department of State, *op.cit.*

[45] Tsakonas and Karatrantos, *op.cit.*, 18.

[46] Combating Money Laundering from Criminal Activities, Hellenic Republic Ministry of National Economy and Finance, https://minfin.gov.gr/oikonomiki-politiki/katapolemisi-nomimopoiisis-esodon-apo-egklimatikes-drastiriotites/, (12 May 2025).

into Greek law of: a) Directive 2018/843 of the European Parliament and the Council of 30 May 2018, amending Directive 2015/849 on the prevention of the use of the financial system for money laundering or terrorist financing, as well as Directives 2009/138/EC and 2013/36/EU, and b) Article 3 of Directive 2019/2177 of the European Parliament and Council of 18 December 2019, which amends Directive 2009/138/EC on the taking-up and pursuit of the business of Insurance and Reinsurance (Solvency II), Directive 2014/65/EU on markets in financial instruments, and Directive 2015/849 on the prevention of the use of the financial system for the purposes of money laundering or terrorist financing. Furthermore, Law 4816/2021 incorporated into the Greek legal order Directive 2018/1673 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2018 on combating money laundering by criminal law, accelerating the administration of justice, and other urgent provisions.[47]

In aligning itself with international standards and recommendations, Greece maintains a strong and consistent presence as a member of the *Financial Action Task Force (FATF)*. In 2019, Greece was evaluated by *FATF* and classified in the first-tier category of countries under Regular Follow-Up, indicating a high level of compliance and an effective system for the prevention and suppression of money laundering and terrorist financing.

Counter-terrorism strategies in Greece have been shaped over time through various regulations and institutional structures. Recently, a decree signed by Greek President Sakellaropoulou on September 23 aimed to establish the Passenger Information Unit (PIU) as the fifth department of the *Greek Police's* intelligence division.[48] This decision can be considered a step towards strengthening the role of the Criminal Justice System (CJS) in counter-terrorism in Greece.

In September, three individuals alleged to be members of Greece's left-wing terrorist group *Revolutionary People's Struggle (ELA)* were arrested by authorities in Athens. The *ELA* is known for attacks on the Israeli Embassy in 2014, a Eurobank branch in 2017, and the *Athens Court of Appeal*. The police found 10 kilograms of gelatin, detonators, and raw materials used for making explosives in a depot belonging to one of the suspects, who is believed to be associated with the *ELA*.[49]

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[47] Hellenic Republic Ministry of National Economy and Finance, *op.cit.*

[48] U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports on Terrorism 2020: Greece", https://www.state.gov/reports/country-reports-on-terrorism-2020/greece/, (7 April 2024).

[49] U.S. Department of State, *op.cit.*, 2020.

The establishment of the Passenger Information Unit (PIU) is a significant step in counter-terrorism. This unit is expected to use passenger name records and advanced passenger information to screen airline passengers in compliance with international standards. In this way, it aims to enhance intelligence gathering and analysis capabilities in counter-terrorism and identify potential threats. The PIU is planned to start receiving airline data in 2021.[50]

However, Greece has some shortcomings in counter-terrorism. Specifically, the focus on specific locations like *the PKK (Kurdistan Workers' Party) terrorist organization's* Lavrion camp in Greece highlights weaknesses in the country's counter-terrorism strategies. This camp is used as a base for terrorists to receive training and continue their activities. This situation indicates that Greece is not effectively operating in counter-terrorism and needs to take stronger measures against terrorist groups.

The international dimensions of terrorism in Greece cannot be overlooked. During the Cold War, terrorist organizations were used as instruments in the conflicts between the Western and Eastern Blocs, and leftist terrorist groups in Greece collaborated with Palestinian and Armenian terrorist organizations. Notably, collaborations were established between Greek groups and organizations such as *ASALA (Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia)* and *the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO),* with these organizations supporting each other's operations. Additionally, Greece has been a factor in straining its relations with Türkiye by providing logistical and financial support to *the PKK* terrorist organization.[51]

According to former Greek Minister of Foreign Affairs Theodoros Pangalos, during the 1990s, Greece provided covert financial support, including postgraduate scholarships, to young Kurds fleeing from Türkiye to Western Europe. Additionally, a policy was initiated to offer medical

