

## TOURISM AND TERRORISM: A WORLDWIDE PERSPECTIVE

Cristina Elena ALBU\*

*“The attacks in Jordan, just like those before it in Indonesia, Egypt, Spain and the United States, demonstrate that terrorism does not discriminate by race, ethnicity or region. Instead, terrorists indiscriminately target those seeking to live a peaceful, loving and free life.”*

Allyson Schwartz

**Abstract:** *We live in a society marked by major changes in the tourism field. Tourist destinations make all possible efforts to best promote their tourist offer and attract as different tourist categories as there might be. However, these tourist destinations are sometimes associated with terrorist attacks that can turn a famous tourist area into a highly avoided one. Terrorism may be permanently detrimental to a tourist destination on both social and economic levels. The purpose of this paper is to highlight the impact that terrorist attacks have on tourism around the globe. The research method used for the achievement of this article is documentary research. Through the proportions and forms that it has taken, terrorism has become one of the more and more active and threatening calamities that affect the international community. For some organizations, terrorism has become a means of solving their political, cultural and religious problems, taking tourism as a niche through which they can carry out their targets.*

**Keywords:** tourism; terrorism; global terrorism index; tourists' behavior; destination image

**JEL Classification:** L83; Z32

### Introduction

Tourism expresses freedom of travelling and can contribute to getting acquainted to different cultures. At the opposite end, terrorist movements are propelled by religious and ethnic factors that arise when a certain segment of the population condemns the Occidental lifestyle on which most of the tourist destinations are based (Korstanje *et al.*, 2012, p. 10).

One may notice the international activity of terrorist organizations from different states that want to enthrall new territories through their terrorist actions. Terrorism is not a phenomenon characteristic to the contemporary age only. It has been practiced through all ages, affecting most peoples and manifesting itself through reprobable actions with most disastrous consequences for human relations (Sofroni, 2010, pp. 6-7).

For the international community it is intolerable that terrorist acts – so many a time resulting in human lives termination and taking place mostly outside a conflict area – should affect the interests

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\* PhD alumna, Doctoral School of Economics and Business Administration, Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iasi, Romania, e-mail: cristina\_albu2006@yahoo.com



of one or more states, or even disrupt the bases of communication and normal relations between nations, nationalities and peoples, and the international order essential to everyone. The increasing number of terrorist acts around the world has brought along the need for developing an international system to fight this phenomenon through coordination of the efforts of different states at the highest level.

Tourist destinations make no exception from being strongly affected by terrorist acts. According to Sofroni (2010), this is the reason why “such events may lead to a fall in tourists’ number in a given touristic destination or even to the complete avoidance of that destination for a very long period of time, until tourists’ confidence might be restored”.

### **1. Terrorism: notion, consequences, actions**

The term “terrorism” derives from the term of Latin origin “terror” meaning “physical violence, fear, dread deliberately generated by public violent acts, the premeditated use of certain means capable of bringing about collective peril” (Servier, 2002, p. 42).

As the former president of the USA, John F. Kennedy, said in 1962, “terrorism is just another type of war - new in intensity, old as origin – a war of guerillas, of rebels and assassins; a war waged by ambuscade and not by fighting, by infiltration, not by aggression, where victory is obtained by wearing down the enemy and not by engaging it” (Enciclopedie Citatepedia, 2015).

Terrorism comprises the violent acts committed by one or more individuals against randomly chosen victims with the scope of maintaining a power, a will of domination by fear and dread that quickly become contagious for the entire population. Therefore, terrorism is an “offensive system used by an individual or by a large or smaller group to impose their will on an entire people or even on an entire civilization, to exercise an influence over history”. If we consider this perspective, “the terrorist, whoever might embody him/her – an individual or an entire nation – turns into the supreme vigilante, holder of an absolute justice, in the name of some principles that are often only known to or acknowledged by himself” (Servier, 2002, p. 31).

According to Servier (2002), the terrorist wave intensified after 1968, when violence appeared as an irrational manifestation of student movements in France, then in the other Western countries as well. Its part within the political conflicts has grown in significance especially after World War II, in relation to the national liberation movements (Sofroni, 2010, p. 44).

Terrorism began to build momentum in the years 1970-1971. The strategy of these groups was formulated according to the following slogan: “intimidate your adversary and propagate the cause

that you are fighting for". Many of the most active terrorist organizations are divided into two main groups:

- anarchist terrorist movements and leftist movements that promote social changes and the change of political regime through revolutionary action (Italian Red Brigade, the Japanese Red Army, the German Red Army);
- national liberation separatist movements and national minorities movements (Spanish Basque Organization, the Irish Republican Army, Muslim movements from Arab countries, the Kurds in Turkey).

