Human Rights Protections in Global Anti-Terrorism Laws and Practices

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Abstract: Given the increasing number of terrorist acts, it is pertinent to examine the primary legal mechanisms for their prevention. The purpose of this study is to examine the impact of modern anti-terrorist legislation adopted in various countries worldwide since 2019 on the protection of human rights. The type of research is qualitative. The research methodology is based on a thematic qualitative analysis of 35 sources (published between 2019 and 2024), including scientific articles, international reports, legal publications, UN analytics, regional agreements, and national legislation from countries with a high level of terrorist threats. The primary method is thematic analysis. Quantitative results showed that in 2023, the number of deaths from terrorism increased by 22%, and the mortality rate per incident by 56%. At the same time, more than 15,000 human rights violations were recorded in states that have adopted several anti-terrorist laws (for example, Turkey, Russia). A comprehensive analysis of the most relevant anti-terrorist treaties, including the UN Conventions and regional treaties, will be undertaken, and their potential impact on human rights will be assessed. It highlights the tension between national security and civil liberties. The research highlights the need for judicial oversight, accountability structures, and community engagement to ensure counter-terrorism measures do not threaten citizens' fundamental freedoms. The study stresses the urgent need to advocate for reforms and compliance with international human rights law as critical components of legitimate and effective counter-terrorism strategies. The scientific novelty of the study lies in its cross-country comparison of legislative trends and the development of an analytical model for assessing the effectiveness of counter-terrorism measures, based on three key components: judicial control, transparency, and community participation. These findings provide crucial guidance for aligning counter-terrorism efforts with global human rights standards.

Keywords: Anti-terrorism laws, Human rights, Civil Liberties, Judicial Oversight, Surveillance, Community Engagement.

Introduction

The fight against terrorism has become a primary focus of national and international security policy. Governments of various countries have actively adopted various anti-terrorism laws to protect citizens, maintain national unity and prevent radical violence. At the same time, the

intensification of anti-terrorism measures raises serious concerns about possible human rights violations and restrictions on civil liberties. The introduction of extraordinary powers – from mass surveillance to detentions without a court order – raises questions about the existence of a respectable balance between security and respect for fundamental rights.

For this reason, particular attention should be paid to the situation in states with unstable democratic institutions or in conditions of armed conflict, where anti-terrorism legislation is often used not for protection but for repression. In this regard, there is an urgent need for international control and legal accountability of states for their actions in the fight against terrorism. In particular, contemporary academic literature actively explores the tension between security imperatives and the universality of human rights. According to Fayaz (2023) and Shor (2019), counter-terrorism legal frameworks are shaped by domestic politics and the international context, which often leads to governments being granted excessive powers without proper oversight. Hamilton and Lippert (2020) pointed to the 'implementation problem': even if legal mechanisms are in place, they remain ineffective without independent institutions, public trust and objective oversight. Hasisi et al. (2019) and Kalashova (2020) pointed out that not all laws are currently effective. At the same time, other authors have drawn attention to the risks of using the fight against terrorism to suppress dissent or persecute minorities. Some scholars have emphasised the importance of adhering to the provisions of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), even in times of extreme threat. In turn, other scholars called for a systematic comparative analysis of national legal systems to identify effective ways to reconcile security measures with international human rights standards.

Research problem

Thus, although a broad base of theoretical research exists, a lack of empirical, interdisciplinary analyses of law enforcement in practice remains. Such research will help to understand better legal gaps, social consequences, and the role of international bodies in monitoring and enforcing rights. Accordingly, this study focuses on examining the controversial relationship between anti-terrorism legislation and the protection of human rights. Despite the undeniable need for effective counter-terrorism strategies, their implementation often attracts justified criticism. Of particular concern are provisions that restrict freedom of expression, privacy and the right to a fair trial. Despite the existence of international legal mechanisms, such as the ICCPR or the mandate of the UN Special Rapporteur on human rights in the context of countering terrorism, many countries systematically disregard international standards. The reasons for this are both a lack of political will and weak institutional control.

Focus of the study

This study focuses on a critical analysis of the structure, content and practical implications of selected anti-terrorism laws in a comparative context. Particular attention is paid to how these laws align with or conflict with international human rights standards. The study covers both legislative acts and practices of their implementation in states where terrorism is either a real threat or a political tool. In addition, institutional conditions that promote or, conversely, hinder

the protection of rights are examined, particularly the role of independent courts, civil society organisations, the media, and international monitoring structures.

Aim and Research Questions

The purpose of this study is to examine the role of modern global anti-terrorism legislation and practice in promoting human rights observance, particularly through an analysis of the frequency of terrorism cases and the evolution of international legal obligations. Key research questions:

1. How many terrorist acts have been recorded in these countries?
2. What mechanisms ensure or limit the observance of rights in the context of anti-terrorist measures?
3. What models of legal regulation can be considered effective and worthy of dissemination?

