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SPECIAL REPORT

Terrorism in Turkey

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Keywords: arson; bombing; disaster; emergency medicine; emergency management; Hospital Emergency Incident Command System; (HEICS); injury; shooting; terrorism; Turkey

Abbreviations:
ATLS = advanced trauma life support
Dev Sol = the successor to an earlier organization, Devrimci Sol
DHKP/C = Revolutionary People's Liberation Party/Front
EMAT = Emergency Medicine Association of Turkey
EMS = emergency medical services
HEICS = Hospital Emergency Incident Command System
IBDA/C = Islamic great Easter Raider's Front
KADEK = Kurdistan Freedom and Democracy Congress
MIPT = Memorial Institute for the Prevention of Terrorism
NATO = North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NBC = Nuclear, biological and chemical
PKK = Partiya Karrekeren Kurdistan
TIKKO = Turkish Workers and Peasant's Liberation Army
TKP/ML-TIKKO = Turkish Communist Party/Marxist-Leninist organization
TRC = Trauma Resuscitation Course
US = United States of America

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Abstract

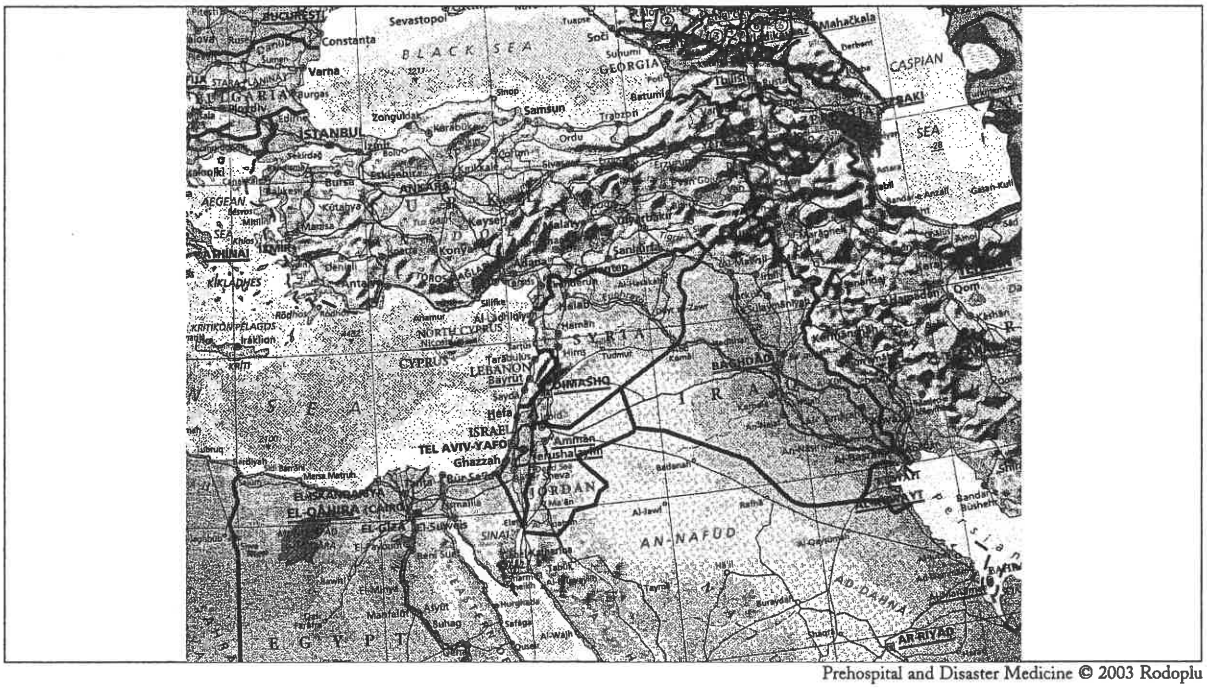
Over the past two decades, terrorism has exacted an enormous toll on the Republic of Turkey, a secular democracy with a 99.8% Muslim population. From 1984 to 2000, an estimated 30,000 to 35,000 Turkish citizens were killed by a nearly continuous stream of terrorism-related events. During this period, the Partiya Karekerren Kurdistan (PKK), a Kurdish separatist group (re-named KADEK in 2002), was responsible for the vast majority of terrorism-related events (and casualties), which disproportionately affected the eastern and southeastern regions of Turkey, in which the PKK has focused its activities. Most terrorist attacks over the past two decades have been bombings or shootings that produced <10 casualties per event. From 1984 to 2003, 15 terrorist attacks produced ≥30 casualties (eight shootings, five bombings, and two arsons). The maximum number of casualties produced by any of these events was 93 in the Hotel Madimak arson attack by the Turkish Islamic Movement in 1993.

