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**CITIES, TERRORISM AND URBAN WARS
OF THE 21ST CENTURY**

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Abstract
The majority of wars are fought in impoverished countries with often devastating and transformative impacts on their urban spaces. Nevertheless, the relationship between acts of terror and development is under-explored and little focus is placed on the impact on cities of the global South. In the wake of 9/11 the critical gaze has been trained firmly on terrorism in the global North, including its impact on cities: New York, Madrid, London. Defining terrorism in terms of acts of terror the paper recognises that urban centres are most susceptible to this form of political violence because of the likelihood of greater impact and visibility afforded by cities. Eschewing a 'developing'/'developed' dichotomy this paper nevertheless demonstrates that while terrorism has levelled risk across cities of the North and South, vulnerabilities in developing country cities are far greater. It is here that the link between terrorism and development can be most tightly drawn. It is further suggested that the incidence of urban terror is greatest in cities of less developed countries and that urban terrorism is helping define a shift from 'peasant wars of the 20th century' to the 'urban wars of the 21st century', a shift not divorced from encompassing global forces.

Introduction
The collapse of New York's Twin Towers on 11th September 2001 dramatically demonstrated the susceptibility of cities to terrorist attacks. Two and a half years later, on the 11th March 2004, bombs were detonated on packed commuter trains in Madrid, killing 191 and injuring over 1,500 people, extending an amplified sense of urban vulnerability to cities in Europe. This was reinforced by the London bombings in July 2005, which again targeted ordinary city dwellers going about their daily lives. Subsequent analyses, contributing to the burgeoning literature on the 'war on terror' that grew up in the wake of 9/11, have examined the consequences of targeted urban terror campaigns in cities of the global North (Cutter et al, 2003; Glaeser and Shapiro, 2001; Graham, 2004). However, what Appadurai (1996: 152-3) called the 'implosion of global and national conflicts into the urban world' (Appadurai, 1996, pp. 152-3) is a phenomenon that cannot ignore cities of the global South.[1] On the contrary, cities absorb much of the impact and fallout from contemporary conflict and war, both directly and indirectly, with consequences both for development and governance at the local and national levels. Moreover, many large cities of

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[1] For ease of expression, I use inter-changeably the terms 'North' and 'South' on the one hand and developed and developing countries, on the other, to refer respectively to industrialised and low- and middle-income countries.

the South, from Karachi and Mumbai, to Nairobi and Bogotá, have been targets of episodic or sustained acts of terror.

The London bombings proved beyond a doubt the extent to which international networks operate across increasingly permeable international borders with cities serving both as nodes for the articulation of international terror networks as well as targets of terrorism. When cities in developing countries – particularly those in the Islamic world – are discussed in relation to terrorism, it is often in the context of 'breeding grounds' for international terrorists, trained and headed for urban targets. In 2002, for example, CNN reported that Osama bin Laden's network had replicated a small western-style city in eastern Afghanistan in order to train recruits in urban terrorist tactics, stating that: 'Al Qaeda has created a series of exercises to conduct terrorist operations … in the urban environment. That is, they are able to operate in cities.' (CNN 21st August 2002). Indeed, a vicious circle is increasingly in evidence, whereby cities are targeted in the 'war on terror' – Kabul and Baghdad come immediately to mind – breeding further terrorism, counter terrorism and so on in a seemingly endless cycle.

In warfare, cities have always been sites of protection and of attack. Across much of the global South they are additionally impacted upon by the knock on effects of wars fought in the countryside. Indeed, it is argued that Eric Wolf's (1969) notion of *Peasant Wars of the Twentieth Century* is giving way to the phenomenon of 'urban wars of the twenty-first century', wars that cannot be explained outside an understanding of how they articulate with international links and processes within a hegemonic global context. This is not to neglect local or national imperatives or indeed rural areas. Nor is it to imply that Wolf did not recognise links between peasant struggles and urban interests. Nevertheless it is important to understand, for example, the impact of Angola's civil (but quintessentially Cold War driven) war on the city of Luanda, both in terms of attacks on the city as well as the exponential growth of the capital as a result of people moving in from surrounding rural areas. Similarly, conflict and terror in Jerusalem cannot be understood outside of Israeli occupation of West Bank and Gaza and the protracted dispute between Israel and Palestine. However, to ignore the urban dimensions of the conflict is both to miss the point and to miss the opportunity of '[t]he urban scale, as a site for or actor in the resolution of international social conflicts, ethnonational conflicts or inter-state war' (Stanley, 2003:11-12). Indeed, Bollens (1999:7) has argued in the case of divided cities that '[t]he disintegration of many states is compelling international aid organizations, mediators, and political negotiators to increasingly look at substate regions and urban areas as more appropriate scales of involvement.'

