

**THE INVISIBLE ENEMY:  
SUICIDE TERRORISM IN CHECHNYA AND SRI LANKA**

Master of Arts in Law and Diplomacy Thesis

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## Table of Contents

Part I: Introduction_____	4
<i>Suicide Terrorism Theory</i> _____	5
<i>Organization</i> _____	8
<i>Profiling/Individual Motivations</i> _____	14
Part II: Case Studies on Chechnya and Sri Lanka	
<i>History of the Conflict</i>	
<i>Chechnya</i> _____	24
<i>Sri Lanka</i> _____	27
<i>Compare/Contrast</i> _____	31
 <i>Ideology</i>	
<i>Chechens and Islam</i> _____	32
<i>Tamils and Nationalism</i> _____	38
<i>Compare/Contrast</i> _____	40
 <i>Structure of Organizations</i>	
<i>Chechen Rebels</i> _____	41
<i>LTTE</i> _____	45
<i>Compare/Contrast</i> _____	49
 <i>Individual Motivations</i>	
<i>Background Chechens and Suicide Terrorism</i> _____	52
<i>Chechens and Women</i> _____	55
<i>Chechens and individual motivations</i> _____	59
<i>Background Tamils and Suicide Terrorism</i> _____	67
<i>Tamils and Women</i> _____	69
<i>Tamils and individual motivations</i> _____	70
<i>Compare/Contrast</i> _____	75
Part III: Countering suicide terrorism/conclusion_____	81
Part IV: Bibliography_____	84
Attachment A-Ethnic map of disputed region (Chechens)___	91
Attachment B –Ethnic map of disputed region (Tamils)___	92
Attachment C -History of suicide terrorism in Chechnya___	93
Attachment D -History of suicide terrorism in Sri Lanka___	97

## **Executive Summary**

Suicide terrorists strike without warning and are difficult if not impossible to stop. The use of suicide terrorism around the world continues to grow, as does its use against civilian populations. The study of a suicide terrorist is very difficult because they are almost always dead before any one has any knowledge of their intent. This form of violence is becoming ever more prevalent today in various conflicts around the world.

It is therefore paramount that a deeper understanding of suicide terrorism is understood in order to develop means with which to combat it. This paper discusses suicide terrorism theory and the importance of both the organizational and the individual motivations to use suicide terrorism as a weapon. Using a comparative case study of two conflicts that have used suicide bombers I will draw out similarities and contrasts to highlight what causes individuals and organizations to use this weapon. In reviewing the cases of Chechnya and Sri Lanka this paper will explore the history of each conflict, the ideology used by each organization to legitimize the use of suicide terrorism, the organizational structures of these terrorist organizations, individual motivations for individuals within these groups who volunteer for suicide missions, and review measures to counter suicide terrorism.

The aim of this research is to explore suicide terrorism's use in two specific conflicts in order to gain an understanding of the motivations for its use and an increased awareness of the triggers that cause individuals to volunteer for these missions. These issues are essential for consideration in attempting to combat these attacks before they occur.

## Introduction

Suicide terrorist strikes occur without warning and are proliferating around the world. To date an appropriate security scheme has not been developed in order to stop these attacks from happening. Although many countries have implemented increasing security measures, especially Israel<sup>1</sup>, most countries, governments and citizens are ill prepared for a suicide terrorist strike. This has special meaning to the United States after the devastating attacks that occurred in the American cities of New York and Washington DC.

It is an impossible task to defend oneself from a suicide terrorist attack without gaining a comprehensive knowledge of the organizations and the people that perpetrate these acts. Doing so is especially difficult due to the clandestine nature of this tactic. Although some suicide terrorist have survived and have submitted to interviews, their validity and worth come into question. Many are still heavily indoctrinated and use these interviews as a platform for political ideology while others may simply lie in order to protect themselves and their organizations. It is the recruitment and indoctrination phases that provide a real window into the heart of these operations and provide the clues towards the answer of how to prevent them.

Due to the lack of information in the areas of recruitment and indoctrination, most scholars in this area have focused on the individual motivations of the suicide terrorist as well as the organizations' reasons for using such a tactic. The following research will explore suicide terrorism as a tactic as well as organizational and individual motivations.

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<sup>1</sup> "Faced with mounting attacks, Israeli policymakers responded with hard-line counter-terror tactics of massive retaliation, targeted assassinations of militant leaders, and building demolitions to deter future bombings." Mia Bloom, *Dying to Kill: The Allure of Suicide Terror*. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), at 34.

In addition, this study will compare and contrast two conflicts in which suicide terrorism has been employed as a tactic. In drawing out the similarities and pointing out the contrasts in these two cases studies it will highlight important features of this powerful tactic in order to provide further information on the individuals and organizations that use it.

### **Suicide Terrorism Theory**

Suicide terrorism has a long history as a tactic used in war, but its modern use against civilians or ‘soft targets’ has provoked a strong reaction from civilization. “A long view of history reveals that suicide terrorism existed as early as the 11<sup>th</sup> century. The Assassins (Ismalis-Nizari), Muslim fighters, adopted suicide terrorism as a strategy to advance the cause of Islam.”<sup>2</sup> Although this tactic has existed for a long period over history, its current use is unique in its disregard for innocent civilians. It is both the specific targeting of civilians and the increased use of this tactic on the whole that requires policymakers to find ways of countering this threat. “The raw number of suicide attacks is climbing, suicide bombs are now used by 17 terror organizations in 14 countries.”<sup>3</sup> Suicide terrorism is no longer a local problem, but a global one.

The first attack in modern times that caused a reaction in the security community was the attack on the Marine barracks in Lebanon in the 1980’s. “The 1983 attacks in Lebanon against the American Marine Barracks signaled the beginning of the modern use of suicide terror.”<sup>4</sup> The attack was significant because the use of suicide terrorism, especially against Americans was not as prevalent as it is today. “Although it was not

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<sup>2</sup> “Female Suicide Bombers,” Debra D. Zedalis, Carlisle Papers in Security Strategy, Strategic Studies Institute U.S. Army War College Carlisle, PA June 2004, at 1.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Mia Bloom, *Dying to Kill: The Allure of Suicide Terror*. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), at 1.

the first such attack, many people date the initiation of a wave of contemporary suicide attacks to the October 1983 destruction of the U.S. Marine barracks in Beirut by a truck bomb, a watershed particularly for Americans.”<sup>5</sup> This attack was a major surprise and caused many fatalities proving the success of suicide terrorism. From that point forward the tactic has been used in conflicts throughout the world targeting not only military targets but also civilians and government officials.

In order to fully understand suicide terrorism it is important to have a working definition of what suicide terrorism is. “The Institute for Counter-Terrorism (ICT) defined suicide bombing as an “operational method in which the very act of the attack is dependent upon the death of the perpetrator. The terrorist is fully aware that if she/he does not kill her/himself, the planned attack will not be implemented.”<sup>6</sup> This definition highlights the unique quality of this type of weapon because unlike in war where those that go into battle have the possibility of losing their life, suicide terrorists know that the mission will not be successful unless they die. The individual who perpetrates this act does so in full awareness, and in the majority of cases delight, that they will be giving their lives to kill others in the pursuit of the ideological goals of their organization. “The idea of the suicide bombing, unlike that of an ordinary attack, is, perversely; a moral idea in which the killers, in acting out the drama of being the ultimate victim, claim for their cause the moral high ground.”<sup>7</sup>

The purpose of suicide terror goes far beyond the initial casualties that it inflicts. The purpose and result of suicide attacks is to terrorize a particular population or group of

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<sup>5</sup> “Terrorists and Suicide Attacks,” Audrey Kurth Cronin, *CRS Report for Congress*. August 28, 2003, at 7.

<sup>6</sup> “Female Suicide Bombers,” Debra D. Zedalis, *Carlisle Papers in Security Strategy*, Strategic Studies Institute U.S. Army War College Carlisle, PA June 2004, at 2.

<sup>7</sup> Mia Bloom, *Dying to Kill: The Allure of Suicide Terror*. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), at 77.

people in order to send a message to the government and perhaps influence policy.

“Although a suicide attack aims to physically destroy an initial target, its primary use is typically as a weapon of psychological warfare intended to affect a larger public audience. The primary target is not those actually killed or injured in the attack, but those made to witness it.”<sup>8</sup> The fear of death or the murder of one’s family or friends after a suicide attack has a major emotional impact on not only those that witness the crime but also those who gain knowledge of it.

The use of suicide terrorism has been extended to all types of targets and is no longer confined to targeting the military. “Suicide bombers have destroyed military, political, economic and cultural infrastructure. They have committed terrorist attacks by killing civilians in buses, crowded places and in buildings. Suicide bombers have also assassinated political and military VIPs.”<sup>9</sup> This has become a flexible and unbeatable strategy that has not only destroyed infrastructure but has altered political choice and killed innocent civilians.

Contrary to early conceptions of suicide terrorists, those that perpetrate the crime and the organizations that assist them are very rational and methodical. The organizations are using individuals as important weapons against the enemy. Those individuals that perpetrate the crime tend to be highly skilled, knowledgeable and rational individuals. “Suicide terrorism has three properties that are consistent with the above strategic logic but not with the irrational or fanatical behavior: (1) *timing*—nearly all suicide attacks occur in organized, coherent campaigns, not as isolated or randomly timed incidents; (2) *nationalist goals*—suicide terrorist campaigns are directed at gaining

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<sup>8</sup>Mia Bloom, *Dying to Kill: The Allure of Suicide Terror*. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), at 77.

<sup>9</sup>“Suicide Terrorism: A Global Threat,” *Jane’s Intelligence Review*, October 20, 2000.

control of what the terrorists see as their national homeland territory, specifically at ejecting foreign forces from that territory; and (3) *target selection*—all suicide terrorist campaigns in the last two decades have been aimed at democracies, which make more suitable targets from the terrorists' point of view.”<sup>10</sup>

Most theorists in this research have concentrated on individual motivations of the bomber and the organizational motivations for using this technique. Both are very complex subjects that deserve attention when dealing with suicide terrorism. The comprehensive study of suicide terrorism would not be complete with examining both the individual and organizational components of this tactic. Whether one should be weighted over the other is hard to determine because the two are so inextricably linked in this phenomenon.

### **Why organizations use suicide terrorism**

The question of why an organization would choose to employ a tactic such as suicide terrorism is important to explore. The reason for most organizations is the many benefits that result from the use of this tactic, especially an organization involved in an asymmetric power struggle. The benefits to an organization are;

(1) it results in many casualties and causes extensive damage, (2) it attracts wide media coverage and displays great determination and an inclination of self-sacrifice, (3) it guarantees that the attack is carried out at the most appropriate time and place with regard to circumstances at the target location, (4) as soon as the suicide terrorist has left for the mission, success is virtually guaranteed, (5) planning and executing the escape route is one of the most complicated and problematic issues, suicide terrorists don't need one, since the attacker is killed during the action, and (6) there is no fear of capture and interrogation of the terrorist.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Robert A. Pape, “The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism,” *American Political Science Review* 97, no. 3 (2003): 5.

<sup>11</sup> Boaz Ganor, “Suicide Attacks in Israel,” *Countering Suicide Terrorism, An International Conference February 20-23*, (Herzliya, Israel: The International Institute for Counter-Terrorism at the Interdisciplinary Center, 2001), 139.

One of the main aims in using this tactic is to cause fear prompting the public to appeal to their governments to solve the problem. “At its core, suicide terrorism is a strategy of coercion, a means to compel a target government to change policy. The central logic of this strategy is simple: Suicide terrorism attempts to inflict enough pain on the opposing society to overwhelm their interest in resisting the terrorists’ demands and, so, to cause either the government to concede or the population to revolt against the government.”<sup>12</sup> The idea that such an inexpensive device could reap such casualties and destruction is a great benefit to any organization trying to change their enemy’s state policy.

Outside pressure on governments may also be beneficial to an organization’s cause; therefore the fact that such a tactic attracts wide media coverage and highlights the group’s cause is a major benefit. The use of a human being to detonate a bomb is the most sophisticated smart bomb an organization can use. By using a person, the organization can choose the time, location, and appropriateness of timing ensuring the most casualties and damage. Another benefit is that once the bomber has left, their plan will achieve at least some small degree of success. Even if the bomber does not make it to its intended target, most likely the individual would have detonated the bomb in view of individuals causing a similar effect if they inflicted casualties. This would surely be enough to wreak terror among the witnesses.

Most significantly, the organization does not have to worry about the well being of the individual perpetrating the attack. There need not be an exit plan, nor fear of secret information about the organization being leaked to the enemy through torture of the

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<sup>12</sup> Robert A. Pape, “The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism,” *American Political Science Review* 97, no. 3 (2003): 4.

bomber. Basically, the organization has a smart bomb able to adapt and make adjustments to the plan based on environmental factors; this person is then effectively disposed of exactly when the bomb is detonated.

With all of the above-mentioned benefits it is easy to see why organizations with limited resources or those who feel that they are fighting a more powerful foe would find this tactic very attractive. “The heart of the strategy of suicide terrorism is the same as the coercive logic used by states when they employ air power or economic sanctions to punish an adversary: to cause mounting civilian costs to overwhelm the target state’s interest in the issue in dispute and so to cause it to concede the terrorists’ political demands.”<sup>13</sup>

In addition to the reasons mentioned above, terrorist/non-state actors use suicide terrorism when engaged in conflict with a more powerful state. “All it takes is a few individuals ready to sacrifice themselves, one or more trucks, several tons of explosives, a little prudent preparation, and voila, a tiny movement can take on the greatest military power the world has every known.”<sup>14</sup> This weapon has served to equalize the power asymmetry by perpetrating suicide terrorism acts on the military or civilians of the stronger power. “The “martyrdom operations” in many of the cases are deemed the only answer to opposing the vastly superior military capabilities of the other side.”<sup>15</sup> Groups opposing the large states with more military might are inclined to use a tactic that although not as technologically advanced has similar power capabilities. This tactic is often used by insurgencies to supplement their guerilla warfare tactics. “Most suicide

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Christopher Reuter, *My Life is a Weapon: A Modern History of Suicide Bombing*. (United Kingdom: Princeton University Press, 2004), at 12.

<sup>15</sup> Mia Bloom, *Dying to Kill: The Allure of Suicide Terror*. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), at 3.

terrorism...is perpetrated by insurgent opposition groups struggling against an established and much more powerful state. It is used after strategies have been tried and found wanting but is rarely the last ditch attempt in the face of certain defeat.”<sup>16</sup>

Some scholars studying suicide terrorism believe that suicide terrorism would not exist if not for the organizations that chose to employ it. The argument is that the organization, not the individual is the important piece to study in order to understand why this method is employed and how to combat it.

“It’s an organizational phenomenon. What we needed to understand was not why bombers did it but how they were recruited and trained. The bombers themselves were weapons. In times of turmoil, they were available to skillful and compelling recruiters who, acting like le Carre spymasters, knew how to weave interpretations of history, religion and present injustice, personal or national, into a tactical imperative. This seemed to fit with what I had absorbed about the kamikazes of World War II and the Black Tigers of Sri Lanka.”<sup>17</sup>

The importance of the organization in relation to use of suicide terrorism cannot be denied, nor can its influence in providing motivations for suicide terrorists to volunteer. However concentrating on the organization alone would not provide the complete picture in relation to understanding the roots of this phenomenon. Organizations often provide the means, and in many cases the ideology or as some would call it indoctrination, but the human being that volunteers for such operations have complex motivations, ideologies and feelings of their own that are very important to study and research for possible trends in dealing with suicide terrorism.

Organizational theorists state four main motivations for organizations to employ suicide terrorism as one of their tactics.

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<sup>16</sup>Mia Bloom, *Dying to Kill: The Allure of Suicide Terror*. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), at 89.

<sup>17</sup> Joseph Lelyveld, “All Suicide Bombers Are Not Alike,” *New York Time*, October 28, 2001.

“Thus, we can hypothesize that a terrorist group’s activities are the results of four broad categories of motivation and a measure of its organizational capabilities to carry out the suicide missions: a) retaliatory actions against its adversaries b) ideological aims of destroying the middle ground of compromise c) competition for support within its prospective support groups, and d) organizational capabilities of the groups to continue with the bombing campaign.”<sup>18</sup>

The first of these motivations is clear; in order to retaliate against the enemy the use of suicide terrorism is effective and inflicts the pain and death that the group itself has experienced. The second aim is a spoiler role, if the group has a radical ideology in regard to the conflict and its resolution, the use of suicide terrorism will most likely ensure that the adversary will either completely reject the aims of the group or they will surrender to the aims of the group in order to stop the bombings. It is unlikely that a state when faced with suicide terrorism will take the middle ground in the conflict. This type of tactic has a polarizing affect. In addition, organizations will use suicide terrorism to make their rebel group predominant among other anti-state groups; which was a tactic employed by the Tamil Tigers. The use of suicide terrorism places these organizations at the top and often is able to draw supporters from other groups to their cause since this tactic is among the most serious and shows absolute commitment to the cause. Lastly, suicide terrorism proves that the organization has the capability to employ this tactic and will continue to do so. The use of such a clandestine type of warfare is telling of a group’s organizational structure and capabilities.

An organization’s decision to employ suicide terrorism makes sense from a tactical perspective. Organizations that use suicide terrorism are often outnumbered,

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<sup>18</sup> Mundra, Kusum and Gupta, Dipak K. *Suicide Bombing As A Strategic Instrument of Protest: An Empirical Investigation of Hamas and and Palestinian Islamic Jihad*, at 14. (accessed on November 10, 2005). Available from [www.economics.ucr.edu/seminars/fall03/10-01-03%20Kusum%20Mundra%20Intro.pdf](http://www.economics.ucr.edu/seminars/fall03/10-01-03%20Kusum%20Mundra%20Intro.pdf).

have limited resources, and are suffering abuse and death at the hands of the enemy. Therefore, suicide terrorism provides the group with a means of successfully combating the enemy. "Suicide bombings are inexpensive and effective. They are less complicated and compromising than other kinds of terrorist operations. The suicide terrorist is the ultimate smart bomb. Perhaps most important, coldly efficient bombings tear at the fabric of trust that holds societies together."<sup>19</sup> The fact that this tactic is unique in its attractiveness to a non-state actor/organization cannot be over stated. Suicide terrorism does not depend on how many 'troops' you have, it only takes one person to use the weapon, which results in the deaths of many. Financially the organization can afford to assemble, plan and detonate many suicide bombs. Lastly, this smart bomb can avenge the abuse and death they have suffered at the hands of the state while literally changing the society of the enemy. Suicide terrorism is a profoundly powerful weapon for organizations.

Some officials that have dealt with suicide terrorism strengthen the organization argument by stating the importance of the organization to the perpetration of these acts.

"We hardly ever find that the suicide bomber came by himself," a police officer explained to me. "There is always a handler." In fact, in some cases a handler has used a cell phone or other device to trigger the blast from a distance. A policeman told me, "There was one event where a suicide bomber had been told all he had to do was to carry the bomb and plant explosives in a certain place. But the bomb was remote-control detonated."<sup>20</sup>

The importance of the organization to the use of suicide terrorism is an actual element for such operations. Without the organization, suicide terrorism would be far less prevalent.