These groups' actions are designed to trigger the following consequences (Sofroni, 2010, p. 42):

- to demonstrate the governments' incapacity to defend their own citizens and diplomatic missions accredited in the respective country;
- to force governments into taking supplementary security actions, including the withdrawal of public freedoms, fact that would lead to negative reactions on the part of the population;
- to determine the target-state's citizens to put pressure on their own government to cease the actions that attract the terrorist attacks.

Terrorism implies "organization, planning, funding and equipment as well as individuals trained for carrying out the concrete fight actions". There are situations in which terrorist groups are under the command of intelligence services of different states for various well-founded reasons (Servier, 2002, p. 43). One of these reasons is the influencing of certain political decisions to the end of determining a government or a political group in power to conform to terrorist interests. Terrorism is used as a form of conventional war, as a weapon directed towards an enemy that cannot be attacked otherwise.

From the point of view of the used tactics, there can be identified two main types of actions (Sofroni, 2010, p. 43):

- those by means of which terrorists take precautions to save their life after the attack – for example, hostage-taking;
- suicidal missions or kamikaze, which present two great dangers: defense against them is extremely difficult; the terrible human and material losses produce real emotional shocks amid the population.

In the first stage, terrorism involves four types of attempts (Servier, 2002, p. 63):

- kidnapping of personalities for obtaining a ransom and often for detained terrorists exchange;
- plane-high jacking, usually followed by liberation demands of certain detained terrorists;

- robbing of banks and armament warehouses to sustain the armed groups both financially and logistically;
- destruction of certain tourist buildings/objectives that have great significance for the respective state.

Terrorists' extremist orientation originates in their conviction that they will never be able to attain their goals on a legal way, so they search for different forms of manipulation, of changing peoples' behavior through fear, unsafely and social division.

## **2. Terrorism and tourist destination image**

Tourism contributes to the development of tourist destinations. The main advantages of tourism consist of creating jobs, attracting foreign currency to a certain area, developing other sectors closely related to tourism and developing the infrastructure without which any tourist destination could not be known, through limited access of tourists (Alsarayreh *et al.*, 2010, pp.145-160).

### ***2.1. Conceptual boundaries on the image of a tourist destination***

The tourist destination may be a country, a city, an area that attracts tourists through the particularities it owns. Be it a resort or a country, some places have a higher probability to develop as tourist destinations if certain factors are present, while their absence may constitute barriers of various degrees. Tourism researchers have underlined the importance of the image of a tourist destination as a crucial factor in the promotion of an area, influencing its prospects of being chosen, its perceived quality, the satisfaction it may offer, the loyalty it may engender, as well as its recommendation within the circle of friends/acquaintances (Alvarez *et al.*, 2008, p. 38).

The image is an essential component within the process of choosing a holiday destination, making the difference between tourist destinations. At the same time, it influences the tourist's decisional process. The destination image is defined as the global perception or the whole set of impressions of an individual regarding a certain place. People create for themselves images and representations about places from the information they get. In the past, this information was transmitted by literature and written papers but, nowadays, the media plays the essential part in transmitting the images and representations (Hall, 2002, p. 458).

As previously mentioned, the image of a tourist destination may contribute to making the decision of purchasing a touristic product. Thus, if the respective destination has a certain reputation

or its standards meet the tourist's level of expectation, then the tourist will tend to choose that which offers safety and certainty. Of course, there is also the situation in which the tourist wants to try a new destination, even if he/she doesn't have detailed information about it.

The image of a country was defined by Nagashima in 1970 as a special image, a stereotype the consumers have in mind in relation to a certain country; this "picture" may be shaped by historical, economic and traditional variables. It is also in this case that the image of a country can ease the process of making a decision to purchase a touristic product or service in that country (Rezvani *et al.*, 2012, p. 205). The image is often created through stereotypes, by classifying nations and people by categories. Although stereotypes can be superficial, they may trigger certain international attitudes or orientations (Hakala *et al.*, 2012, p. 14). Stereotypes may distort one's perceptions about a destination. This happens especially when events take place that leave an unpleasant mark on the tourists during their vacation. Feeling resentful, the respective tourist will foully "advertise" the destination, fact that may change the perception of his/her friends and relatives on the analyzed destination, determining them to give up visiting that particular place (Albu, 2013, p. 8).

Each tourist has his/her own personality, fact that leads to the making of various decisions. In this respect, Corniglon and Turnois (2011) consider the image of a destination as an influencing factor not only on the actual situation of the destination, but also on the tourist's behavior, in general.

