Name: _____

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> **SS.7.CG.4.4 Benchmark Clarification 1:** Students will recognize the historical context of global terrorism over time.

On September 11, 2001, members of the Islamic fundamentalist terror group **al Qaeda** hijacked a number of planes and flew them into the World Trade Center of New York City, the Pentagon in Arlington, Virginia, and into a field in Pennsylvania. The atrocities committed by al Qaeda on that day drew the attention of the world. This attack on American soil was an act of global terrorism, and while it wasn't the first act, it also hasn't been the last, which makes it important to understand what terrorism is and how it has looked.

Terrorism can be defined as the use of extreme fear and violence as a way to achieve a political goal or ideological goal, especially, but not always, against civilians or civilian targets. Global terrorism often involves some sort of network that allows different groups of people in different countries or regions to work together to instill violence and fear in target populations. During the Cold War, countries like the Soviet Union and East Germany sponsored terror groups like the **Red Army Faction** that launched attacks on pro-capitalist Western targets. Near the end of the 20th century, countries like Iran started sponsoring Islamic terror groups that would target the United States and Israel. By the early 21st century, extremist Islamic terrorist groups like al-Qaeda launched attacks on countries all over the world. That includes a truck bomb that was used on the World Trade Center in 1993 and the horrific use of planes that led to the events of September 11th in the United States.

It's important to remember that there are many other examples of terrorism both in the United States and globally. The **Ku Klux Klan**, for example, is an American terrorist organization that has used violence against African Americans and others who support civil rights. The **Irish Republican Army** in Ireland has used violence, especially bombings of both civilian and military targets, to try and force the British out of Northern Ireland. In the Middle East, groups like the **Palestine Liberation Front** and related organizations have used acts of terror against Israel and other nations to try and force Israel and its allies out of the region. Many of these networks work together even though they have little in common and are truly global. The **Provisional Irish Republican Army**, for example, provided training to terrorists in both Latin America and the Middle East, with completely different objectives.

Despite coordinated efforts by these groups, the nations of the world have attempted to thwart their actions through the collection of intelligence and use of military force as efforts to keep their people as safe as possible from the threat of global terrorism. Even today, though, organizations like **HAMAS** and offshoots of the Irish Republican Army continue to threaten global peace and security.

al Qaeda - extremist Islamic terror group responsible for multiple global terror attacks against Western targets, including the events of September 11th, 2001

Terrorism - the use of extreme fear and violence as a way to achieve a political goal

Red Army Faction - far-left terror group also known as the Baader–Meinhof Gang that attacked capitalist targets and was sponsored by the Soviet Union and East Germany

Ku Klux Klan - American extremist terror group founded after the U.S. Civil War to support white supremacy

Irish Republican Army - Catholic Irish nationalist terror group responsible for multiple bombing and terror attacks against British interests

Palestine Liberation Front - extremist Palestinian terror group responsible for the hijacking of the cruise ship Achille Lauro and attacks on the country of Israel

Provisional Irish Republican Army - Catholic Irish nationalist terror group related to the original Irish Republican Army

HAMAS - extremist Palestinian terror group pursuing Palestinian independence responsible for multiple attacks on Israeli targets and civilians