When examining the incidence and impact of terrorism in cities of the developing world, it is important to think very carefully about which of the many definitions of terrorism to take as a point of departure. Following Jonathan Barker's lead, the definition employed here has three main elements: a) violent acts threatened or employed; b) violent acts directed against civilian targets; and c) violent acts threatened or perpetrated for political objectives (Barker, 2003, p. 23). Unlike some characterisations, this definition embraces acts of terror committed by states. Although contentious, this is considered critical; for as Barker points out:

> Definitions that exclude state terrorism remain blind to a major source of the violence and fear that is visited upon civilians around the world. State terrorism and group terrorism, it is true, have rather different features, but their effects on people and politics are similar and they are often closely linked' (Barker, 2003, p. 24).

Moreover, by putting more focus on terrorist acts rather than actors, this definition also avoids the vexed question of when one person's 'terrorist' becomes another's 'freedom fighter' and escapes the essentialist categories associated with the discourse of the current 'war on terror'. There is a danger that a focus on *acts* strips the analysis of considerations of power. While terrorist acts are themselves incredibly powerful – not least because they transgress what is perceived to be 'normal' - it is also the case that there are often great differentials in power between those espousing the causes advanced by terrorist acts and those against whom such causes are pitted. This observation is made without wishing to portray terrorism as a 'weapon of the weak' (Scott, 1985).

Here the largely negative implications of terrorist activities for development are examined, as well as the potential of cities for propelling reconstruction and peace building. The essay concludes by suggesting that while the specific challenges faced by cities of the South cannot be under-estimated, the very phenomenon of urban terrorism is serving to break down any sense of a rigid binary between the 'developed' and 'developing' worlds, at least in the urban realm. The implication for development is that the 'them' and 'us' attitude prevalent in the international security discourse, and creeping into development discourse, is not only misleading but is itself damaging to both development co-operation and global security. Moreover insisting on a clear divide between the notions of 'them' and 'us' serves to fuel ever-intensifying cycles of violence born of 'terrorism' and 'counter-terrorism', levelling risk across cities of the world, while leaving the vulnerabilities of urban dwellers highly unequal.

Cities, Terrorism and Globalisation

One of the most striking things about the blasts on the London Underground was the extent to which they illustrated how the politics of terror have become internationalised. While the events of 9/11 demonstrated the devastation that organisations based far outside the US could inflict on American cities, the more recent series of *al-qa'ida* related attacks in London further elucidated the truly global nature of terrorism: the attackers were British, seemingly orchestrated from Pakistan (their country of origin), arguably in support of a cause rooted in the Arab world. Clearly, grievances felt in one part of the globe can be felt in many others and the more cosmopolitan the city the more grievances are likely to resonate. This is not, of course, inevitable. If Pakistani youth in the North of England are resentful and aggrieved due to unemployment, exclusion and real or perceived racism, it is because multiculturalism has failed to translate into real cosmopolitanism. If, on the other hand, immigrants and refugees have opportunities and are treated with respect, it is more likely that the positive face of the cosmopolis will emerge. However, when people feel aggrieved or disenfranchised in one context, they can achieve satisfaction from championing a cause across the globe that somehow resonates with their own misgivings or discontent. This has long been a feature of solidarity movements and today international causes are facilitated by enhanced networking.

The geography of terror has moved on to the global stage largely by way of cities and specific urban symbols. In part, the message of the London bombers was that any war perceived to have its origins in London would come back to roost in London. While London was the site of thousands of people of multiple origins taking to the streets in protest against the war, 7th July 2005 also stand as a symbolic gesture against the Anglo-American alliance that went to war in

Afghanistan and Iraq. In a quintessentially cosmopolitan city like London, the events of July 2005 are further emblematic of how the victims of the bombs were inextricably linked to families, friends and sympathisers across the globe.

The notion of an internationally networked world economic system is not new (Castells, 1989, 1998, 1996). Nor is it any longer revelatory to describe cities as critical nodes in systems of global exchange (Sassen, 1991, 1994). However, a more recent and sobering recognition of a 'networked urban world' (Hall and Pfeiffer, 2000) suggests that terrorism has fundamentally changed the geographies of global inclusion and exclusion (Flint, 2003). Not only is international communication easier than ever before but also many of the supportive urban infrastructures or 'lifelines', such as transportation and communication, are available as targets for terrorist networks seeking to exploit the vulnerabilities of the 'network society' (Esser, 2004; Miller, 2003; Dezzani & Lakshmanan, 2003). However, not all cities, nor all of their inhabitants, are similarly networked and few under conditions of their own choosing. Consequently, we need to go beyond seeing networked cities simply as providing an optimum environment for the operation of global terrorism, to understand the accompanying networks of global, national and local power.

In order to understand why cities become targets of acts of terror and the impact of such acts on urban dwellers, it is necessary to say something about the nature of cities. The physical environment of the city is important, as is the role of cities in national development, alongside the economies of scale provided by cities in addressing human well-being through public goods and services. All these dimensions are attractive to those seeking maximum impact from their acts of destruction and disruption. Moreover, in cities, institutional organisation and human interaction takes place within urban spaces. As argued elsewhere, 'Struggles for survival and power are played out in physical spaces and built environments that are spatial and organisational expressions of social relations and contesting realities' (Beall, 1997, p. 3). Urban space has been used by planners to put or keep people in their place, while urban dwellers claim, challenge and change space and its uses. Hence terrorist acts not only attack the built environment and the urban political economy but cities as social institutions and the very fact of urbanism itself.

