

My thesis shows how difficult is to describe and define terrorism, which proved to be the biggest political problem for the democratic countries at the beginning of 21st century. In order to understand this phenomenon it is essential to show its long and violent history as I did in the first part of this text.

The core of my work focuses on the rapid growth of international terrorism in the late 1960's and early 70's with emphasis on the events that took place at the Olympic Games in Munich in 1972. On 5th September 1972 group of eight Palestinian terrorists entered the olympic village and seized 11 Israeli athletes and coaches. The terrorists demanded the release and safe passage to Egypt of 234 Palestinians and non-Arabs jailed in Israel, along with two German prisoners, Andreas Baader and Ulrike Meinhof, who were members of the Red Army Faction. However, two athletes were killed outright, and by the time the tragedy was resolved all the Israelis and a German policeman were dead, five members of Black September had been killed and three others captured. This tragedy can be in my opinion regarded as the birth of modern international terrorism. An estimated 900 million persons in at least a hundred different countries saw the crisis unfold on the television screens. The Olympic tragedy provided the first clear evidence that even terrorist attacks which fail to achieve their ostensible objectives can nonetheless still be counted successful provided that the operation is sufficiently dramatic to capture the media's attention. The third part of my thesis shows the Israeli reaction that followed after the "Munich massacre. Golda Meir and the Israeli Defense Committee made a decision secretly authorizing the Mossad to track down and eliminate those responsible for the attack. This highly controversial response to terrorism is still very topical and deserves our attention even today.