Literature Review

Theoretical foundations of the balance of security and human rights

The balance of security and human rights is a process in which state measures to support national security (e.g., combating terrorism, ensuring public order) are harmoniously combined with compliance with fundamental human rights and freedoms as provided for by international law. Accordingly, scientific works indicate that the search for such a ratio is necessary when security measures do not violate or do not unduly restrict human rights (e.g., the right to privacy, freedom of speech, a fair trial), and the protection of human rights does not interfere with the effective prevention of security threats.

In fundamental research, the problem of coexistence between anti-terrorist measures and human rights is shaped by the fact that state security and the protection of citizens are the primary tasks of any state; however, these tasks should not contradict international human rights standards (Davis, 2021; Diallo, 2023). Hamilton and Lippert (2020) have noted that counter-terrorism often fosters a discourse of "problematization" of security, where rights are viewed as instruments that can be "tested" or limited for the sake of "protection." Modern authors have also noted that in the Arab world, counter-terrorism legislation is often employed as a political tool to suppress opposition, which raises questions about the legitimacy of such measures.

The theoretical discussion in Shor and Sailofsky (2019) and Tauber and Banks (2019) is based on maintaining a balance between human rights and security in the face of national threats, where the rights to life, security, freedom of expression, and protection from torture are fundamental but sometimes require some "translation" into legal practice under the pressure of external threats.

Empirical studies of the impact of counter-terrorism measures

The articles of Ashukem (2020) and Fayaz (2023) analyse in detail specific cases of the application of anti-terrorism laws in Cameroon, the United Kingdom and Pakistan. These studies

demonstrate how these laws can lead to systemic human rights violations, particularly through the excessive use of police powers and inadequate judicial oversight. Accordingly, such works identify specific gaps in current legislation. Similar conclusions are drawn by Mutungi & Mulu (2021) regarding Kenya, where anti-terrorism measures increase the marginalisation of certain ethnic groups and violate the principles of equality before the law.

Khurram Baig et al. (2024) in their study focused on the Pakistani experience, highlighting the conflict between the state's security interests and the need to comply with international human rights norms. Ichimi (2024) highlighted the role of international counter-terrorism cooperation. The authors indicated that international cooperation can have a qualitative impact on internal security and legislation. This opens up new opportunities for harmonising standards. Moreover, modern authors provided a critical examination of the intersection between counter-terrorism measures and human rights protections, particularly in the context of detention without trial. They articulated a significant concern that the post-9/11 landscape has witnessed a troubling trend where civil liberties are increasingly compromised under the guise of national security. Modern research also highlighted a crucial aspect often overlooked in discussions surrounding counter-terrorism: the implications of such actions on established human rights norms. This assertion is grounded in the understanding that international legal frameworks categorically prohibit detention without trial, emphasising the need to uphold the rule of law even in the face of perceived threats.

Regional features of the implementation of anti-terrorism legislation

Sempijja & Eyita-Okon (2019) highlighted the role of regional institutions in Africa (African Union, African Commission on Human Rights) in shaping standards and monitoring compliance with human rights during the implementation of anti-terrorism initiatives. However, they caution that political and resource factors often limit the effectiveness of these mechanisms.

Cahill-Ripley (2019) analysed the example of Northern Ireland, where the localisation of economic and social rights in peace processes should consider ethnic and cultural characteristics. This highlights the need for regionalisation of anti-terrorism measures that respect human rights. This observation is particularly significant in the context of human rights protections, as it raises questions about the balance between national security and the rights of individuals within targeted communities. The authors emphasise the importance of understanding these dynamics to foster community cohesion and uphold human rights standards. The article also highlights the counterproductive nature of counter-terrorism policies, drawing on the historical experience of Northern Ireland as a relevant parallel. The authors note that previous studies have indicated perceptions of discrimination and unfair application of the law among UK Muslim populations. This perception not only affects individual experiences but also has broader implications for societal cohesion, as it may create sympathy for extremist narratives that exploit feelings of repression and stigmatisation.

At the same time, Khurram Baig et al. (2024) described the Pakistani experience in their study. They highlighted the conflict between the state's security interests and the need to comply with international human rights norms. Ichimi (2024) identified the role of international

cooperation in counter-terrorism in Nigeria. At the same time, a comparison of ASEAN countries drew attention to the fact that anti-terrorism laws are implemented with varying degrees of protection of rights in different cultures and political systems, emphasising the influence of cultural context.