At the same time, an attack on a given city need not necessarily be a deliberate attack on the city itself. Cities transcend national boundaries and have come to represent something bigger than the countries in which they are located. For instance, it is questionable as to how likely the bombs in the busy urban tourist centres of Bali and Sharm el Sheikh were aimed at the towns themselves, or even the Indonesian or Egyptian governments. Similarly, the *al-qa'ida* backed bombings of the Australian embassy in Jakarta and the American embassies in Nairobi and Dar-es-Salaam also had an international focus. Thus, unlike civil wars and other instances of urban political violence, terrorism is not only domestic in impact and reach. Instead, urban terrorist acts in developing countries are used to communicate and send signals across the globe, with their impact ricocheting across continents, or they become enmeshed in the rhetoric and policy agendas of the global 'war on terror'. It is thus not unreasonable to speak of urban terror as a sort of international language.

That urban terror operates simultaneously at both global and local levels means that it must be interpreted as profoundly geopolitical. This becomes clear, for example, when one considers that the kind of terror/counter-terror dynamics evident for so long in the cities of Israel and Palestine

and now being replicated on a much wider international stage, articulated across strategic urban sites. A few anecdotal examples serve to illustrate the point. In July 2002, the Colombian authorities foiled an attempt by the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) to fly a plane into government buildings in the capital, Bogotá (BBC News, 2002). After the July 2005 London bombings, there were press reports of Britain consulting Israeli politicians and security services in order to bring in expertise on the subject of 'dealing with suicide bombers' in urban centres (Shang-jen Li, 2005). And precedence can be found in the presence of the US military at the Battle of Jenin in Israeli Defence Force (IDF) uniforms, in order to observe the way the IDF conducted itself within the Palestinian urban terrain, with a view to applying such methods in their own military actions in Arab cities, despite Jenin having been widely been considered a failure and a grave violation of human rights (Graham, 2004).

Cities of the South as Arenas of Violence

When urban centres become arenas of terror, the way violence is visited upon them can vary enormously. For example, cities can be caught in the crossfire of wider international conflicts, chosen for attack simply because they afford a high degree of visibility or because urban targets promise maximum impact. Given the proximity of urban living and the technologies central to modern urban life, cities offer the potential for devastating attacks. The London bombings or the periodic targeting of buses and passenger ferries in Mindanao and Manila by the Philippine Abu Sayyaf Group, are testimony to this. City life can itself be absolutely central to the terrorists' political goals. Here Israeli attempts to destroy Palestinian towns provide an example, constituting an attack on Palestinian urbanism itself.

In identifying cities as arenas for acts of terror, it is important to recognise that these are just one form of violence faced by urban populations. Cities are also sites of political violence and opposition, civil war and conflictual competition for access to and control over urban space and resources. Urban violence can take the form of communal riots, such as those that from time to time tear Indian cities apart, or see attacks on vulnerable populations, such as the killing of hundreds of children by vigilantes every year in the streets of Brazilian cities. Such battles can overlap or mesh with criminal violence, gang warfare, or other features of the brittleness of urban life, but should not be confused with internationally linked terrorism, although they often are in the rhetoric of the 'war on terror'.

Aside from the various forms of man-made violence, cities of developing countries (especially in Africa and Asia) are vulnerable to new and growing forms of specifically urban risk (Mitchell, 2003). Under conditions of rapid urbanisation, these range from inadequate infrastructure, to poor service delivery and deficient or corrupt local governments. The effects of unregulated globalised industrialisation and climate change, for example, are generating new forms of urban environmental hazard alongside older ones (Wisner, 2004). Low-income urban populations are at particular risk, living in vulnerable locations exposed to the effects of poor water quality, petrochemical explosions, landslides and earthquakes, as well as urban violence and crime (Douglass, 1992; Patel, 1997a, 1997b).

Nancy Scheper-Hughes (1993) and Daniel Goldstein (2004) refer to 'everyday violence' and 'spectacular violence' respectively. Associated with the latter, terrorism is a hazard that derives from a very deliberate attempt to unsettle populations but it is important to recognise that it is, in

many cases, a relatively small risk compared to other hazards. As such it differs significantly from the more prosaic and pernicious threats that give rise to urban vulnerability. Thus, while the *risk* associated with a range of possible terrorist threats is enormous, James K. Mitchell argues that efforts would be better spent focusing on the particular *vulnerabilities* of urban populations. Terrorist acts, he argues, 'challenge us to carefully examine changing relationships between the two main components of environmental hazard (risks and vulnerabilities), and to increase our efforts to understand the more neglected component of the two, vulnerability' (Mitchell, 2003, p. 21).