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[50] David Whitetaker, *Terrorists and Terrorism*, Routledge, London 2006, p. 136.
[51] Nagihan Taslı, "The PKK Dominance in Lavrio Camp and the Instrumentalization of Refugeeism by the PKK", *Diplomacy and Strategy Journal*, Vol. 4, No. 2, 2023, p. 230-258; Presidency of the Republic of Türkiye, "Our Expectation from Greece is That It Does Not Become a Safe Haven for Members of Terrorist Organizations Such as FETO, PKK, and DHKP/C", 5 February 2019, https://www.tccb.gov.tr/haberler/410/101848/-yunanistan-dan-beklentimiz-feto-pkk-dhkp-c-gibi-teror-orgutu-mensuplarinin-sigindigi-guvenli-bir-ulke-h-line-gelmemesidir-, (18 May 2024).

treatment in Greek hospitals for Kurds injured in armed conflicts. The establishment of a rehabilitation institute for Kurdish individuals who had been subjected to severe torture in Turkish prisons was also considered. This process, Pangalos notes, significantly influenced his perception of the Kurdish movement. Nevertheless, he maintained his stance of not recognizing Abdullah Öcalan- the leader of the armed struggle- as a legitimate political actor, despite Öcalan's undeniable popularity among the Kurdish population.[52]

In conclusion, while some measures taken by Greece through the Criminal Justice System in counter-terrorism can be considered positive steps, the country needs to adopt a more effective and determined stance against the presence of terrorist organizations like the *PKK*. This requires adopting an approach in line with international standards in counter-terrorism and developing effective strategies to prevent terrorist activities.

3. The Transformation of Counter-Terrorism Policies in Greece After 1974 and Recommendations

The New Democracy governments sought to further strengthen relations with the Arab world for both economic and diplomatic reasons, particularly in support of Cyprus. During the period from 1974 to 1981, the Greek governments supported the Egypt-Israel peace talks and the Camp David Accords. However, despite endorsing United Nations resolutions in favor of the Palestinian people, they avoided officially recognizing the *Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO)*. This stance led to dissatisfaction from the Palestinian side, with Farouk al-Kaddoumi, a representative of the organization, characterizing the Greek position as hostile and conveying this message to Arab capitals. This approach, a result of the divergences in the policies of Arab states and Greece's preference to focus on bilateral relations, effectively shielded Greece from involvement in intra-Arab conflicts and potential American discontent. Nonetheless, contrary to Greece's general stance towards Arab countries, Greek policy tended to view the Arab world as a unified entity, particularly concerning the Cyprus issue.[53] During this period, compared to the dictatorship era, there was no significant increase in terrorist activities from Arab organizations despite the support for the Israel-

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[52] Pangalos, *op.cit.*, 59.
[53] Sotiris Roussos, "Greek Policy in the Middle East: Between 'Operational Mindset', 'Domestic Policy' and New Challenges", in Konstantinos Arvanitopoulos and Marilena Koppa (eds), *30 Years of Greek Foreign Policy*, Livanis, Athens 2005, p. 80-86.

Egypt agreement. However, on November 19, 1977, Palestinian students attacked the Egyptian Embassy in Athens, resulting in 14 injuries and 60 arrests.[54]

In general, the shift away from Cold War perspectives and the implementation of a more comprehensive policy in the Balkans and the Eastern Mediterranean, according to Likourgos Korkovélas, aimed to improve the country's international image and highlight the advantages Greece could offer to the Community as a bridge to the Arab world. Both the promotion of diplomatic benefits and the effort to manage Greek-Turkish relations through negotiation were intended to allay concerns at the Community and member state levels that Greece's accession would be accompanied by the inheritance of Athens' external problems.[55]

In this context, it is crucial to understand how Greece's policy towards Türkiye and the rise of anti-Turkish sentiments influenced the development of terrorism within the country. While Greece sought to address diplomatic concerns and improve relations with the Arab world, the strained relationship with Türkiye contributed to a growing anti-Turkish rhetoric that fueled terrorism. Radical leftist and nationalist groups leveraged these tensions, using terrorism as a means to advance their ideological agendas and express opposition to Turkish influence. The Greek government's approach to combating terrorism during this period included a combination of domestic and international strategies. Domestically, Greece intensified its efforts to address the radical groups responsible for terrorist acts. The state focused on strengthening its security measures, enhancing intelligence capabilities, and cooperating with international partners to dismantle terrorist networks. Despite these efforts, the persistence of anti-Turkish sentiments and the underlying political tensions continued to pose significant challenges to effective counterterrorism strategies.

