

4. Networks and Terrorism

4.1. Shaul Gabbay (Institute for the Study of Israel in the Middle East, University of Denver)

Shaul Gabbay examined the importance of networks and their structure in international relations. He said a network is a relationship between two or more actors. Complex relationships, which include more than two actors, are referred to as social networks or structures. A key characteristic of any relationship is its strength, which can be measured by several factors, including the duration of the relationship, the frequency of interaction and the feeling of closeness. A social network can either be opened or closed. An open social network is characterised by communication gaps, while a closed social network is well inter-linked.¹ If an open social network functions to the advantage of one actor – a social engineer, social capital is created.²

Individual terrorists likely use network strategies since they have to coordinate with each other without having any formal organisation. Moreover, terrorist cells may have to function in isolation. The strong, often life-long ties among terrorists make infiltrating their networks exceedingly difficult. Gabbay said that the experience of Israel in addressing terrorism demonstrates this point. **Despite the fact that Israeli security forces are able to uncover terrorist networks and target them with precision, they are unable to eliminate terrorism.**

President George Bush created a solid network of individuals, organisations and countries to combat terrorism. The Coalition of countries is, especially, an impressive achievement, unfathomable before September 11. Creating a Coalition which includes Muslim countries thwarted the intentions of Osama bin Laden to pit the U.S. and the Muslim world against each other. The cohesive Muslim-based network he was counting on opened (in part) in sympathy to the U.S. and other Western countries. Therefore, one of the goals of the Coalition should be creating structural gaps within the terrorist networks. The anti-terrorist networks may take on a different life in the future. The networks may also put pressure on Israel and Palestinians to resolve their long-standing conflict.

5. Environment and Energy

5.1. Dirk Forrester (Natsource)

Dirk Forrester examined the implementation of the Energy Policy Plan, initiated under the

¹For instance, when a network has three actors: A, B, C, it is open if A has links to B and C while C shares no links with B. In a closed network all actors are inter-linked.

²This may occur, for instance, when A forges links separately with unconnected B and C and capitalises on their disconnectedness.