Cities of the South are particularly vulnerable because poverty, urbanisation and the rapid and unplanned expansion of cities exacerbate the impact of terrorism. According to recent United Nations projections, 2.2 billion people are likely to be added to the world's population between 2000 and 2030, with the cities of Africa, Asia and Latin America expected to absorb most of this increase. Indeed, by 2030 it is anticipated that 60% of the global population will live in cities and towns, with nearly all of this growth being absorbed into the urban areas of the world's least developed regions (UN Habitat, 2004/05). The pace of urbanisation in the South has caused some to predict imminent urban dystopias, characterised by flood tides of people housed in walled islands of cheek-by-jowl wealth and extreme poverty (Hall and Pfeiffer, 2000). Cities are also vibrant and creative places (Hardoy *et al,* 1992). Nevertheless, many of the distinctive qualities of urbanism derive from the fact that 'spatial proximity brings socio-economic diversity into focus' (Montgomery *et. al.*, 2004, p.71).

While cities are the source of cosmopolitanism and conviviality, it is also the case that as urban populations grow and become more differentiated, social distance is often magnified. The demonisation of ethnic and religious minorities has been a central feature of urban terrorist attacks in developing countries. These can be identified from Ahmedabad to Karachi and from Beirut to Sarajevo. Moreover, conflicts rooted in divided cities where people are at war with highly 'othered' neighbouring communities are equally mirrored in the West (Davis, 2004). However, as demonstrated by Robin Soans (2005) in his recent play *Talking to Terrorists,*[2] similarities are often as evident as differences. The script was based entirely on actual conversations he had conducted with people formerly involved in terrorism. In one such conversation, a former member of the Ulster Volunteer Force from Belfast tells of how he met and became friends with a member of the IRA whilst in prison:

> 'We were both working-class men from Belfast; we had both put cardboard into our shoes when it rained; by and large, I could have lived his life, and he mine.'

It is likely that these dynamics parallel experiences of civil conflict in the Balkans or Rwanda, where people literally found themselves at war with their neighbours. Similarly, the rise of no-go areas, gated communities and the privatisation of security, bred by fear and insecurity, is equally a global urban phenomenon (Beall *et al*, 2002; Blakely and Snyder, 1997; Caldeira, 2000; Davis, 1990).

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[2] Robin Soan's play *Talking to Terrorists,* directed by Max Stafford-Clarke for the theatre company Out of Joint, toured in England in 2005. Its recent London run took place at the Royal Court Theatre.

In drawing conclusions about cities of the South as arenas for violence it is interesting to note that, conventionally, war in developing countries has been thought of as a rural phenomenon, involving peasant soldiers and being conducted across mainly rural terrains. Reinforced by images of Amilcar Cabral, Mao Zedong, Ho Chi Minh or Ché Guevara, there were of course urban exceptions in the anti-colonial struggles across the world. The importance of Managua for the Sandinistas, the militant role of urban workers in colonial Africa and the now iconic example of *Battle of Algiers*[3] are all instances that are easily recalled. Nevertheless, for the most part a rural focus predominates in subsequent analyses of anti-colonial struggles, civil wars and the armed uprisings accompanying struggles for land, water and other essential resources. However, Wolf's (1969) *Peasant Wars of the Twentieth Century* are increasingly giving way to what we might call urban wars of the twenty-first century (although it should be noted that Wolf recognised that peasant wars sometimes arose as a result of opportunities to ally with urban interests). What is different today is that equivalent examples of revolutionary violence, such as the Chiapas in Mexico or rural uprisings in Nepal, operate within complex axes of interest that span national, regional and international localities and where rural-urban linkages seem more tightly drawn.

The effect of terrorist acts on cities of the global South is not well understood. However, given that the national economies of developing countries are less competitive, it makes it far more difficult for them to recover after a severe terrorist attack. For example, the *al-qa'ida* bombing of a hotel in Mombassa in November 2002 was to the residents of that city the last straw in the region's downward spiral into poverty and banditry (Richards, 2002). The impact of the bombings in Sharm-el-Sheikh and Bali has been equally substantial. Moreover, in the context of weak governments and flailing economies, such as in Afghanistan, it is more difficult to undertake reconstruction, both physical and social (Beall and Esser, 2005). More generally, terrorism and the vulnerabilities on which it plays reduce the space for social and economic interaction and brake the economic growth and social development of affected nations (Dezzani and Lakshmanan, 2003). There are certainly differences in the incidence of terror between cities of the North and South. In the industrialised countries it is much lower (if Israel is discounted), despite the greater analytical focus on cities of the North since 9th September, 2001. Colombia, for instance, above all other countries, has had the highest number of attacks that can be classified as terrorist, with a reputed 191 terrorist incidents in 2001 (Barker, 2003, p. 34). While the *risk* associated with terrorism in the South are very similar to those in the North, one of the insights that can be gleaned from the study of urban hazards in general is that the outcomes differ substantially in the South (Wisner, 2004). This is the case for terrorism as much as it is for earthquakes or heat waves. Under such conditions, cities are doubly afflicted, by being the targets of actual attacks and primary recipients of the economic and social side effects from which it is difficult to recover, underscoring the contention that *vulnerability* is worst in urban areas, especially in developing countries (Mitchell, 2003).