Global and local events such as terrorism, epidemics and political turmoil's are illustrated in the media and affect representations and perceptions related to a certain place. Disasters' reflection by the media can generate bad publicity for tourist destinations, reducing their general reputation as to safety, attractively and comfort (Sönmez *et al.*, 1999, p. 13). Beginning with the September 11<sup>th</sup> 2001 events, the numerous terrorist attacks, epidemics and natural disasters, these ones' risks, crises and impact have started to gain considerably more importance within tourist research. Terrorist attacks represent a specific form of tourist crises, as destinations are usually hit unexpectedly. The symbolic images of panic and destruction become deeply rooted in the potential tourists' minds and the decrease in demand may strongly affect tourist industries (Aschauer, 2010, p. 4).

An important aspect in tourist industry is tourist intention to return to a specific area/region/city/country. That is why we should take into account the fact that a tourist destination image may positively influence tourist's behavioral intentions, especially their desire to return to that particular area (Lertputtarak, 2012, p. 111). Roth and Romeo (1992) consider that the image of a country is represented by the consumers' general perception on that country, based on the strong and weak points by which the respective country has made itself known. Tourist image is considered to be an important aspect of a country's general image. Every destination has an image, but some

destinations have more powerful images than others (Sönmez *et al.*, 2002, p. 185). We may quote in this sense the image of Paris (considered the city of romance) and the image of the Danube Delta (renowned nature reserve in Europe). In the first case, the city of Paris is a worldwide well-known destination, with a powerful impact on tourist perception. In the second case, the Danube Delta is known rather on a European level, being chosen as destination only by those tourists that might be keen on the flora and fauna of the area.

## ***2.2. Components of a tourist destination image***

Some authors consider that the structure of the image consists of a single component: the cognitive one. Schneider and Sönmez (1999) define the cognitive component as “assessment of known attributes of the product or as perception of product from an intellectual perspective”. The emotional dimension is the second component of the tourist image structure and consists of the impressions that a tourist has about a particular object or place, while on the other hand, there might also be a third series of opinions envisioning the structure of a tourist destination as formed by three components. Gartner (1993) clarifies that the three components of a tourist destination are: the emotional component, the cognitive component and the conative component.

In his opinion, the conative image component is analogue to behavior, since it represents the action component leading to the making of a decision after both internal and external information has been processed.

Echner and Ritchie (1993) have proposed a single tri-dimensional model that divides the image into two components, based on attributes and holistic. Each component presents items that might have functional or psychological features and reflect common or unique characteristics of the destination.

In Echner’s and Ritchie’s opinion, the image is based on specific attributes (e.g. good restaurants, high prices, night clubs) and mental/holistic attributes (e.g. a group of friends having fun in night clubs along the beach).

At the same time, the image might also refer to measurable characteristics (beaches, parks) or to psychological characteristics (the reputation of the destination). The third classification emphasizes the unique objectives of the destination (e.g. the Giza Pyramids in Egypt, The Eiffel Tower in France) or the common ones (e.g. natural environment, mountains, beaches).

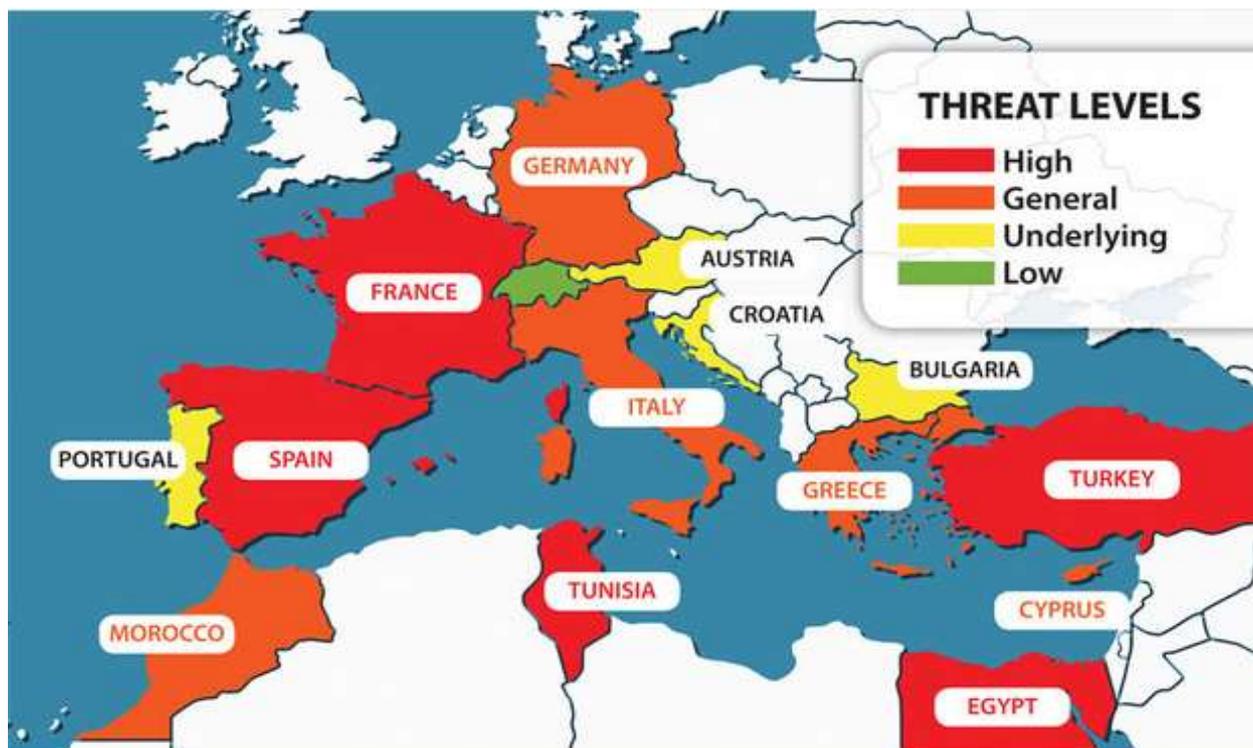
### 2.3. Terrorism impact on the image of a tourist destination