The recruitment of individuals to perpetrate this crime, their indoctrination, the assembly of the bomb itself, and incentives provided by the organization are instrumental to the use

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<sup>19</sup> "The Logic of Suicide Terrorism," Bruce Hoffman, *The Atlantic Monthly*, June 2003.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

of this tactic. However, without a study of the individuals that execute this crime and their motivations to do so, the analysis of suicide terrorism would be incomplete.

### **Profile/Motivations of the individual**

Whether a profile exists for a suicide terrorist is contentious; some suggest that there is one, while others believe that one cannot be developed. “Some suggest that there are definite trends, others dispute that conclusion, and still others maintain that a profile cannot be developed as it is unlikely that the search would be successful in creating a set of common denominators that could span several continents, time periods, cultures, and political configurations.”<sup>21</sup> In the past the profile of a suicide terrorist was a young, uneducated, poor, male, but this profile has not proven true. One need only look at the suicide bombers that perpetrated the acts of September 11, 2001 against the United States or at the suicide terrorists in Chechnya, Sri Lanka, and Iraq that now include women among their bombers. “Until recently, the leading experts in psychological profiling of suicide terrorists characterized them as uneducated, unemployed, socially isolated, single men in their late teens and early 20s.”<sup>22</sup> Although past profiles have proved inefficient, finding commonalities among those that choose to perpetrate these crimes is a worthwhile exercise in combating this threat.

Agreement upon a proper profile for suicide bombers has proved unsuccessful, “Some of the factors assessed included age, education, economic status, and socialization toward violence. The only factor that all the experts seem to agree on is that suicide

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<sup>21</sup> “Female Suicide Bombers,” Debra D. Zedalis, Carlisle Papers in Security Strategy, Strategic Studies Institute U.S. Army War College Carlisle, PA June 2004, at 8.

<sup>22</sup> “Suicide Terrorism in Sri Lanka,” R. Ramasubramanian,, IPCS Research Papers, August, 2004 *Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies New Delhi, India*, at 5. (accessed November 11, 2005). Available from [www.ipcs.org/IRP05.pdf](http://www.ipcs.org/IRP05.pdf).

bombers are primarily young people.”<sup>23</sup> The idea that younger individuals will be the ones to continue to perpetrate suicide terrorism is very likely. It makes sense that individuals most susceptible to coercion, indoctrination, and with the physical ability to do this type of act are young people. In addition, those that are older members of these organizations have invaluable experience that an organization would not be willing to sacrifice. However, it is important never to rely too fully on one assumption. Although organizations are less likely to use older members of the organization, if they find that there is vulnerability in any counter terrorism policy they will find a way to exploit it.

With the realization that the original profile is too incomplete to be useful to counter terrorism officials, so too has the assumption that those that perpetrate suicide terrorism are irrational actors. “Evidence shows... most suicide bombers are not undereducated religious zealots who blindly follow the commands of the religious leadership; rather they come from a middle or upper class background and have comparatively high levels of education.”<sup>24</sup> The individuals that are being chosen and are willingly sacrificing their lives in suicide bombings are complex human beings who chose to do this with profound thought and strong convictions, making the study of these individuals as well as the compilation of trends in their motivations very important. One of the largest uncertainties and the most difficult to predict in the world is human behavior. “The vast spread of suicide terrorism over the last decade suggests that there may not be a single profile of a suicide bomber, although the study of the personal

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<sup>23</sup> “Female Suicide Bombers,” Debra D. Zedalis, Carlisle Papers in Security Strategy, Strategic Studies Institute U.S. Army War College Carlisle, PA June 2004, at 8.

<sup>24</sup> Mia Bloom, *Dying to Kill: The Allure of Suicide Terror*. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), at 35.

characteristics of suicide attackers may help identify individuals whom the terrorist organizations are likely to recruit for this purpose.”<sup>25</sup>

Those that argue that looking for commonalities may be a futile exercise site the wide range in differences between individuals that chose to become suicide terrorists. “Now, it is recognized that suicide terrorists can be college educated or uneducated, married or single, men or women, socially isolated or integrated, from ages 13 to 47. In other words, although only a tiny number of people become suicide terrorists, they come from a broad cross section and lifestyles, and it would be impossible to pick them out in advance.”<sup>26</sup> Even if this argument is true, exploring individual motivations and characteristics of suicide terrorists must yield some clues as to why someone becomes a suicide terrorist. No state can begin to combat suicide terrorism if they do not have a profound understanding of not only the organizations that use this tactic, but also the individuals that become the smart bombs.

One major trend that needs further exploration is the role of women in suicide terrorism, a fairly new trend that creates further challenges to states combating suicide terrorism. Within the framework of profile/ individual motivations it is important to mention that some scholars believe that the reasons for becoming a suicide terrorist differs for males and females, as well as why organizations have decided to start using women in this capacity. Research is starting to reveal that, “When men conduct suicide missions, they are motivated by religious or nationalist fanaticism, whereas women

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<sup>25</sup> “Suicide Terrorism in Sri Lanka,” R Ramasubramanian, IPCS Research Papers, August, 2004 *Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies New Delhi, India*, at 5. (accessed November 11, 2005). Available from [www.ipcs.org/IRP05.pdf](http://www.ipcs.org/IRP05.pdf).

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid* at 5-6.

appear more often motivated by very personal reasons.”<sup>27</sup> These personal reasons often include avenging the death of a loved one or a getting justice for a rape inflicted on them by a member of the enemy state.

Suicide terrorism is often associated with groups and cultures that are highly male dominated societies. The question then becomes why women would be given the responsibility or rather the privilege of partaking in such an act. Some say, such as in the Chechen case, that they are running out of men and often women will gain more media attention for their plight, but that the control of everything remains in the hands of the men. Other reasons for women to commit these acts may also be financial, although on the surface this is not unique to women. But if you look further into the culture you will find that often women are at a much greater financial disadvantage than their male counterparts, requiring money to take care of fatherless children and their families that no longer have men in the family due to loss of life in war. Women lack options in society and are thus a vulnerable target for these organizations.

One way to create a profile for a suicide terrorist is to understand the personal motivations that go into an individual’s decision to volunteer for and to execute such an attack. Among the list of motivating factors are, “religious, nationalistic, economic, social, and personal rewards for suicide bombers.”<sup>28</sup> Religion and nationalistic motivations fall under the category of ideology and are often linked to the organizational, while economic, social and personal rewards are varied from individual to individual and

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<sup>27</sup> Mia Bloom, *Dying to Kill: The Allure of Suicide Terror*. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), at 145.

<sup>28</sup> “Female Suicide Bombers,” Debra D. Zedalis, Carlisle Papers in Security Strategy, Strategic Studies Institute U.S. Army War College Carlisle, PA June 2004, at 9.

often have links to environmental factors. Due to the complexity of human beings and their individual psychology the reasons that are applicable to each individual are unique.

Ideology is an important element to an individuals' motivation to commit a suicide terrorist attack and for an organization to implement and indoctrinate individuals to carry them out. Religion in particular has proved to play a strong role in the use of suicide terrorism. "Religious terrorism is a particularly potent form of violence; religion offers the moral justification for committing seemingly immoral acts. Suicide bombers then see their own actions as being driven by a higher order; they believe their sacrifice will provide rewards for them in the afterlife."<sup>29</sup> For an individual who strongly believes in his or her religion, the belief that they are taking the moral high ground and also that they will be rewarded by God are strong motivations for the individual, and a strong motivating tool to be used by the organization.

Although religion has proved to be a highly motivating factor for individuals to commit suicide terrorism, so too has nationalist ideology. In many instances in which suicide terrorism is used, it is done so by one group against a state in furtherance of establishing a national homeland and a separate identity from their current government. This is the case in many parts of the world where nationalism is a part of the ideology including Palestine, Chechnya, and Sri Lanka.

Mythology and connections to history or ancestry of a particular group are also used quite frequently by organizations for individual motivation. "What makes the deed effective is its embeddedness within a network of reimagined and reawakened medieval myths and popular-culture hero-worship. This culture combines modern-day marketing

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<sup>29</sup> "Female Suicide Bombers," Debra D. Zedalis, Carlisle Papers in Security Strategy, Strategic Studies Institute U.S. Army War College Carlisle, PA June 2004, at 9.

techniques like trading-cards, film music, and video-clips, with a “creative” reinterpretation of theology that lends religious legitimacy to the attackers’ suicides by characterizing them as the noblest form of fearlessness in the face of death.”<sup>30</sup>

In addition to ideology there are other factors to be considered. One theory of why individuals volunteer for suicide terrorist missions is the Frustration Aggression (FA) hypothesis. This theory states that violence may serve as the final expression of the terrorist impulse to desperation in the face of oppression.<sup>31</sup> With populations that are fighting for something that they truly believe in and find no forward movement in their struggle, they may out of frustration seek other means to achieve their ends. Suicide terrorism is a tactic that appears to be an outlet for this frustration; it symbolizes the individual’s frustration and desperation with the state of affairs and the inability to achieve what they are asking for. Frustration can be a powerful motivation for an individual to commit himself or herself to a suicide terrorism operation.

Another important factor to keep in mind for individual motivations is that environmental factors also have an impact on an individual’s decision to become a suicide terrorist. Environmental factors have been both highlighted and discounted in the study of suicide terrorists. Some believe that environmental factors such as oppression by a powerful state, poverty, lack of education or human rights can most definitely contribute to a person’s decision to become a suicide terrorist. Others state that the idea of poverty or social oppression on their own do not have such a profound effect, that evidence demonstrates there are many populations around the world living with terrible

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<sup>30</sup> Christopher Reuter, *My Life is a Weapon: A Modern History of Suicide Bombing*. (United Kingdom: Princeton University Press, 2004), at 13.

<sup>31</sup>Victoroff, Jeff, “The Mind of the Terrorist, A Review and Critique of Psychological Approaches,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 49, no. 1 (2005), at 19.

environmental factors that do not use suicide terrorism. While the argument that environmental factors alone do not provide the entire story, to discount them because of their prevalence in other parts of the world that do not have suicide terrorists would be inaccurate. Environment factors have an effect on many choices that individuals make, it is hard to imagine they would not factor into an individual's decision to die.

Another theory as to why people perpetrate these missions is rational choice theory. Rational choice theory states that terrorist action such as suicide terrorism is derived from a conscious, rational, calculated decision to take this particular type of action as the optimum strategy to accomplish a sociopolitical goal.<sup>32</sup> This argument supplements the earlier discussion regarding prior misconceptions of the rationality of suicide terrorists. Suicide terrorist motivations are related to a rational and calculated decision to sacrifice their lives for something. Whether that something is the organization, ideology, furtherance of establishing their homeland, or personal reprisal, there is a trigger that causes an individual to do a cost benefit analysis and arrive at the decision that their life is not worth more than their cause.

Ingroup vs. Outgroup theory provides another motivation for suicide terrorists. Many use terrorism to fight on behalf of their "in-group."<sup>33</sup> In causes related to ethnicity and national identity such as the Chechens and the Tamils, this is a particularly important motivation; they have made a definitive separation of us vs. them. Sacrificing your life for a greater cause is often seen as noble, therefore the idea that an individual would volunteer for a suicide terrorist mission shows their worth to their group and their hatred for the enemy. An individual's decision to use suicide terrorism as a means to fight for

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid at 14.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid at 3.

their ingroup has been described by Durkheim as the difference between altruistic suicide—suicide in the service of society—or egoistic and anomic suicide.<sup>34</sup> Those that have the ingroup vs. outgroup motivation have distinguished between good suicide and bad suicide, what they are doing is good; noble even, this is important in regard to the conflict that often emerges with religion regarding suicide. Although in Islam suicide is forbidden, the ingroup vs. outgroup ideology legitimizes its use as a means to achieve the greater good for their group.

Another issue for consideration is trauma that many men, women and children have suffered due to conflict. “Motivation to volunteer for a suicide mission may be for the shaheed to avenge the death or injury of a close friend or family member.”<sup>35</sup> Revenge may serve as a strong motivation for committing a suicide terrorist attack; although the attacker is losing his or her life, they are doing so to take the life of the individual or the state that took away the life of their loved one. “There is an empirical regularity in Chechnya, Palestine, and Sri Lanka wherein suicide bombers have lost a family member to the “unjust state” and feel that their only meaningful response to express their outrage is to perpetrate an act of suicide terror.”<sup>36</sup>

Symbolism and self-importance are also important factors for an individual to commit a suicide terrorist act. “From the perspective of the individual attacker, the act of “martyrdom” may offer an opportunity to impress an audience and be remembered, an act that may be a powerful incentive for individuals who perceive their lives as having little

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Assaf Moghadam, “Palestinian Suicide Terrorism in the Second Intifada: Motivations and Organizational Aspects,” *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 26, (2003): 72.

<sup>36</sup> Mia Bloom, *Dying to Kill: The Allure of Suicide Terror*. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), at 86-87.

significance otherwise.”<sup>37</sup> In some cultures, individuals who volunteer for and perpetrate suicide terrorist acts are worshiped by the organization, its members, and by the community as a whole.

“A related aspect is the symbolic value of martyrdom for a cause, not only in Islamic cultures but in other cultures as well. Even in secular groups, the death of a member contributes to the sense of legitimacy and dramatic community investment in a cause. The message is that there is no going back. Some groups engage in glorification of the act, deliberately hyping a “culture of martyrdom” that may include posters, songs, legends, etc., lionizing the attacker. This celebrity can be powerfully attractive to potential recruits, and with the suicide often comes greater general attention as well to the motivation for the act.”<sup>38</sup>

Money is also a factor to be considered in an individual’s motivation to become a suicide terrorist. Using a suicide bomber for an organization is relatively inexpensive.

“In cost/benefit terms, suicide attacks are financially inexpensive: according to one expert, the price of materials used in a suicide attack in Israel is about \$150. Monetary rewards for terrorist organizations, on the other hand, can be large.”<sup>39</sup> Therefore the cost to the organization is small while the benefit financially to the suicide terrorist, more specifically to their family is very large. “After the suicide attack, both the material and the social status of the shaheed’s family improve significantly.”<sup>40</sup>

Outlined above are eight factors for consideration regarding an individual’s motivation to become a suicide terrorist. Those eight factors are:

- Ideology
- The Frustration Aggression hypothesis

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<sup>37</sup> “Terrorists and Suicide Attacks,” Audrey Kurth Cronin, *CRS Report for Congress*. August 28, 2003, at 9.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid* at 12

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid* at 13.

<sup>40</sup> Assaf Moghadam, “Palestinian Suicide Terrorism in the Second Intifada: Motivations and Organizational Aspects,” *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 26, (2003): 72.

- Environment
- Rational choice theory
- Ingroup v Outgroup
- Trauma
- Symbolism and self importance
- Money/financial

In the case of ideology it may take various forms, for example it could be religious or it could be nationalistic. However it must have both a uniting quality as well as the ability to lend legitimacy to an individual's decision to sacrifice themselves for a particular cause.

The Frustration Aggression hypothesis states that an individual's decision to commit suicide terrorism is based on a need for a vehicle through which they can exhibit their frustration. This frustration is often a product of dealing with factors that appear to be beyond their control. Becoming a suicide bomber allows these individuals to take control of the situation and act out their frustration.

Environmental factors are issues such as poverty, violence, or lack of social mobility that could cause an individual to strike out in the form of suicide terrorism. Rational Choice theory states that with careful consideration and a cost/benefit analysis the decision to become a suicide terrorist is the most practical choice to achieve an individual's goals.

Ingroup vs. Outgroup theory may be described simply as "us" vs. "them." An individual sees themselves as part of a particular group in conflict with outsiders. Becoming a suicide bomber allows the individual to injure the "others" in an attempt to

protect a group they identify with. Trauma from factors such as war, rape, or discrimination over long periods of time can motivate an individual to become a suicide bomber in order to deal with these issues.

Becoming a suicide bomber in some societies can even make you famous and a hero and provide prestige for the family that you leave behind. In societies with no other avenues for such fame or success, suicide terrorism can be very tempting. In addition there are often financial rewards associated with becoming a suicide bomber. By executing such an attack, the bomber can be assured that his family will be taken care of financially.

The ability to ascertain why an individual decides to become a suicide terrorist is as complex as the make up of any individual. There is no cross-cutting broad profile within which suicide terrorists' fall. For every individual the reason will always vary slightly, just as every individual is unique from the next. However through the following case studies this research will attempt to isolate factors in common and in contrast between the two groups that have used suicide terrorism in their conflict with a State. In isolating these attributes the research aims at highlighting important motivations and triggers that lead to suicide terrorism, both in its adoption by organizations and willingness of individuals to perpetrate these acts.

## **Case Studies**

### **History of the Conflict**

#### **Chechnya**

The conflict over Chechnya has been raging since the late eighteenth century and has been the cause of two bloody wars between Russia and the Chechen rebels fighting

for an independent Chechnya. Russian national interests and Chechen desire for independence have created an intractable conflict between the two sides over land in the Northern Caucasus region.<sup>41</sup> The conflict between the opposing sides is fueled by differences in ethnicity, culture, religion and language.

Due to this conflict and the Russian inability to control this region, the government often used harsh repressive measures against the Chechen people. A profound example of Russian mistreatment of Chechens is an incident that occurred under the direction of Joseph Stalin during WWII that in current terminology is deemed ethnic cleansing and has been labeled genocide. “On 22 February 1944, tens of thousands of NKVD troops assembled and deported at one hour’s notice the vast majority of the indigenous Chechen and Ingush populations.”<sup>42</sup> The reason behind the Russian government’s deportation of these populations was largely due to German occupation of the Northern Caucasus region during the war, historical Russian intolerance of the Chechen people as well as military resistance on the part of some Chechens. The result of the deportation was, “...478,479 Chechen and Ingush were loaded on to trains in February 1944; when Khrushchev publicly revealed what had happened, 400, 478 were later officially reported as having been deported- which is a strong suggestion that the other 78,000 died in route or soon after they were unloaded, freezing and starving, in the Kazakh steppe. Thousands never made it to the trains at all.”<sup>43</sup> The deportation of these individuals resulted in many deaths due to unsanitary conditions, brutal treatment and murder perpetrated by Russian soldiers as well as relocating to a harsh climate where

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<sup>41</sup> See attachment A

<sup>42</sup>Anatol Lieven, *Chechnya, Tombstone of Russian Power*. (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1998), at 319.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

indigenous populations also rejected them. Although it took some time for the Russian government to admit what happened and for this incident to garner international attention, "...the European Parliament...adoption on 26 February...a declaration formally condemning as an act of genocide the 1944 deportation of the Chechen people to Central Asia."<sup>44</sup>

With the continued fight on the part of the Chechen people to secure their land as an independent state from the Russian federation, the time period of the Soviet Union's disintegration provided the perfect opportunity for Chechens to reassert their right to independence. However, this effort was opposed with Russian resistance resulting in two armed conflicts between Russian soldiers and Chechen rebel fighting forces. The Chechen resolve in continuing to fight for their homeland is fueled by historical mistreatment of the Chechen people at the hands of the Russian government as well as a culture and society that continues to see itself as separate from the Russian state.

