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International security enhancement instruments and the prevention of terrorist attacks during sports competitions

Abstract. *The article examines issues related to terrorist attacks against participants in sports events, both the athletes themselves and the spectators. The article presents a brief analysis of the existing mechanisms of international law enforcement cooperation. The main aims are to strengthen the interaction of international organizations, national bodies responsible for law enforcement, and sports organizations.*

Keywords: *sports events, terrorism, law enforcement agencies, international organizations, the interaction of law enforcement agencies.*

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Introduction

Today, the developing contemporary world is bringing more and more threats to the public security of which terrorism is one of the most unpredictable and dangerous forms. Sports events, as public gathering places, at international, regional, and national levels attract a wide range of criminal activities, from pickpocketing and passport fraud to organized crime and terrorism.

Sports events, such as the Olympic Games, World Championships, and Commonwealth Games, present a lot of security challenges to the

organizers and law-enforcement authorities of the hosting countries.

Since the attack during the 1972 Olympic Games [1], terrorist and extremist groups have continued to target sports events. Moreover, along with the globalization of terrorism, its fanatic-religious manifestations, and « lone terrorists », other frightening and unexpected forms of terrorist threats are emerging.

Previously, Mr. Noble, the INTERPOL Secretary General at that time, warned of « invisible » threats to personal and economic security when speaking at the 10th Yalta Annual

Meeting in Ukraine. Namely, it was highlighted that « advances in technology mean we are facing security challenges which were unheard of until recently”, pointing to an incident in Israel where a group of journalists smuggled a plastic gun produced by a 3-D printer into the Knesset parliament building. In his opinion, the possibility of printing a plastic gun on a 3D printer is one of the examples of new threats [2].

Food terrorism and the destabilization of sportsmen or spectators through food or drink contamination have become another very real threat. A pinch of ground glass could be enough to prematurely age or even kill extremely fit and healthy athletes or to contaminate spectators at sports events. These new technologies, threats, criminal «modus operandi», and terrorism bring with them additional concepts and public security requirements.

Methodology

In which connection, international and national level sports events are becoming a preferred target for the terrorist.

We all remember an act of terrorism that occurred during the 1996 Olympic Games in Atlanta when a bomb was detonated during an evening music concert at the Centennial Olympic Park, killing 2 people and injuring more than 100 others. The bomb was planted by a former US Army explosives expert who believed the Olympics « promoted the values of global socialism».

In April 1997, England’s most famous horse race was called off after two bomb threats were received, reportedly from the IRA. Some 60,000 spectators were evacuated while police inspected the course.

In May 2002, just hours before Real Madrid’s semi-final tie against rivals Barcelona was due to kick-off, a car bomb was detonated close to the Bernabeu Stadium in Spain’s capital. The explosion followed the arrest of 11 members of the Batasuna (a group linked to ETA). 17 people were injured.

In January 2008, the threat of an Al-Qaeda attack meant that organizers deemed it too

dangerous to stage the 2008 Paris Dakar race. It was subsequently canceled for the first time in its 30-year history. In the same year, 15 athletes were killed and at least 90 others were injured when a suicide bomber attacked the start of a marathon held to celebrate the start of Sri Lanka’s new year.

Discussion

Another suicide car bomb explosion took place during a football match in Tal-Afar, Iraq in 2010. The Damask sports complex became the target of a shooting during a training session of the football club « Al-Vatba » and the shocking acts of terrorism during the 2013 Boston marathon.

This list could be continued with many other illustrations, but we want to mention just one more recent incident. In April 2018, during a Berlin half-marathon, police pre-emptively arrested 6 suspects who were planning a knife attack on spectators.

As the newspaper Die Welt reported, they were members of the group who committed a terrorist attack on the Christmas market in Berlin in 2016 [3] to avenge the killing of one of their members by Italian police while they were trying to arrest him.

What if tomorrow the situation changes and the situation becomes even worse? What should we do to prevent it? How could we protect the athletes and spectators? Who could assist in this work? What are the international security enhancement instruments which could and should be used to prevent terrorist attacks during the sports competitions?

First, it is the reinforcement of international cooperation between national law-enforcement agencies; regional and national law-enforcement organizations; INTERPOL; other international organizations such as the International Centre for Sport Security; and security experience exchange with other international federations and leagues which could be very fruitful in this epoch of visible and invisible threats to public security.

Some sports organizations have already started to develop partnerships with the International Criminal Police Organization, INTERPOL. Namely, the Fédération Internationale de Football

Association (FIFA); the Union of European Football Association (UEFA); the Confederation of North, Central American, and Caribbean Association Football (CONCACAF); the Cricket World Cup; and the Kontinental Hockey League (KHL); etc.