Urbicide and State Terrorism

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[3] Made in 1965, *Battle for Algiers* was directed by Gillo Pontecorvo. The film has for decades been studied by liberation movements across the globe. Interestingly, the Pentagon held a screening of it in 2003, with a view to understanding more about the situation they faced in Iraq and the tactical options open both to them and their opponents. See: http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/editorials/archives/2005/07/28/2003265387.

Given the definition employed in this article, violence inflicted on civilian populations for political purposes by state actors is taken to be a form of terrorism, and one that is central to our analysis of urban terror in the developing world. The use of political violence in and against cities, as a deliberate attempt to deprive people of the benefits of urban life, goes to the heart of Graham's analysis in *Cities, War and Terrorism* (Graham, 2004). Following Marshall Berman, Graham also uses the concept of 'urbicide' to describe the ways in which cities are systematically and violently targeted (Berman, 1987; Graham, 2004). In this view, urban targets are not only associated with terror attacks and war but also pernicious urban planning, evictions, involuntary relocation and the deliberate destruction of urban infrastructures for political purposes (Davis, 2004). Moreover, as Graham points out, the link between militarism and urban planning is often very close, even to the extent that the same personnel are involved.

The most obvious example from the South is that of South Africa, where the apartheid state sought to keep the black population of cities restricted to those people with jobs and a pass giving them permission to live in urban areas. When this policy faltered the regime resorted to bulldozing settlements and forced removals to rural Bantustans, giving rise to what Murray has called 'displaced urbanisation' (Murray, 1987). Such forms of violence against the city and urban dwellers are not confined to apartheid South Africa. While never couched in the language of terrorism, the legacy of colonialism is one in which the 'pacification' or 'regularisation' of cities featured to a considerable degree. Indeed the wholesale attempt to destroy certain urban spaces or to disperse particular urban populations was a recognisable feature of empire and one that has persisted in some contexts to the present. In contemporary Kabul, foreign military personnel actively and assertively participate in urban planning processes, despite being viewed by many of the Afghans involved, as members of an occupying force.

In many ways, the enhanced vulnerability of urban life in the South is best epitomised by instances of state terrorism. While not exclusively confined to the developing world, state terrorism is more widespread in the South where many countries still fall under authoritarian regimes or are victim of violent state institutions. Under such conditions, urbanity is often one of the first targets of states wishing to exert control by means of terror. For example, the Taliban, an armed non-state organisation whose origins were rural, succeeded in capturing the Afghanistan state and forming a regime based on terror. Herold goes so far as to argue that the Taliban:

> .... represented the forceful imposition upon the city of distorted, traditional, decentralized, rural value and lifestyles [....] one might say it was the revenge of the poor countryside against the city, (Herold, 2004, p.313)

While it might be argued that Afghanistan's recent history offers a fairly idiosyncratic case, the destruction of structures and symbols of urbanism is not unique and constitutes a common feature of state terrorism and can be used for strategic advantage. In this way, for example, Israeli attempts to counteract Palestinian terrorism have often involved preventing Palestinians from forming enduring urban centres, with Palestinian urbanism being regarded as a 'cancer' on the body of the Israeli state (Graham 2004, Weizman 2004).

That activities aimed at eliminating urbanism fall within the realms of state terrorism is confirmed by Ariel Sharon's words after a suicide bomber killed 19 and injured 172 people at a

Pesach dinner in a crowded seaside hotel in Netanya, Israel in March 2002. In remarks that preceded by a few weeks the bulldozing of Jenin in April 2002, he told his ministers:

> We are in a hard war against a cruel and bloodthirsty enemy…We must cause them losses, casualties…so that they understand they will gain nothing by terrorism' (Hills, 2004, p, 142).

Beyond civil war or inter-state conflict, the kind of destruction of urban settlements pursued with such vigour by Sharon constitutes acts of terror that have been employed extensively elsewhere in the developing world. Examples of 'ethnic cleansing', such as took place in the Balkans, are not examples of urbicide as they are not necessarily directed against the urban fabric. On the contrary they often seek to preserve physical if not social resources for the victors. This is not the case with 'urban cleansing' such as is evident in contemporary Zimbabwe. While perhaps not a straightforward attack on urbanism *per se,* it has resulted thus far in around 700,000 people losing their homes, livelihoods or both (UN Habitat report, July 2005). At one level it can be characterised as a targeted political campaign akin to 'urbicide'. At another it is very likely aimed at punishing urban voters who sympathise with the powerful Movement for Democratic Change opposition party established in 1999. It may also be aimed at swelling the ranks of the rural poor who are more dependent on government and therefore more supportive of it (BBC News, 2005). As such, a focus on urbanism should not obscure the class dynamics involved.

