

## **War on terror? Assessment of a disaster**

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9/11 does not suffice to comprehend the 'war on terror' launched in September 2001, which President Bush initially described as a 'crusade'. Global neo-militarism is a response to the end of the Cold War, the looming problems of resources and migration, the rise of new powers, and to the breakdown of neo-liberalism. The war in the Balkans offered a weakened NATO the chance, over the course of the 1990s, to marginalise a UN that had regained in strength. This was the prerequisite for the unleashing of the 'long and global war' (Rumsfeld) and in particular the Afghanistan and Iraq campaigns with their disastrous consequences. Part of the reason that the 'war on terror' became a 'global war' was that numerous regimes, from Russia (Chechnya), Israel (Palestine), Sri Lanka (Tamil Eelam), India (Naxalites), Spain (ETA) to China (Uyghurs), used an enemy stereotype whose lack of substance rendered it particularly convenient. The effects of 'anti-terrorism' have been particularly acute in combination with anti-Islamism. In addition to those already named, the consequences of the 'war on terror' are the breakdown of international law, the relativisation of human rights, the dismantling of civil liberties and rights, increased Islamophobia and xenophobia in general, a loss of human and material resources and of political culture.