This pattern suggests that terrorist attacks in Turkey rarely required more than local systems of emergency medical response, except in rural areas where Emergency Medical Services (EMS) are routinely provided by regional military resources. The last decade has seen the development of several key systems of local emergency response in Turkey, including the establishment of the medical specialty of Emergency Medicine, the establishment of training programs for EMS providers, the spread of a generic, Turkish hospital emergency plan based on the Hospital Emergency Incident Command System, and the spread of advanced training in trauma care modeled after Advanced Trauma Life Support.

Rodoplu U, Arnold J, Ersoy G: Terrorism in Turkey: Implications for emergency management. *Prehosp Disast Med* **2003;18(2):152–160.**

Introduction

The Republic of Turkey, with a population of 67 million, sits at the cross roads between Europe, Asia, and the Middle East (Figure 1).[1,2] Founded by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk in 1923, modern Turkey is a republican parliamentary democracy based on secular institutions. In succeeding the Ottoman Empire, a sprawling Muslim realm, Ataturk's Turkey opted for a unitary state that brought together all ethnic and religious groups within its borders, including Armenians, Greeks, and Jews. This democratic secular



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Figure 1—Terrorist organizations active in Turkey since 1990[4–8] (*The PKK was renamed KADEK in 2002; **Unrelated to the Lebanon-based Shiite Hezbollah)

English Name	Turkish Acronym	Major Ideology	Major Goal
Kurdistan Worker's Party*	PKK	Kurdish separatism, Islamism, Marxism	Establishment of an independent Kurdish state in southeast Turkey
Kurdistan Democratic Congress*	KADEK	Kurdish separatism	Establishment of an independent Kurdish state in southeast Turkey
People's Liberation Army of Kurdistan	ARAK	Kurdish separatism	Establishment of an independent Kurdish state in southeast Turkey
Kurdistan Liberation Party	-	Kurdish separatism, Marxism	Establishment of an independent united socialist Kurdistan in southeast Turkey, with portions from Syria, Iraq, and Iran
Northern Kurdistan Democratic Party	PDK/BAKUR	Kurdish separatism, Marxism	Establishment of an Independent Socialist Kurdistan Republic uniting Kurds in Turkey, Syria, Iraq, and Iran
Union of Kurd Laborers	-	Kurdish separatism, Marxism	Establishment of an independent Kurdistan in southeast Turkey, with portions from Syria, Iraq, and Iran
Turkish Hizballah**		Radical Islamism	Establishment of an Islamic state in Turkey
Islamic Great Eastern Raiders' Front	IBDA/C	Radical Islamism	Establishment of an Islamic state in Turkey
Islamic Kurdistan Party	PIK	Radical Islamism, Kurdish separatism	Establishment of an Islamic Kurdistan
Revolutionary People's Liberation Party/Front	DHKP/C	Marxism	Establishment of a Marxist state in Turkey
Turkish Communist Party/Marxist-Leninist	TKP/ML-TIKKO	Marxism	Establishment of a Marxist state in Turkey
Marxist-Leninist Communist Party	MLKP	Marxism	Establishment of a Marxist state in Turkey
Turkish Revolutionary Communists' Union	TIKB	Marxism	Establishment of a Marxist state in Turkey
Turkish Workers and Peasants Liberation Army	TIKKO	Marxism	Establishment of a Marxist state in Turkey

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Table 1—Terrorist organizations active in Turkey since 1990[4–8] (*The PKK was renamed KADEK in 2002; **Unrelated to the Lebanon-based Shiite Hezbollah)

