

Marketing Manhattan: The United Nations Response to the September 11 Attacks

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Abstract

September 11, 2001 was one of the most tragic days in United States history. Nineteen men hijacked four US commercial airplanes, crashing into the World Trade Center, the Pentagon, and a small town in Pennsylvania. At the World Trade in New York City, 2,753 people were killed and thousands more were injured (CNN, 2001). The United Nations, a global organization of 193 member states, aims to maintain international peace and security and protect human rights. After the attack, the United Nations released a series of resolutions, some of which were legally binding under Charter VII of the Security Council, to aid in the worldwide fight against terrorism. The UN Visitor Centre in New York has also established exhibits to promote international peace and cooperation between member states and citizens of the world.

The goal of this project is to analyze the response of the United Nations to the attacks on September 11. The scope will include the terrorism resolutions that were released closely following the attacks and years after, as well as how the events of that day and other terrorist attacks are portrayed to visitors of the United Nations Headquarters and Visitor Centre in Manhattan. The research includes primary data from online databases and visit to the United Nations Visitor Centre as a part of the HP 3152: Marketing Manhattan course. It will analyze the diplomatic strategies used by members of the United Nations in writing the resolutions and the marketing strategies used throughout a visitor's experience to the United Nations. The result will likely suggest that the United Nations focused on anti-terrorism efforts and recovery after the attacks to encourage the world to come together to fight terrorism.

Keywords: marketing, terrorism, New York City, United Nations, human rights, global strategy, community

Marketing Manhattan: The United Nations Response to the September 11 Attacks

On one of the most tragic days in the history of New York City and the United States of America, four American passenger planes were hijacked and crashed into the World Trade Center, the Pentagon, and Shanksville, Virginia. At the World Trade Center, two planes were crashed, one into each of the Twin Towers, killing hundreds on impact. Less than two hours later, the buildings would collapse due to structural damage. Including civilians and first responders, 2,996 people would lose their lives that day and thousands more would be injured (CNN, 2001). The attacks would lead the United States to launch the War on Terror, an ongoing battle against terrorism.

The United Nations, a global organization dedicated to bringing together its member states to confront common challenges and create unity, is headquartered in New York City, just a few miles away from where the attack occurred. The United Nations (UN) frequently adopts resolutions, a “formal text adopted by a United Nations body” (United Nations General Assembly, 2019). According to the United Nations, any UN body can issue resolutions, but most are issued by the General Assembly or the Security Council. The UN Charter refers to the resolutions in general as recommendations, which are heavily stressed by the International Court of Justice, but are not officially binding of any of the member states. The only Resolutions that are considered legally binding are made under Chapter VII by the Security Council. More specifically, a resolution issued by the Security Council is adopted by all fifteen members of the Security Council. The member states that make up the body of the United Nations are then charged with “primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security” (United Nations Security Council, 2019). After the September 11 Attacks, the Security Council

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adopted several resolutions: Resolution 1368, Resolution 1373, and the Uniting Against Terrorism Global Strategy (United Nations Security Council, 2019).

Resolution 1368

Immediately following the attacks, the United Nations adopted Resolution 1368 on September 12, 2001. (Resolution 1368, 2001). It was adopted unanimously by the fifteen members of the UN Security Council. It was one of the shortest resolutions adopted at less than one page, but it showed the urgency that the United Nations had to make a statement against the tragedy and stand behind New York City. The resolution stated a determination to combat threats to international peace and security caused by acts of terrorism. It also recognized the right of individual and collective self-defense. The resolution included two action items for the member states and the international community. First, it called on countries to:

“work together urgently to bring just to the perpetrators, organizers, and sponsors of the these terrorist attacks and stresses that those responsible for aiding, supporting, or harboring the perpetrators, organizers and sponsors of these acts will be held accountable” (Resolution 1368, 2001).