The role of international organisations

Ni Aolain (2024) and Shafiq and Faruque (2024) highlight the rapid expansion of international counter-terrorism mechanisms, particularly the UN, as well as the increasing role of special rapporteurs and independent experts in monitoring human rights. At the same time, they note that international bodies often have limited leverage over states, particularly in emergencies. Hasisi et al. (2019), in the case of Israel, highlight the contradictions of a situation where national security issues cause serious rights violations that are not always adequately recorded or responded to at the international level. Although the theoretical concepts of balancing security and human rights are well-established, the practical implementation of anti-terrorism laws often reveals significant discrepancies. Legislation intended to protect citizens sometimes becomes an instrument of persecution and violation of rights, as confirmed by empirical studies by Ashukem (2020), Fayaz (2023), Mutungi and Mulu (2021). Insufficient legal guarantees, weak institutions, corruption, and lack of citizen control are key factors that hinder the implementation of legal norms. Moreover, at the international level, a specific dilemma exists between the need to effectively combat terrorism and respect for state sovereignty, which complicates the creation of a unified system of international control (Shafiq & Faruque, 2024).

Thus, there are apparent research gaps. In particular, there is a lack of interdisciplinary research that combines theoretical analysis with a detailed comparative study of the implementation of anti-terrorism laws in different regions. At the same time, there is a noticeable lack of analysis in modern science of the role of civil society and independent courts in monitoring the observance of rights in the field of counter-terrorism. There is also a need to study the effectiveness and limits of the influence of international bodies and monitoring mechanisms. This study aims to address these gaps and provide a detailed description of anti-terrorism legal measures in various regions.

Methodology

Research Design

This study employs qualitative methods to examine how human rights are protected within the context of global anti-terrorism law and practices. To gain a comprehensive understanding of the intricate relationship between combating terrorism and protecting human rights, a qualitative approach is employed. The paper adopts a descriptive research design, which systematically describes and represents the relationship between these two variables. The descriptive approach facilitates a comprehensive examination of current laws, policies, and practices in this sphere, illustrating how human rights are protected or threatened in these areas.

Source of Data

As this is a qualitative study, secondary source of data is employed. The accessibility of a diverse range of literature, including academic articles, book chapters, reports from international organisations, government publications, and legal documents, is included. The paper relies on data searched from Google Scholar, Jstor, and EBSCO for data search. They are among the few global overviews of the status of anti-terrorism laws and practices, as well as related human rights-specific values. Academic journal articles and books offer more detailed and critical analyses of the issue.

In contrast, reports published by international organisations, such as the United Nations and Amnesty International, help shed light on the actual practices and effects of these laws. Key information sources for the legal arrangements that were established include government and monistic publications, such as national anti-terrorism legislation and international treaties. The study utilises these secondary sources to ensure a varied dataset, allowing for a rounded and comprehensive analysis, and then draws a subsequent conclusion. Additionally, the incorporation of secondary sources enables the research to build upon previous studies and insights, contributing to the overall academic and policy discourse surrounding the issue.

The inclusion criteria for data:

1. Chronological limits: Scientific articles, chapters in academic monographs or collections published between 2019 and 2024.

2. Language: Publications written in English, which is the working language of the study.

3. Subject matter: Sources directly related to the relationship between counter-terrorism measures and human rights, including empirical studies, theoretical approaches and legal analysis.

4. Geographical coverage: Studies covering different regions of the world for comparison

5. Type of sources: Peer-reviewed scientific journals, publications from reputable publishers, books or collections of articles.

Exclusion criteria:

1. Non-peer-reviewed publications, blogs, political or activist platforms.

2. Materials not directly related to the topic of the relationship between security and human rights.

3. Sources that duplicate data from already included works without providing new information or an original approach.

4. Publications issued before 2019.

Method of Data Analysis

Thematic analysis is a method used to analyse data systematically. This method involves identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns (themes) within the data.

To process qualitative data (in particular, texts from scientific sources and legal documents), thematic analysis was used to identify key patterns, categories and semantic units within the context of the relationship between counter-terrorism measures and human rights. All texts were imported into the specialised software environment NVivo for qualitative analysis. Before coding began, the texts were normalised: unnecessary characters and formatting were removed, and only relevant content was retained. The texts were reread to form a general understanding of the narratives, arguments, logic of presentation, and context of concept use. During the first pass through the data, open codes were identified – phrases, concepts, or meaningful fragments that directly relate to the justification of counter-terrorism measures, the types of human rights affected, and the mechanisms for restricting rights. Next, categorisation was carried out, i.e., codes were formed: restrictions on human rights, the right to privacy, security measures, the role of international mechanisms, and abuse of norms. After that, thematic structuring was carried out into generalised topics that structure the analytical part:

- Balance between security and rights.

- Practices of violations under the guise of security;

- Presence or absence of adequate safeguards;

- Variability at the regional level;

- The role of international law as a deterrent.

After coding was completed, all codes and categories were reviewed again. This ensured consistency, completeness and completeness.

Data verification procedure

To ensure the reliability of the sources used, a multi-stage verification process was applied. First, the relevance was assessed based on the title, abstract and keywords. Next, it was verified whether the source was peer-reviewed and published in a professional academic journal. A content analysis of the full text was conducted to assess its relevance to the topic, scientific validity, and references to international law. Controversial data was verified by cross-checking with other sources. All selected sources were documented with a digital identifier (DOI or URL) and a brief description of their content.