Date	City/village	Site	Number injured**	Number dead	Type of bombing	Terrorist group attributed to
Nov 1992	Hani	Houses	16	14	Rockets***	PKK
Jun 1993	Antalya	Tourist hotel	28	0	-	PKK
Jul 1993	Kudadasi	Trash can on street	18	0	-	-
Aug 1993	Istanbul	Hungarian tour bus	11	0	Hand grenade	-
Oct 1993	Midyat-Kayapinar	Village road	30	26	Landmine	PKK
Feb 1994	Istanbul	Trash can at Tuzla Train Station	55	5	-	PKK
Apr 1994	Istanbul	Inside Covered Bazaar	19	2	-	PKK
Jun 1994	Fethiye	Tourist site	10	0	-	PKK
Jun 1994	Marmaris	Tourist beach and park	21	1	2 bombs	PKK
Aug 1995	Istanbul	Trash cans in central city	32	2	2 bombs	-
Sep 1995	Izmir	Outside café/grocery store	34	5	-	PKK
Jun 1996	Tunceli	Military parade	44	9	Suicide bombing	PKK
Nov 1996	Cigli	Minibus on road	26	17	Rockets	PKK
Sep 1997	Gaziantep	Book fair	25	1	Hand grenade	-
Oct 1997	Hakkari	Transportation vehicle	16	1		PKK
Dec 1997	Dargecit	Minibus on road	16	10	Landmine	PKK
Dec 1997	Temelli	Minibus on road	24	12	Landmine	PKK
May 1998	Hatay	Military vehicle	10	0	Landmine	-
May 1998	-	Police van	20	20	-	ARAK
Jun 1998	Istanbul	Train	15	1	-	PKK
Jun 1998	Istanbul	Brothel	12	0	-	IBDA/C
Nov 1998	Kirikkale	Bus	21	4	-	PKK
Dec 1998	Lice	Grocery store	24	16	Suicide bombing, hand grenades	PKK
Dec 1998	East Turkey	Outside army barracks	24	2	Suicide bombing	PKK
Feb 1999	Esenler	Coffeehouse	17	0	Hand grenade	-
Mar 1999	Cankiri	Governor's car on street	16	3	Car bomb	TIKKO
Mar 1999	Istanbul	Police van at Taksim Square	12	1	Suicide bombing	PKK
Apr 1999	Yuksekova	Governor's car on street	11	2	Suicide bombing	-
Jul 1999	Istanbul	Trash can in park	26	1	Metal additive	PKK
Jul 1999	Adana	Outside police headquarters	15	1	Suicide bombing	-
Sep 1999	Istanbul	Elevator in Treasury building	20	0		-
Jan 2001	Istanbul	Street near Taksim Square	10	0	Pipe bomb	DHKP/C
Sep 2001	Istanbul	Outside police post at Taksim Square	24	3	Suicide bombing	DHKP/C
Total			**702**	**159**		

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Table 2—Terrorist bombings that produced ≥10 casualties in Turkey 1984–2003[5,6,9–11,15,22–28]* (*01 January 1984 –30 September 2003; **Includes deaths; ***3 deaths by shooting; - = Data not available; PKK = Partiya Karrekeren Kurdistan; ARAK = People's Liberation Party of Kurdistan; IBDA/C Islamic great Easter Raider's Front; TIKKO = Turkish Workers and Peasant's Liberation Army; DHKP/C = Revolutionary People's Liberation Party/Front)

foundation has withstood numerous challenges over the years, including decades of intermittent terrorism. Today, as the only North Atlantic Treaty Organisation member with an almost entirely Muslim population (99.8%), Turkey also is a key partner in the global war on terrorism.[1]

Date	City/village	Site	Number injured**	Number dead	Terrorist group attributed to
Sep 1986	Istanbul	Synagogue	25	22	Black June, Al-Assifa**,†
Jun 1987	Ömerli-Pınarcık	Village square	38	30	PKK
Jul 1987	Peçenek and Yuvalı	Private houses		25	PKK
Aug 1987	Kılıçkaya	-	--	25	PKK
Oct 1987	Sırnak -Meseici-Çobandere	Private houses	25	16	PKK
May 1988	Sırnak -Tarakli	-	--	13	PKK
May 1988	Sırnak -Dereler	Outside	11	11	PKK
May 1988	Mardin-Nusaybin-Tasköy	Outside	17	15	PKK†
Aug 1988	4 villages southeast Turkey	-	14	13	PKK
Nov 1989	Yuksekova-Ikiyaka	2 private houses	30	28	PKK
Jun 1990	Siirt-Eruh- Çevrimli	Houses	28	26	PKK **, †
Jun 1992	Kokarsu	Minibus on road	15	15	PKK
Mar 1992	Sırnak -Cizre	Centrum	39	13	PKK
Oct 1992	Cevizdali	-	80	40	PKK
Oct 1992	Aksakalli	Minibus on road	19	19	PKK
Jul 1993	Kemaliye-Basbaglar	Outside	33	30	PKK
Jul 1993	Van-Bahçesaray-Sündüz	Tent	26	25	PKK
Oct 1993	Siirt- Daltepe	Village courtyard	33	23	PKK
Oct 1993	Siirt- Günbulak-Derince	Inside school	30	24	PKK††
Jul 1995	Van-Gürpınar-Atabinen	4 homes	25	12	PKK ***
Oct 1993	Erzurum-Cat-Yavi	-	47	31	PKK
Jan 1995	Kulp-Hamzali	-	--	19	PKK
Aug 1995	Gazelusgi	Homes	18	8	PKK ***, ††
Sep 1995	Sırnak-Bulakbasi	-	22	9	PKK
Jan 1996	Guclukonak	Minibus on road	11	11	PKK
June 1996	Diyarbakır	Altindag Recreational Facilities/ TV studio	20	8	PKK
Apr 1998	Agri-Diyadin	Cafeteria	10	4	PKK
Jun 1998	Near Iraqi border	-	10	10	PKK
Jun 1998	Sagman	Bus	12	9	TIKKO
Nov 1998	-	Helicopter	16	16	PKK
Mar 2000	Istanbul	Sports facility	15	0	-
Dec 2000	Istanbul	Police vehicle	14	2	TKP/ML
Total			--	**552**	