Chechen rebels organized under Aslan Maskhadov, predominantly constrained their organized resistance to conventional and guerilla military tactics. However when these tactics failed to produce results, radical factions of the group branched out and began using terrorism against military and civilian targets alike. Shamil Basayev has taken the lead for the terrorist faction and has escalated from primarily military targets to the inclusion of the most vulnerable portions of Russian society, children. Shamil Basayev believes the tactics are justified and the targets legitimate. "Basayev says the decision to go into Russia was made for two reasons: First, "We could no longer fight [the Russians] normally. They were shelling our villages. They were destroying our

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<sup>44</sup> "Chechen President Thanks European Parliament," Central Asia Caucasus Analyst, *Central Asia-Caucasus Institute*, Tuesday March 18, 2004, (accessed on February 24, 2005); available from [http://www.cacianalyst.org/view\\_article.php?articleid=2250](http://www.cacianalyst.org/view_article.php?articleid=2250).

houses with six-ton bombs.” Second, “We needed to show the people in Russia that this war is very close to them too; we wanted them to see what blood looks like, and how it is when people are dying. We wanted them to understand it, to wake up.”<sup>45</sup>

The use of suicide terrorism has become particularly prevalent after the year 2000. In the period between 2000-2004, there have been twelve reported suicide terrorist actions by Chechen rebels on Russian military and civilians. Chechen rebels have utilized suicide terrorism as a means of drawing attention to their cause and inflicting harm on their perceived enemy. The Chechen opposition has built its insurgency based on an ideology of a secessionist nature; however, most recently the ideology of Islam has gained momentum in the conflict.

### **Sri Lanka**

The conflict in Sri Lanka is based on the Tamil’s desire for their own homeland distinct from the country of Sri Lanka. This desire is based on differences in culture, language and history between the Tamil minority and the Sinhalese majority in Sri Lanka. The division between the two ethnic groups dates back to the colonial occupation of the region and transcends to the present day. “Social and economic developments during the early colonial period under the Portuguese and then the Dutch- the commercialization of agriculture, the registration of title to land, registration of births and deaths, and proselytization- all contributed toward a freezing of ethnic boundaries.”<sup>46</sup>

The discrimination that began during colonial times has continued to this day and has provided one of many motivations for the Tamil population to seek a homeland of their own. “Discrimination against the Tamil population began soon after the peaceful

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<sup>45</sup> Paul Murphy, *The Wolves of Islam*. (Washington D.C.: Brassey’s Inc., 2004), at 20.

<sup>46</sup>Mia Bloom, *Dying to Kill: The Allure of Suicide Terror*. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), at 47.

transition from Colonial rule to independence on February 4, 1948. Nationalist ideology denied the multiethnic and multireligious character of Sri Lankan society and refused to accept the collective rights of minority groups.”<sup>47</sup> Therefore the Tamil minority organized a resistance to the state and the discriminatory measures of the state in an attempt to defend themselves, and ultimately establish the independent homeland of Eelam.

The region of Sri Lanka that the Tamils are fighting for is “The Tamils “traditional homelands” are in Jaffna, Vavuniya, Batticaloa, and Trincomalee.”<sup>48</sup> The ethnic breakdown of Sri Lanka is, “74 per cent Sinhalese, 16 percent Tamils- divided between the Estate or Indian Tamils (6 percent) and Sri Lankan Tamils (10 percent)- and almost 10 percent Muslims. Tamils are the majority in the north and east while there is significant intermixing of populations in Colombo and parts of the south.”<sup>49</sup> The Tamils are fighting for the regions in which they make up the majority of the population.<sup>50</sup> The Tamils feel that these regions represent their homeland and due to the state policy of discrimination against them that they need to establish this area as independent from the rest of Sri Lanka.

The result of the Tamil minorities struggle with the state was the creation of a resistance movement consisting of ethnic Tamils. The resistance has undergone an evolution leading in the direction of increasing violence. Initially, the Tamils used peaceful means to resist government oppression; this has evolved into a movement using one of the most violent means of conflict, suicide terrorism. “Separatist agitation went

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<sup>47</sup>Ibid at 49.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid, at 46.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> See attachment B

through several phases according to KM de Silva. In the 1950's it was peaceful, moving to civil disobedience in the 1960's, to individual violence in the 1970's until it became a dangerous threat in the 1980's."<sup>51</sup> The organization from which the Tamil Tigers was founded created the LTTE in the 1970's, "The founders of the military youth movement, Tamil New Tigers, formed the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam on May 5, 1976."<sup>52</sup> The organization's aim is to create their own land independent of Sri Lanka, one where they are not discriminated against and can run their own government.

Ideally, "It aims to carve a Tamil homeland out of the north and east of Sri Lanka, and it has waged a brutal war toward this end for nearly 18 years."<sup>53</sup> The treatment by the government of ethnic Tamils has proved the catalyst for this opposition and continues to be fueled today. "As a result of government actions that violated the rights of the Tamils in Sri Lanka in the 1948-77 period, a large pool of educated and unemployed young people rose against the government in 1972, under the leadership of Velupillai Prabhakaran. Nationalism has remained the driving force behind the Tiger movement."<sup>54</sup>

Much like the Chechen experience, the Tamils can point to a particular time in history where the actions of the government against their particular group were so atrocious as to warrant the label of genocide. This incident for ethnic Tamils is the 1983 riots that took the lives of many innocent Tamils. "A three-day wave of anti-Tamil violence against civilians during which time Sinhalese burned homes, destroyed Tamil-owned factories and businesses, and engaged in widespread looting, pillaging, and

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<sup>51</sup> Mia Bloom, *Dying to Kill: The Allure of Suicide Terror*. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), at 51

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> "Suicide Terrorism in Sri Lanka," R Ramasubramanian, IPCS Research Papers, August, 2004 *Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies New Delhi, India*, at 7-8. (accessed November 11, 2005); available from [www.ipcs.org/IRP05.pdf](http://www.ipcs.org/IRP05.pdf).

rape”<sup>55</sup>. Although the government tried to distance itself from this incident there is evidence to the contrary that they had a large hand in the massacre, “the government admitted to 360 deaths and the ‘mobs were armed with voters’ lists, and detailed addresses of every Tamil owned shop, house or factory, and their attacks were very precise. The mob allegedly had detailed lists of personal belongings and knew what to look for.”<sup>56</sup> International assistance was requested in the incident because of its terrible nature. “ It described the 1983 Sri Lankan riots as genocide against the Tamils and called on the Indian government to send its armed forces to Sri Lanka in order to save their beleaguered brethren.”<sup>57</sup> This incident is something that will remain in the minds of Tamils and will provide motivation for some individuals to become suicide terrorists.

In addition to this particular incident, government abuse of the Tamil minority has been a campaign, which has left the Tamils angry and dehumanized. “The government organized and routinized violence through a systematic campaign of “disappearances,” while turning a blind eye toward the use of rape. It used checkpoint searches in order to dehumanize Tamils, as well as widespread torture. Entire villages were razed in remote areas.”<sup>58</sup> Due to this maltreatment and the feeling of helplessness on the part of most Tamils, “militant groups who infiltrate camps have little difficulty in recruiting new cadres from deeply frustrated and resentful youth, men and women, girls and boys.”<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> Mia Bloom, *Dying to Kill: The Allure of Suicide Terror*. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), at 53.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid at 55.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid at 63.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

## **Compare/Contrast History**

Both in the Chechen conflict as well as in Sri Lanka, there exist two groups who have engaged in violence and war with a more powerful state in an attempt to establish their minority group as a separate entity and to obtain an autonomous region to call their homeland. The two groups have found themselves in intractable conflicts where the power of the state they are fighting clearly overwhelms even their guerilla tactics of fighting. Each group has in turn used suicide terrorism to gain an equal footing with their advantaged opponents and have targeted civilians as well as government leaders.

In addition to the evolution of the tactics of war that have been employed the historical maltreatment of the Chechens and the Tamils is an important point to make. Each group has found themselves not only in the minority but also subject to very harsh treatment by the government. In particular both the Chechens and the Tamils can point to a particular event in history that could be labeled ethnic cleansing or genocide perpetrated on their particular ethnic group by the government. In the case of the Chechens this is the mass deportation under Stalin that took place during WWII and cost the lives of many Chechens as well as physically removed them from the area that they believe to be their homeland. The Tamils in turn can point to the riots that broke out in 1983 that were specifically focused on the Tamil minority and believed to be highly supported by the government. In this case they were specifically targeted and killed both in their homes as well as in government run institutions such as prisons.

In each case counter organizations were formed in order to combat the injustice that each minority group perceived to exist both from the government as well as the majority populations of society. These organizations employed both political and

military means in order to establish a homeland for their minority populations. These two organizations have evolved their tactics to include suicide terrorism, however the ideology they have chosen to legitimize it and to motivate their ‘soldiers’ has a strong distinction, yet contains similar elements.

## **Ideology**

### **The Chechens and Islam**

Islam has become a powerful force in this conflict for the Chechen rebels and, through an instrumentalist interpretation of Islam, has justified the use of suicide terrorism. The term instrumentalist approach means that one part of the Chechen rebel group, lead by Shamil Basayev, is using Islam to justify their actions and tactics, and to garner support from the global Islamic jihad in order to achieve their ends of an independent Chechnya. Therefore, “religion in those instances provides a useful mobilization tool, but the principle justification of violence is based on a cultural and historical perception of victimization.”<sup>60</sup> Although suicide terrorism is being shrouded in Islamic clothes, the terrorism is related to the history of the conflict and the desire to be free of Russian dominance. This tactic has great appeal to smaller groups fighting large governments/states where it can be utilized to equalize power asymmetries.

Ideology is very important to any group that decides to implement suicide terrorism as a tactic. Ideology is the, “beliefs, values, principles, and objectives... by which a group defines its distinctive political identity and aims.”<sup>61</sup> In the case of the Chechen rebels, they initially legitimized their struggle through a political ideology of

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<sup>60</sup> Adam Dolnik, “Die and Let Die: Exploring Links Between Suicide Terrorism and Terrorist Use of Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear Weapons,” *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 26 (2003): 23.

<sup>61</sup> C.J.M. Drake, “The Role of Ideology in Terrorists’ Target Selection,” *Terrorism and Political Violence* 10, no. 2 (Summer 1998): 54-55.

secession from the Russian Federation. With the implementation of suicide terrorism, although their aims may be the same, Basayev's group is using the ideology of Islam. The recruiting slogan of this part of the organization is, "Chechnya is not a subject of Russia, it is a subject of Allah," thereby combining their desire for independence with their allegiance to Allah and the Islamic faith. The ideology being employed by Chechen rebels in regard to suicide terrorism includes Islamic Jihad.

The definition of jihad is important to note here because those employing jihad through suicide terrorism are employing a radical interpretation of the faith. Jihad is interpreted by some of the Islamic faith to mean, "Jihad bi al saif, the military struggle, the holy war by means of the sword. ...an act of self-defense against the enemies of God."<sup>62</sup> Those employing suicide terrorism take this definition as the foundation of their ideology, but stretch the interpretation to include any means necessary to defeat the enemy, inclusive of suicide terrorism. Chechen rebels have also manipulated the term jihad in order to legitimize the use of suicide terrorism in their quest for independence, as well as garner support from the group employing the most radical interpretation of jihad, Al Qaeda.

A term used for the religious ideology that legitimizes suicide terrorism is the term martyrology.<sup>63</sup> Martyrology serves to manipulate the meaning of jihad in order deal with the obvious conflict that exists between the meaning of jihad in the Koran and the meaning assigned by suicide terrorists. For example, in dealing with the issue of condemnation of suicide, martyrology states that suicide terrorism is justified because in

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<sup>62</sup>Assaf Moghadam, "Palestinian Suicide Terrorism in the Second Intifada: Motivations and Organizational Aspects," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 26, (2003): 70.

<sup>63</sup>Raphael Israeli, "A Manual of Islamic Fundamentalist Terrorism," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 14, no. 4 (Winter 2002): 31.

the true meaning of jihad, the value of the worship of Allah is more important than the value of human life.<sup>64</sup> In addition, according to this radical view of jihad, “the act of martyrdom is an expression of jihad, and is often pursued as an act of self-defense against an enemy who has invaded Muslims in their own home and territory, when it becomes incumbent upon individual Muslims to use force.”<sup>65</sup> This fits nicely into the current situation in Chechnya as the majority of the population is Muslim and the government of Russia is not. The leaders of the rebellion describe the use of suicide terrorism as a means of protecting their territory from outside invaders.

In line with the legitimization of suicide terrorism by Martyrology, this ideology also serves to legitimize the targets chosen for these actions. One way to accomplish this through ideology is for groups employing suicide terrorism to transform the people or objects they intend to kill into representative symbols. “The ideology of a terrorist group identifies the ‘enemies’ of the group by providing a measure against which to assess the ‘innocence’ or ‘guilt’ of people and institutions. This gives rise to the idea that certain people or things are somehow ‘legitimate’ targets.”<sup>66</sup> Therefore, the ideology serves to make the intended targets seem less important than the cause. In the Chechen case, this ideology serves to further demonize the Russian “invaders” by labeling them non-believers.

It is important to address the use of the term fundamentalist in this discussion. Although many groups that employ suicide terrorism are labeled as Islamic Fundamentalists, this is an inappropriate classification in the case of the Chechen rebels.

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<sup>64</sup> Ibid at 33.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid at 36.

<sup>66</sup> C.J.M. Drake, “The Role of Ideology in Terrorists’ Target Selection,” *Terrorism and Political Violence* 10, no.2 (Summer 1998): 56.

The term fundamentalism has been purposefully avoided in this discussion regarding Chechnya due to its often misinterpretation. The definition of fundamentalism is, “a return to the texts and to the original inspiration of the first community of believers.”<sup>67</sup>

The Chechen rebels employing suicide terrorism are not returning to the meaning of the scriptures, they are manipulating the scripture of Islam to serve their own ends. An Imam with a degree in Islamic Law<sup>68</sup> asserts that, “Muslims are not allowed, even in jihad, to kill and target civilians such as women, children and elderly people. Suicide as a violent act is not justified in Islam either, no matter what the goal of the act is.”<sup>69</sup> But Chechen rebel leaders interpret Islam in such a way as to create an ideology purely intended to mobilize terrorism against the Russian Federation.

Religion is a very powerful force; it has been the cause of many wars in the course of history. It is hard to find a more powerful justification than to say you are doing something for God. In addition to the power that religion holds on its own, Islam serves as a powerful force for Chechens for reasons unique to the region. The reason that a leader such as Basayev has been able to affectively manipulate Islam and bring it to the forefront of the struggle is because of the frustration and desperation with the lack of progress in their cause, the strong religious institutions established during Soviet Russia

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<sup>67</sup> Olivier Roy, *The Failure of Political Islam*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996), viii.

<sup>68</sup> In Aref M. Al-Khattar’s book he defines an Imam as, “A person who holds authority similar to the priest and rabbi but officiates in a Muslim Mosque. “Imam” is a title for he who leads prayers and gives Friday’s speech. The word “Imam” always has a religious meaning, referring either to a regular person performing as a religious leader, or to the Imam, according to Shia, who belongs to Ali’s family.” Aref M. Al-Khattar, *Religion and Terrorism An Interfaith Perspective*, (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 2003), 15. Dr. Al-Khattar is currently an associate professor of criminal justice at the California University, is a retired Lieutenant Colonel from the Department of Intelligence (counter-terrorism) in Jordan and holds a Certificate in Advanced Intelligence Operations from the U.S. government. “Terrorism Expert Al-Khattar Joins Cal U Faculty,” April 15, 2003. (accessed December 08, 2005); available from <http://www.cup.edu/whathappening/pressreleases/2003/april/041503C.htm>.

<sup>69</sup> Aref M. Al-Khattar, *Religion and Terrorism An Interfaith Perspective*, (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 2003), 64.

to support Islam, and the support available to Islamic movements from the global network of Al Qaeda.

First, the struggle by Chechen rebels for independence is 200+ years old and the generations following the second war have grown up in deplorable conditions. Chechnya is war ravaged and the lack of a proper educational system coupled with the breakdown of the patriarchic structure due to many deaths within the conflict has lead to a poor development of their youth. In addition, historically Chechnya is a region of hard segmentation, where populations are often scattered and divided into clans. Religion is an effective unifying force for such populations. In addition, the youth of Chechnya are growing up as witnesses to violence as a means of achieving goals. They are frustrated and desperate with the lack of success of the Chechen rebel movement and are easily persuaded to employ more violent means to achieve their goals.

In addition to these youth that may see violence as a means to an end, many members of the Chechen rebel group had been employed in this fight against the Russian Federation under Maskhadov and seen little progress. Methods of terrorism appear to be a new and even better way of achieving progress that guerilla warfare was unable to achieve. These rebels are frustrated with their inability to release their homeland from the powerful Russian Federation, which makes suicide terrorism a good technique to equalize the power asymmetry that exists.

Another reason that Islam is a good ideology to employ for Chechen rebels is because Islam serves as a unifying force to recruit individuals as well as legitimize methods such as suicide terrorism. The reason for this is because of the strong structure of Islam that was built up during Soviet oppression. “The religious institutions of the

organized Muslim community developed during the course of Soviet rule a remarkable degree of standardization and uniformity.”<sup>70</sup> This organization was a result of the strong oppression of freedom of religion that occurred during this time. Due to the highly institutionalized and organizational structure of Islam during the Soviet era, Muslim Boards were created. These, “Muslim Boards have huge organizational, human and financial resources at their disposal.”<sup>71</sup> Islam has proved to be a unifying force before in the face of oppression, why not now. It is very important for a leader of an insurgency to find something that can unify and also provide a strong foundation.

Lastly is the support available to Islamic jihad movements from the global network of Al Qaeda. The Chechen rebels’ affiliation with Al Qaeda has been debated because showing a direct link could serve to corroborate Russia’s insistence that the rebel movement is part of the war on terror enunciated by the United States. Although the Chechen movement has recently brought Islam to the forefront of its ideology, it has done so as a means to an end. In a sense the Chechen rebels are using Al Qaeda in order to help finance and exploit their struggle for independence. Therefore although evidence will be presented of Al Qaeda assistance to Chechen rebels, it is not meant to label the entire Chechen rebel organization a terrorist organization.

One source sites the beginning of Al Qaeda involvement in the Chechen struggle dating back to Dudayev. “Al Qaeda’s major involvement in Russia began when Jokar Dudayev, a Soviet Air Force general, initiated a campaign for an independent Chechnya. Dudayev was supported by the Chechen branch of the Muslim Brotherhood, the Islamic

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<sup>70</sup>Mark Saroyan, “Authority and Community in Soviet Islam,” in *The Fundamentalism Project, Accounting for Fundamentalisms The Democratic Character of Movements*, eds. Martin E. Marty and R. Scott (Chicago, IL: Appleby, University of Chicago Press, 1994), 513.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid at 529.