The development and worldwide reputation of some tourist destinations may also have a negative impact: that of becoming a target for terrorist attacks. These terrorist attacks are usually engendered by misunderstandings regarding political aspects between countries, racism or religious discrimination, but also by other reasons related to government and governmental decisions that affect more than one state.

Some terrorist attacks have permanently changed the way in which tourist activity is taking place within the affected areas/countries. It has been noticed the need for higher security measures within the tourist areas, especially in those countries whose economy depends on the tourist industry, such as Spain, France, Greece, Italy, Egypt, Tunisia (especially the Mediterranean Basin countries because they are among the most important countries receiving tourists).

The map below shows the terrorist threat levels for certain countries in Europe and from the entire Mediterranean Basin.

**Figure 1 – Countries targeted by terrorist threats**



Source: Thema News (2015)

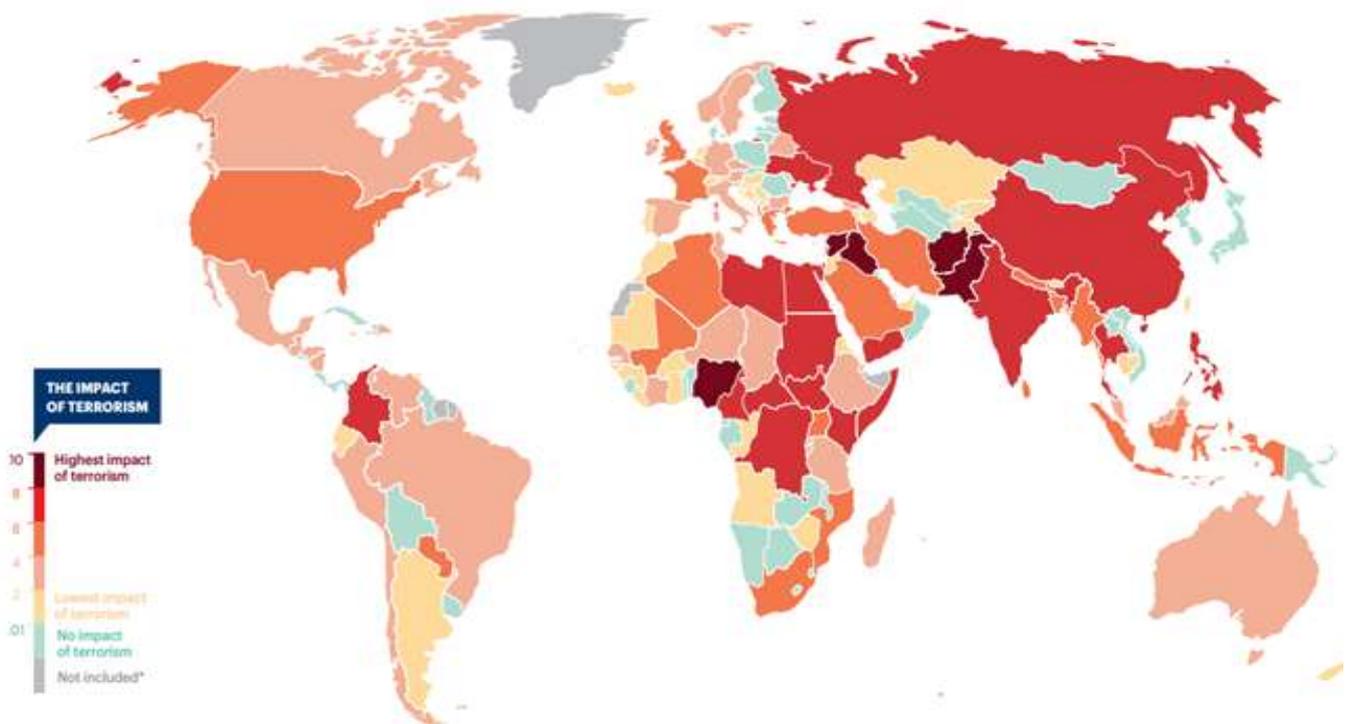
Analyzing the above map we can notice high levels of terrorist threats in countries such as Spain, France, Turkey, Tunisia and Egypt. General threat levels are present in countries such as Germany, Italy, Greece, Cyprus and Morocco. Underlying threat levels are to be encountered in Portugal, Austria, Croatia and Bulgaria, while terrorist threat levels in countries such as Switzerland are low.