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Table 3—Terrorist events involving shooting that produced ≥10 casualties in Turkey 1984–2003[5,6,9–11,15,22–28]* (*01 January 1984 – 30 September 2003; **Includes deaths; ***Explosives also used; † Arson also used; ††Stabbing also used; - = Data not available; PKK = Partiya Karrekeren Kurdistan; TIKKO = Turkish Workers and Peasant's Liberation Army; TKP/ML = Turkish Communist Party/Marxist-Leninist Organization)

Burden of Terrorism

Historical Considerations

Terrorism in modern Turkey has its roots in the tumultuous 1960s and 1970s, two decades marked by tremendous political and social upheaval in Turkey. Several factors fueled the instability of this period: (1) rapid urbanization as the population migrated from rural Turkey to its cities; (2) economic hardships as employment failed to keep up with an exploding urban population; (3) growing unrest in the southeastern Kurdish provinces; and (4) nascent radical Islamic and leftist student movements. Also exacerbating this upheaval was the Constitution of 1961, which guaranteed Turkish citizens the right to political protest, and a succession of civilian governments that failed to control these worsening problems.

By the late 1970s, both left-wing and right-wing political extremes had given rise to numerous domestic terrorist organizations. As a result, terrorist bombings, shootings, and threats were commonplace. Between 1978 and 1982, the Turkish National Security Council recorded an estimated 43,000 terrorist incidents in Turkey, with an average of 28 deaths per day due to terrorist attacks.[3]

On 12 September 1980, with the government unable to stem the rising tide of political violence, the Turkish military supervened with a *coup d'etat*. In 1983, with a new Constitution in place and order seemingly restored, the Turkish government, once again, reverted to civilian rule. However, by the mid-1980s, terrorist attacks resurfaced, as old terrorist organizations regrouped and as new groups emerged.

Date	City/village	Site	Number injured**	Number dead	Terrorist group attributed to
Apr 1991	Istanbul	Greek tour bus	43	36	-
Dec 1991	Istanbul	Çetinkaya department store	32	12	PKK***
Jul 1993	Sivas	Hotel Madimak	93	37	Turkish Islamic Movement
May 1995	Istanbul	Nazli dress store	22	3	PKK***
Nov 1996	Istanbul	Hotel	57	17	Turkish Hizballah
Mar 1999	Istanbul	Shopping center	23	13	PKK***
Total			**270**	**118**	

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Table 4—Terrorist events involving arson that produced ≥10 casualties in Turkey 1984-2003[5,6,9–11,15, 22–28*] (*01 January 1984 – 30 September 2003; **Includes deaths; ***Molotov cocktail used; - = Data not available; PKK = Partiya Karrekeren Kurdistan)

The 1990s brought little change in the pattern of terrorism in Turkey. The vast majority of terrorist attacks still were carried out by an assortment of domestic groups. Furthermore, three main ideologies — Kurdish separatism, radical Islamism, and Marxism — continued to dominate the Turkish domestic terrorist agenda (Table 1).[4–8] Major exceptions to this trend were periodic assassinations of Iranian dissidents by Iranian state agents in the early 1990s and three major events by Chechen militants (i.e., Trabzon ferry hijacking in 1996; Istanbul hotel hostage-taking in 2001; and Istanbul to Moscow aircraft hijacking in 2001).[9–11]

The three main categories of terrorist groups active in Turkey since 1990 are described below. Since these ideologies are not mutually exclusive, some overlap exists between these groups.

