

**Terrorism: International Response Options; Overview**

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The United States responded and continues to respond in various ways to the September 11, 2001, attack by forces of international terrorism. Immediate diplomatic efforts around the globe were evident and military force against suspected perpetrators commenced on October 7. Many other short and long term responses may be anticipated. On September 20, President Bush said, "We will direct every resource at our command -- every means of diplomacy, every tool of intelligence, every instrument of law enforcement, every financial influence, and every necessary weapon of war -- to the disruption and defeat of the global terror network."

This section includes analyses of diplomatic and military options: [Military Responses](#) tracks operations from Afghanistan to Yemen. It also includes the new challenge of [Cyberwarfare](#), as well as [Foreign Aid](#) and [Economic Sanctions](#). Other activities with relevant international components are intelligence ([Threat Assessment Section](#) of this briefing book), law enforcement ([Legal Issues](#) and [Law Enforcement Section](#)), and banking and finance ([Economic Repercussions Section](#)). For analyses of specific nations, international organizations, and their interactions, see the [International Arena section](#). To examine the weapons of mass destruction nexus with terrorism, see the [WMD Proliferation](#) entry under Current Legislative Issues (Defense).

Congress demonstrated support for a strong response by authorizing the President to use military force (P.L. 107-40, September 18, 2001). In exercising oversight and funding responsibilities over short term response options, Congress should be particularly aware of the need to coordinate many elements in both timing and content. In some cases, standing U.S. policies may conflict with anti-terrorism goals. One example: to continue military operations against Osama bin Laden supporters in land-locked Afghanistan, the United States is receiving cooperation from neighboring Pakistan. In that light, the President waived long-standing, congressionally mandated economic, military assistance, and other sanctions meant to discourage Pakistan from deploying nuclear weapons. Too much support from the fragile Pakistani government, however, could irritate its populace into a crisis that might put nuclear weapons in the hands of terrorists. Conflicts between "September 10" policy objectives and measures to fight international terrorism also exist with Russia and other nations that appear otherwise willing to cooperate.

For the longer term, events may require legislation to establish new policies and organizational arrangements. For example, as Congress oversees formation of the new Department of Homeland Security, it may wish to ensure mechanisms are in place to coordinate domestic activities with international initiatives against terrorism.