One can notice that all these mentioned countries play a fundamental part in tourist industry, being renowned for their resorts, special natural environment, as well as for various unique tourist landmarks. On the other hand, the economic wellbeing of some countries such as Germany may attract terrorist attacks with the scope of reducing population's trust in the government of the country and creating panic among the less developed states.

According to the studies done by the Institute for Economy and Peace (2015), terrorist events have increased by 80% in 2014, the highest ever recorded level according to the Global Terrorism Index. Unfortunately, data that show what was exactly the increase relative to the tourism developed areas are not available.

These violent acts killed 32.658 people in 2014, compared to 18.111 in 2013, according to the Global Terrorism Index. The map below highlights the countries where this index has different values, according to the impact of terrorism on that particular area.

**Figure 2 – Worldwide Terrorism Impact**



Source: Institute for Economics & Peace – Global Terrorism Index (2015)

According to the Global Terrorism Index, among the countries scoring a strong impact of terrorism is: Iraq, Afghanistan, Nigeria, Pakistan and Syria (in these countries, the Global Terrorism Index reach level between 8 and 10 on the terrorism impact scale). They are followed by India, Libya, Thailand, Philippines and Egypt (with a 6-8 index), while a medium level of terrorism is scored by countries such as Turkey, the UK, Greece, the USA and France, with a 4-6 index.

The Global Terrorism Index scores values between 2 and 4 for countries such as Tunisia, Germany, Italy, Cyprus, Spain, Bulgaria and Canada. A low level of this index (with values between 0 and 1) is scored by countries such as Belgium, Jordan, Morocco, Switzerland, UAE, Portugal and Croatia.

At the same time, there are also countries where this index is or tends to be 0, meaning that there have been no terrorist events within these areas, or that their impact was insignificant. This is the case of countries such as Romania and Moldova.

On a geographical basis, the table below synthesizes a part of the values that the Global Terrorism Index has scored worldwide.

**Table 1 – Global Terrorism Index in 2015**

Rank	Country	Score	Rank	Country	Score	Rank	Country	Score
1	Iraq	10	27	Turkey	5.737	72	Canada	2.297
2	Afghanistan	9.233	28	UK	5.613	82	Belgium	1.977
3	Nigeria	9.213	29	Greece	4.976	85	Jordan	1.751
4	Pakistan	9.065	35	USA	4.613	92	Morocco	1.446
5	Syria	8.108	36	France	4.533	95	Switzerland	1.349
6	India	7.747	47	Tunisia	3.697	101	UAE	1.045
9	Libya	7.29	53	Germany	3.442	110	Portugal	0.267
10	Thailand	7.279	54	Italy	3.364	116	Croatia	0.115
11	Philippines	7.27	61	Cyprus	3.08	121	Moldova	0.038
13	Egypt	6.813	65	Spain	2.622	149	Romania	0

Source: Personal adaptation after Institute for Economics & Peace (2015)

As a result of the values scored by the Global Terrorism Index we can notice a worldwide ranking of countries. We can see that a number of countries noted for their tourist activities are to be found in the above table, with different values of the index. Among them there are: India, Thailand, Egypt, Turkey, Greece, France, Tunisia, Italy, Spain, Jordan and Morocco, countries that might have

economic problems in the absence of tourism industry. Countries like Syria, India, Egypt and Tunisia have come to be chosen very carefully by tourists, their number dropping considerably or totally (the case of Syria), precisely because of the terrorist attacks that have started to take place frequently in these areas.

The increase of terrorist attacks can be attributed to the Islamic State group (ISIS) and Boko Haram, a Nigerian jihadist group that allied itself with ISIS in March 2015. This alliance was practically responsible for 51% of the deaths resulted from the terrorist events of 2014.

Terrorist groups are usually financed by certain sponsoring states. According to Johnson *et al.* (2010), besides the Taliban regime in Afghanistan, “a total of seven countries were listed as sponsors of terrorist groups in 2000: Cuba, Iran, Iraq, Libya, North Korea, Syria, and Sudan”. These countries provided financial and logistical support to terrorist organizations. However, in order to avoid detection, terrorists are continuously looking for new ways to gain more support (Johnson *et al.*, 2010, p. 110).