The failure of Mugabe's regime in Zimbabwe to expand formal employment or income earning opportunities inevitably led urban dwellers in Harare to engage in irregular economic activities. This in turn became central to the reason why the urban poor were targeted (Brett, 2005). The residents of the Harare settlements that were bulldozed, illustrated in *Figure 1*, fall into two main groups. On the one hand are elderly homeowners, unemployed and subsisting through the rents received from subletting rooms, outbuildings and houses to low-income urban tenants. On the other are the tenants themselves who are much younger, with few prospects and who are largely ignored by government policies. As a result they are dependant on informal sources of income inimical to the interests of the better off and aspirant supporters and beneficiaries of the Mugabe regime. Very much urban dwellers, many among the urban poor lack support or a sense of safety in the rural areas. Hence they are caught between town and countryside, reportedly living in 'the bush' on the city limits. The example of 'urban cleansing' in Zimbabwe offers an important reminder that class dynamics are intrinsic components both of urbanism and state terrorism.

Figure 1: Satellite Image of Destruction of Urban Settlement in Harare
Source: International Alliance of Inhabitants (2005).

Insecurity of tenure is a central vulnerability of many urban populations and one that is exacerbated by much wider examples of 'urban cleansing', whereby under conditions of 'urbicide', states perpetrate acts of terror on their own people. Beyond the immediate example of Harare above, it is possible to cite a number of other contemporary examples of state terrorism. In 2001 and 2002 in Asia alone, 1.8 million people were evicted from their homes and another 3.9 million were under immediate threat of eviction (ACHR newsletter). Between July and October 2001, 12,000 families were evicted from the Agargoan area of Dhaka under the Caretaker Government of Bangladesh, in the name of clearing up criminal elements in the city. Around the same time, the governor of Jakarta was beginning his own 'clean-up' campaign. By November 2003, approximately 50,000 people in Indonesia's capital had been evicted. The list goes on. In Karachi, according to estimates of the city's Urban Resource Centre, a total of 16,470 houses have been bulldozed as a result of evictions since 1992 (Urban Resource Centre, 2001). In Afghanistan since the fall of the Taliban residents of Kabul who live in or close to the city centre have had to cope with several incidents of urban cleansing, allegedly to revitalise the urban economy but in some cases clearly following elite interests and largely detached from mutually agreed local economic development strategies.

Evictions and the bulldozing of informal settlements are such major causes of urban poverty that security of tenure was taken up by UN-Habitat as one of two major themes to take into the new millennium.[4] Of course UN-Habitat does not deal with tenure issues from the perspective of state terrorism. Indeed, there is an argument that by describing such gross violations of human rights in this way is to undermine the rights agenda and to fall foul of the 'hype' associated with the 'war

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[4] The other is Urban Governance.

on terror'. However, there is equally no reason why states should escape being included under the rubric of terrorism and to exclude them would be to overlook some of the most substantial acts of political violence against cities and citizens in the developing world. That said it is not just states that deliberately enact violence on people in cities. As Martin Shaw points out, 'Ethnic-nationalist political movements often draw on rural and small-town hatred of the city' (Shaw, 2004, p. 145). The Abu Sayyaf separatists in Mindanao, for example, direct much of their vitriol and indeed their terror specifically at Manila (Cragin and Chalk, 2003). However, those episodes of terror that have had the most devastating impact on cities have usually been state-led, with many having been backed by the United States. When external sovereign states become involved in perpetrating acts of terror in another nation, distinguishing between war and state terrorism can be a thorny area. It has been frequently asserted that the war on terrorism is a war *of* terrorism (Gregory, 2004, cited in Graham, 2004; Pilger, 2002) and in Kabul, Baghdad, Palestine and elsewhere, civilians have arguably been targeted for the purpose of spreading fear and exerting dominance. Put another way and in the words of C. Douglas Lummis (1994, p. 304, cited in Herold, 2004), 'Air bombardment is the terrorism of the rich', a terrorism perpetrated against cities where poor people are particularly vulnerable and where the prospect of reconstruction and recovery that much more difficult.

Urban Terrorism and Development

Urban acts of terror are not only a geopolitical but very much a development issue. The idea of cities as heroic sites of civilisation is turned on its head by acts of terror (Graham, 2004). They destroy what development has built, in relation to both the physical and social fabric and cause cities to regress in development terms. Writing about the first Gulf War in 1990-91, Gautam Banarji notes that the violent assault on Baghdad's infrastructure by US forces had the capacity to reduce what was previously a fairly advanced economy to a 'pre-industrial age' (Banarji, 1997, p. 199). Terror onslaughts by incumbent regimes and US-led coalitions have subsequently led to similar outcomes in Kabul, Gaza, and other cities across the Middle East, including Baghdad once more. Terrorist acts divert resources away from investment in areas of development that promote growth and poverty eradication and when the state itself is a perpetrator of terror, another impact is that development assistance is often withdrawn, resulting in further blows to the development process. For example, development in Zimbabwe will suffer not only because of the devastating effect of 'urban cleansing' but also because donors are concerned not to provide aid to the Mugabe government for fear of propping up an authoritarian regime. When organisations such as *al-qa'ida* are present in a country, ironically the effect is often opposite, with aid to that country increasing in the hope that it will help diminish their influence. Given the spurious connection between terrorism and poverty and the long-term nature of pro-poor growth strategies, this approach might be questioned if the latter remain the critical focus of development cooperation. Critical for the monitoring of humanitarian and development aid is whether when it is increased, it is actually used to further the fundamental goals of development or whether, for example, it fuels the repression of citizens in the name of counter-terror. Well before the 'War on Terror' the efficacy of aid was questions, testified to by the reams written and many conferences held on the subject. Moreover, for a long time aid has been seen as propping up unsavoury regimes (Duffield, 1992). However, as pointed out in the introduction, the 'War on Terror' has tightened the noose conjoining the twin heads of security and development and in such a way that it is not always clear how the latter can remain of equal value and stature.