Path Party.”<sup>72</sup> It is obvious why Al Qaeda would have an interest in this particular conflict; according to their organization it clearly fits the paradigm of a Muslim group fighting outsiders invading their homeland. Providing finances lends them some influence and involvement in the progression of the insurgency. In addition, reports indicate, “several hundred Chechens were trained in Al Qaeda’s Afghan camps and provided with weapons.”<sup>73</sup> Thereby providing another link with Al Qaeda.

## **Ideology**

### **Tamil Tigers and Secular Politics**

The Tamil Tigers’ ideology inclusive of recruitment and legitimization of suicide terrorism is a secular one. The Group and its members are fighting for a political, not a religious aim, the independent and free homeland of Eelam. “The Black Tigers offer significant proof that suicide terrorism is not merely a religious phenomenon and that, “under certain extreme political and psychological circumstances, secular volunteers are fully capable of martyrdom.”<sup>74</sup> The major ideology behind the Tamil struggle as well as the use of suicide terrorism is nationalism, and “Nationalism has remained the driving force behind the Tiger movement.”<sup>75</sup>

Some academics have suggested that there is a religious element to the LTTE ideology as a whole and for their legitimization of suicide terrorism. This theory is based on the Tamils use of mythology and ancestry as well as the cult of personality developed by their leader. Although there may be a mystical element to the ideology employed by

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<sup>72</sup> Rottan Gunaratna, *Inside Al Qaeda: Global Network of Terror*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 134.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid at 135.

<sup>74</sup> “Suicide Terrorism in Sri Lanka,” R Ramasubramanian, IPCS Research Papers, August, 2004 *Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies New Delhi, India*, at 5. (accessed November 11, 2005); available from [www.ipcs.org/IRP05.pdf](http://www.ipcs.org/IRP05.pdf) .

<sup>75</sup> Ibid at 8.

the Tamils and a cult of personality developed by its leader, this does not constitute a religious element that exceeds the nationalist base of the ideology.

The mythological or 'spiritual' part of the logic underpinning the LTTE's use of suicide terrorism is, "The LTTE's main concept of heroism is the concept of *tiyakam*, 'abandonment' (of life). The heroic element within this concept of *tiyakam* was reinforced and differentiated by the glorification of a Tamil martial past. The LTTE *tiyaki*...receives no reward and is without compensation in *cuvarkkam*, 'heaven', or elsewhere, for his voluntary and representational dying. The LTTE hero is a 'secular' hero who expects no reward for himself."<sup>76</sup> There are clear elements of heroism and historical culture endemic to the ideological backing of suicide terrorism, but it does not constitute a religion such as Islam. In addition, "Another powerful motivation for the LTTE's suicide cadre is that the LTTE connects its ideology with a judicious use of symbols rooted in Tamil myth such as the tiger, the symbol of one of the most favorite Tamil gods, *Mrugan*."<sup>77</sup>

The ideology that the LTTE uses in relation to its struggle and specifically to its use of suicide terrorism consists of six main parts.

"Six main ideological sources for LTTE concept of martyrdom: (1) there is the revival of a sacrificial language as expressed in the term *arpanippu*, meaning 'dedication (of man to god)' (2) there is the Tamil *bhakti* tradition from the Gita providing concepts of dedication and asceticism and a cosmic perspective in which the battle for independence takes place (3) there is a Christian element expressed in the concept of a *catci*, 'witness', 'martyr' (4) there is *Subhasism*, expressed in the justification of armed struggle and in the concept of *balidan*, 'gift (of life) as sacrifice' (5) there is *Dravidian nationalism* providing martial concepts to the LTTE and the concept of a linguistic Tamil nation-state, (6) there is the martial

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<sup>76</sup> "Resistance and Martyrdom in the Process of State Formation of Tamil Eelam," Peter Schalk, 1997, (accessed April 16, 2005); available from <http://www.Tamilnation.org/ideology/schalkthiyagam.htm>.

<sup>77</sup> "The Uniqueness of LTTE's Suicide Bombers," *Sabil Francis Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies* Article no. 321 February 4, 2000. (accessed November 11, 2005); available from <http://www.ipcs.org/ipcs/kashmirLevel2.jsp?action=showView&kValue=674&subCatID=1022&mod=g>

feminism of the female Tamil fighters adapted to Tamil male concept of female behavior adopted by the female Tamil fighters.”<sup>78</sup>

These six parts of the ideological source for martyrdom for the Tamil Tigers reiterates a mystical/mythological orientation. In addition it gives a perspective of the individual giving their life as a gift for the greater good, in this case for a free homeland for the Tamils. It is also important to note that the ideology of suicide terrorism is inclusive of women in its concept and includes them in the fight for independence. This is a different perspective from many organizations that are using women as suicide terrorists in their struggles.

The struggle waged by the LTTE is based on nationalist ambitions for an independent state outside of control of an oppressive Sri Lankan government. “In Sri Lanka, the LTTE has never made the conflict about religion and so the conflict has never contained the ideology of war of *all against all* as it has in Palestine.”<sup>79</sup> The LTTE have made its’ aim specific to a people against a state, not a religion against everyone else.

### **Compare/Contrast Chechen and LTTE Ideology**

The ideology that each organization employs provides an important contrast for the study of suicide terrorism. In the Chechen case, Islam and religion play a very important role in the rebel organization’s employment of suicide terrorism. In contrast in the Tamil organization religion does not play an important role, rather it is a secular organization whose ideology is based on the political goal of obtaining the homeland of Eelam.

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<sup>78</sup> “Resistance and Martyrdom in the Process of State Formation of Tamil Eelam,” Peter Schalk, 1997, (accessed October 16, 2005); available from <http://www.Tamilnation.org/ideology/schalkthiyagam.htm>.

<sup>79</sup> Mia Bloom, *Dying to Kill: The Allure of Suicide Terror*. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), at 46.

Although religion has become the main tenant for the Chechen rebel organization's use of terrorism and specifically for suicide terrorism, it is important to note that the underlying fight for which they have been entrenched for so many years has been to become independent from Russian rule and to have their own state, much like the Tamils. Therefore the major aim for which each group is fighting for is the same, an independent nation state.

Another similarity that exists in the ideology between the Chechen rebels and the Tamil Tigers is the element of history, mythology and symbolism that underpins both their struggle as well as their use of suicide terrorism. One example is the Chechens use of the wolf as their symbol, "Chechens like to compare their national character to that of the Chechen wolf, long ago chosen as the republic's national symbol because it will attack a stronger foe, using its daring, adroitness, and courage to compensate for its smaller size and lack of strength."<sup>80</sup> The Chechens also have a history of clans and traditional elements that are endemic to the Chechen society, something that they take great pride in and defend fiercely. While the Tamils identify themselves with the tiger for very similar reasons.

## **Organization Structures**

### **Chechen Rebels**

In order to describe the Chechen rebel organization's utilization of suicide terrorism, it is important to provide a framework of what terrorism is and how their implementation of suicide terrorism fits into that framework. The table below illustrates

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<sup>80</sup> Paul Murphy, *The Wolves of Islam, Russia and the Faces of Chechen Terrorism*. (Washington D.C.: Brassey's Inc., 2004) at 8.

the many dimensions that terrorism may take. This table serves as an analytic tool to provide a paradigm of Chechen terrorism.

**TABLE 1**<sup>81</sup>

**Dimensions of Terrorism**

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Classification</i>
Perpetrator	Number Individual vs. group
Sponsorship	State vs. substate vs. individual
Relation to authority	Anti-state/anti-establishment/separatist vs. pro-state/pro establishment
Locale	Intrastate vs. transnational
Military status	Civilian vs. paramilitary or military
Spiritual motivation	Secular vs. religious
Financial motivation	Idealistic vs. entrepreneurial
Political ideology	Leftist/socialist vs. rightist/fascist vs. anarchist
Hierarchical role	Sponsor vs. leader versus middle management vs. follower
Willingness to die	Suicidal vs. nonsuicidal
Target	Property (including data) vs. individuals vs. masses of people
Methodology	Bombing, assassination, kidnapping/hostage taking, mass poisoning, rape, other (e.g., bioterrorism, cyberterrorism)

In the case of the Chechen rebels, perpetrators of terrorism have been both individual and group. In the case of suicide terrorism it is mixed, because the organization is involved in the planning, bomb making, etc. but it is in the hands of the individual to actually carry out the mission. This terrorism is sub-state sponsored, through the Chechen rebel organization, which is not associated with the state structure of

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<sup>81</sup> Jeff Victoroff, "The Mind of the Terrorist, A Review and Critique of Psychological Approaches," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 49, no. 1 (2005): 5.

Russia or Chechnya. Their relation to authority is separatists and anti-establishment, and the location is intrastate since Chechnya is still formally recognized as a part of the Russian Federation.

There exist both paramilitary and civilian components to this terrorist structure, and their spiritual motivations are both secular and religious, but the use of suicide terrorism is being associated with Islamic jihad. Their financial motivations appear to be both idealistic and entrepreneurial. One example of the entrepreneurial nature is, “a bank in the Gulf was used to fund Al Qaeda operations in Chechnya, and Osama ordered an investigation after it was brought to his attention that Chechen leaders were siphoning off large sums for their personal use.”<sup>82</sup>

There are both hierarchical and communal elements to this group; there are established leaders however many operate on the clan structure, which is endemic to their culture. There definitely exists a willingness to die, which has been demonstrated in the multitude of suicide operations that have taken place during their struggle. Their targets have been inclusive of all three categories, property, individuals and masses of people. Included in their methodology has been bombings, assassinations, kidnapping and hostage taking and although bioterrorism has not been employed, there have been instances in which the rebel organization has made attempts to and have achieved gaining such weapons.<sup>83</sup>

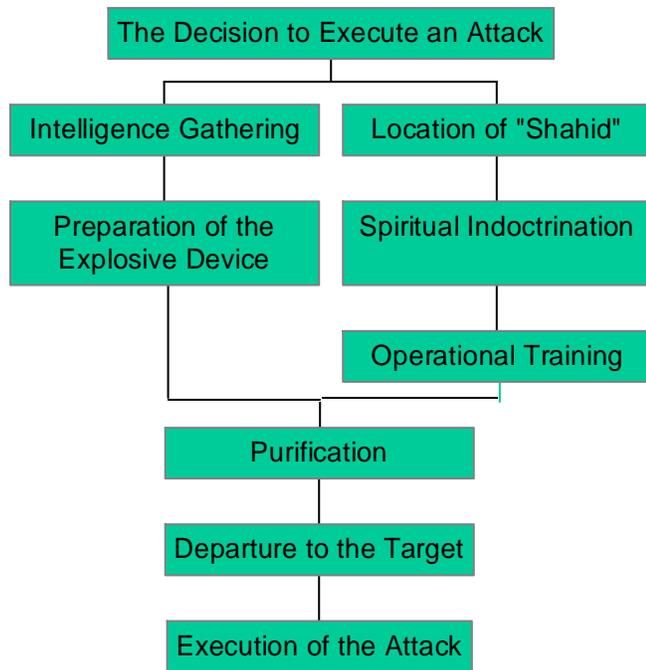
The method and procedures the organization uses in order to perpetrate a suicide terrorist act are largely unknown due to the clandestine nature of the operation. However

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<sup>82</sup> Rottan Gunaratna, *Inside Al Qaeda: Global Network of Terror*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 64.

<sup>83</sup> Adam Dolnik, “Die and Let Die: Exploring Links Between Suicide Terrorism and Terrorist Use of Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear Weapons,” *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 26 (2003): 27.

the model below provides a generic paradigm of the procedures used to implement a suicide terrorist attack.



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Once the decision to execute an attack has been made, intelligence and selection of the appropriate person to carry out the attack takes place. After that has been accomplished the explosive device to be used is prepared and the spiritual indoctrination of the individual occurs.

Following the indoctrination of the individual and before the attack takes place this individual “reaches a ‘point of no return.’ From then on, he is the living martyr.”<sup>85</sup>

Once the indoctrination and operational training occurs, the date that the attack is to take place is usually very soon, because although the martyr is now deemed to have passed the point of no return, “organizations are also aware that the longer they remain living

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<sup>84</sup>Boaz Ganor, “Suicide Attacks in Israel,” *Countering Suicide Terrorism, An International Conference February 20-23*, (Herzliya, Israel: The International Institute for Counter-Terrorism at the Interdisciplinary Center, 2001), 141.

<sup>85</sup>Assaf Moghadam, “Palestinian Suicide Terrorism in the Second Intifada: Motivations and Organizational Aspects,” *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 26, (2003): 85.

martyrs, the greater the chances they will let other people in on their secret, and the greater the risk that they will be intercepted.”<sup>86</sup> Once the suicide terrorist has embarked on their mission, the last step is execution of the attack. The organization hopes that the terrorist makes it to the intended target, but if not, most of their objectives will have been achieved if the bomb is detonated around other people.

### **LTTE Organization**

The Tamil organization appears to be a bit more sophisticated than the Chechen rebel group. The organization itself, as well as the separate units dedicated specifically to suicide missions is quite complex. The leadership has remained the same over time, while in the Chechen organization leadership has consisted of contentious relationships between competing leaders causing a split in relation to ideology and tactic. “The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, a highly secretive and ruthless separatist movement based here in the country’s north, has fielded 220 suicide bombers, more than any other group in the world.”<sup>87</sup>

The organization has both political and military structures, “The LTTE leadership has two wings- a military wing and a subordinate political wing headed by a central governing committee, headed by the LTTE chief, Velupillai Prabhakaran. The Military wing has four major units viz., *the Sea Tigers, the Black Tigers, an elite fighting wing,* known as the Charles Anthony Regiment and a *highly secretive intelligence group*. The political wing is headed by Thamilselvam and Anton Balasingham.”<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>86</sup>Ibid.

<sup>87</sup> David Rohde, “In Sri Lanka’s Time of Agony, a Moment of Peace,” *The New York Times*, January 4, 2005.

<sup>88</sup> “Suicide Terrorism in Sri Lanka,” R Ramasubramanian, IPCS Research Papers, August, 2004 *Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies New Delhi, India*, at 8. (accessed November 11, 2005); available from [www.ipcs.org/IRP05.pdf](http://www.ipcs.org/IRP05.pdf) .

In addition to the organization's political and military wings it has also established a shadow government in order to take over the administration of Eelam once they become independent from Sri Lanka. "The LTTE has...set up a parallel civil administration within its territory by establishing structures such as a police force, law courts, postal services, banks, administrative offices, television and radio broadcasting station, etc."<sup>89</sup> This shows significant sophistication, planning and forethought on the part of the Tamil Tigers. Should they gain independence from Sri Lanka they already have in place many of the civic institutions necessary to make the transition easier.

The suicide terrorist organizations within the LTTE are extremely well organized, administered, and maintained. Evidence of this is the way in which individuals are selected for suicide missions and the training they undergo before perpetrating their suicide mission. Being chosen to be a suicide terrorists is quite competitive and the selection is made with great consideration; "To become Black Tigers, our cadre must apply in writing to our leader, Mr. Velupillai Prabhakaran. He then goes through the applications, looking at the applicant's particular skills, the kinds of missions he or she has been involved in, their motivations and their family situation. Are they an only son or daughter? Do they have dependents? All these things are considered after which the applicant is told whether he can become a Black Tiger."<sup>90</sup> Therefore, the individual that is chosen to perpetrate the attack is someone who the organization deems worthy and also capable of completing the mission. Application for suicide terrorists is open to both males and females with equal consideration in this organization.

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<sup>89</sup> Ibid at 8-9.

<sup>90</sup> Gambetta, Diego (ed), *Making Sense of Suicide Missions*, (United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, June 2005), at 60.

Once the individual has been selected for the mission, they must then undergo significant training before they are sent on the mission. “Upon selection, the selected Tiger will undergo six months of training at a place called ‘Red Garden’, which is located deeply in the Mullaitivu forest. At the end of the camp the Tiger, he/she, will swear an oath of personal loyalty to the Tiger’s leader, Prabhakaran and place an amulet containing a cyanide capsule around his/her neck. For suicide missions, the LTTE leader himself selects the members from the Black Tigers and the Birds of Freedom, the women’s suicide wing.”<sup>91</sup> Therefore the application process as well as the long training process that an individual goes through helps to ensure that the individual will be successful in the mission and also that they are loyal to the organization.

The suicide terrorist portions of the LTTE are divided into different types of missions, much like the organization of a modern army. “The general umbrella organization is the Tamil Tigers, but the organization is further subdivided between the Black Tigers (suicide bombing division), Sea Tigers (Naval attack unit), Baby Tigers (child soldier division), Air Tigers (Air Force Division) and the “Women’s Military Units of The LTTE.”<sup>92</sup> This is an extremely sophisticated organizational structure for a non/state organization. It is clear when one looks at this organization how they have become the leading group in the world for suicide terrorism. This organization uses all facets of society; men, women and children as well as perpetrate pointed attacks on all sectors of the Sri Lankan military and government.

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<sup>91</sup> “Suicide Terrorism in Sri Lanka,” R Ramasubramanian, IPCS Research Papers, August, 2004 *Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies New Delhi, India*, at 10. (accessed November 11, 2005); available from [www.ipcs.org/IRP05.pdf](http://www.ipcs.org/IRP05.pdf).

<sup>92</sup> Mia Bloom, *Dying to Kill: The Allure of Suicide Terror*. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), at 60.

The black tigers use various types of suicide bombs in order to perpetrate attacks on varied targets. “The black tigers use six types of improvised explosive devices (IEDs) for their suicide missions. These are: the human-borne suicide IED, also known as the suicide bodysuit; the vehicle-borne suicide IED; the motorcycle-borne suicide IED; naval craft-borne suicide IED, scuba diver-borne suicide IED; and aerial- (microlight, glider, mini-helicopter) borne suicide IED. However, the suicide body suit is the most common device.”<sup>93</sup>

The use of suicide terrorism by the Tamil Tigers was one method of distinguishing themselves among other separatist groups and getting more supporters for their organization. “In Sri Lanka, suicide bombing emerged at a time when there were several opposition groups competing for leadership of the Tamil community. Afterward, the LTTE closed ranks and eliminated all other remaining competitors for leadership, a process that they started in 1987.”<sup>94</sup> The use of suicide terrorism for the LTTE has provided strategic advantages for them in order to fight the more militarily powerful state of Sri Lanka. “The Black Tigers serve two main strategic purposes for the LTTE: first, to compensate for lack of heavier weaponry; and second, to engage in commando-like actions to secure inaccessible or difficult targets, including assassinations. They are best understood, in other words, as elite soldiers selected for the most dangerous missions—ones with very little chance of survival, and one at all in many cases.”<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>93</sup> “Suicide Terrorism in Sri Lanka,” R Ramasubramanian, IPCS Research Papers, August, 2004 *Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies New Delhi, India*, at 10. (accessed November 11, 2005); available from [www.ipcs.org/IRP05.pdf](http://www.ipcs.org/IRP05.pdf).

<sup>94</sup> Mia Bloom, *Dying to Kill: The Allure of Suicide Terror*. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), at 45.

<sup>95</sup> Gambetta, Diego (ed), *Making Sense of Suicide Missions*, (United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, June 2005), at 46.