Kurdish Separatist Terrorist Groups

The main goal of Kurdish separatist terrorist groups in Turkey has been the establishment of an independent Kurdistan in the region that now is part of southeastern Turkey, northern Syria and Iraq, and western Iran. Over the years, factors fueling Kurdish separatism have been the economic disparity between the underdeveloped Kurdish region in southeast Turkey and the more developed western portions of the country, the emergence of the Kurdish cultural identity, and periodic support from outside countries (e.g., Greece, Iran, Lebanon, and Syria).[7] The early 1990s added another inciting factor — the establishment of a *de facto* Kurdish state in northern Iraq as a consequence of the first Gulf War.

The Partiya Karrekeren Kurdistan (PKK) or the Kurdistan Worker's Party was responsible for the vast majority of terrorism-related casualties in Turkey during the past two decades.[12–14] Founded in 1978 by Abdullah Ocalan, the PKK initially sought to set up a separate Kurdish state via a communist revolution.[7] During the 1980s, the PKK conducted nearly all of its terrorist activities in the rural areas of eastern and southeastern Turkey. Meanwhile, it established a lucrative economic base in drug-trafficking, while extending its political base through Islamic agitprop. In the 1990s, the PKK expanded its terrorist strategy to include a variety of urban targets within Turkey and at least six other countries in Western Europe. On 01 January 1999, Abdullah Ocalan was captured in Nairobi. In August 1999, Ocalan renounced violence and ordered members to use only political means to achieve its new goal — improved rights for Kurds in Turkey. In April 2002, the PKK changed its name to the Kurdistan Freedom and Democracy Congress (KADEK).[7,15] Originally sentenced to death, Ocalan's sentence was commuted to life imprisonment in October 2002.[15]

Radical Islamic Terrorist Groups

The major goal of radical Islamic terrorist groups in Turkey has been to replace the secular, constitutional Turkish state with an Islamic Sharia-based state following the Iranian example. In general, the radical Islamists have enjoyed broad Iranian support and often have acted on behalf of Iranian political and strategic interests. Karmon reported that the overall strategy of these groups consists of three stages:

> The first stage is the message (*teblig*), and calls for an effort by the radicals to persuade the people to adopt the Islamic religion, establish an Islamic state and administration, live in accordance with Islamic rules and struggle to safeguard the Islamic way of life. The second stage is the community (*cemaat*) and calls for the restructuring of communities in accordance with the requirements of the first stage. The third stage is the struggle (*jihad*), and calls for the armed struggle to safeguard the Islamic way of life.[5]

Substantial confusion exists regarding the names and number of radical Islamic terrorist groups operating in Turkey since 1990. For example, in 1991, at least 10 radical Islamic groups were reported to be active in Turkey.[5] One of the main radical Islamic groups—the Turkish Islamic Movement or Hizballah (also called Hezbollah) — actually is an umbrella organization of groups acting on behalf of the International Islamic movement.

The major impetus for the growth of the Turkish Hizballah in southeast Turkey was its opposition to the PKK, which during the late 1980s, was attempting to

expand its popular base in southeast Turkey through the distribution of religious propaganda and the formation of religious off-shoots, such as the Union of Kurdistan Religious People, Union of Kurdistan Imams, and the Kurdistan Islamic Movement. Conflict between the two organizations ensued, culminating in the early 1990s, in a series of armed clashes that left >700 people dead, including civilians.[16]

In 1990, the Turkish Hizballah and other radical Islamic terrorist groups also began to attack the Turkish secular establishment throughout Turkey (Table 1). For example, in 1995, these groups (primarily the Turkish Hizballah and one of its splinter groups) staged 86 acts of violence, leading to 25 deaths and another 21 persons injured.[5] Since 1998, with many leaders and >1,000 members arrested, terrorist activity by the Turkish Hizballah has waned. On 01 January 2000, the leader of the Turkish Hizballah, Huseyin Velioglu, was killed in combat with the Istanbul police.[5]

Leftist Terrorist Groups

The main objective of leftist terrorist groups in Turkey has been to establish a communist state in Turkey (or Kurdistan) with the redistribution of wealth according to the principles of Marx. Arising out of the ferment of leftist student organizations in the 1970s, two terrorist groups continued to pursue their Marxist agenda over the ensuing decades — the Turkish Communist Party/Marxist-Leninist organization (TKP/ML-TIKKO) and the Revolutionary People's Liberation Party/Front (DHKP/C), the successor to an early organization, Devrimci Sol (Dev Sol). Today both organizations are in decline. Since its inception in 1972, the TKP/ML-TIKKO has been racked by periodic internal discord, leading to several divisions and the branching-off of multiple, less potent factions.[4] In the late 1990s, the ranks of DHKP/C were decimated when the organization attempted to expand beyond its Black Sea power base and to penetrate the Mediterranean and Aegean regions, a strategic error that led to the arrest of many of its members.[4]