Internationally, Greece worked to mitigate the impact of terrorism on its foreign relations by engaging in diplomatic initiatives and seeking support from other nations. The government aimed to portray itself as a reliable partner in the fight against terrorism, emphasizing its role in regional stability and security. However, the ongoing anti-Turkish sentiment and the complex

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[54] *Kathimerini*, 20 November 1977, (12 April 2024).
[55] Lykourgos Kourkouvelas, "Détente as a Strategy: Greece and the Communist World 1974-1979", *The International History Review*, Vol. 35, No. 5, 2013, p. 1052-1067.

dynamics of Greek-Turkish relations continued to influence the effectiveness of these counterterrorism efforts, highlighting the need for a nuanced and coordinated approach to address both domestic and regional challenges.

Since the 1970s, European countries have adapted their legislations to address the observed rise in terrorism caused by both domestic (left-wing and right-wing) and international terrorist organizations. In contrast, in Greece, the relevant legislation adopted by the New Democracy government in 1978 was abolished by the new government in 1983.[56]

Recommendations

In their comprehensive study on the termination of terrorist groups, RAND scholars Jones and Libicki (2008) analyzed 648 groups worldwide that employed terror tactics from 1968 to 2006.[57] They found that 41% of these groups either disappeared, dissolved, were destroyed by external forces, or integrated into the political mainstream. Political settlements contributed to the end of another 40% of these groups, while police action was responsible for ending 40% as well. Only 10% of the groups, and only after transforming into entities other than terror organizations, achieved what could be considered a form of victory. Military action was effective in terminating 7% of the groups. The study advocates for counterterrorism strategies that prioritize policing and intelligence gathering over a predominantly military approach, suggesting that effective counterterrorism relies more on these methods than on broad military campaigns.[58]

The insights from the *RAND* study underscore the critical role of intelligence and diplomacy in combating terrorism. Intelligence gathering is paramount in identifying and dismantling terrorist networks before they can execute their plans. Effective intelligence operations provide crucial information on the locations, capabilities, and intentions of terrorist groups, allowing for targeted interventions that can preempt attacks and disrupt operations.[59]

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[56] Van Coufoudakis, "Greek Foreign Policy since 1974: Quest for Independence", *Journal of Modern Greek Studies*, Vol. 6, No. 1, 1988, p. 55-79.

[57] Seth G. Jones and Martin C. Libicki, *How Terrorist Groups End: Lessons for Countering al Qa'ida*, RAND Corporation, Research Report, 3 August 2008.

[58] George M. Clifford, "Just Counterterrorism", *Critical Studies on Terrorism*, Vol. 10, No. 1, 2017, p. 67-92.

[59] *Ibid*., 70.

This stance has limited Greece's effectiveness in combating terrorism and weakened its role in the international community's efforts against terrorism. Notably, the presence of international terrorist organizations (such as *FETO, PKK/PYD*) operating in Greece and the increasing threat of cross-border terrorism should prompt the Greek government to take more effective measures.

For Greece to be more effective in combating terrorism, it needs to adopt an approach based on international cooperation. Since international terrorism is a cross-border threat, Greece should act in collaboration with the international community rather than in isolation. In this context, Greece should align its counter-terrorism efforts with international norms and standards and work closely with international organizations, neighboring countries, and other relevant actors. This could enhance Greece's effectiveness in combating terrorism and help it play a stronger role in the global fight against terrorism.

Greece's current approach to counter-terrorism needs to be updated to address the international terrorism threat adequately. This involves strengthening Greece's counter-terrorism strategy in line with international standards and best practices. Additionally, more effort should be devoted to areas such as international cooperation, intelligence sharing, and border security, and closer collaboration with regional and international actors should be established. This way, Greece can play a more effective role in combating terrorism and better contribute to the international community's collective efforts against terrorism.