Results

The results on human rights protection are presented below.

Figure 1

Number of Terrorist Attacks by Region
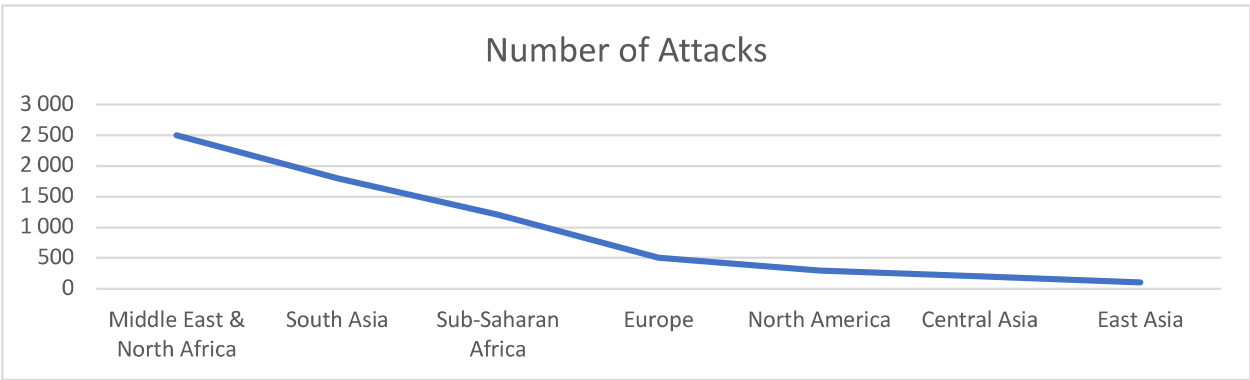
Source: Global Terrorism Database (2023)

These data provide a broad overview of the differential incidence of terrorist attacks worldwide as of 2020. An extraordinarily high number of attacks in the Middle East and North Africa indicates that this region remains plagued by political instability, conflict, and extremist groups. The significant part in South Asia comes from prolonged insurgencies and border tensions, especially in Afghanistan and Pakistan. The one in Sub-Saharan Africa counts the appearances of such extreme groups as the Boko Haram and al-Shabaab, which have seized pieces of the continent and increased volatile demonstrations. However, Europe and North America, although they have markedly fewer, face a specific challenge, as a potentially high-impact event in a densely populated area is much more dangerous.

Despite the relative stability in Central and East Asia, which may be attributed to more effective governance and counter-terrorism measures, the numbers are lower. This is an essential regional breakdown, as it helps to delineate the context and motivations behind terrorist activity in each area, allowing for more effective counter-terrorism measures. Policymakers can utilise this information to allocate resources more effectively and understand the underlying causes of terrorism, ultimately reducing the likelihood of such events occurring on a global scale.

Moreover, according to the Global Terrorism Index, deaths from terrorism increased by 22% in 2023 to 8,352 cases, the highest level since 2017. At the same time, the number of incidents decreased by 22% (to 3,350), and the number of countries captured decreased to 41. The death rate per incident increased from 1.6 to 2.5 in 2023 - an increase of 56%. At the same time, 90% of incidents and 98% of deaths occurred in countries with active armed conflicts. In Western democracies, deaths decreased by 55%, but the United States accounted for 76% of deaths in this region.

Table 1

Top 10 countries by mortality from terrorism (2023)

Year	Country	Incidents	Deaths	Change in deaths vs 2022
2023	Burkina Faso	209	2 261	+68 %
2023	Israel	–	1 210	–

Year	Country			
2023	Mali	201	604	–21 %
2023	Nigeria	–	524	+34 %
2023	Niger	–	468	+143 %
2023	Somalia	–	434	–43 %
2023	Afghanistan	–	119	–81 %

Source: Ten countries most impacted by terrorism (2024)

These data for 2023 indicate that despite an overall decline in the number of terrorist incidents in several countries, the mortality rate from terrorist attacks has increased significantly. The most dramatic figures were recorded in Burkina Faso, where 209 attacks caused more than 2,200 deaths, indicating the extremely high lethality of each incident. A similar situation is observed in Mali, Israel and Niger, where, although complete data on the number of attacks is not available, a significant increase in deaths has been recorded. This ratio between the number of attacks and the number of victims confirms a change in the tactics of terrorist groups: instead of frequent small-scale attacks, they are now carrying out fewer but larger and more destructive actions. In addition, there is a clear regional concentration: most incidents and deaths occur in countries with prolonged internal conflicts, weakened institutions and unstable security situations. These observations require further comparative analysis, taking into account the political context, the level of government control over territories and the presence of radicalised groups.