Characteristics of Terrorism in Turkey

From 1984 to 2000, an estimated 30,000 to 35,000 Turkish citizens were killed by a nearly continuous stream of terrorism-related events.[12,17–21] In 1996 alone, 3,286 persons reportedly were killed by terrorism-related events (of which 2,516 were associated with the PKK).[22]

Tables 2–4 list terrorist events that produced ≥10 casualties in Turkey from 01 January 1984 to 30 September 2003, which were associated with bombings, shootings, and arson respectively. These events were culled from a search of unclassified Turkish government sources, international databases, and online news reports.[5,6,9–11,15,22–28] Although it is possible that some smaller events are not listed, it is unlikely that any large-scale events escaped notice by all of these sources. It is noteworthy that no other terrorism-related mechanism of injury was found to produce ≥10 victims during this period.

The vast majority of terrorist attacks in Turkey to date, have produced <10 victims. For example, the RAND and RAND-Memorial Institute for the Prevention of Terrorism (MIPT) databases of international terrorism incidents reported an average of 1.4 injured victims per terrorist event over 757 events in Turkey from 1968 to September 2003.[10-11] Moreover, the 71 terrorist events in Tables 2–4 that did produce ≥10 casualties only account for an estimated 828 of the estimated 30,000–35,000 terrorism-related deaths that occurred during the same period. Only 15 of these events produced 30 or more casualties (eight shootings, five bombings, and two arsons). The maximum number of casualties produced by any of these events was 93 in the Hotel Madimak arson attack by the Turkish Islamic Movement in 1993.

Another characteristic of terrorism in Turkey during the past two decades is that it disproportionately affected the eastern and southeastern regions of Turkey, where the PKK sought to compel the population to cooperate with its aims.[7] Consequently, many residential districts in southeast Anatolia suffered attacks by the PKK that aptly can be described as massacres. For example, the PKK conducted 23 attacks against mayors of cities and villages in the region from 1984 to 2000, killing eight mayors and wounding another three.[26] In 105 attacks against village elders, 60 were killed, another eight were wounded, and 30 were kidnapped, of whom 23 disappeared.[26] Even imams were attacked. In 40 incidents, 27 imams were killed, 89 others were wounded, and five were kidnapped.[26]

The PKK also repeatedly attacked the educational system in southeast Anatolia, claiming that it imposed Turkish culture on Kurds. In 128 attacks against schools or teachers between 1984 and 2000, 116 teachers were killed, 48 others were wounded, and 30 were kidnapped, nine of whom disappeared.[26] The PKK also targeted journalists. In 35 attacks against members of the press during the same period, 21 were killed and another six were wounded.[26] In addition, the PKK carried out numerous attacks on other public and commercial infrastructure in the southeast Anatolia in the early 1990s in order to deter investment in the region, including bridges, dispensaries, electricity plants, oil facilities, and pipelines.[10,29,30]

Foreign tourists and tourist sites also emerged as a new type of terrorist target in Turkey during this period as a means of driving foreign tourists away and undermining the Turkish economy. For example, the PKK and other groups kidnapped numerous foreign tourists in the early 1990s, almost all of whom ultimately were released. Several popular tourist sites in Istanbul—the St. Sophia Mosque, Blue Mosque, Covered Bazaar, and Taksim Square—also were attacked in 1994 and 1995.[10,11] During this period, terrorists also began targeting American fast food restaurants and hotel chains in Turkey, a trend that continues today.[10,11,15]

The majority of terrorist events reported in Turkey either have been bombings or shootings. According to the RAND-MIPT database of international terrorism incidents, 358 of 468 (76%) recorded terrorist events of all magnitudes from 06 January 1998 to 30 September 2003, involved explosive devices.[11] Often these bombs exploded without causing injury or were found and defused. Of the 71 events listed in Tables 2–4, 33 (46%) involved explosive

devices (usually bombs or hand grenades), 32 (45%) involved shootings, and six (8%) involved arson. Despite several instances of hostage-taking or hijacking over the years, no event was reported to produce greater than three victims with physical injuries since 1981. To date, no nuclear, radiological, biological, or chemical terrorist attacks have been reported in Turkey.