Johnson *et al.* (2010) also consider that “some states support terrorism indirectly, through investing in certain particular sectors of activity or through different political arrangements”.

Terrorist attacks cause repercussions of various intensities on the economy, as well as on the psychological level of a tourist destination. The tourism industry contributes to the rapid development of a country's economy, creating millions of jobs worldwide (Stojanovic, 2012, p. 1260). There are some external factors that can affect the success of the tourism industry (Prideaux, 2005, p. 780). However, indirect repercussions may fall on several sectors and across several countries (Brück, 2007, p. 5). We can talk here about travel agencies from different countries working together to mutually promote their services or to meet the needs of several categories of customers from different continents. A terrorist attack could create economic problems for both travel agents, even if one of them is not located in the attacked area. Thus, both agencies would suffer from the falling in demand for the tourist destinations they had been promoting, especially if their work had been focused mainly on those destinations.

Both tourism and terrorism involve crossing borders and citizens from different countries. The reasons why terrorists attack tourist areas are the desire to affect the economy of that area, to attract international attention and to advertise themselves (Kamrava 2011, p. 341). The kidnapping of tourists of certain nationalities is, in fact, a sign of protest made manifest by terrorists against the support of certain governments/countries, and aim to destroy public confidence in the respective government (Bremer, 2000, p. 4). Of course, the indirect goal is to get financial resources in exchange for releasing the prisoners or other advantages such as the release of captured terrorists.

At the same time, the government of certain Muslim countries that refuse to support terrorism can cause an avalanche of terrorist attacks as retaliation against the disobedience to the requirements of terrorist extremists. This is the case of Egypt, whose new president (since June, 2014) is Abdel Fattah El-Sisi. He was commander of the Egyptian Armed Forces, Minister of Defense, and contributed significantly to the removal of the former president Mohamed Morsi, a supporter of several terrorist groups.

The social and economic problems triggered by terrorist attacks are related to unemployment, lack of shelter (as a consequence of destroying one's home), tension, and criminality. Tourism generates revenue for both the developing states and for those already economically developed, so any issue affecting this industry can turn into a big problem (Kalia, 2009, p. 1).

Some terrorist activities are focused on issues that are directly associated with the tourism industry: hotels, restaurants, airlines, tourist attractions, famous tourist resorts. Therefore, security in these locations must be a priority for all tourist destinations that want to preserve their tourists and maintain the safety in the area.

#### ***2.4. Selective chronology of terrorist events***

Further on we will display a selective chronology of terrorist acts of the last half century. Some of these events, taking place before 2009, have been made available to the general public by the Romanian Intelligence Service (2015). Emphasis was laid especially on those events that occurred in areas popular for their tourist activity (Toma, 2013, pp. 409-412):

- 1970: three planes with more than 400 passengers aboard are hijacked by the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine. Two are taken to Jordan, where hostages are released and the planes blasted, while the third plane was blown in the air, in Egypt. Another team tried unsuccessfully to hijack a plane from the London airport, one of the kidnappers being caught.
- 1971: the Jordanian prime minister is killed by Palestinian terrorists from the Black September group at a hotel in Cairo, Egypt. A month later, in London, the Jordanian ambassador to Britain is the target of an attack by a Black September team.
- 1972: eight Palestinian terrorists from the Black September group kill two Jewish athletes and take nine hostages in the Olympic village in Munich (FRG). In the releasing attempt all the hostages are killed, together with five terrorists and a police officer.

- 1979: Two hundred Islamic terrorists take hostages hundreds of pilgrims in the Grand Mosque of Mecca (Saudi Arabia). French and Saudi security forces take control of the most important place of worship in the Islamic world, after an intense fight in which 250 people were killed and another 600 injured.
- 1981: Egyptian President Anwar Sadat is shot dead by a group of rebels during a military parade in Cairo. Seven other officials were killed and 28 wounded. The assassins were later executed.
- 1984: Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi is assassinated by her own bodyguard, Sikhs, in New Delhi, India. Nearly 3,000 people died in incidents which followed the assassination.
- 2001: Two planes, domestic flights of US airlines, are flown into the twin towers of the World Trade Center in New York, while another plane is crashed over one side of the Pentagon building. The attack, the worst in the US history and world terrorism, made thousands of victims, and though it has not been claimed, the information obtained revealed the involvement of Al-Qaeda, led by the Saudi billionaire Osama bin Laden. The US launched a retaliatory military operation in Afghanistan following bin Laden's support by the Taliban regime in Kabul.
- 2002: remote-controlled bombings and car bombs took place in a bar in Bali, Indonesia. The attack ended with 202 dead and 209 wounded.
- 2003: bombings took place in Casablanca, Morocco, against Hebrew and Spanish targets. The attack was claimed by Jihad Salafia, a branch of Islamic Combatant Moroccan Grouping (Al-Qaeda related) and resulted in 33 deaths.
- 2003: bomb attacks in Istanbul, Turkey: several synagogues and a British bank were attacked, resulting in 57 dead and 700 wounded.
- 2004: the Moroccan Islamic Combatant Group attacked several trains in Madrid with conventional explosives and the effect was 191 dead and 1,800 wounded.
- 2005: bombing in London, that consisted of three explosions in the subway and a bus attack (56 dead and 700 wounded). The attacks were claimed by some local groups related to Al-Qaeda.
- 2005: terrorist attack on a bus in the tourist resort of Kusadasi, Turkey (5 people killed and 14 wounded).
- 2005: bombing in the tourist resort Sharm-el-Sheikh, Egypt (at least 65 dead and 200 wounded).