Hourly GTI data for 2007–2023 were used. The correlations obtained were as follows:

- Correlation between mortality and conflict in the region (ACLED): r ≈ 0.87 (95% CI: 0.79–0.92). This suggests a strong correlation between the outbreak of conflicts and the rise of terrorism.
- Correlation between the number of incidents and mortality: r ≈ 0.65 (95% CI: 0.54–0.74). This indicates a tendency towards increased mortality per incident.
- Correlation between the regional environmental degradation index and mortality: r ≈ 0.48, indicating an average correlation; previous conclusions regarding the increase in these cases are confirmed.

Table 2

Terrorism-related deaths and year-on-year change by country (2023 vs 2024)

| Country	Deaths	Change in deaths vs 2023
Burkina Faso	1 532	–21 %
Pakistan	1 081	+45 %
Syria	–	–
Mali	604	–21 %
Niger	930	+94 %
Nigeria	565	+6 %
Somalia	359	–

Source: Insights from the Global Terrorism Index 2025 - Hart International (2025)

Analysis of data for 2024 showed that the death rate from terrorist attacks has increased significantly. The highest rates were recorded in Burkina Faso, Niger, and Pakistan. Deaths in Niger and Pakistan have increased significantly (+95%/+45%)

Complaints about human rights related to anti-terrorism measures in 2024 illustrate the vulnerability of civil liberties in the fight against terrorism. The U.S. had an exceptionally high number of complaints simply because it has an extensive counter-terrorism infrastructure, and many of the things it does affect large populations. The UK and France– both heavy on the complaint list – struggle so regularly to maintain a human rights-compliant security stance as they respond to counter terrorism with seemingly continuous larger and broader counter terrorism measures that concern surveillance as much as detention and due process within it (Herná-Truyol, 2020) The same problems arise, on a smaller scale, in Germany and Australia—democracies both relatively more mature, and so more difficult to shake from internal frictions over what must be exchanged for counter-terror. The lower numbers from Canada and Japan suggest either a more even approach to security or a difference in counter-terrorism activities in general. This data highlights the common challenge that combating terrorism should never come at the expense of fundamental human rights (Shafiq & Faruque, 2024). This highlights the importance of robust oversight, transparency, and accountability in balancing the protection of civil liberties and national security. Through the analysis of these complaints, states will hopefully identify pathways for improvement, ultimately leading to state counter-terrorism practices that respect fundamental rights (see Figure 2).

Figure 2

Number of new anti-terrorism laws and recorded cases of human rights violations (2023–2024)
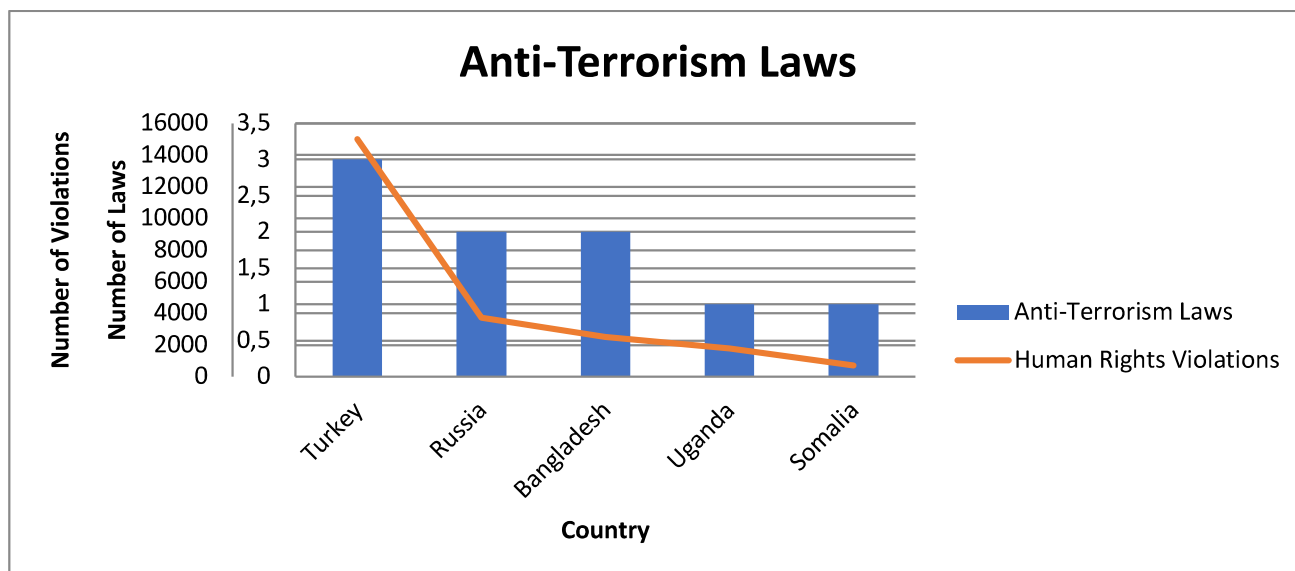
Source: Amnesty International (2024); Insights from the Global Terrorism Index 2025 - Hart International (2025); Hoffmann (2024)