Many of the resources directed towards reducing terrorism – especially since 11 September 2001 – have not targeted root causes but have been channelled into surveillance, emergency planning and training operatives in counter-terrorism. This has detrimental effects on other sectors of development, as suggested in the introduction. In both Tanzania and Kenya, for example, USAID has invested in training centres and emergency planning relating to terrorism, while these countries lack fundamental infrastructures to deal with hazards such as floods, droughts or public health issues (Wisner, 2004). As such, the proportionality of urban hazards has been skewed by the war on terror and development in many sectors crucial to managing urban hazards has been hindered by the focus on counter-terrorism. These processes affect both the global South and North alike. For example, it is arguable that the resources ploughed into the department of Homeland Security in the US have weakened the state's ability to cope with more common threats to its urban centres, the poor response to Hurricane Katrina being a case in point. . In an unfortunate irony, the disproportionate focus on counter-terrorism by developed countries stands to leave their own cities open to increased vulnerabilities; hence, after Hurricane Katrina, the widespread perception that New Orleans was a city reduced to 'third world' levels of chaos.

The impact of terrorist acts on domestic policy and the delivery capacity of governments is also important. In the case of urban governance, the latter is undermined by one of the knock-on effects of terrorist acts and urban violence: the rise of private security and gated communities in which better off residents opt out of both public service delivery and local democracy. Moreover, it is often the case that those who *perpetrate* terrorist acts surface from the ranks of the better off. It may be that targeted urban development programmes might yield rewards in terms of reducing *support* for terrorist acts, although on their own they are by no means sufficient (Cragin and Chalk, 2003). Policies designed to assist particular marginalised or disaffected communities are difficult because they signal lack of parity in the treatment of citizens. This can reinforce inter-communal distrust, especially in tight urban spaces and lead to discontent (Cragin and Chalk, 2003, p. 13). However, whether urban development can reduce the incidence of terrorist acts is hard to say and attribution is almost impossible to ascribe. Despite this sober prognosis, this is not an argument for abandoning urban reconstruction and development.

Cities can play a vital role in helping to resolve conflicts and rebuild societies. Antanas Mockus, the former mayor of Bogotá, for example, has written of his experiences attempting to change civic culture and attitudes to violence in the city. In part due to mayoral efforts to change perceptions of citizens' duties and responsibilities in respect of the law and in part to a concerted and partially successful attempt to dispel negative perceptions of Bogotá, he has argued that violence is increasingly seen as morally and culturally unacceptable. While still rife, crime and homicide have dropped significantly in the last decade and, crucially, it appears that citizens feel an ownership of these positive results (Mockus, 2004). Just as the visibility of urban targets are crucial to the success of terrorist acts, the profile of cities is also central to their potential role in peace-building. Indeed, some of the very properties of urban life – diversity, cosmopolitanism and creativity – can contribute to a defiant resilience and progress towards peace. More tangible peace resources include proximity to decision-makers and financial resources, the protection or reconstruction of vital urban services, as well as opportunities for non-violent political action and conflict management.

Embracing cities as sites for peace requires engaging with difficult contradictions. In Nicosia, while Turkish and Greek Cypriots were divided by the Green Line, they were equally dependent

upon on the effective operation and maintenance of subterranean sewers, as were black and white South Africans, residentially segregated under apartheid. In Palestine, an organisation perceived as terrorist by the Israelis is functioning at a city level in ways that could be construed as constructively working towards peace. Despite being in prison, Wajia Qawais – a leading member of *Hamas* – was recently elected as Mayor of the town of Qalqilya. Its position on the West Bank border and its almost total enclosure by Ariel Sharon's dividing wall, places it right on the faultline of conflict, explaining the high level of local support for the hard-line posture of *Hamas*. Despite the fact that *Hamas* is rhetorically committed to the destruction of Israel the nature of municipal governance renders necessary some communication between local governments. The Qalqilya mayor and his deputy made it clear that they were willing to deal with surrounding Israeli municipalities on matters relating to electricity or sewage. By the same token, while the Israeli foreign ministry has repeatedly stated that they will have no dealings with *Hamas*, a senior Israeli commander in the West Bank has said that he will deal with all mayors, whatever their political party (BBC Radio 4, 2005).