- 2005: suicidal bombing attacks in three restaurants in Bali, Indonesia (22 dead and 100 wounded).
- 2005: bombing attacks on several hotels in Jordan (62 dead and over 100 wounded).
- 2006: suicidal bombing attacks in the tourist resort Dahab, Egypt (23 dead and 83 wounded).
- 2012: an Islamist extremist opened fire in a Hebrew school in Toulouse, France, killing three children and one adult. But the total number of victims attributed to him rises to seven, including three soldiers.
- 2014: armed militants from the Muslim terrorist group Boko Haram (“Western education is forbidden” in a rough translation) attacked two neighboring settlements, Gamboru and Ngala, located in the Borno state, Nigeria. A total of 336 peaceful villagers were mercilessly killed and the settlements were destroyed and burned. The few survivors managed to escape by fleeing into the neighboring country, Cameroon. On the same night, the Boko Haram group kidnapped 11 Christian girls (aged 12-15 years) from the Chibok School, and they forced them to become Muslim wives for their militants.
- 2015: in January, France underwent a series of multiple terrorist attacks (one of them is that of Charlie Hebdo) which ended tragically, with 17 dead and 22 wounded.
- 2015: ISIS terrorists detonate a bomb in a train station in Ankara, Turkey. This is believed to be the biggest terrorist attack in Turkey's history. A number of 102 people were killed and more than 200 - wounded.
- 2015: in November, France had a series of separate incidents which held Paris under terror. Bombs on Stade de France, suicide bombings at some terraces and a hostage situation at an auditorium during a concert, lead to a terrifying balance - about 150 dead and 200 wounded.
- 2015: in March, at Aswan, Egypt, an area highly frequented by tourists, a bomb attack caused the death of two civilians and got another five seriously injured.
- 2015: in June, the General Attorney of Egypt, Hisham Barakat, was killed in a car bomb assassination in Cairo. The incident took place in a context in which former President Mohamed Morsi, spokesman of the Muslim Brotherhood, was sentenced to death and during a wave of capital convictions or life sentences among Islamist militants from Egypt.

- 2015: in June, there was a terrorist attack in Egypt at the temple of Karnak, near Luxor, a highly populated tourist area. The Egyptian police killed two suspected Islamist militants near the ancient temple and a suicide bomber detonated the explosive he had on himself near the famous tourist spot, fortunately with no victims among the population.
- 2015: in June, in Tunisia, men disguised as tourists opened fire at two hotels located in the El Kantaoui resort. Some of the tourists staying at these hotels were from aboard a couple of cruise ships which had made stopovers in Tunisia. At least 37 people were killed and another 20 injured. The terrorist attack was claimed by the Islamic State organization.
- 2015: in October, a Russian plane transporting tourists from Sharm-el-Sheikh to Sankt-Petersburg was shot down in the Sinai Peninsula, Northern Egypt, resulting in 224 dead. The attack was claimed by the Fundamentalist Group Sinai Province, a subsidiary of the Islamic State terrorist network.

Terrorist attacks are quite common in countries such as Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan or Sri Lanka, and most of them remain unclaimed by any terrorist groups. These areas are often avoided by tourists because of the high risk of suicidal or bomb attacks and armed robbery.

As outlined above, the terrorists have focused in recent years on some states known as tourist destinations visited by tourists from around the world: Spain, Turkey, Egypt, Tunisia, and France. These attacks are aimed at killing foreigners from different states in order to create tension between countries, generate panic among the population, and consequently make that the respective destination become avoided by tourists. This entire complex tends to economically destabilize the area and destroy the collaboration between some countries.