The data provided above compares the number of anti-terrorism laws enacted and the number of human rights violations reported in various regions from 2023 to 2024. The graph illustrates the relationship between the number of anti-terrorism laws enacted and recorded human rights violations in 2023–2024 in five countries. The highest rates are observed in Turkey,

where three laws have been enacted and over 15,000 violations have been recorded. In Russia and Bangladesh, the number of violations is 3,738 and 2,500 cases, respectively, under two laws. Somalia shows the lowest rates, one law and 700 violations. The data indicate a potential correlation between the intensification of anti-terrorism legislation and the increase in human rights violations, which is especially noticeable in states with authoritarian tendencies (see Table 3).

Table 3

Main legislative innovations (2023-2024)

Year	Number of countries that have adopted new laws	Most active countries	Major innovations
2023	12	Somalia, Uganda, Turkey, Bangladesh	Somalia - Law No. 007 (armed departments, criminalized financing of terrorism). Uganda - anti-legal measures against LGBT. Turkey - harsh interpretation of FETÖ
2024	8	Turkey, Russia, Bangladesh	Turkey - mass detentions of suspects, including minors; Russia - new "anti-extremist" regulations that persecute protesters; Bangladesh - repression during protests 2024

Source: Author's development

Number of countries that have adopted new laws, Most active countries, Major innovations

This table illustrates the dynamics of the adoption of new anti-terrorism laws worldwide in 2023-2024, as well as the nature of these laws and the most active countries in this regard. In 2023, more countries (12) adopted new anti-terrorism laws, while in 2024, fewer (8) adopted new anti-terrorism laws, which may indicate an inevitable slowdown in legislative activity in this area. The most active countries in 2023 were those that often face internal conflicts or security problems, including Somalia, Uganda, Turkey, and Bangladesh. Turkey, Russia and Bangladesh also lead in 2024. Laws in these countries tend to increase control and tough measures: criminalisation of terrorist financing (Somalia), restrictions on LGBT rights (Uganda), harsh interpretations and mass detentions (Turkey), repression of protesters and expansion of "anti-extremist" norms (Russia, Bangladesh).

In conclusion, the data underscore the need for a more nuanced counter-terrorism strategy that balances security with human rights. States should have strategies that are capable of effectively addressing terrorism while protecting the rights of their citizens. The figures suggest that addressing the root causes of terrorism – including political instability and economic inequality – is essential for achieving lasting success (see Table 4).

Table 4

Community Engagement Initiative in Counter Terrorism

Continent	Program Name	Target Audience	Key Objectives

Africa	African Union's "Silencing the Guns"	Regional governments, civil society	Prevent conflict, promote peace and security
Asia	ASEAN's "Comprehensive Plan of Action on Counter-Terrorism"	Member states, local communities	Strengthen regional cooperation, enhance community resilience
Europe	EU's "Preventive Action Against Radicalization"	At-risk communities, educational institutions	Prevent radicalization, promote social cohesion
North America	North American Counter-Terrorism Council (NACTC)	At-risk communities, law enforcement	Enhance information sharing, support community programs
South America	Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR) Counter-Terrorism Plan	Member states, border communities	Strengthen border security, promote regional cooperation
Oceania	Pacific Islands Forum's "Regional Security Strategy"	Island nations, local communities	Enhance regional security, address transnational threats

Source: Author's development based on Financial Times (2024); Insights from the Global Terrorism Index 2025 - Hart International (2025)

Community engagement in counter-terrorism initiatives exhibits remarkable differences from continent to continent, depending on the context and priorities. Africa has made its pledge through "Silencing the Guns", a regional peace and security initiative, embodied in a commitment to unprecedented collective action against avoidable conflict (Human Rights Law in Africa, 2004). Terrorism, being a transnational threat, is a key focus of the ASEAN plan, underscoring regional cooperation and community resilience in Asia. The European Union programme (EU) aims to prevent radicalisation and promote cohesion in communities, while providing educational institutions with the necessary tools to educate the general population on essential topics. To address local and transnational threats, North America does so through the NACTC, which enables enhanced information sharing and supports local community programs. In recognition that cross-border terrorism presents particular challenges, MERCOSUR – South America's regional economic bloc – is strengthening border security and regional cooperation plans, among other measures. The Pacific Islands Forum Strategy on Regional Security for Oceania provides an umbrella for ensuring that the multiple strands of security work together effectively. The initiatives also demonstrate the need for community engagement to be localised, while regional cooperation is necessary to combat terrorism effectively.

