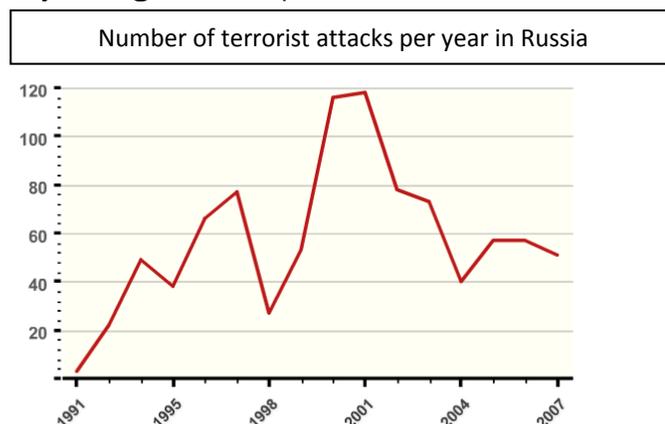


## **Background Info Report: Moscow Subway Terrorist Attacks**

In the wake of coordinated suicide attacks on the Moscow subway system on March 29, 2010, START has compiled background information on terrorist activity related to this attack:

- **HOW FREQUENTLY DOES TERRORISM OCCUR IN RUSSIA?**

There have been **925 incidents** in Russia since 1991, resulting in 857 deaths and injuries to an additional 4896 people. Between 1991 and 2007, Russia has been the victim of 2.4% of all terrorist attacks. Russia experienced the 13<sup>th</sup> most terrorist attacks of any country during this time period.



115 of these attacks (or 12.4%) have been in Moscow. The March 29, 2010, attack is reminiscent of a past attack on the Moscow Metro Railway in the country's capital: On February 6, 2004, a bomb exploded at a metro station during the morning rush hour. 40 people were killed and 122 were injured in the 2004 attack. (For more, see GTD ID#200402060003 at [www.start.umd.edu/gtd](http://www.start.umd.edu/gtd).)

- **WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR TERRORISM IN RUSSIA?**

Of those terrorist attacks in Russia for which a perpetrator was identified, Chechen-associated terrorist groups, as well as individuals advocating the Chechen cause, are responsible for 343 attacks. That is, Chechen groups have been responsible for **89.6%** of terrorist attacks with known perpetrators in Russia in the past two decades.

- **HOW COMMON IS SUICIDE TERRORISM?**

Between 1970 and 2007, there were **1240 terrorist suicide attacks globally**, accounting for 1.5% of all terrorist attacks in this period. The frequency of suicide terrorism has increased in recent years, with 8.4% of terrorist attacks from 2000 to 2007 being classified as suicide terrorism.

There have been **31 suicide attacks in Russia** since 1991. As such, 3.4% of all terrorist attacks in Russia between 1991 and 2007 were suicide attacks. Compared to all countries, Russia had the 12<sup>th</sup> highest percentage of suicide terrorism during this period.

In contrast, the **United States** experienced far fewer incidents of suicide terrorism during this period. Less than 0.5% of terrorist activity in the United States is classified as suicide terrorism, with the most notable event being the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon in which all 19 attackers died in the attacks.

- **WHAT ARE THE TRENDS REGARDING FEMALE SUICIDE TERRORISTS?**

There were **56 suicide attacks involving female perpetrators** globally between 1985 and 2007, with an annual high of 10 in 2003. Twelve such attacks took place in Sri Lanka, 10 in Russia, and 10 in Turkey. Of the attacks in Russia involving female suicide bombers, four targeted ground transportation.

Overall, the rate of fatalities caused by female perpetrators of suicide attacks is similar to that caused by male perpetrators of suicide attacks. Suicide attacks involving female perpetrators have killed 10.4 people on average. Suicide attacks involving only male perpetrators have killed 11.5 people on average, not including the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center.

- **IS IT COMMON FOR TERRORISTS TO ATTACK TRANSPORTATION TARGETS, LIKE SUBWAY SYSTEMS?**

Since 1970 there have been **5117 terrorist attacks on transportation systems** globally. 4124 have been on ground transportation systems, including trains and buses, while 993 attacks have been on the aviation system. In all, 5% of terrorist attacks around the world since 1970 have been on ground transportation systems.

In **Russia**, about 8% of terrorist attacks have targeted ground transportation (76 of 925 incidents), including the 2004 Moscow metro attack referenced above. Russian attacks that target transportation systems are deadlier than other terrorist attacks in the country, on average, with attacks on transportation systems averaging just more than 2 deaths per attack while attacks on other target types average 1.2 deaths per attack in Russia.

Since 1970, the **United States** has experienced 64 terrorist attacks on its transportation systems. The majority of U.S. attacks have been on airlines and airports, with only 11 attacks by terrorist on U.S. ground transportation systems. Of these, only 1 U.S. terrorist attack on ground transportation has involved a fatality—a 1976 bombing of Grand Central Station in New York City conducted by Croatian nationalists (see GTD ID# 197609100010 at [www.start.umd.edu/gtd](http://www.start.umd.edu/gtd).)

These data were collected and compiled from the **Global Terrorism Database (GTD)**, [www.start.umd.edu/gtd](http://www.start.umd.edu/gtd)). The GTD contains information on more than 80,000 terrorist incidents that have occurred around the world since 1970. An updated version of the database, with information on incidents through 2008, will be released in May 2010.

GTD is a project of the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terror (START) is a U.S. Department of Homeland Security Center of Excellence, START, based at the University of Maryland, College Park, aims to provide timely guidance on how to disrupt terrorist networks, reduce the incidence of terrorism, and enhance the resilience of U.S. society in the face of the terrorist threat. The material presented here is the product of START and does not express the official opinion of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

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