It also is noteworthy that the PKK began deploying suicide bombers (often women) during the late 1990s. In the first documented instance of a suicide bombing in Turkey, a young female nurse feigning pregnancy at an outdoor military parade in Tunceli in 1996, detonated 30 kg of TNT strapped around her waist, killing nine and injuring another 35 at an outdoor military parade in Tunceli in 1996.[35,10,15,31] The DHKP/C also carried out two large suicide bombings in Istanbul during 2001. The first was a confined-space bombing on the fifth floor of a regional police headquarters building in Istanbul (nine injured, of whom two died), while the second was an open-air bombing adjacent to a police post in Taksim Square (Table 2).[11]

Future Risk of Terrorism

Despite the historic burden of terrorism on Turkey, the risk of terrorism today probably is lower than it has been in recent years, owing to several factors. First, with the recent arrests or deaths of their leaders, most major terrorist groups have been weakened, if not decapitated. Accordingly, the magnitude of terrorist attacks has lessened during last three years. Second, some of the impetus for radical Islamism in Turkey may be defused by the pluralism of the Turkish political system and the full integration of the Refah Partisi (Islamic Fundamentalist Welfare Party) into this system. Third, with the Cold War over, communism is unlikely to attract the zealous support that it did during previous decades. Finally, as a state party to all 12 international conventions and protocols against terrorism, Turkey continues to be a proactive partner in the international war against terrorism.[15,32]

Nevertheless, a substantial risk of terrorism in Turkey persists. One factor likely to fuel future domestic terrorism in Turkey is the economic under-development that continues to exist in its southeastern region, rendering the Kurdish population more susceptible to the agendas of Kurdish separatist and radical Islamic terrorist groups.

The war in Iraq in 2003 may have important implications for terrorism in Turkey. A newly empowered and potentially wealthier Kurdish population in northern Iraq may inspire further Kurdish separatism in Turkey. In addition, the continuing political instability in post-war Iraq appears to be a crucible for emerging terrorist groups, some of which may spread to neighboring countries in the region.

Turkey's common border with the Islamic Republic of Iran also ensures that radical Islamic ideology will continue to diffuse into Turkey. In addition, Iran is likely to continue providing some material support to the Turkish Islamic Movement. A critical question for the future in Turkey is whether Iran has chemical or biological weapons that it also will share with domestic Turkish terrorists.

Turkey also continues to have a number of ongoing international conflicts, which may affect its risk of terrorism in the future, including complex disputes with Greece over Cyprus and Aegean island territories; disputes with Syria and Iraq over water rights to the Upper Euphrates River; and Syrian claims to the Hatay Province in southeastern Turkey.[1]

Geography also plays a role in enabling terrorist groups in Turkey to evade detection. For example, following the crackdown on terrorist groups in the early 1980s, the PKK, DHKP/C, and TKP/ML-TIKKO all were able to regroup in the forests and high slopes of Sivas, Tokat, Ordu, and Giresun.[4]

Finally, the future risk of terrorism in Turkey also depends on the risk of terrorism in other countries. Turkey need not be the intended terrorist target for risk to exist from events outside its borders. For example, the intentional release of a contagious biological agent (e.g., smallpox, pneumonic plague, or SARS) in another country still poses a risk to Turkey through the ability of such diseases to spread rapidly through international travel. Even biological releases involving non-contagious pathogens pose some risk. For example, the 2001 United States of America (US), anthrax letter attacks triggered a rash of copy-cat, white powder events throughout Turkey.

Emergency Management of Terrorist Events

The pattern of terrorism in Turkey to date, suggests that terrorist attacks seldom produce numbers or types of casualties that require more than local emergency response. The only exceptions are events occurring in remote rural areas, where EMS is provided routinely by the Turkish military ground and aeromedical resources.

The last decade has seen the development of several key systems of local emergency response in Turkey. In 1993, the Ministry of Health took a crucial step toward the creation of a mature emergency care system in designating Emergency Medicine as an independent medical specialty in the country.[33,34] This was followed by the establishment of the first paramedic school in Turkey at Dokuz Eylul University in Izmir in 1993 and the first residency training program in Emergency Medicine at Dokuz Eylul University in 1994.[34] Today, there are 22 Emergency Medicine residency training programs in 21 cities, and an estimated 80 emergency physicians and 250 Emergency Medicine residents. In adopting the specialty system of Emergency Medicine, Turkey was able to create a cadre of new emergency physicians, who have guided the development of EMS systems in their communities and the modernization of emergency departments in hospitals. This core group of emergency physicians also has become the educators and trainers of Emergency Medicine for the future.