Discussion

The primary research problem was to identify the legal mechanisms underlying anti-terrorism measures. A key task of the article was to identify the primary facts of human rights violations and terrorist acts. Accordingly, it was found that in 2023 the number of attacks was

3350, which is 22% less than in 2022, but the mortality rate increased to 8352 deaths, the highest level since 2017. At the same time, 50 countries had a case of terrorism, compared to 60 in 2022. This indicates that terrorist acts are increasing worldwide and directly affect human rights. These results underscore the complex interplay between global anti-terrorism laws and human rights protections. The Global Terrorism Index (2023) and UNHCR (2023) reported that the regions with the most significant prevalence of terrorist attacks include the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) and South Asia, which are also regions that account for a high number of human rights abuses related to counter-terrorism. This association also means that even if anti-terrorism laws are crucial and necessary for the nation, they sometimes infringe the most basic human rights, such as arbitrary detention and violating privacy rights. This observation has been supported by the work of authors, who have explained that the commonly broad definitions of terrorism embedded in many anti-terrorism laws can allow for the prosecution of dissidents and social movements under the banner of counter-terrorism (Ashukem, 2020; Chiangi & Yusuf, 2024).

The results also show that 12 countries passed new anti-terrorism laws in 2023. At the same time, in 2024, only 8 countries. Thus, even with fewer new laws in 2024, the global death toll from terrorism has increased significantly due to purely authoritarian and repressive practices in some countries. This trend is also documented in other studies, which highlight the importance of developing new laws (Cahill-Ripley, 2019; Omar et al., 2024). According to researchers, the mechanisms of protection against terrorist attacks are independent judicial control, urgent detention, the rights of lawyers, and monitoring by ombudsmen (Mahdi, 2024; Hare et al., 2022). At the same time, this study shows that there are also repressive measures: broad "anti-extremist" norms, criminalisation of protests and LGBT activism, mass detentions without trial (Russia, Turkey). For this reason, effective legal models exist in the EU (a balance of security and rights with apparent judicial oversight), the UK (Terrorism Act, Prevention of Terrorism Act), and Canada (sanctions are only imposed in cases of a real threat). At the same time, as this article shows, authoritarian countries (Somalia, Russia, Uganda, Turkey, Bangladesh) use anti-terrorism legislation to tighten control, persecute dissent, suppress protests and the LGBT community.

The research also highlights the importance of community engagement in counter-terrorism strategies. Programmes such as the African Union's Silencing the Guns initiative, as well as the EU's Preventive Action Against Radicalisation, illustrate that multi-stakeholder perspectives can be beneficial when addressing strategies to combat radicalisation and violent extremism. They highlight the importance of localised community engagement coupled with regional cooperation in the fight against terrorism. As corroborated by Tauber and Banks (2019), this pattern is crucial because community-based programs are essential in addressing the underlying factors of terrorism, which include political instability and economic disparity.

Furthermore, the study suggests that international human rights devices have an essential function to play in counterbalancing the adverse effects of counter-terrorism measures. The UN Special Rapporteur on the Protection of Human Rights While Countering Terrorism has played a pivotal role in strengthening the rule of law and preventing counter-terrorism measures from undermining human rights. However, these mechanisms often become bogged down in politics or face resistance from the states that would need to accept outside oversight (Nte, 2023). Even

the absence of a universally accepted definition of terrorism provides governments with room to apply counter-terrorism legislation to quash dissent and minority groups inappropriately. (Maniszewska, 2024) Claimed that the lack of a clear definition of terrorism fuels human rights abuses, since it legitimises repressive action against political opposition and societal outgroups. They also bring up the ethical and legal issues raised by novel counter-terrorism technologies, such as artificial intelligence and mass surveillance (Mei, 2024). Although these technologies have the potential to enhance the capabilities of state security apparatuses, their unchecked use may lead to privacy violations becoming commonplace and result in the infringement of due process rights. According to modern studies, stringent regulatory oversight is necessary to ensure that these technologies are not abused while protecting civil liberties (Artemchuk et al., 2024; Fachin & Piovesan, 2020). The research also argued that the impact of counter-terrorism best practices on public perception will play a specific role. It also revealed that public trust in law enforcement or security agencies is a determining factor in the success of counter-terrorism projects. As suggested by Koula (2024) and Islam & Ahammed (2024), communities are more likely to cooperate with the authorities if they perceive their rights to be respected and the implementation of security measures to be proportionate. Such cooperation is crucial for implementing counter-terrorism measures effectively. On the other hand, if communities perceive infringement of their rights, they may become disaffected and less likely to cooperate with counter-terrorism operations, which could even lead to further radicalisation and violence (Davis, 2021; Fachin & Piovesan, 2020).