## **Compare/Contrast Organizations**

One major difference between the Chechen rebel organization and the LTTE is the level of sophistication in the establishment of these organizations. The LTTE has developed a very sophisticated structure with a political and military wing, civil administration, and subdivision of its suicide terrorist groups. Whereas the Chechen rebel organization does not have such subdivisions with separate leadership or a strong shadow government in place should they gain independence.

This level of sophistication is important to note in this study, however the sophistication of the organization is not necessarily linked to their ability to perpetrate suicide terrorism. Rather it appears to facilitate the use of suicide terrorism, but it does not necessarily have a large affect on the amount of suicide missions that the group can perpetrate. While the LTTE may be able to target a larger diversity of targets based on units' specifically trained to attack the navy or airforce, suicide terrorism does not have to be a sophisticated operation. It is specifically the lack of sophistication necessary to use suicide terrorism as a weapon that makes it so attractive.

Another difference between the two groups is its leadership. While the LTTE has had the same leader since its inception, one who has developed a cult of personality, the Chechen rebels have more of a haphazard leaderships structure with infighting and splintering of the organization. One reason for this is due to the clan nature of the Chechens, clans are not hierarchical structures and leadership is usually resented. Therefore relationships in the organization tend to be different. One example is that the leader of the LTTE is personally responsible for choosing the individual to perpetrate the suicide terrorist act and he has a last supper with the individual before they perpetrate

their mission. In the Chechen rebel organization, the sense is that Shamil Basayev is not as personally involved in the selection of the individuals who perpetrate suicide terrorist missions. He is likely at the center of planning large missions such as the Moscow theater siege or the Beslan school siege, but when it comes to choosing individual suicide bombers, he is probably not involved at the level of Prabhakaran. In addition it is not likely that Basayev spends the last evening with the bomber by having dinner with them. Lastly, there appears to be a weaker link between the organization and the bomber in the case of the Chechens than in the case of the LTTE. In the Chechen case bombers have in some cases been individuals that had no previous association with the rebel organization, whereas with the LTTE, bombers are carefully selected specifically from within the ranks of their suicide units.

The indoctrination of bombers occurs both in the Chechen rebel group as well as in the LTTE. The difference may be the amount of time and training a bomber receives in the Chechen case as opposed to the LTTE. In some cases those that have been captured before detonating a suicide bomb for the Chechen rebels have claimed they were abducted and drugged, or physically coerced into committing the act, which is vastly different from the LTTE. The individuals that commit this act for the LTTE are so indoctrinated and loyal to the cause they carry cyanide capsules around their neck to commit suicide should the mission fail. However it is important to note that although there are differences, the end goal of getting an individual to perpetrate a suicide terrorist act is largely achieved.

The aim of the two organizations' use of suicide terrorism may also differentiate them. The LTTE does not claim responsibility for terrorists attacks that claim civilian

lives; their aim is to win the war not to spread terror among the populations. The LTTE often targets military and political figures and not civilians. The “Black Tiger attacks aim primarily to win the war, not to spread terror. As a result, there are no clear examples of civilians being directly targeted by SMs (although there have been many civilian casualties).”<sup>96</sup> This is something that has been recognized by other governments, including the United States. “This was recognized by the United States in late September 2001 when a US embassy spokesman in Colombo, Stephen Holgate, distinguished the LTTE from al-Qaeda because ‘the LTTE is not involved in unbridled terror, has specific political demands and is not averse to negotiations’.”<sup>97</sup> This is far different from the Chechen rebels specific aim of civilians, especially vulnerable civilians such as children. The United States does not make statements about the Chechens as they did about the LTTE, the U.S. policy has allowed the Russians to bring the conflict with the Chechen rebels under the umbrella of the ‘war on terror’.

Both the LTTE and the Chechens use women in their suicide missions, however the reasons behind their use are different. In the case of the LTTE they have always used women in their struggle against the Sri Lankan government and women have always been a part of the suicide terrorist units. In the case of the Chechens, women have come into the struggle, specifically in their use of suicide terrorism after some time where only males were perpetrating the act. The reason that the LTTE has always used women is that their ideology in relation to women is much different than the Chechens. The LTTE have promoted equality among the sexes and believe that women are a valuable part of the struggle against the State. In the case of the Chechens, their society is patriarchic and

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<sup>96</sup> Gambetta, Diego (ed), *Making Sense of Suicide Missions*, (United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, June 2005), at 55.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid at 59.

Muslim, making women not equal to men in society and of lesser value. The use of women in their struggle appears to be based on the declining number of males lost to war. Even when women are suicide bombers they have handlers and only make decisions based on orders from male rebels.

In the case of both organizations, the ideology behind suicide terrorism is inclusive of the dehumanization of the enemy. The organization and the individuals that perpetrate suicide terrorism do not see the civilians and human beings that they kill as human beings, but rather as the enemy. This is an important component that creates the ability for an individual or an organization to commit suicide terrorism.

### **Suicide Terrorism/Individual Motivations**

#### **Chechnya**

The use of suicide terrorism by the Chechen rebels becomes widespread in the years following the second Russo-Chechen war.<sup>98</sup> In the years 2000-2004 alone there have been at least twelve incidents of suicide terrorism by Chechen rebels.

(1) June 2-3 2000- series of suicide attacks against Russian troops in Chechnya, (2) October 2002-Moscow theatre siege, (3) December 2002- Suicide bomb attack on Grozny headquarters of Russian-backed Chechen government, (4) May 12 and 14, 2003-suicide bombing of government building in the north of the republic, (5) two days later another suicide bomber attempts to kill the administration chief Akhmad Kadyrov, (6) June 5, 2003-suicide bomber ambushes a bus carrying Russian air force pilots, (7) July 5, 2003- 2 suicide bombers blow themselves up at an open-air rock festival, (8) August 1, 2003-military hospital in Mozdok, (9) December 9, 2003- suicide bomber doesn't make target but still kills 6, (10) August 24, 2004- two Russian passenger planes are blown up, (11) August 31, 2004- suicide bomber detonates bomb outside subway station, (12) September 2004- Beslan school siege.<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>98</sup> See attachment C

<sup>99</sup> NUPI Center for Russian Studies' Database, *Chronology of Events, A Wave of Terror Hits Russia-an overview of the most important terrorist acts 1995-2004*, August 31, 2004 (accessed April 2, 2005); available from <http://www.nupi.no/cgi-win/Russland/krono.exe?6224website>.

One of the above incidents is an important case study in attaining further understanding as to why and how the Chechen rebels are able to perpetrate suicide terrorism missions. The *Journal of Terrorism and Political Violence* published a study conducted through interviews of hostages that survived the Moscow Theatre Siege. This is a rare opportunity to study suicide terrorists while they are in the act of committing an attack. Suicide terrorists are very difficult to study beyond their family, friends, associates and tapes they may have left behind as to why they chose to become martyrs. In this study a portrait of a Chechen suicide terrorist was sketched through interviews with surviving hostages. This study is of particular importance because,

“The theatre siege...effectively end the second Chechen war and begin a new one- a third war- with the attendant reshaping of military doctrine, strategy, and tactics on both sides. On the Chechen side, Dubrovka crated a new dynamic with two fundamental and qualitative changes taking place. First, terror is clearly now the strategic weapon of choice, taking precedence over guerilla actions. Second, Basayev has escalated the war by adopting the Palestinian model of suicide terror against civilians. A third dimension, international terror operations, is also being added.”<sup>100</sup>

In this siege, forty-one Chechen rebels took eight-hundred+ hostages in the Moscow Dubrovka House of Culture from October 23rd to October 26th, 2002. Their one demand was that Russian forces leave Chechnya immediately.<sup>101</sup> A major part of the operation was the use of Islam, the spiritual indoctrination mentioned in the model of a suicide operation. One thing that came up repeatedly from surviving hostages was the Islamic symbols that were put on display by the rebels. The rebels displayed a Wahhabit flag, large placards in Arabic script, which one of the rebels said translated to “Jihad-

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<sup>100</sup> Paul Murphy, *The Wolves of Islam, Russia and the Faces of Chechen Terrorism*. (Washington D.C.: Brassey's Inc., 2004) ,at 197.

<sup>101</sup> Anne Speckhard, Nadejda Tarabrina, Valery Krasnov, and Khapta Akhmedova, “Research Note: Observations of Suicidal Terrorist In Action”, *Terrorism and Political Violence* 16, no. 2 (Summer 2004): 305.

Death of the nonfaithful in Chechnya.”<sup>102</sup> In addition when one of the hostages asked a young woman rebel what books she had read her response was, “I have read only one book, the Koran.” This is a common response from someone deemed to be a true believer of Islam, to denounce any other book that is not the Koran.<sup>103</sup>

The hostages mentioned other evidence of indoctrination they observed in these rebels. These signs included the appearance of many of the rebels to have been brainwashed, some in a trance-like state and some rebels “referring to themselves as ‘living martyrs’.”<sup>104</sup> These individuals were ready and willing to die and intended to kill everyone in the theatre along with them. This indicates a dehumanization of the target and is evidenced in two statements made by the rebels, one of which was “All of us have the same fate here. We are here to die” and, the second, “children already 13 are soldiers”,<sup>105</sup> made in response to captives’ requests for the release of pregnant women and children.

In addition to the strong Islamic undertone incorporated in this operation were the careful planning, preparation, training and support that accompanied it. The attack was carefully planned and orchestrated and included an outside command structure. Without the organization, careful planning and assistance from the outside, such a large operation with only forty rebels would have never worked. It was clear to observers that, “The takeover of the theatre was carefully orchestrated according to the hostages, with each of the terrorists knowing their jobs. All their behavior and movements were ordered and

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<sup>102</sup> Ibid at 317.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid at 315.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid at 322.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid at 314 and 318 respectively.

everyone knew what he or she must do.”<sup>106</sup> This provides evidence of the Chechen rebel organization’s execution of a suicide terrorist operation to be inclusive of the steps mentioned in the model, determining a location, intelligence gathering and operational training.

Although the above study provides some very interesting insights into the state of mind of suicide terrorist in the employment of their mission, there also exist some problems with the study that need to be mentioned. One issue, which is detailed in this study, is that many of the hostages that were giving accounts of their impressions of the rebels may have been suffering from Stockholm syndrome, “the paradoxical development of reciprocal positive feelings between hostages and their terrorist kidnappers,”<sup>107</sup> which would impair their objectivity. In addition, many hostages were in fear for their lives during their observations, which could also cloud impressions and recounting of events. Also, this study is derived from individual accounts, e.g. second hand information which consists of subjective opinions. Lastly with the article translation from Russian to English it appears to be lacking some coherence in hostage statements of events based on imperfect grammar.

## **Women in Suicide Terrorism**

### **Chechnya**

The use of women by the Chechen rebels in suicide terrorism missions has increased remarkably over the last five years. The use of women by the Chechen rebels seems to be counter to their social and ideological structure, which is both patriarchic, and Islamic, both of which do not view women as equitable to men. Many speculate that

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<sup>106</sup> Ibid at 308.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid at 311.

the use of women has been based on the fact that they are losing men every day in the battle against the Russians leaving them with no alternative but to begin to employ women, others believe it is the result of a tactical shift, wherein the organization recognizes the advantage that the use of women in suicide terrorist missions can give them. “Their participation- despite Chechnya’s deeply patriarchal society, or perhaps because of it- reflects the radicalization of a war that began as a separatist struggle but has turned increasingly nihilistic.”<sup>108</sup>

The idea of a woman committing a suicide terrorism mission is difficult to comprehend in any culture because women are seen as less likely to participate in violent acts.

“In Russia, such women are known as shakihidki, the feminine Russian variant for the Arabic word meaning holy warrior who sacrifices their lives. In the media, they are known more luridly as black widows, prepared to kill and to die to avenge the deaths of fathers, husbands, brothers and sons in Chechnya. But the circumstances that bring women to suicidal attacks are not so simple.”<sup>109</sup>

As stated earlier in this study, women tend to have more personal reasons for their decision to become suicide terrorists. In many cases these are women looking to avenge the death of a close relative or loved one. However, religion/ideology and environmental factors appear to also influence these individuals much like their male counterparts.

Although many women who participate in suicide missions of their own free will in the Chechen conflict, there are reports of others who participate due to coercion.

Based on reports of women that have been captured before detonating their bomb it is likely that some women are coerced into committing suicide bombings. “More than three -dozen Chechen women-roughly half of the suicide bombers- have launched or

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<sup>108</sup> Steven Lee Myers, “From Dismal Chechnya, Women Turn to Bombs,” *The New York Times*, September 10, 2004.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid.

attempted attacks against Russian targets since the second Chechen war began in 1999. Russian authorities say many appear to be dazed and under the influence of drugs; some would-be bombers have reported that they were forced by relatives in the Chechen resistance into attempting such attacks.”<sup>110</sup> The following are two accounts of a woman who was unable to follow through with her suicide mission and the story that she told to officials.

“Zarima Muzhikoyeva, the first live *shakhidka* (martyr), was captured when her purse filled with 1.5 kilograms of military-issue explosives failed to detonate. Ms. Muzhikhoyeva’s husband was killed in the first war in Chechnya when she was pregnant with her daughter. A female friend offered to help her and agreed to pay her debts, give her grandparents money, and provided for her daughter- all that was required in return was that she choose the true road to Allah. She was taken by rebel fighters to the mountains for 1 month. There, she cooked and washed the fighters’ clothes, prayed daily, and listened to the atrocities of the Russian troops in Chechnya. When her training was complete, she went to Moscow and was housed with two young women who later blew themselves up at a rock concert.”<sup>111</sup>

“Muzhikhoyeva, whose husband was killed fighting the war while she was pregnant with their daughter, told her interrogators that she had been “a virtual slave” to rebels who convinced her that it was her religious duty to go to Moscow and detonate a bomb at a café on busy Tverskaya Street. Investigators told the Moscow paper *Kommersant* that a woman Muzhikhoyeva knew as Lyuba-Black Fatima- took her to a house near Moscow and visited her frequently during the next week. She told police that Lyuba often gave her orange juice that made her dizzy and gave her a headache.”<sup>112</sup>

For those women that chose to commit suicide terrorism of their own free will, they often lack the power and control over the mission that their male counterparts have. In most instances these women are being controlled right up until the actual act occurs by handlers. “A nationwide alert has been issued for a middle-aged woman with a hooked

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<sup>110</sup> Kim Murphy, “A Cult of Reluctant Killers,” *Los Angeles Times*, February 4, 2004.

<sup>111</sup>“Female Suicide Bombers,” Debra D. Zedalis, Carlisle Papers in Security Strategy, Strategic Studies Institute U.S. Army War College Carlisle, PA June 2004, at 10.

<sup>112</sup> Kim Murphy, “A Cult of Reluctant Killers,” *Los Angeles Times*, February 4, 2004.

nose and dark hair popularly know as “Black Fatima,” who has been identified as a recruiter for the women know as shahidas, or martyrs. The woman reportedly has been seen lurking on the edges of terrorist bombings during a decade of tensions between Russia and the breakaway republic of Chechnya.”<sup>113</sup> It is believed that Black Fatima works as both a recruiter and a handler for female suicide terrorists. Another example of the lack of power held by these women is the events that occurred during the Moscow theatre siege. It has been reported by witnesses that the women bombers acted only under explicit instruction from the male rebels in the theatre, even though it was mostly the women who were wearing the suicide belts. Some experts speculate that the reason the suicide bombers did not detonate their bombs when the Russians stormed the theatre is because the men had left to fight off the attackers and there was no one present to give the order to the women to detonate their explosives.

In addition to coercion and handlers there is also evidence of indoctrination and brainwashing that has occurred on women suicide terrorists. One such report stated that,

“Zakharov says he has seen evidence of brainwashing techniques, in which religious phrases in Arabic are recited repeatedly. They’re gathered in large auditoriums, and they repeat a combination of sounds whose meaning they have no idea of. At the same time, they’re making very rhythmic body motions. That, in fact, is one of the simplest and most primitive entrancing technologies.”<sup>114</sup>

These methods of indoctrination can have a powerful effect on these women inducing them to commit suicide terrorist missions. Although in some respects men are indoctrinated as well through religious ideology, it appears that women go through more rigorous brainwashing techniques, perhaps due to the social and religious connotations of female inferiority.

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<sup>113</sup> Ibid.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid.

It is important to note that prior to the Chechen use of women in suicide terrorism missions, in large part it was only secular organizations that employed women. “Until the Chechen terrorist campaign, the use of female suicide bombers was a clear indicator of secular terrorism. The growth in the number of Chechen female suicide bombers signaled the beginning of a change in the position of fundamentalist Islamic organizations regarding the involvement of women in suicide attacks.”<sup>115</sup> This is important to note because the use of women in suicide terrorism missions will spill over to other Islamic terrorist organizations now that its use has been legitimized by an Islamic organization. The use of women in suicide terrorism missions is likely to increase in the future both in specific missions as well as its use among organizations.

### **Theories on Individual decision to be a suicide terrorist**

An individual’s decision to commit a suicide terrorist operation is very important. Although an organization may be able to provide ideology, either religious or political, there must be other factors present for an individual to willingly commit such an act. The Chechen rebels have employed a religious ideology, Islam, in an instrumental way to provide legitimacy for their employment of suicide terrorism. Although Islam can provide an appeal and a form of indoctrination for individuals to commit these crimes, other influences and theories must be explored, especially in the case of the Chechen rebels. A good explanation of an individual’s decision to become a suicide terrorist is, “a

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<sup>115</sup> “Female Suicide Bombers,” Debra D. Zedalis, Carlisle Papers in Security Strategy, Strategic Studies Institute U.S. Army War College Carlisle, PA June 2004, at 11.

combination of religious justification and religious interpretation, together with social factors rooted in the surrounded society.”<sup>116</sup>

One of these societal factors is war fatigue, which has facilitated Basayev’s ability to garner support for his cause and enlist individuals to perpetrate suicide terrorism. The first war between the Russia Federation and Chechen rebels took place from 1994 to 1996, which began with the Russian invasion of Grozny. The second war occurred from August to September 1999 when Russia launched a new offensive after rebel attacks.<sup>117</sup> The two wars that have occurred coupled with continued guerilla warfare between the rebels and the Russian Federation army has caused indescribable hardship for the Chechen people. Due to this war fatigue and inability to achieve an independent Chechnya many rebels are willing to employ a new method, suicide terrorism.

The role of education or lack thereof of these individuals is another societal factor to be considered. In the Chechen case there appears to be a difference in education between those that lead the organization that employs suicide terrorism, namely Basayev and those that carry out the operations. In general, terrorist leaders tend to be more educated than followers or those that perpetrate the crime; an obvious exception is the men who perpetrated the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks. In the Chechen case, Basayev, after serving time in the Russian Military, “entered the Moscow Engineering Institute of land management in 1987. However he was expelled for poor grades in 1988.”<sup>118</sup> Therefore although Basayev did not complete a University degree he did complete his education up

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<sup>116</sup>Reuven Paz, “The Islamic Legitimacy of Suicide Terrorism,” *Countering Suicide Terrorism, An International Conference February 20-23*, (Herzliya, Israel: The International Institute for Counter-Terrorism at the Interdisciplinary Center, 2001), 88.