Conclusion

For instance, the Cricket World Cup host countries ensured security through millions of checks against INTERPOL's global databases. For the 2011 Cricket World Cup, where the participating countries hosted many hundreds of thousands of visitors, INTERPOL, at the request of the Bangladeshi, Indian, and Sri Lankan authorities, deployed a Major Events Support Team (IMEST) in each country to support national and international security efforts for the event.

During this period, the total number of checks the authorities of the three countries carried out at key inspection points against INTERPOL's global nominal and stolen or lost travel documents (SLTD) databases reached 2.8 million [4]. Furthermore, INTERPOL's involvement with the Cricket World Cup also provided an opportunity for the world police body to extend its technology to airports and land borders in all three countries to allow remote access to its global databases.

During the 2013 European Conference on Integrity in Sport, FIFA Secretary General Jérôme Valcke Rome highlighted that the awareness of corruption in sport, specifically in match-fixing must be improved. « This is the reason why FIFA and INTERPOL have decided to invest in 10-year cooperation implementing an integrity initiative to fight against match-fixing and corruption.

The objective of the FIFA-INTERPOL initiative is to tackle sports corruption to a maximum through the provision of various training programs to improve key individuals' awareness and understanding of corruption in football regarding the strategies used by organized crime and the methods to detect and counteract them. INTERPOL, moreover, ensures and promotes the widest possible mutual assistance between all criminal police authorities.

The battle is not only about protecting the integrity of football, but also to fight against organized crime with all means possible» [5].

Another example of such cooperation is the Kontinental Hockey League (KHL). The League signed a Memorandum of Understanding with INTERPOL to counter threats to sports events from criminal practices, including doping, match-fixing, and corruption. The joint KHL-INTERPOL project aims to contribute to the prevention of terrorist threats; fight against organized crime, and enhance security, and law and order during KHL Championships and other ice hockey competitions at national, regional, and international levels.

The project will reinforce the cooperation between the Kontinental Hockey League, law-enforcement agencies, INTERPOL National Central Bureaus (NCBs) in the KHL member countries, and the INTERPOL General Secretariat to prevent and combat all forms of crime in ice hockey. Firstly, through the provision of joint capacity-building programs and the exchange of best practices. Secondly, by enhancing the operational, institutional, and technical capacity of law-enforcement agencies and NCBs in the KHL member countries to prevent, detect, and combat security threats to the KHL

Championships and other ice hockey competitions through strengthening technical infrastructure, providing training sessions, and international expertise. One of the project objectives is to develop and implement a joint INTERPOL-KHL strategy to prevent and combat violence and any other crimes affecting integrity in ice hockey and to develop a joint INTERPOL-KHL strategy to further reinforce security during ice hockey events through the assessment of KHL ice hockey arena security measures and the provision of security support during competitions.

Within the project implementation, joint INTERPOL-KHL conferences and seminars will be organized with the participation of other international, regional, and national entities dealing with issues related to the prevention and enhancement of security in sport. Globally, the

project will raise public awareness of the role of both organizations in preventing and combatting international crimes affecting integrity in sport by the promotion of the INTERPOL-KHL partnership [6].

These projects require the appropriate personnel, who should be trained to be able to operate in this specific field of international

activities. The project must also be adequately financed because the financial aspect is one of the key elements of successful implementation [7].

All the above-mentioned regional and international projects are the guarantees of international security enhancement and the instruments to prevent terrorist attacks during sports competitions.

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Спорттық жарыстар кезінде халықаралық қауіпсіздікті жоғарылату және террористік шабуылдарды алдын алу құралдары

Аңдатпа. Мақалада спорттық жарыстар кезінде қатысушыларға - спортшылар мен көрермендерге - бағытталған террористік шабуылдарға байланысты мәселелер қарастырылады. Қазіргі кезде орын алатын халықаралық құқықорғаушылық ынтымақтастық механизмдеріне қысқаша талдау жасалады. Бұл

ынтымақтастық құқыққорғаушылық жұмысқа, спорттық шаралардың өткізілуіне жауапты халықаралық ұйымдардың, ұлттық органдардың өзара қатынасын нығайтуға бағытталған.

Түйін сөздер: спорттық шаралар, терроризм, құқыққорғаушылық органдар, халықаралық ұйымдар, құқыққорғаушылық органдардың өзара қатынасы.

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Инструменты повышения международной безопасности и предотвращения террористических атак во время спортивных соревнований

Аннотация. В данной статье рассматриваются вопросы, связанные с террористическими атаками, направленными на участников спортивных мероприятий, как самих спортсменов, так и зрителей. Дается краткий анализ существующих механизмов международного правоохранительного сотрудничества, направленного на усиление взаимодействия международных организаций, национальных органов, ответственных за правоохранительную деятельность и проведение спортивных организаций.

Ключевые слова: спортивные мероприятия, терроризм, правоохранительные органы, международные организации, взаимодействие правоохранительных органов.

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