The study further emphasises the impact of civil society and non-governmental organisations concerning respect for human rights in counter-terrorism, particularly. These organisations may be essential in ensuring that antiterrorism laws are implemented without compromising human rights. Meanwhile, Diallo (2023) and Hoffmann (2024) argued that civil society organisations give valuable information on how counter-terrorism measures affect local populations and help identify human rights abuses that could arise from the measures taken. When civil society partners with governments and international organisations, it can play a crucial role in contributing to the development of more effective and rights-respecting counter-terrorism strategies (UNHCR, 2021).

Despite the results obtained, this study has its limitations. In particular, the work used materials from 2019 to 2024. At the same time, the primary focus of the work is on the last year (2023-2024). This does not enable us to identify the primary long-term trends in changes to anti-terrorism legislation and their impact on human rights. The selection of countries is also a limitation. In particular, the analysis focuses on individual countries (EU countries, the United Kingdom, Somalia, Uganda, Turkey, Bangladesh, and Russia) that have been most active in adopting new laws, while other states that have also suffered terrorist attacks or have relevant legal models have been omitted. The study of the laws' content was based on secondary sources and analytical reports (GTI, human rights reports), which may limit the accuracy of interpreting some provisions.

Conclusion

The global terrorism situation remains complex and largely regionalised. The highest concentration of terrorist attacks is recorded in the Middle East, North Africa, South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa. Countries such as Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Somalia, Pakistan and Afghanistan consistently demonstrate high mortality rates, which indicates the presence of internal instability and the activity of radical groups. Despite a decrease in the number of attacks in 2023–2024, the fatality rate increased significantly, which indicates a change in terrorist tactics - from frequent but smaller attacks to fewer but more destructive incidents. Correlation analysis confirms a strong relationship between mortality rates and the presence of conflicts in the region ($r \approx 0.87$), which emphasises the importance of political stability in reducing the risks of terrorism.

An analysis of complaints about human rights violations in democratic states shows that ensuring civil liberties in the fight against terrorism is a challenging task. In the USA, Great Britain and France, increased surveillance, mass detentions and restrictions on the right to due process are recorded. In countries with authoritarian tendencies, in particular, Russia, Turkey, and Bangladesh, anti-terrorism legislation is often used to suppress protests and public activism. At the same time, Canada and EU countries demonstrate that terrorism can be effectively countered without massive violations of human rights.

An analysis of legislative changes in 2023–2024 reveals a trend toward tighter control, particularly in countries with unstable political situations. In Somalia, the financing of terrorism was criminalised, in Uganda, discriminatory regulations against LGBT people were adopted, and in Turkey and Russia, repressive regulations aimed at protest movements were introduced. However, there are examples of effective models focused on preventing radicalisation and engaging communities, including initiatives by the EU, ASEAN, the African Union, and NASTC in North America. Such strategies combine legal regulation with educational work, social integration and regional cooperation. Thus, terrorism most often occurs in the context of armed conflicts, weak state governance and socio-economic inequality. Strengthening legislation alone is not enough; it often has the opposite effect if guarantees of human rights are not accompanied by it. To achieve a sustainable result, it is necessary to implement approaches that combine effective legal regulation, localised work with communities and respect for fundamental rights.

Practical recommendations are addressed to individual organisations and countries, in particular:

1. For the UN (in particular, UNODC and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights), unified recommendations should be developed on the observance of human rights in the implementation of anti-terrorism laws. It is also worth conducting monitoring missions in countries with high levels of rights violations in the fight against terrorism.
2. For the countries of the European Union, cooperation programs with neighbouring countries in the field of preventing radicalisation should be expanded. It is also worth investing in educational and awareness-raising initiatives aimed at countering disinformation and building tolerance.

3. For the African Union, MERCOSUR, and ASEAN, regional centres for the exchange of information between law enforcement agencies should be developed. It is also worth supporting local initiatives aimed at the reintegration of former militants and the prevention of radicalisation among young people.

The limitations of the study relate to the use of exclusively English-language materials from 2019 to 2024. The most detailed analysis of the problem was conducted in recent years, from 2024 to 2025. The selection of countries is also a limitation. In particular, the analysis focuses on individual countries (EU countries, Great Britain, Somalia, Uganda, Turkey, Bangladesh, and Russia). In several countries (especially with authoritarian regimes or war zones), official data may be incomplete or manipulative. Some information had to be taken from open sources or NGO reports, which affects the accuracy of the assessment.

Suggestions for Future Research

1. Conduct exhaustive studies on particular nations and locales to deliver an intensive exploration of how counterterrorism rules are actualised and their effect on human entitlements.
2. Investigate the impact of developing innovations, such as counterfeiting awareness, surveillance systems, and data mining, on human rights related to counterterrorism.
3. Consider the role of public culture associations and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in supporting human rights and ensuring their inclusion in counterterrorism systems.
4. Conduct a comparative analysis of how various nations interpret and apply international human rights principles in their counterterrorism laws.
5. Survey how general society perceives human entitlements and how they are perceived about counterterrorism.

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Conflict of Interest

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