<sup>117</sup> Liam Plevin, “Chechnya: Small, Troubled Republic.” *Newsday*, August 26, 2004. Accessed February 17, 2005. Available from LexisNexis.

<sup>118</sup> *Shamil Basayev, Biography.ms*, (accessed April 21, 2005); available from <http://shamil-basayev.biography.ms/>.

to that point and had the opportunity to go to college. Because Chechnya is so impoverished and consumed by conflict, the ability to be educated and the choices available to Basayev no longer exist for today's Chechen youth. The availability of education is even more limited for women in Chechnya's patriarchic society. There have been a profound number of women suicide terrorists in the Chechen conflict, one reason for this may be that women are afforded fewer opportunities for education and advancement.

One example of the deterioration of the Chechen education system is evidenced in a conversation between a hostage and a Chechen rebel that took place during the Moscow theatre siege. One young male rebel spoke of a desire to attend college and in the same conversation talked about how important it was for him to be a suicide terrorist. "This young terrorist's conflict between hoping for higher level education but willingness to die a martyr reflects the current situation in Chechnya where the education system has been largely destroyed by war and has not functioned well in the past 10 years."<sup>119</sup>

Another issue for consideration is trauma that many men, women and children have suffered due to the conflict. "Motivation to volunteer for a suicide mission may be for the shaheed to avenge the death or injury of a close friend or family member."<sup>120</sup> Some of the women for example that are perpetrating suicide terrorism in Chechnya have earned the title of "black widow" and were first seen at the Moscow Theater siege. "The Suicide bombers--who have become known as "black widows"—are dressed head-to-toe

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<sup>119</sup> Anne Speckhard, Nadejda Tarabrina, Valery Krasnov, and Khapta Akhmedova, "Research Note: Observations of Suicidal Terrorist In Action", *Terrorism and Political Violence* 16, no. 2 (Summer 2004): 320.

<sup>120</sup> Assaf Moghadam, "Palestinian Suicide Terrorism in the Second Intifada: Motivations and Organizational Aspects," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 26, (2003): 72.

in black and wear the so-called “Martyr’s belt” filled with explosives.”<sup>121</sup> These are widows who have lost husbands or other male relatives to the war and are gaining revenge through such actions. Women have perpetrated many of the twelve suicide missions that occurred between 2000 and 2004 mentioned earlier in this paper. The lack of religious foundation for the employment of women in this regard can be expressed in the following way; “There is no religious aspect to this—its psychological ...terrorists exploiting the misfortune of these women.”<sup>122</sup>

Ingroup vs. Outgroup theory provides another motivation for suicide terrorists in Chechnya. Many use terrorism to fight on behalf of their “in-group.”<sup>123</sup> In the sense that a person chooses to use suicide terrorism as a means to fight for their ingroup has been described by Durkheim as the difference between altruistic suicide—suicide in the service of society—or egoistic and anomic suicide.<sup>124</sup> What Durkheim suggests is that some view their suicide terrorism mission as an altruistic sacrifice to further the cause of their people. In collectivist cultures such as Chechnya, a person’s identity is primarily derived from the social system, dividing the world strictly according to in-groups and out-groups and linking their personal well being to the well-being of their group.<sup>125</sup> Weinberg and Eubank propose that collectivists would be more likely than individualists to carry out terrorist attacks on out-groups, including foreigners.<sup>126</sup> In the Chechen case, the Russian government as well as Russian civilians are being seen as members of the outgroup, whose death is necessary to preserve the Chechen’s ingroup.

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<sup>121</sup>CNN, *Chechnya’s ‘black widow’ bombers*, July 11, 2003 (accessed April 22, 2005); available from <http://www.cnn.com/2003/WORLD/europe/07/11/russia.black.widows/>.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid.

<sup>123</sup> Jeff Victoroff, “The Mind of the Terrorist, A Review and Critique of Psychological Approaches,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 49, no. 1 (2005): 13.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid at 21.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid.

Another theory as to why people perpetrate these missions is rational choice theory. Rational choice theory states that terrorist action; such as suicide terrorism is derived from a conscious, rational, calculated decision to take this particular type of action as the optimum strategy to accomplish a sociopolitical goal.<sup>127</sup> Due to the length of this protracted conflict and the number of benefits that suicide terrorism provide to an organization this theory makes sense both for the individual and the organization. Due to the lack of progress in their struggle through the use of guerilla warfare and the assassination of Russian Federation officials, and the progress achieved by other groups employing this method, it is likely that members of the Chechen rebel group see suicide terrorism as a rational choice to achieve their ends.

Environmental factors also have an impact on an individual's decision to become a suicide terrorist. For example those suffering great emotional loss, from the death of a spouse or family member, an individual lacking innate rebellious qualities, through proper manipulation may be driven to such extremes. This may be evidence in the use of black widows in the struggle as well as younger more impressionable people. "Teenagers living in hotbeds of political strife may directly witness terrorist behaviors and seek to imitate them or, even more commonly, learn from their culture's public glorification of terrorists."<sup>128</sup> However it is important to note that while environmental factors may be a motivating factor, "Men do not necessarily rebel merely because their conditions of life are intolerable: it takes a rebel to rebel. Individual factors must be at work. Temperaments vary."<sup>129</sup> This suggests that it takes a particular type of individual to get

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<sup>127</sup> Ibid at 14.

<sup>128</sup> Ibid. at 18.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid at 17.

involved in these types of actions; environmental factors alone are not enough to drive someone to this type of action.

Another theory which I see attributable to the Chechen situation is the Frustration Aggression (FA) hypothesis. This theory states that violence may serve as the final expression of the terrorist impulse to desperation in the face of oppression.<sup>130</sup> The Chechens certainly fall into this category. Desperation is clearly one of the factors that led to the employment of suicide terrorism. The Chechen rebels desperately needed to draw attention from the world to their struggle for independence. The tactics they had been using were not working. This theory is especially applicable, “in the case of nationalist-separatist or ethnic-sectarian terrorism (e.g., ETA, PIRA, Hamas), actors often cite the injustice of their treatment by governments that rob them of identity, dignity, security, and freedom as the motive for their joining a terrorist group.”<sup>131</sup>

In addition, another motivating factor for an individual to commit a suicide terrorist action is the ability to improve the life of his or her family. “After the suicide attack, both the material and the social status of the shaheed’s family improve significantly.”<sup>132</sup> With the terrible conditions in which most Chechens live and the lack of development and resources available, perpetrating a suicide terrorist mission may have additional appeal to an individual if it means improving the life of his or her family. This could be especially applicable if the family has lost a member of the family, namely the father or brothers to war, who had been responsible for providing for the family. With

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<sup>130</sup> Ibid at 19.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid. at 20.

<sup>132</sup> Assaf Moghadam, “Palestinian Suicide Terrorism in the Second Intifada: Motivations and Organizational Aspects,” *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 26, (2003): 72.

the breakdown of the education system, the financial future of many individuals in Chechnya is bleak.

Endemic to the clan structure in Chechnya is the idea of honor and vengeance, which play an important part in an individuals' decision to become suicide terrorists. "For most young Chechen bombers in waiting, the rules of *Adat*, a traditional Chechen code of honor, are more important than any religious motive. Jihad is overshadowed by a desire to exact retribution for the sake of honor. The mixture of jihad talk and *Adat* make for an odd but potent brew."<sup>133</sup> The Chechen code of honor is a powerful force for these individuals, it is a part of their culture and history that has existed for hundreds of years and is closely tied to their fight for independence from Russia.

The above theories are meant to illuminate various factors that can contribute to the utilization of suicide terrorism by an organization as well as an individual's decision to become a suicide terrorist. The list is certainly not exhaustive, but provides some examples of other factors to be considered beyond ideology. In addition none of the above theories are mutually exclusive in relation to the Chechen rebels employing suicide terrorist attacks. Any one Chechen could decide to be a suicide terrorist based on a combination of any of these individual factors coupled with religious or political ideology.

However there appear to be three factors among the list of individual motivations for Chechens that appear to be more prevalent than others. One of these is the war fatigue being felt by the Chechen population. Much of the war and violence is taking place in Chechnya not in Russia, and the Chechen population is subjected to it on a day-

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<sup>133</sup> Christopher Reuter, *My Life is a Weapon A Modern History of Suicide Bombing*. (United Kingdom: Princeton University Press, 2004) at 150.

to-day basis. The only weapon used by the Chechens against the Russians that has helped their struggle gain notoriety is suicide terrorism. Therefore they see their willingness to become suicide terrorists as a means to end the war that has ravaged both their land and their people.

In relation to the notion of 'their land' and 'their people' is the ingroup vs. outgroup hypothesis. This is especially applicable to the Chechens, as they have continued to distinguish themselves from the Russians both through ethnicity and religion. The Chechen people have a long history with an endemic clan nature. The Chechens have always fought to separate themselves from the Soviets and now the Russians. The clan nature of the Chechens places great emphasis on kinship and community, making the divide between themselves and non-Chechens even wider. The origin of the Chechen struggle was and continues to be based on the desire for an independent Chechnya.

The last factor that has particular relevance to the Chechen case is the amount of trauma that the Chechen people have suffered. Ethnic cleansing under Stalin and the two wars in the 1990's have provided more than enough trauma for modern day Chechens. The level of trauma is evidenced in part through the introduction of women as suicide bombers. As mentioned earlier, often females are motivated most strongly by personal factors when they chose to be a suicide terrorist. These personal factors stem from trauma such as the loss of a husband, father, son, or rape.

## **Suicide Terrorism/Individual Motivations**

### **Sri Lanka**

The first suicide attack to take place by the LTTE was done by a man named Captain Millar, he has subsequently lived on as a symbol of heroism in the LTTE organization and specifically for future suicide bombers. “When Captain Millar plowed a truck full of explosives into an army camp in July 1987, 40 soldiers died, along with the captain, and a culture was born.”<sup>134</sup> From that point forward the use of suicide terrorism for the LTTE has been an important component of their organization and a strategic weapon in their arsenal.<sup>135</sup> Their use of suicide terrorism has been strongly influence by their attainment of political goals. This is evidence in the nearly three year period between 2001 and 2004 in which there were no suicide terrorists attacks by the LTTE in recognition of the declared cease fire with the government.

The aim of these suicide missions has been to kill military and political personnel in an attempt to get the government to acquiesce to their demands of an independent homeland of Eelam. Specifically,

“Suicide bombers killed one Sri Lankan president, wounded another and killed a former Indian prime minister. They took out government ministers, mayors, and moderate Tamil leaders, decimating the country’s political and intellectual leadership. ...They attacked naval ships destroying a third of the Sri Lankan Navy and oil tankers; the airport in Colombo, the capital; the Temple of the Tooth, home to Sri Lanka’s most sacred Buddhist relic; and Colombo’s own World Trade Center.”<sup>136</sup>

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<sup>134</sup> Amy Waldman, “Suicide Bombing Masters: Sri Lankan Rebels,” *The New York Times*, January 14, 2003.

<sup>135</sup> See attachment D.

<sup>136</sup> Amy Waldman, “Suicide Bombing Masters: Sri Lankan Rebels,” *The New York Times*, January 14, 2003.

The LTTE has made it clear that they do not specifically target civilians and that any civilian casualties that do occur are not the result of their actions. “The LTTE code prevents it from claiming responsibility for attacks on non-military persons such as Rajiv Gandhi, Premadasa, Dissanayake, and Ranjan Wijeratne, the Sri Lanka Minister of State for Defence. By adopting such a position, the LTTE seeks to project to the international community that it is a liberation movement that targets only military personnel, and not a terrorist group.”<sup>137</sup> The LTTE wants to ensure that their struggle for independence is not confused with a terrorist organization whose aim is to spread terror and which lacks political aims or objectives.

The LTTE has made their objection to being lumped in with other terrorist organizations or even under the terminology of suicide terrorism. “The Tigers abjure the phrase suicide bombing. Mr. Thamichelvam cited two works in Tamil. One, “Thatkolai,” means to kill yourself. The other, “thatkodai,” means to give yourself. That was the word the Tigers used, and preferred.”<sup>138</sup> Therefore the Tigers see suicide terrorism specifically as a way to give oneself to the cause, rather than the taking of a life or lives. This serves to legitimize the use of suicide terrorism and also allows them to separate their deed from other terrorists.

While the LTTE aim may have been to keep outsiders from seeing their struggle as terrorism, many terrorist organizations have studied and copied their tactics and use of suicide terrorism. “The LTTE became the world’s foremost suicide bombers and proved the tactic to be so unnerving and effective that their methods and killing innovations were

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<sup>137</sup> Rohan Gunarantna, “The LTTE and Suicide Terrorism,” *Frontline Indian’s National Magazine from the publishers of THE HINDU*, 17 no. 03 (February 05-08, 2000).

<sup>138</sup> Amy Waldman, “Suicide Bombing Masters: Sri Lankan Rebels,” *The New York Times*, January 14, 2003.

studied and copied, most notably in the Middle East. The LTTE has committed the most attacks, close to 200, using women bombers in 30-40 percent.”<sup>139</sup> The fact that the LTTE has been using this method for such a long time, on a consistent basis has made them a group to be studied and emulated by terrorist organizations.

## **Women**

The LTTE has been quite notable in their use of women in suicide terrorism. “Some 30 to 40 percent of their suicide bombers, including the one who killed former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi of India in 1991, have been women.”<sup>140</sup> The use of women in this regard has been going on since the attacks began in Sri Lanka. Female participation in suicide missions is demonstrative of the social culture of the LTTE, which preaches equality among the sexes. Therefore women should be and are involved in all aspects of the war against the government of Sri Lanka. “Nearly one-third of the Black Tigers are composed of women. The presence of women in the suicide squad asserts the gender equality that the LTTE preaches.”<sup>141</sup>

The confidence that the LTTE has in its women cadres is evidenced in the major operations in which they have been involved. “Most famously, a female suicide bomber killed Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi in 1991 while he was campaigning for reelection. The attacker was wearing an explosive device under her robes that made it

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<sup>139</sup> “Female Suicide Bombers,” Debra D. Zedalis, Carlisle Papers in Security Strategy, Strategic Studies Institute U.S. Army War College Carlisle, PA June 2004, at 2.

<sup>140</sup> Amy Waldman, “Suicide Bombing Masters: Sri Lankan Rebels,” *The New York Times*, January 14, 2003.

<sup>141</sup> “Suicide Terrorism in Sri Lanka,” R Ramasubramanian, IPCS Research Papers, August, 2004 *Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies New Delhi, India*, at 11. (accessed November 11, 2005); available from [www.ipcs.org/IRP05.pdf](http://www.ipcs.org/IRP05.pdf).

appear that she was pregnant.”<sup>142</sup> This was one of the biggest assassinations of a political leader by the LTTE, and it was a mission executed by a woman.

The use of women by the LTTE is based on the many benefits associated with using a woman over a man in a suicide mission.

“Terrorist organizations use women as weapons because they provide:

- Tactical advantage: stealthier attack, element of surprise, hesitancy to search women, female stereotype (e.g., nonviolent).
- Increased number of combatants.
- Increased publicity (greater publicity = larger number of recruits).
- Psychological effect.”<sup>143</sup>

This is evidenced in the success of large-scale female suicide terrorist operations perpetrated by the LTTE. In addition, they are able to recruit large numbers of combatants when they are not concerned with the gender of the individual. The use of women has had both profound psychological and publicity affects in the case of the Tamil Tigers.

### **Individual motivations**

Although the LTTE is a strong organization with a nationalist ideology and heavy indoctrination methods, the reason an individual decides to become a suicide terrorist is quite complex. “The LTTE suicide bomber is motivated by his or her politico-social environment as well as by the indoctrination carried out by the organization.” Anyone that decides to volunteer for a suicide mission is likely acting in response to many factors that influence their lives.

One of these factors that is applicable in the case of the Tamils is “The prolonged conditions of chronic ethnic conflict and bloodshed in Sri Lanka have endowed suicide

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<sup>142</sup> Audrey Kurth Cronin, “Terrorist and Suicide Attacks,” *CRS Report to Congress*, August 28, 2003, at 15.

<sup>143</sup> “Female Suicide Bombers,” Debra D. Zedalis, Carlisle Papers in Security Strategy, Strategic Studies Institute U.S. Army War College Carlisle, PA June 2004, at 7.

bombing with a sinister logic. Death seems pervasive and unavoidable for the Black Tigers of the LTTE who value its survival above their own. They became willing, even eager, to sacrifice their lives for the greater cause of Tamil Eealm.”<sup>144</sup> This is related to war fatigue, many individuals, especially youths find themselves in a state of conflict and war with few alternatives but to join the cause. Whether they fight for the LTTE or not, they believe they will likely die in the conflict and therefore are more interested in offering their lives for a greater cause. Young Tamils often find themselves a victim of abuse at the hands of the military of Sri Lanka and are looking for a way to end the conflict that has consumed their entire lives. Suicide terrorism offers these individuals the opportunity to try and end the war and to end their own suffering.

Another factor in the individual’s decision to become a suicide terrorist for the LTTTE is related to what some have called brainwashing.

“ Brainwashing methods have played a significant role in the Tamil Tiger organization. In its training camps, one hears heroic songs blaring from loudspeakers from dusk to dawn. LTTE recruits are not allowed to marry: they are already married to the “Tamil Eelam.” Nor are they allowed to have sex, for anyone who is chaste and who saves his sperm bestows a magical potency on it or gives it superhuman poweres which are then set free at the critical moment.”<sup>145</sup>

While this has a profound affect on the individual, it is more likely helpful in sustaining their resolve in committing the act rather than a specific trigger. An individual would likely come to a training camp because they had these beliefs or thoughts already. The brainwashing allows the LTTE leadership to remain in power without question. The idea of not allowing marriage ensures loyalty to only the organization and no one else above

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<sup>144</sup> “Suicide Terrorism in Sri Lanka,” R Ramasubramanian, IPCS Research Papers, August, 2004 *Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies New Delhi, India*, at 15. (accessed November 11, 2005); available from [www.ipcs.org/IRP05.pdf](http://www.ipcs.org/IRP05.pdf).

<sup>145</sup> Christopher Reuter, *My Life is a Weapon A Modern History of Suicide Bombing*. (United Kingdom: Princeton University Press, 2004), at 160.

it, while the prohibition on sex between individuals is also likely related to preventing powerful relationships from forming or possible pregnancy among women which could be a powerful deterrent for a woman to commit a suicide terrorist attack.

Another motivation for an LTTE suicide terrorist is the ability to become important and contribute to society.

“Like the bombers of Hamas, Hezbollah, and al-Qaeda, the earnest young men and women dispatched on suicide missions by the LTTE are posthumously honored. Scented candles, garlands of flowers, and papier-mache effigies of the dead decorate their shrines. Their bodies- patched up, if possible- are carried to the funeral in a triumphal procession.”<sup>146</sup>

An individual that lacks importance or the ability to contribute to society are able to do so through the act of suicide terrorism. It brings glorification and worship for both themselves and for their families after they commit a suicide attack.