Conclusion

Urban acts of terror are only one aspect of how violence is experience in cities. However, they are increasingly a defining component of urban wars of the 21st century. They have increased our sense of the vulnerability of cities as objects of war and targets of attack and they often signal the link between local conflicts and global forces. The 'Cities and Fragile States' component of the Crisis States Research Centre has begun to undertake systematic comparative studies of a number of large urban centres of countries in the developing world that have become sites of 21st century urban warfare. Early findings show that cities absorb much of the impact of national, regional and often internationally fuelled conflict. However, urban centres are also sites of reconstruction and peace-building in the wake of war. The tragedy of acts of urban terror is that they undermine the capacity of cities and urban citizens to contribute to recovery, restitution and state-making.

In highlighting the ways in which acts of terror impact on cities of the South, a distinction has been made between cities in the 'developed' and 'developing' worlds. This is more than simply a heuristic device. Cities in the world's poorer countries experience terrorist acts with greater frequency and often with more devastating effect than in economically advanced countries. Nevertheless, given the globalisation of terror networks, the permeability of international boundaries and the fact that characteristics defining the urban experience in Bogotá, Johannesburg and Los Angeles increasingly overlap, the distinction between 'developed' and 'developing' *cities* does tend to break down in ways that are not necessarily replicated at the national level. The extreme differentials of wealth in cities of many developed countries parallel those in the cities of the South, as does the way the increasing incidence of urban violence has entrenched social divisions and distance. Cities like Detroit are characterized by decaying infrastructure, half-ruined cityscapes and levels of gang and ethnic violence to rival the megacities of the developing world (Graham, 2004, p. 44). There is a vibrancy, creativity and strong sense of order that underpin the seemingly informal and chaotic working and living arrangements of low income urban communities in the South (Hardoy and Satterthwaite, 1989). This is increasingly evident in cities of the North. Urban places everywhere are more likely to be heterogeneous than rural areas. Indeed, the very reasons for terrorist acts targeted at Istanbul or Mumbai are not dissimilar to those aimed at New York, Madrid or London.

Particularly in cities of the South it is difficult to define acts of terrorism, given the 'conceptual minefield that is the current state of classification and understanding of political violence' (Shaw, 2004). Moreover, local acts of urban political violence can become entangled in the vicious cycle of terrorism and counter terrorism that characterises the 'War on Terror'. Neither is differentiating terrorism from civil war not straightforward, for example, in a country like India where separatist causes are rife. In a city such as Bogotá, where urban violence takes many forms, it often becomes difficult to know where terrorism begins and violent crime ends, as pointed out in this *policy arena* by Francisco Gutiérrez Sanín, especially given that Colombian terrorism is tightly bound together with the narcotics industry. The mayor of Bogotá has sought to play down the relevance of the distinction, stating: 'We're not interested in intent – whether political or not, [violence] is a disease that we need to cure … the important thing is to preserve lives' (Regan-Sachs, 2001). The difficulty in determining the point at which urban violence becomes terrorism is illustrated by Sophie Body-Gendrot, who argues that in some cases 'Inter-social urban violence is not political *per se* but becomes political through its generated effects, that is via the potential exploitative strategies open to political actors' (Body-Gendrot, 1994, p. 215). Ultimately though, it is *acts* of terror that remain a defining feature of terrorism. It was the act of planting bombs in two cinemas in New Delhi in May 2005, by the militant Sikh organisation, Babbar Khalsa International, that rendered the incident terrorist rather than simply a gesture of Sikh separatism.

The analysis presented here exposes something of a paradox: it is noted that cities of the South experience terrorism very differently to those of the North, and yet at the same time urban terrorism also reveals the analytical weaknesses of a rigid binary between developed/developing cities. To make sense of this it is helpful to return to the distinction between risks and vulnerabilities. While vulnerability is more blatantly evident in the South, international terrorism has somewhat leveled the risk of exposure to political violence. Issues of proportionality aside, it has become clear that the risks faced by cities in the North and South are very similar, both with respect to terrorist acts and, more recently, other dangers such as environmental hazards. Yet it is the particular vulnerabilities of urban populations of developing societies, which result in differences in the ultimate outcomes.

A developing/developed country binary can also be misleading in relation to political violence. Mockus, in analysing attempts to alleviate crime in Bogotá, is explicit that some 'should also be recognized as important issues for American society' (Mockus, 2004, p. 11). Far from being at opposite ends of a spectrum, the cities of both the North and South are not only afflicted by many of the same problems, but are bound together in their affliction. Views based on rigid binaries are problematic and indeed often serve to sustain political violence. It is just such an approach that allows *al-qa'ida* to proclaim everyone in New York a legitimate target, or for the American Administration to refer to hundreds of civilian deaths in Baghdad or Kabul as 'collateral damage'. Ultimately the most significant dimension of urban terrorism is that it is an international problem requiring both local and global resolution. This resolution, however, cannot be bought at the expense of development.

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