The resolution continued by calling on the international community as a whole to increase their efforts against terrorism through “increased cooperation and full implementation of the relevant international anti-terrorist conventions and Security Council resolutions” (Resolution 1368). This resolution was meant to serve as an immediate response to the terrorist attacks and did not provide a thorough plan or strategy for combating international terrorism. However, it did show the UN’s support of New York City and the United States in the immediate aftermath and recognize the threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist attacks. The Security

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Council would then spend just over two weeks discussing and drafting Resolution 1373, a more in-depth response to the attacks.

Resolution 1373

On September 28, 2001, the Security Council adopted Resolution 1373, a more detailed statement to combat international terrorism and maintain peace and security. This resolution was the first of any resolution adopted by the United Nations that was legally binding under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, making the dictates binding under international law for all 193 member states. The resolution was also one of the harshest resolutions to ever be adopted by the United Nations, including rigorous steps that all member states would be taking to prevent future terrorist attacks from occurring. As stated in Resolution 1373, this included preventing and suppressing the financing of terrorist acts, criminalizing the provision or collection of any funds, directly or indirectly, to be used in order to carry out terrorist acts, and freezing funds and other assets or economic resources of persons who commit, or attempt to commit terrorist acts, as well as prohibiting any nations from making any funds available for the benefit of persons who commit or attempt to commit terrorist acts. Resolution 1373 continues by stating that all states shall “take the necessary steps to prevent the commission of terrorist acts” and

“ensure that any person who participates in the financing, planning, preparation or perpetration or terrorist acts or in supporting terrorist acts is brought to justice and ensure that, in addition to any other measures against them, such terrorist acts are established as serious criminal offences in domestic laws and regulations and that the punishment duly reflects the seriousness of such terrorist acts.”

Although this resolution was a powerful statement against international terrorism, the fact that it was legally binding caused several issues with member states.

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The first issue was that the protection of human rights, one of the main goals and purposes of the United Nations, was completely ignored in the address. It does not mention human rights at all, let alone state that human rights be respected when criminalizing and punishing these terrorists. This gave member states the ability to punish any suspected terrorist or associate as they chose, without any regard for human rights. There are several member states that have a questionable history with human rights and the treatment of their citizens, especially criminals. Not only did this give them a motive to severely and inhumanely punish suspects, but it also gave them an excuse to stop any legitimate political dissent in the country by claiming it as acts of terrorism.

Another issue Resolution 1373 was that there were no resources allocated to any of the member states to execute what was being asked of them. The Security Council did not approve adequate resources to any of the UN agencies to be able to provide for the capacity that was required to implement such an undertaking. While some countries, such as the United States, have their own resources to be able to combat terrorism, there are many member states who rely on the resources provided by the UN to implement resolutions. Without adequate resources, the countries cannot implement the resolution, even though it is legally binding and required of them. There was also backlash because it was the first international legally-binding resolution adopted by the Security Council. Even if adequate resources had been provided, most of the member states were not prepared to implement such a comprehensive strategy. They did not have the infrastructure or manpower to fulfill all of the tasks of the resolution. As a result, the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism would create the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, a dynamic, cumulative strategy to combat terrorism and maintain international peace and security.

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Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy

The Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy was instrumental in the fight on terrorism as it fulfilled the commitment made by world leaders at the 2005 United Nations Summit. It builds on many of the elements proposed by the Secretary-General in his May 2006 report 'Uniting Against Terrorism: Recommendations for a Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy'. On September 8, 2006, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the strategy, a "unique, global instrument to enhance national, regional, and international efforts to counter terrorism" (United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism, 2019). This was the first time that all member states agreed to a common strategic and operational approach to fight terrorism, sending a clear message that terrorism is unacceptable in all its forms and manifestations. Unlike Resolution 1373, the strategy also includes practical steps that can be taken individually and collectively to prevent and combat terrorist acts, including a wide array of measures ranging from strengthening state capacity to counter threats to effectively coordinating UN system and agency activities.