In addition to this framework, Greece has violated international agreements by not extraditing terrorists who fled to Greece following the July 15 coup attempt in Türkiye. Given that both countries are *NATO* members and neighbors, Greece's position in combating terrorism is significant. In this regard, it may be beneficial for Greece to base its counter-terrorism strategy on Audrey Kurth Cronin's model. In her book *"How Terrorism Ends"*, Cronin proposes six sub-headings that could shape Greece's counter-terrorism strategy: the elimination of the leader, cooperation/diplomacy, successful operations, failure, pressure, and reorientation.[60] Bu The

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[60] Audrey Kurth Cronin, *How Terrorism Ends: Understanding Decline and Demise of Terrorist Campaigns*, Princeton University Press, Princeton and Oxford 2009, p. 3-4.

cooperation/diplomacy approach, as suggested by Cronin, could be an appropriate strategy for Greece to adopt in combating terrorism. According to Cronin, this approach can help prevent the global spread of regional terrorist organizations. Implementing this model could also provide a lasting solution to the migration issue flowing into Europe.

The construction of a fence on the Evros land border by Greece in 2012 is linked to the securitization of migration at a national level. Migration has been framed as a security issue in Greece, particularly with the increased influx of migrants from North Africa, the Middle East, and South Asia via the Aegean Sea over the past decade. National migration policies and border control have been integrated and cooperated with EU-level regulations in Greece. The construction of the fence also aims to legitimize the securitization of migration.

Since 2016, studies, policies, and political decisions on migration and immigration, along with securitization speech acts, have drawn public attention in Greece, turning migration into a security issue by political actors. This securitization has instilled fears among the Greek public. The primary fear expressed by local communities is the potential decline in tourism. The insecurity brought about by migration has led to changes in Greece's national migration and integration policies. Migration has been perceived as a fundamental element of security in social, economic, political, and behavioral contexts.

During this period, the role and influence of public opinion on Greece's changing security perceptions have increased. Due to rising internal (brain drain) and external (incoming migrants) migration, Greece's security discourse has been shaped to include public opinion and the media. At this point, official Greek national strategies are now formulated by Greek governments to include broad economic and domestic political issues in addition to 'securitization' and 'Europeanization' policies. In this environment, in addition to ensuring the country's migration and security defenses, issues such as "joint European border defense and crisis (conflict) management, combating asymmetric threats such as uncontrolled movements of large migrant populations and terrorism, organized crime, and overcoming socio-economic disparities" have begun to be included in Greece's security concepts during this period, along with the COVID-19 pandemic.

Conclusion

The concept of terrorism in Greece has been profoundly influenced by the country's historical, political, and social dynamics. Notably, terrorism in Greece has shown a leftist inclination and is distinct in that it is not based on religious, ethnic, or territorial disputes. The internal and external political transformations in Greece's history have shaped the emergence and activities of terrorist organizations. These organizations have typically carried out actions against the existing political order, foreign states, and capitalist systems, drawing their ideological foundation from leftist views.

Historically, terrorism in Greece has been significantly marked by organizations such as the *17 November Terrorist Organization* and *ELA*. These groups have threatened the country's security for many years, orchestrated numerous attacks, and caused the loss of many lives. However, the Greek government and security forces have resolutely combated these terrorist organizations and achieved substantial successes.

This study provides a foundation for understanding the complexity and origins of terrorism in Greece. Future research is expected to examine the evolution of terrorism in this country in greater detail and to contribute to the further development of counter-terrorism strategies.

The 17 November Terrorist Organization and *ELA* have occupied an important place in Greece's modern history. These organizations have threatened the country's security for many years, carried out numerous bloody attacks, and disrupted public order. Specifically, *the 17 November Terrorist Organization* has become a symbol of terrorism in Greece and caused the loss of many lives.

ELA, on the other hand, is a less known but still significant terrorist organization. *ELA* was particularly active in the 1970s and carried out bloody actions such as the assassination of Turkish diplomats. Both organizations were ideologically based on leftist views and carried out attacks against the Greek government, American opposition, and Turkish presence.

Today, although Greece has made significant progress in combating terrorism, it is still under the threat of terrorist organizations. The activities of these groups reflect the deep-rooted problems in the country's political and social structure. Therefore, developing more effective strategies to combat

terrorism and understanding the origins of terrorist organizations are of vital importance for Greece's security and stability.