In 1995, the first organization dedicated to the advancement of Emergency Medicine in Turkey was founded — the Emergency Medicine Association of Turkey (EMAT).[34] The EMAT is a unique organization that brings together all of the stakeholders in Emergency Medicine in Turkey — physicians, nurses, paramedics, and civilians. Since its inception, EMAT has offered numerous Disaster Medicine-related community first-aid programs, basic life support programs for prehospital personnel (para-

medics and nurses), and continuing education programs for in-hospital emergency physicians, nurses, and other medical professionals.

Since April 2000, the EMAT also has sponsored a series of "hospital disaster plan" conferences for healthcare professionals participating in hospital emergency response, including medical, administrative, and logistical staff. During the first conference at Dokuz Eylul University, attendees created Turkey's first ever generic, hospital emergency plan based on a version of the Hospital Emergency Incident Command System (HEICS) adapted for Turkish hospitals. The EMAT has since disseminated this generic plan to 56 university, state, and public hospitals via 22 other conferences conducted in 12 other cities.[35] Taking a train-the-trainer approach, these EMAT conferences also have taught the basic principles of hospital emergency planning and preparedness to approximately 1,440 hospital professionals, with specific training in HEICS (called HAP in Turkey) using table-top exercises.[35]

Another critical component of hospital emergency response to terrorism-related events is the establishment of mature systems of trauma care. In 1998, the Turkish Association of Trauma and Emergency Surgery organized a Trauma Resuscitation Course (TRC) modeled after the American College of Surgeons' Advanced Trauma Life Support Course.[36] Since its inception, two instructor courses (35 participants) and 16 provider courses (335 participants) have been held in various venues in Turkey.[36] Target audiences have included not only trauma surgeons, but also in-hospital and prehospital emergency physicians. Since 2000, the EMAT and the International Emergency Medicine Center at Pennsylvania State University also have co-sponsored three advanced trauma courses for 145 general practitioners working in Turkish Emergency Departments (EDs).

In the aftermath of the 2001 World Trade Center and US anthrax letter attacks, the Ministry of Health launched a number of educational initiatives concerning preparedness for nuclear, biological, and chemical (NBC) terrorism. Schools and the general public have been major targets for these NBC preparedness programs. The Ministry of Health also prepared and distributed educational material (i.e., brochures, and posters) to EDs and hospitals with information about the medical management of patients exposed to nuclear, biological, and chemical agents. The EMAT and individual universities also have organized conferences covering various aspects of NBC terrorism for medical professionals as well as civilians.

Future Challenges

One of the greatest future challenges for the emergency management of terrorism-related events in Turkey will be to create an overall national emergency management system with the capacity and capability for responding to large-scale terrorist events. The Kocaeli Earthquake on 17 August 1999 and the Dulzce Earthquake on 12 November 1999 unmasked critical deficiencies in the national system of emergency management in Turkey. Although the government already had a ministry-level agency for managing disasters, the General Directorate of Emergency Management, in place at the time of the 1999 earthquakes, this agency was largely ineffective at coordinating the overall national emergency response to these events.[37] A major underlying problem was and continues to be that no government organization outside of the Prime Minister's Office has the authority or ability to coordinate and control the multiple other government agencies (especially Ministries) involved in disaster response. A closely related and continuing problem was the lack of communication between the various national, regional, and local systems of emergency response involved in the aftermath of these earthquakes. The unfortunate result was a chaotic and delayed government response.

Since the 1999 earthquakes, a number of training programs have been established. They are designed to train emergency management professionals in Turkey.[38] This new group of emergency managers hopefully will be able to address a number of issues relevant to planning and preparedness for large-scale terrorist events, including the use of administrative data systems, resource utility techniques, project planning and management, and infrastructural inventory management. Nevertheless, the lack of a unified command system, which can coordinate the many vertical organizations involved in the emergency response to large-scale events, remains a major challenge.

Another critical challenge for Turkey will be to achieve an adequate level of planning and preparedness for terrorist events involving unconventional weapons, such as the intentional release of nuclear, radiological, biological, and/or chemical agents. Although much progress has been made in educating prehospital and in-hospital healthcare providers in the medical management of these entities, much work remains be to done in terms of ensuring adequate provider competencies via disaster drills, adequate hospital-based decontamination unit and negative pressure isolation bed capacities, and adequate hospital-based stockpiles of personal protective equipment, pharmaceuticals, and ventilators.

Conclusions

Turkey is one of the countries hardest hit by terrorism during the past two decades, experiencing a nearly continuous stream of low or multiple casualty terrorist attacks from three major types of terrorist groups. Although Turkey has or is developing many of the systems of local emergency response required for victims of multiple casualty bombings, shootings, or arson attacks, much work remains in organizing these response components into the cohesive whole required by large-scale or unconventional terrorist events.

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