Like most conflicts, individuals often suffer great trauma and loss. Some have decided that committing suicide terrorism against the symbol of what has caused this trauma is the way to deal with it. “The existence of intense and sustained trauma is likely to play a role in recruiting volunteers for the LTTE and this is borne out by what little material exists on personal motivations. Death and suffering are ubiquitous among the Tamils.”<sup>147</sup> The Tamils have all been touched personally in some way by this conflict, which has raged in their country for decades. Suicide terrorism gives them the ability to fight back against the injustice they believe has been exacted against them while fighting for their entire ethnic group.

The Ingroup vs. Outgroup theory is definitely applicable to the Tamil Tigers. The LTTE ‘s foundation is based on the ethnicity of the Tamils and their fight against the

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<sup>146</sup> Ibid.

<sup>147</sup> Gambetta, Diego (ed), *Making Sense of Suicide Missions*, (United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, June 2005), at 70.

oppressive and discriminatory policies of the 'outgroup' of the Sri Lankan government and the Sinhalese majority. Therefore those with Tamil ethnicity and who are members of the LTTE see themselves as a cohesive, homogenous group that is fighting against the 'others' that are seeking to destroy their civilization. The use of suicide terrorism and the ferocity with which they fight are demonstrative of this phenomenon.

The decision for the LTTE to employ suicide terrorism against state institutions was based on rational choice theory. The decision to use suicide terrorism was a rational one for the Tamils. After years of abuse and defeat by the stronger Sri Lankan military, the organization needed a new tactic that could equalize the power asymmetry. The Tamils quickly learned that suicide terrorism was a tactic that was very difficult to combat and would often inflict major damage and casualties on the enemy. The decision to continue to use this tactic was a rational one, because it was a tactic that was working and eventually led to negotiations and a declared cease-fire in 2001. It was only after talks fell apart that they resumed their suicide attacks.

Frustration is also a key factor in an individual's decision to become a suicide terrorist. The inability to protect yourself, your family, or your ethnic group creates major frustration in an individual. The government of Sri Lanka systemically discriminated against, abused, tortured, raped and killed Tamils. Although an organized resistance was formed, the guerilla tactics did not have the same affect as suicide terrorism.

The above factors may have an influence on an individual's decision to become a suicide terrorist, however to what extent and in what combination is unknown because of the complexity of human beings. In addition there are surely other factors that have

motivated individuals that have not been explored here. While “The individual motives for the bombers vary between the personal desire for revenge and reactions to the domestic policies of the Sri Lanka government. All however, were inspired by an extreme ethnic nationalism and complete dedication to the leader of the LTTE, Villupilai Prabhakaran.”<sup>148</sup> The organization is very important in the case of the Tamils.

Of the factors mentioned above regarding individual motivations for a suicide terrorist, there are three in particular that are more prevalent in the Sri Lankan case than the others. The three most prevalent factors are the trauma suffered by the Tamils, the Ingroup v Outgroup hypothesis and the recognition and heroism assigned to suicide bombers in this organization.

The Tamils have suffered great atrocities at the hands of the Sri Lankan government, including the riots of 1983, systemic discrimination and violations of human rights. Much like the Chechen case the trauma has transcended gender and has caused many females to volunteer for suicide missions. The ability to avenge the trauma they have suffered at the hands of the government appears to be a strong motivation for suicide bombers in Sri Lanka.

The separation between the Tamils and the Sinhalese was determined and exploited during colonial times and has continued to this day. There is a clear distinction for the Tamils between their ethnic group and the majority Sinhalese in Sri Lanka. This distinction provides a strong separation between the ingroup and the outgroup. Even further separation occurs between those that are part of the LTTE and those that are not. The LTTE organization is very tight-knit and its suicide bombers are seen as an elite

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<sup>148</sup> Mia Bloom, *Dying to Kill: The Allure of Suicide Terror*. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), at 63-64.

group of individuals willing to die for their cause. These individuals are sacrificing their lives for their ingroup the Tamils and more specifically the Tamil Tigers.

Last is the honor and prestige associated with suicide terrorism in the LTTE. The process through which one becomes a suicide terrorist creates the feeling of being elite among their peers. Members of the LTTE that are chosen for these missions undergo a competitive process to be chosen. In addition, they will have their last dinner with the leader of the LTTE who is highly revered and worshiped by members of the LTTE. In addition the individual knows that once they have executed the attack, they will rise to the status of a hero and be worshiped by members of the organization. They believe that the act they commit is one that will have a great contribution to their society. These are large motivators for Tamils who lack the ability to achieve real success in any other way.

### **Intro compare/contrast**

One difference between the Chechen rebels and the LTTE is the means each organization uses in order to obtain their political goals. The LTTE's main use of suicide terrorism is aimed at the institutions they are fighting, namely the Sri Lanka government and military. When the LTTE engages in negotiations with the government of Sri Lanka and there is a demonstration of good faith, they are willing to stop the suicide bombings, this is evidenced in the almost three year term of peace between 2001 and 2004. The Chechen rebels that are perpetrating suicide terrorism are less willing to have any association with the government of Russia and since the suicide bombings began they have never stopped. The Chechens appear more interested in using suicide terrorism to create terror among the civilian populations and have less focus on targeting the military and the government for political aims than the Tamils Tigers.

In conjunction with the differences in the aims of the organizations are the intended targets of their suicide bombings. The LTTE specifically target's only military and political figures although there have been many civilian casualties; whereas the Chechens also target civilians in some cases specifically civilians. The LTTE is so against the targeting of civilians that they will not claim responsibility for missions in which civilians are killed. The LTTE wants to be viewed as organization with political aims that targets the government in its bombings. The Chechen appear to be less concerned with how their organization is viewed and have ruthlessly and purposefully killed many civilians.

Although there are differences in target selection and in some cases the aims of the use of suicide terrorism, in the end these two organizations are both fighting for the attainment of a similar goal. They both are fighting a powerful state that has been repressive and abusive to their particular ethnic group and the use of suicide terrorism is meant to punish the government and obtain an independent state.

### **Women Compare and Contrast:**

In the case of Chechnya the use of women seems to be due to a loss of men to the conflict and the need for more bodies. The women that perpetrate these crimes certainly have their own individual motivations or may have been indoctrinated, but the organization does not see them as equals. Chechen society is male dominated and patriarchal. Women are under the direction of men in this conflict, they are not independent thinkers. Women are seen as nothing more than a body to be sacrificed for the cause. In contrast the use of women in Sri Lanka seems far different. The inclusion of women is based on the idea of equality among the sexes and they are considered equal

members of the conflict. They have been part of the organization from the beginning and seen as valuable contributors. The use of women in suicide missions has been commonplace, with women perpetrating some of the most high profile missions. In the case of the LTTE women are more a part of the organization as a whole and often believe wholeheartedly in the ideology.

There are commonalities within the women's motivations for volunteering for suicide missions. Although the ideology of the organization is a large influence, women in general tend to commit suicide terrorism for personal reasons; this is the case for both Chechen and Tamil women. Often suicide missions are undertaken by these women in order to get revenge for rape or the murder of their family members by the state. However one important note to make is that women in the LTTE are less likely to become suicide terrorists based on coercion than are Chechen women bombers.

#### **Individual motivations compare/contrast**

The motivations for an individual to become a suicide terrorist are very similar in both the Chechen and the Tamil cases. Part of the reason for this is because of the similarities that exist in the history of their conflicts and the political goal of independent statehood for their respective ethnic groups that both organizations have. The environmental conditions created by the war and the oppressive and discriminatory practices of the governments create motivations for an individual to become a suicide terrorist.

The similarities in techniques used by these two organizations such as an ideology that individuals can easily unite behind as well as indoctrination techniques provide the motivation necessary for some individuals to become suicide terrorists. Once inside

these organizations individuals are bombarded with nationalist or religious ideology as well as undergo various indoctrination/brainwashing techniques leaving the individual to believe that becoming a suicide terrorist is the right thing to do.

Individuals perpetrating suicide attacks for the Chechens and the Tamils have also suffered similar trauma and loss of loved ones due to the conflict between the separatists and the state. This has had a profound affect on individuals and may often lead to a desire to avenge the death of a love one or a crime inflicted upon the individual. This becomes an especially potent factor for women to become suicide terrorists.

The individuals perpetrating suicide terrorism for these two organizations do so also with the strong motivation of the ingroup v outgroup theory. The Tamils and the Chechens see themselves as different from the other ethnicities in their respective countries and are fighting to differentiate themselves through the establishment of an independent state. The mentality of the Tamils and the Chechens is very much an, 'our ingroup' or us vs. 'the outgroup,' or them. This is in part based on ethnic pride but more significantly to the oppressive and discriminatory practices of the government that created a real divide between the Chechens and the Russians and the Tamils and the Sinhalese populations. This creates the feeling among the minority population that they must fight on behalf of their ingroup against the outgroup to ensure their very survival.

Another similarity in motivation for individuals from these two groups to become suicide terrorists is the war fatigue that they feel. Both minority groups have been engaged in active combat against the state for independence. These conflicts have raged for many years and have in many cases destroyed the infrastructure and the future of youth in these regions. Many are tired of living in a constant war and are willing to do

anything to change the status quo. Becoming a suicide terrorist allows them the opportunity to get out of the war and possibly help to end it.

Rational choice theory is another similarity that individuals from these organizations share. Individuals are motivated to partake in suicide terrorist missions because they see it as a rational choice for a tactic in an asymmetric power struggle with the state. The use of suicide terrorism is a strategy that can allow their less powerful organization to inflict pain and suffering against the enemy. For an individual this is a rational choice, to fight the enemy with the only weapon they have, their life.

Individuals from both organizations also share in common the idea of self-importance and worship from others should they become suicide terrorist. Both countries provide very little if any opportunity for the minority youth populations. To join one of the rebel organizations, and rise to the rank of a suicide terrorist brings great pride to their families and they are often held up as a model to be emulated by others. This provides a strong motivation for an individual who has nothing and whose future looks bleak.

Lastly the frustration hypothesis fits as a motivation for individuals in both organizations due to the length of the conflict they are both involved in. Both organizations fought their enemy state with guerilla tactics for years with little result in achieving their political aims. Therefore due to the frustration with little progress being made, individuals are willing to sacrifice themselves for the cause in order to advance the conflict. The reaction of governments to the use of suicide terrorism has proved the successfulness of the use of suicide terrorism for organizations that perpetrate them and prove their efficacy.

Among the above mentioned theories those that share special prevalence between the two groups are; ideology, trauma, ingroup v outgroup, and war fatigue. Ideology plays a very important role in the path to suicide terrorism for individuals. It is the ideology touted by the organizations that lends some legitimacy to the actions of these bombers. Although there are certainly some bombers for whom the organizational ideology may play a very small role, for most ideology is a prevalent part of their decision.

In the cases of Chechnya and Sri Lanka, the organizations employing suicide terrorism have been embroiled in a violent and deadly war with the government for many years. The Chechens and the Tamils have been dealing with war on a daily basis for so long that they hardly remember there ever being a time of peace. War fatigue has set in for the Tamil and Chechen populations, many of the youth being born into the war and never knowing a time of peace. These individuals are exceptionally susceptible to using suicide terrorism in order to deal with this war fatigue. With this constant state of war comes constant trauma. These individuals are constantly surround by death, suffering and destruction of society. Suicide terrorism allows for a certain amount of vengeance for these individuals.

Lastly is the ingroup vs. outgroup hypothesis, the “us” vs. “them.” Both organizations have clearly delineated themselves and have been fighting on behalf of a particular ethnic group that they identify with and which they see in direct conflict with those outside of their ethnic group. The use of suicide terrorism by Chechens and Tamils is in direct relation to their fight of outsiders who are trying to destroy their homeland or

to ethnically cleanse their ingroup. This is a strong motivating factor for Chechen and Tamil suicide terrorists.

### **Recommendations for countering suicide terrorism/Conclusion**

This study has provided information regarding commonalities and differences between the uses of suicide terrorism in two conflicts in two different parts of the world. With that knowledge the following will provide information on how governments should deal with suicide terrorism and the counter terrorism options available to them. For example,

“How one deals with suicide attacks depends greatly on what motives are presumed to lie behind them. If one believes them to be a result of political desperation, a political response is called for. If, alternatively, they are thought to spring from the perversity of individuals, who for their own lascivious reasons are determined to get into paradise in order to have sexual relations with virgins, and who are impervious to reason- then it would be appropriate to deal with them as if they were a criminal sect; to arrest them, isolate them, fight them.”<sup>149</sup>

According to the above logic, the response from the Sri Lankan government and the Russian government needs to be a political one. Both organizations clearly have political motives behind their suicide terrorist actions and therefore these demands or issues must be addressed in some fashion.

Also what must be addressed are the environmental factors that create motivation for individuals to perpetrate suicide attacks, and make it easier for organizations to recruit them.

“They would include policies that alter the political, cultural and socio-economic contexts that perpetuate suicide attacks, such as improving quality of life, increasing social stability, providing opportunities for productive political expression, employment, education, and so on. Other important means of reducing recruitment include methods to undermine the ideology of the individual attacker, especially his or her dedication and faith in the meaningful nature of his

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<sup>149</sup> Christopher Reuter, *My Life is a Weapon A Modern History of Suicide Bombing*. (United Kingdom: Princeton University Press, 2004), at 126.

or her death. Historical experience demonstrates that terrorist organizations cannot continue to employ methods that alienate actual or potential constituents. The ultimate active measure over time is to remove the constituencies.”<sup>150</sup>

These actions are often difficult to implement for a government because they require generous amounts of time and resources. However, to really disrupt the chain of suicide terrorism they are important factors that must be implemented especially in the two cases presented in this study. Social and economic factors weigh greatly in a decision for an individual to become a suicide terrorist. In addition the ideology that the individual obtains from the organization provides the rational and legitimacy necessary for an individual to perpetrate a suicide terrorist act.

Human intelligence gathering is also critical to thwarting suicide terrorist attacks. “Intelligence is the first link in the chain of thwarting any terror attack, but it is of the utmost importance in thwarting suicide attacks before they are put into practice. Enabling us to penetrate the movement’s armies, monitor its recruitment drives, and predict its evolution- including the type of personnel it will recruit.”<sup>151</sup> Without the ability to understand how these organizations work and the individuals that perpetrate suicide bombings, no country can effectively implement a security regime to combat suicide terrorism. In addition, this type of intelligence also helps to alert authorities to the possibility of one of these attacks before they occur, allowing the government to take counter measures. The current clandestine nature of suicide terrorism makes the enemy invisible and impossible to stop.

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<sup>150</sup> Audrey Kurth Cronin, “Terrorist and Suicide Attacks,” *CRS Report to Congress*, August 28, 2003, at 22-23.

<sup>151</sup> “Female Suicide Bombers,” Debra D. Zedalis, Carlisle Papers in Security Strategy, Strategic Studies Institute U.S. Army War College Carlisle, PA June 2004, at 13.

While this particular study concentrates specifically on suicide terrorism and its use in the conflicts between the Chechens and Russia and the Tamils and Sri Lanka, there are valuable lessons to be learned in general regarding suicide terrorism. Organizations despite their level of complexity are able to recruit volunteers for their organization and specifically for suicide missions, due to a strong ideology that has a uniting quality particular to these individuals. Also, regardless of religious or societal beliefs, women are participating on a large scale in suicide terrorism and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future. Organizations involved in asymmetric power struggles will continue to use suicide terrorism as it has proved to be one of the most effective weapons against powerful states. While the decision to become a suicide terrorist is based on a number of factors due to the complexity of individuals, with a common set of environmental factors, you will find many similarities among individual motivations. Lastly, in order to counter suicide terrorists, governments must work to change environmental/societal factors that make individuals riper for recruitment while expending resources in human intelligence to gain a further understanding of the phenomenon while attempting to obtain information to thwart attacks in the short term. These recommendations will provide a way to take away the invisible nature of suicide terrorism and render it an ineffective weapon in the hands of the enemy.

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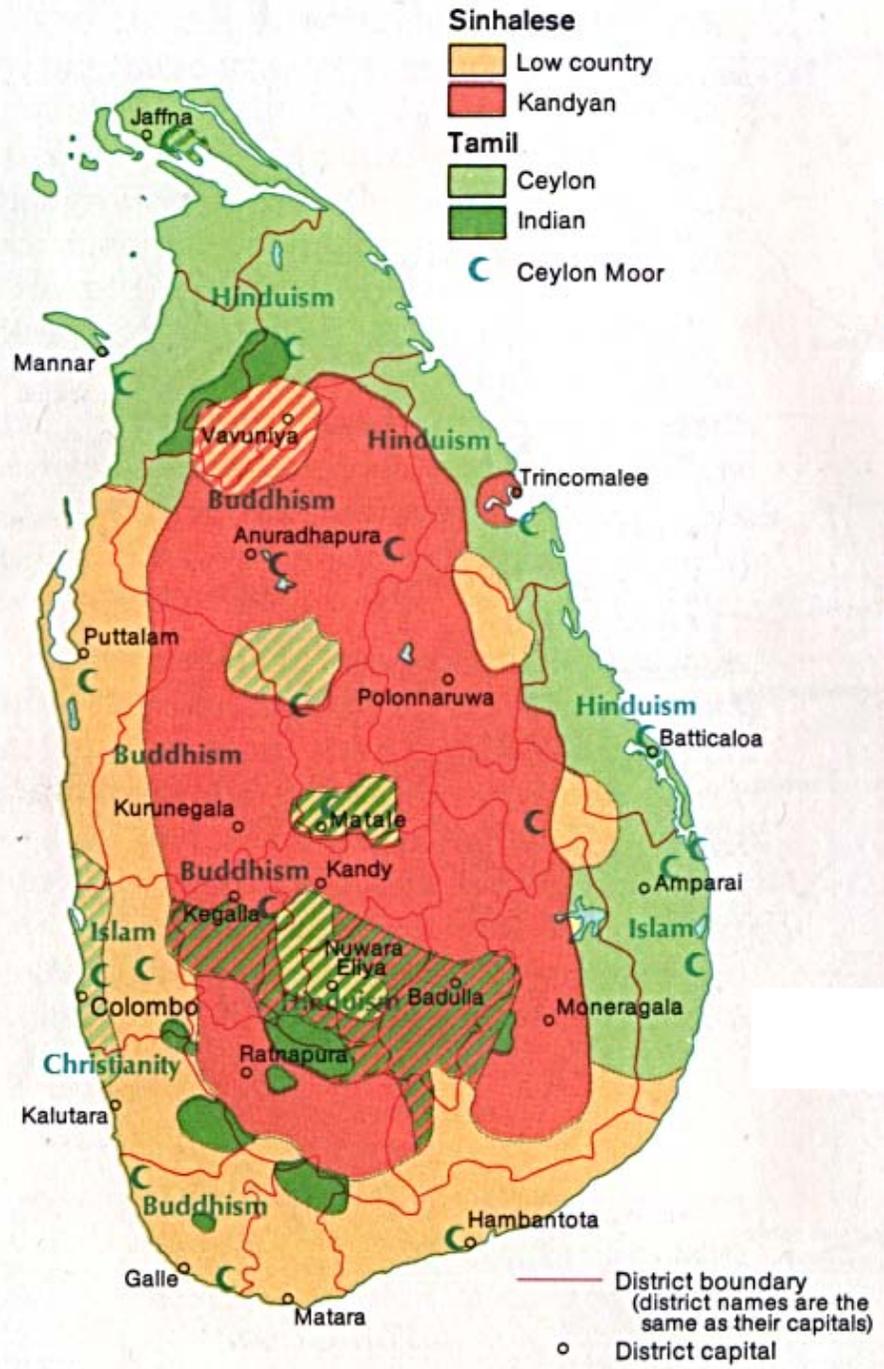
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**Ethnolinguistic Groups in the Caucasus Region**



<sup>152</sup> “Perry-Castañeda Library Map Collection-Chechnya (Chechen Republic) Maps, *The University of Texas at Austin*. (accessed on November 12, 2005); available from <http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/commonwealth/ethnocaucasus.jpg>.