Within the internal dynamics of Greek security forces, the concern and closeness felt towards the actions of *the 17 November Terrorist Organization* have played an important role in shaping counter-terrorism strategies and security policies. Especially during the periods when the organization was active, there was a serious process of discussion and evaluation within various elements of the security forces about how to respond to the organization's activities and what approach to take.

During these periods, the effectiveness of counter-terrorism strategies was closely linked to the internal dynamics of the security forces, political will, and public perception. During times of intense activity by the organization, there was a sensitivity and determination observed among certain elements within the security forces, particularly intelligence units and special forces, who played a leading role in the fight against the organization.

However, it should also be considered that not all segments within the security forces held the same views and priorities regarding counter-terrorism strategies and measures against the organization. Therefore, the concern or warmth felt towards the terrorist organization within the internal dynamics of the security forces can vary depending on the period and various factors. This variability is an important factor to consider in the determination and implementation of counter-terrorism strategies.

In the context of Greek-Turkish cooperation, intelligence sharing between the two nations could enhance their ability to counteract common terrorist threats. Despite historical tensions, both countries have a vested interest in improving their intelligence cooperation to address mutual security challenges. For instance, coordinated intelligence efforts could help in tracking and neutralizing groups that operate across borders, such as *the PKK*, which poses a threat to both countries.

Diplomacy is a crucial instrument in combating modern terrorism, which has increasingly transcended national borders. Haris Pesto[61] emphasizes that effective diplomacy is central to unifying anti-terrorism

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[61] Haris Pesto, "The Role of Diplomacy in the Fight Against Terrorism", *Connections*, Vol. 10, No. 1, 2010, p. 66.

measures into a cohesive strategy. As terrorism poses global threats, skilled diplomatic efforts can consolidate international anti-terrorism actions and address conflicts through public dialogue and confidential negotiations. By fostering change through non-violent means, diplomacy can weaken the influence of terrorist organizations and prevent their involvement in mass movements that seek political and social change. Pesto also highlights the role of partial amnesty for certain terrorist group members, which can further discredit more violent factions, and the use of diplomatic pressure on states that support terrorism, including measures such as withdrawing diplomatic staff or severing diplomatic ties.[62]

Within *NATO*, a focus on intelligence and diplomacy is equally important. *NATO's* counterterrorism strategies benefit from the collective intelligence capabilities and diplomatic resources of its member states. By enhancing intelligence-sharing mechanisms and pursuing diplomatic solutions to regional conflicts, *NATO* can better address the transnational nature of terrorism and support member states in their efforts to combat extremist threats effectively.[63]

The study also underscores the importance of addressing historical grievances and underlying conflicts through diplomatic channels. While terrorism may offer short-term tactical advantages, it often complicates efforts to achieve long-term peace and stability. This is particularly evident in the enduring friction between Greece and Türkiye, exacerbated by Greece's support for anti-Turkish groups.

To overcome these challenges and foster regional stability, *NATO* allies such as Greece and Türkiye must adopt a shared vision emphasizing collective security and cooperative solutions. By focusing on mutual security concerns and engaging in transparent, collaborative initiatives, *NATO* members can reduce tensions and build trust. Dialogue, transparency, and joint actions can help bridge historical divides and establish a cohesive framework for addressing shared security challenges.

In summary, this study highlights the necessity of a balanced approach to international relations, prioritizing diplomacy and collective security over unilateral strategies that risk escalating conflicts. For *NATO*

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[62] *Ibid.*, p. 66.
[63] *Ibid.*, p. 67.

allies, adopting a unified vision that addresses historical grievances and contemporary security issues offers a pathway to more effective and harmonious regional relations.

This research has examined the evolution and implications of terrorism in Greece, demonstrating how it has been instrumentalized as both a domestic policy tool and a foreign policy strategy. By exploring the role of groups such as *the November 17 (17N) organization* and Greece's support for anti-Turkish organizations like the *PKK*, the study reveals how terrorism has been used to weaken Türkiye's regional influence. This strategy, rooted in historical grievances and geopolitical rivalries, continues to shape regional security dynamics. Ultimately, the findings call for a reevaluation of counter-terrorism policies, emphasizing the importance of intelligence, diplomacy, and collective action in addressing the complex intersections of terrorism and international relations.

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