### **3. Terrorism and tourists' behavior**

Some activities and sectors are more vulnerable to terrorist attacks than others. This vulnerability can be given by the services' characteristics, particularly their intangibility and inability of storage to be sold later - specific features for the tourism industry. At the same time, terrorist attacks can cause changes in the tourists' need to visit a certain tourist destination (Bruck *et al.*, 2004, p. 4).

Swarbrooke and Horner (2007) consider that the tourists' behavior is derived from the consumers' behavior, fact which underlines the factors that determine the tourists to purchase certain

tourist products over others. Equally important are the factors determining those tourists to travel to a certain destination.

One of these factors refers to the perception the tourist has of a tourist destination, this perception being practically the image he/she has formed about that destination (Seba, 2011, p. 23). For example, Paris is perceived as a romantic city, while Ibiza is famous for its numerous entertainment opportunities. These perceptions are formed in our minds sometimes involuntarily, following our exposure to a range of information provided by the Internet, television, media, or friends who have already visited the respective locations.

Consumers' behavior is influenced by a number of internal and external factors. Internal factors aim directly the tourist's perception or experience about a certain tourist destination, and among external factors we have the economic conditions, that can affect the behavior of tourists who want to visit a particular destination (Musadiq, 2002, p. 103). In other words, financial resources play an important role in knowing a tourist destination, facilitating or limiting the access to certain tourist areas coveted by tourists.

The form of government represents another external factor, a country being able to facilitate or limit tourists' access. We may note here the case in which one wants to attract a certain category of tourists who can afford to spend a lot of money in a certain country. This is, for example, the policy of Qatar - an Arab emirate in Southwest Asia - which targets especially very rich tourists, the living standard being very high in this area. It is also impossible to entry this country without having a prior visa and this visa can only be issued through embassies and not at the usual border crossing points. These formalities sometimes make the tourists turn to other destinations, where their access is easier.

A previous visit to a tourist destination helps the tourist form a perception about that particular destination (Jack, 2006, p. 37). Thus, the tourist will decide more easily whether to visit that destination again or choose another. At the same time, the tourist can have a good perception of a tourist destination, and nevertheless might like to visit another destination he/she has never been to before. Conversely, their perception can influence a lot of people to choose or not the already visited tourist destination.

An equally important aspect is the level of satisfaction regarding the whole experience had by a tourist in a tourist destination (Maxwell, 2005, p. 49). Tourists' confidence in receiving quality services, the comfort, the culture of the area, the locals' hospitality, an enhanced security and no terrorist events, along with the professional employees of the tourist accommodation structures play a major part in the tourists' decision to return to a tourist destination. It is also worth mentioning that tourists may behave differently in different countries. For example, in a tourist destination like Egypt,

tourists will have to adapt to the local culture, to dress decently and behave accordingly. Instead, in a country like Italy, tourists can feel comfortable and free from local prejudice, regardless of what they might choose to wear.

### **Conclusions**

Tourism isn't just a means by which terrorists can convey their messages. Tourism can also encourage the development of certain political, economic, cultural or religious resentments in relation to some renowned destinations. Terrorist attacks within tourist destinations are meant to elicit international attention and their impact is all the greater as they create more victims in areas previously known for tourists' safety and lack of terrorist events.

The economic costs of terrorism are extremely high. Terrorism has influence on the economic bases of states such as Egypt, Israel, Turkey or Cyprus, countries that have high tourism income and which are practically taken out of this industry in the periods of affliction. As the society develops, the terrorism becomes more complex, more elaborate, crueller, remaining an integrant part of organized crime since ancient times, with an unfortunate prediction of persisting further into the future. Consequently, states must join and work permanently to exclude the possibility of terrorist attacks, whether they occur in tourist destinations or common areas.

Most often, terrorist actions do not hit the state military force, but the civil society. The purpose of terrorist activity is the emotional involvement of the population; this makes the psychological pressure on the state to be much stronger than in the case of a usual military conflict. The main aim of such actions is to spread fear. The higher the fear is, the greater the pressure on the state. The impact is all the greater as the area survives thanks to its income gained exclusively from the tourism industry.

The emotional reaction of the population to the consequences of terrorist attacks is natural. The fear that the next time one might be a victim is as real as possible. Tourists avoid the tourist areas where terrorist events have occurred, their confidence in the respective destination being very hard to recover. International terrorist attacks have led to the strengthening of security and military sectors in many of the affected states, as well as to the review of crossing interstate borders policy and the strict passengers' control, even if their purpose of travel is tourism.

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*“Terrorism is a biological consequence of the multinationals, just as a day of fever is the reasonable price of an effective vaccine ... The conflict is between great powers, not between demons*

and heroes. Unhappily, therefore, is the nation that finds the heroes underfoot, especially if they still think in religious terms and involve the population in their bloody ascent to an uninhabited paradise.”

Umberto Eco

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