### Ethnic communities and religions



<sup>153</sup> “Perry-Castañeda Library Map Collection- Sri Lanka Maps,” *The University of Texas at Austin*. (accessed November 12, 2005); available from [http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/islands\\_oceans\\_poles/sri\\_lanka\\_charts\\_76.jpg](http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/islands_oceans_poles/sri_lanka_charts_76.jpg).

## Attachment C

### *Suicide Terrorist Attacks Committed By Chechen Rebels*<sup>154</sup>

January 2000

A man kills himself with a suicide bomb outside the Russian embassy in Beirut, Lebanon.

June 7, 2000

Khava Barayev and Luiza Magomadova drive a truck bomb into the police commandant's office in Alkhan-Yurt, Chechnya.

June 11, 2000

A man and a woman blow themselves up in a car at a Russian checkpoint in Grozny.

June 12, 2000

A former Russian soldier who had converted to Wahhabism detonates his car bomb at a Russian checkpoint in the Chernorechnye district of Grozny.

July 2-3, 2000

A series of coordinated suicide bombings in Gudermes, Urus-Martan, Argun, Novogroznensky, and Naibyora, Chechnya kill at least fifty people.

August 2000

Basayev claims that the sinking of the *Kursk* nuclear submarine was a deliberate act of sabotage by a suicide saboteur aboard the submarine during the testing of the new torpedo.

August 2, 2000

A suicide car bomber kills the deputy head of the Russian administration in Urus-Martan, Chechnya. Other suicide car bombings that month in Khankala, Argun, and elsewhere kill at least thirty and wound fifty.

December 16, 2000

Sixteen-year-old Mareta Dudayeva attempts to drive a truck into a Leninsky district police station in Grozy. She is wounded by police gunfire and is unable to detonate her bomb. That same day, a little-known suicide bombing in Alkhan-Kala, Chechnya kills sixteen and wounds twenty.

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<sup>154</sup> The events listed from January 2000- April 6, 2004 was assembled from information provided in Paul Murphy's Book, *The Wolves of Islam*, in the section entitled, "Chronology of Terror," pages 242-268, events after this date were assembled from "Timeline: Chechnya," *BBC News*. (accessed on November 12, 2005); available from [http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/asia-pacific/country\\_profiles/2357267.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/asia-pacific/country_profiles/2357267.stm), and NUPI Center for Russian Studies' Database, *Chronology of Events, A Wave of Terror Hits Russia-an overview of the most important terrorist acts 1995-2004*, August 31, 2004 (accessed April 2, 2005); available from <http://www.nupi.no/cgiwin/Russland/krono.exe?6224website>.

July 31, 2001

Chechen Sultan-Said Idiyev, armed with a Kalashnikov and a grenade bomb around his neck, seizes a bus traveling from Nevinomyssk to Stabropol, Russia, with thirty-seven passengers.

November 29, 2001

Sixteen-year-old Aizan Gazuyeva uses grenades hidden under her dress to kill Russian General Geidar Gadzhiyev in Urus-Martan after her refuses to tell her the fate of her detained husband.

February 2002

Fifteen-year-old Zarema Inarkayeva tries to deliver a bomb to a Grozny police station, but it fails to detonate. She says she was kidnapped and told that her family would be killed if she didn't do the job.

October 23, 2002

At least forty-one Chechen terrorists belonging to Basayev's Riyadus-Salikhin Reconnaissance and Sabotage Battalion of Shakhids seize the Dubrovka theater center in Moscow with 761 theatergoers and staff inside.

December 27, 2002

Chechen Gelani Tumriyev, his fifteen-year-old daughter, and his son drive powerful truck and car bombs into the Chechen government administration building in Grozny, completely destroying the complex.

May 12, 2003

Two men and female suicide bomber Zarina Alikhhanova drive their truck bombs into the Nadterechny, Chechnya, district government building, killing sixty and wounding up to one hundred.

May 13, 2003

Two or three female suicide bombers attempt to kill Akhmat Kadyrov during a religious ceremony in Iliskhan-Yurt, Chechnya.

June 4, 2003

A female suicide bomber, Lidiya (Lida) Khaldykoroyeva, attempts to board a military bus near the Prokhladny Russian air forces base in Mozdok, North Ossetia. She detonates her bomb, killing eighteen, when the bus driver refuses to let her board.

Mid June 2003

A man and a woman attempt to drive a KamAZ truck with two metric tons of explosives into the MVD building in Grozny, but barriers and police gunfire stop the truck. Six are killed besides the bombers and thirty-six are wounded.

June 24, 2003

Pregnant suicide bomber Luiza Asmayeba, twenty-two, on her way to a Grozny target dies along with two male fighters in a shootout with police. Before her death, she tells police she wanted to cleanse herself after being raped by Chechen fighters.

July 5, 2003

Nineteen-year-old Zulikhan Yelikhadzhiyeva and twenty-six-year-old Zinaida Aliyeva blow themselves up at the annual Wings rock and beer festival at Tushino airfield, Moscow.

July 9-10, 2003

Twenty-three-year-old Zarema Muzhikhoyeva attempts to blow up a restaurant on Moscow's main street, but her bomb refuses to detonate until an FSB sapper attempts to disarm it.

July 24, 2003

A police dragnet nabs three male suicide bombers in Nazran, Ingushetia. Two bombers are killed and a third escapes.

July 27, 2003

Twenty-six-year-old Iman Khachukayeva blows herself up outside the base housing Ramzan Kadyrov's Kadyrovsky Spetznaz special Chechen security unit in Totsin-Yurt, Chechnya.

August 1, 2003

A suicide truck bomber crashed into the Russian military hospital in Mozdok, North Ossetia, Killing fifty and wounding eighty-two.

August 8, 2003

Moscow police catch two men and a Chechen woman in a car with suicide belts and a marked-up map with potential targets. Police say they were going to steal a fire truck and crash into one of the targets.

September 15, 2003

A man and wife suicide team attempt to blow up the new FSB building in Magas, Ingushetia, but fail to get close enough. Three people in the parking lot are killed and twenty-eight wounded.

December 5, 2003

Four Chechen suicide bombers (a man and three women) blow up an early morning train carrying students and other commuters as it departs from the Yessentuki train station, killing forty-two and wounding one hundred others.

December 9, 2003

An unidentified lone Black Widow blows herself up outside the National Hotel in Moscow, killing six and wounding fifteen. Her likely target is the Russian State Duma.

February 6, 2004

One or two suicide terrorists bomb the green-line subway train near the Paveletskaya metro stop in Moscow, killing at least forty passengers and wounding a hundred.

March 11, 2004

A suicide car bomber attempts to assassinate MVD Deputy Minister Sultan Satuyev as he leaves work, but terrorists detonate their bomb too early. Other terrorists open fire on his car, but he is not hurt.

April 6, 2004

A suicide car bomber attempts to assassinate Ingush President Murat Zyazikov on the way to his office in Magas from his home in Nazran. The bomber's car overtakes the president's armored limousine and then crashes into the passenger's side of the president's car. He is unhurt, but six other people are wounded.

August 24, 2004

Two airliners were downed simultaneously hundreds of kilometers apart after flying out of the same Moscow airport by female suicide terrorists.

August 31, 2004

A suicide bomber detonated herself outside the entrance of to a Moscow subway station killing 10 and injuring 50.

September 2004

Hundreds are killed or wounded-many of them children- when a siege of at a school in Beslan, North Ossetia ends in a bloodbath.

**Attachment D**  
*Suicide Attacks Committed by the LTTE<sup>155</sup>*

<b>Table 3</b> <b>Suicide Attacks by LTTE in Sri Lanka</b>				
<b>Date / Day</b>	<b>Target Zone</b>	<b>Victims</b>	<b>Mode of Operation</b>	<b>Suicide bomber</b>
5 July 1987, Sunday	Nelliyadi Maha Vidyalyam, in Vadamaradchchi in the Jaffna peninsula.	40 security persons killed	Truck laden with explosives	Captain Miller
12 July 1990, Thursday	Naval Vessel , Triconamalee	6 security persons killed	Boat laden with explosives	4 Male suicide bombers (Sea Tigers)
23 November 1990, Friday	Manakulam Army camp	3 Army men killed	Car laden with explosives	2 Male suicide bombers
02 March 1991, Saturday	Havelock Road, Election rally in Colombo	Defence Minister Ranjan Wijeratne killed	Car laden with explosives	Male suicide bomber
19 March 1991, Tuesday	Army camp, Silavathurai	5 Army men killed	Truck laden with explosives	—————
05 May 1991, Sunday	Naval vessel in Triconamalee	5 security personnel killed	Boat laden with explosives	2 Male suicide bombers (Sea Tigers)
11 May 1991, Saturday	Kankesanthurai	3 Naval personnel killed	Boat laden with explosives	3 Male suicide bombers (Sea Tigers)
21 June 1991, Friday	Outside the Joint Operations Command Office, Colombo	21 persons killed, 200 people wounded	Truck laden with 70 kg of explosives	Two male suicide bombers
16 November 1992, Monday	Outside the Naval Command office, Colombo	Clancy Fernando, Vice Admiral of Navy and 5 others killed	Motorcycle laden with explosives rammed into his car	Two male suicide bombers
01 May 1993, Saturday	Armour Street Junction, UNP's May Day rally at Central Colombo	Mr.Ranasinghe Premadasa, the Sri Lankan President and 23 others killed	6cm wide and 40 cm long – abdominal belt bomb	Babu, a male suicide bomber
11 November 1993, Thursday	Naval base, Jaffna lagoon	2 Navy boats got damaged	Boat laden with explosives	Sea Tigers

<sup>155</sup> R. Ramasubramanian, “Table 3, Suicide Attacks by LTTE in Sri Lanka,” in “Suicide Terrorism in Sri Lanka,” IPCS Research Papers, August, 2004 *Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies New Delhi, India.* (accessed November 11, 2005); available from [www.ipcs.org/IRP05.pdf](http://www.ipcs.org/IRP05.pdf).

02 August 1994, Tuesday	Palali Air base	Air force helicopter damaged	Body suit	Male suicide bomber
23 October 1994, Sunday	Thotalaga (Grandpass) Junction, Election meeting in Colombo	Gamini Dissanayake, Opposition leader (UNP) and 56 others killed	Abdominal Belt bomb	Male suicide bomber
07 August 1995, Monday	In front of the Western Province CM's office at Independence Square, Colombo	22 persons killed	Hand cart laden with explosives	Male suicide bomber
10 September 1995, Sunday	Kankesanthurai	A Naval vessel damaged	Plastic bomb by Scuba diving	Male suicide bomber (Sea Tigers)
02 October 1995, Monday	Kankesanthurai	A Naval vessel damaged	Plastic bomb by Scuba diving	Male suicide bomber(Sea Tigers)
17 October 1995, Tuesday	Triconamalee	9 Naval personnel killed and a Naval vessel damaged	Plastic bomb by Scuba diving	Male suicide bomber(Sea Tigers)
11 November 1995, Saturday	Opposite Slave Island Railway Station and near the Army headquarters.	23 Army men killed	Abdominal belt bomb	Two women Suicide bombers.
05 December 1995, Tuesday	Police Camp, Batticaloa	23 police killed	Truck laden with explosives	3 Male suicide bombers
31 January 1996, Wednesday	Central Bank at Janadipathi Mawatha, Colombo	91 killed and 1,400 wounded	Truck laden with 124 kg of explosives	3 member suicide squad
01 April 1996, Monday	Vettilaikerni	10 security persons killed	Boat laden with bomb	2 male suicide bombers (Sea Tigers)
03 July 1996, Wednesday	Government Motorcade, Jaffna	37 persons Killed	Abdominal belt bomb	Woman Suicide bomber
25 October 1996, Friday	Triconamalee	12 Naval personnel killed	Boat laden with explosives	2 Male suicide bombers (Sea Tigers)
17 December 1996, Tuesday	Ampara, Police unit	A Deputy Police commander killed.	Motorcycle laden with explosives	Male suicide bomber
15 October 1997, Wednesday	World Trade Centre building, near President's Secretariat	118 killed and 40 wounded	Truck laden with 300-400 kg of explosives	2 Male suicide bombers
19 October 1997, Sunday	Naval gun boat, North Eastern coast	7 Naval personnel killed	Boat laden with explosives	2 Male suicide bombers (Sea Tigers)

28 December 1997, Sunday	South Srilanka	Naval Chief Cecil Tissera wounded	Truck laden with explosives	Male suicide bomber
25 January 1998, Sunday	Sri Dalada Maligawa in Kandy, the temple which houses the Sacred Tooth Relic of the Lord Buddha	11 killed and 25 wounded	Truck laden with 300-400 kg of explosives	Three Male suicide bombers
06 February 1998, Friday	Near the Rio Cinema at Slave Island - Air Force Head quarters, Colombo	8 Air Force men killed	Abdominal belt bomb	Woman Suicide bomber
23 February 1998, Monday	Point Pedro	47 Naval personnel killed	2 Boats laden with explosives	4 Male suicide bombers (Sea Tigers)
14 May 1998, Friday	Jaffna Peninsula	Army Brigadier killed	Abdominal belt bomb	Woman suicide bomber
11 September 1998, Friday	Municipal Council building, Northern Jaffna	Mayor of Jaffna and 17 others killed	Bomb strapped to the bomber's body (Body suit)	Male suicide bomber
18 March 1999, Thursday	Near a police station in Colombo. Target was the head of the police terrorism investigation unit	Chief Inspector Mohammed Nilabdeen and 2 others killed	Bomb strapped to the bomber's body (Body Suit)	Woman Suicide bomber
29 May 1999, Saturday	Batticalao	Tamil Rival leader Mr.M.Ganesha Kumar (EPRLF) killed	Abdominal belt bomb	Woman Suicide bomber
25 July 1999, Sunday	Triconamalee	1 Naval personnel killed	Abdominal belt bomb	Woman Suicide bomber
29 July 1999, Thursday	Kynsly Road - Rosmead Place Junction in Borella, Colombo	Neelan Thiruchelvam, TULF vice president killed	Bomb strapped to the bomber's body (Body suit)	Male suicide bomber
04 August 1999, Wednesday	Town of Vavuniya northern Sri Lanka	Nine police commandos and one civilian killed	Belt bomb. A bicycle was used for the mission.	Male suicide bomber
09 August 1999, Wednesday	Vakarai	Military commander killed	Abdominal belt bomb	Male suicide bomber
02 September 1999, Monday	Vavuniya	K.Manikkadasan, Deputy Leader of PLOTE and 2 others killed	Abdominal belt bomb	Male suicide bomber

18 December 1999, Thursday	Election rally Town Hall premises in the heart of Colombo	21 people killed and 110 others wounded. Chandrika Kumaratunga, President, survived the attack but shrapnel wounds the eye	Bomb strapped to the bomber's body (Body suit)	Woman suicide bomber
18 December 1999, Thursday	Presidential Election meeting at Ja-Ela, Colombo	Former Army Major General Lucky Algama and 8 others killed and 70 wounded	Bomb strapped to the bomber's body (Body suit)	Male suicide bomber
05 January 2000, Saturday	In front of the Prime Minister's Office, Flower Road, Colombo	11 persons killed and 24 wounded	Bomb strapped to the bomber's body (Body suit)	Woman suicide bomber
02 March 2000, Thursday	Rajagiriya, opposite to an Ayurveda Hospital	25 persons killed	Weapons & claymore mines	3 member suicide cadre
02 March 2000, Thursday	Inner Harbour Road, Trincomalee	Col.DP De Z Abeyasekera (221 Brigade Commander) and 2 others killed	Belt bomb	Woman suicide bomber
10 March 2000, Friday	Top floor of the Serpentine Flat "C", Wanathamulla	Three policemen and at least 20 others killed	Van laden with explosives	5 Male suicide bombers
05 June 2000, Monday	Sinks gunboat of the Sri Lankan Navy, off Vadamarachchi coast, Jaffna peninsula	34 Naval personnel killed	Boat laden with explosives	2 Male suicide bombers - Sea Tigers
07 June 2000, Wednesday	Golumadama Junction, Ratmalana	C. V. Goonaratne, Industries Development Minister killed	Bomb strapped to the bomber's body (Body suit)	Woman Suicide bomber
14 June 2000, Wednesday	Gemunu Palace Cinema Junction in Wattala	2 Air Force personnel killed	Push Bicycle fitted with an explosive device	Male suicide bomber
25 June 2000, Sunday	Merchant vessel in the high seas off Point Pedro	16 Naval personnel killed	Boat laden with explosives	Sea Tiger squad
16 August 2000, Wednesday	Vavuniya	1 Army person killed	Abdominal belt bomb	Woman suicide bomber
15 September 2000, Friday	Eye Hospital, Deans Road in Colombo	7 persons were killed and 30 wounded	Bomb strapped to the bomber's body (Body suit)	Male suicide bomber

02 October 2000, Monday	Triconamalee	SLMC leader and 22 others killed	Abdominal belt bomb	Woman suicide bomber
19 October 2000, Thursday	Near Town Hall. Just before Sri Lanka's President installed her new cabinet in Colombo	5 people killed and 23 wounded.	Abdominal belt bomb	Male suicide bomber
24 July 2001, Tuesday	International airport in Sri Lanka	12 people killed	Truck laden with explosives	14 Male suicide bombers
29 October 2001, Monday	Chitra Lane, Narahenpita	6 others killed. Sri Lankan Prime Minister Ratnasiri Wickremanayake escapes assassination	_____	Male suicide bomber
30 October 2001, Tuesday	Mt. Silk Pride was attacked at 12 nautical miles north of Point Pedro	7 security personnel killed	Boat laden with explosives	Sea Tiger squad
15 November 2001, Thursday	Batticaloa town	Three soldiers killed (who had formerly been members of PLOTE) and nine others seriously wounded	Abdominal belt bomb	Male suicide bomber
07 July 2004, Wednesday	Kollupitiya police station, Colombo.	Four police officials killed and nine seriously injured	Bomb strapped to the bomber's chest.	Thiagaraja Jeyarani, a Woman suicide bomber