The strategy is unique in that it is much more detailed and comprehensive than a resolution. It is a living document in that it is reviewed every two years by the general assembly, allowing it to be altered to address current issues and events around the world and can include new resolutions, strategies, and resources as they are developed. The strategy first states the four pillars of the strategy developed from the plan of action. The four pillars include "addressing the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism, preventing and combatting terrorism, building states' capacity and strengthening the role of the United Nations, and ensuring Human rights and the rule of law" (United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism, 2019). The document follows the pillars with the full text of the resolution and a thorough statement of the plan of action, including measures to address each pillar.

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The strategy was monumental in that it was the first United Nations resolution to include a complete plan of action to address each of the issues with terrorism that the world faces. It dissuades people from resorting to or supporting terrorism, it denies terrorists the means to carry out an attack, and it deters states from supporting terrorism. Unlike Resolution 1373, it also develops state capacity to defeat terrorism by providing feasible solutions and adequate resources to combat terrorism, and defends human rights in detail. It provides details of the UN agencies that will be supporting member states and how member states can work together and utilize resources to accomplish the goals set forth in the strategy. The strategy was the first time that the United Nations publicly released a plan capable of combatting terrorism on an international scale and in every member state. Diplomatically, it was a large step forward in the fight against terrorism and demonstrated the capacity and ability of the United Nations and each of its member states to maintain international peace and security.

The Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy addresses how the governments and diplomats of each member state can actively combat terrorism. The Visitor Centre, located at the United Nations Headquarters in Manhattan, focuses on how terrorism has affected individuals around the world, and how individuals can come together for the sake of international peace and defense of human rights.

Marketing Mix of the United Nations Visitor Centre

According to the United Nations Visitor Centre, guided tours of the United Nations Headquarters in New York City have been offered to the general public since November 1952. There has been an acting Visitor Center since 1950 when the complex was established, but in 2007 it underwent a major \$1 billion renovation along with the rest of the complex to create the Visitors Centre that the public visits today. Because the renovations started shortly after the

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Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy was released, there is a large focus on counter-terrorism in the Visitor Centre.

The marketing mix is a combination of the product, price, promotion, and place that is marketed to a consumer at any given time for any product or service. While participating in Dr. Kent Drummond's Marketing Manhattan course, I was able to visit the United Nations Visitor Centre and experience it for myself. It is free for the general public to view, but they must pass through a security screening to do so. Visitors can take guided tours of the United Nations facilities or tour the Visitor Centre and installations by themselves. There is a smartphone app that can answer frequently asked questions, provide information, and tell visitors more about the exhibits and United Nations as a whole, as well as several disability and language accommodations. They provide these services to ensure that anyone who is a citizen of the member states feels welcome in the Visitor Centre and UN Headquarters. Both facilities being in the same location allows consumers to feel that they are in the middle of the action and experiencing the United Nations as any diplomatic member of the General Assembly would. The Visitor Centre is not marketed to tourists the same way as most tourist attractions in New York. While in the city, it seems as if a lot of people stumble into some of the tourist attractions and do not necessarily plan on visiting for weeks in advance. However, at the United Nations, visitors must buy tickets weeks in advance if they would like a tour. Anyone can visit without a scheduled tour, but they must wait in line to be processed at the security counter and screened through, which can take up to an hour depending on how busy it is. Unlike other destinations in New York, the Visitor Centre is one that is most often planned beforehand and allotted several hours to peruse.

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While technically considered a product and a service, the Visitor Centre provides an experience to the consumer. This begins when the consumer visits the website to schedule a tour guide or makes their way to the Visitor Centre. The United Nations is a symbol of peace and cooperation throughout the world, and all of the employees at the Visitor Centre, from the security agents to the janitors, must convey that feeling to the consumer at all times. They were very effective in this aspect with their friendly attitudes and willingness to make a visitor's experience positive. The experience continues outside on the grounds of the Visitor Centre, regardless of the weather, and inside with all five senses. The building is quite and calm, staff are friendly and helpful, and the installations can be viewed at any pace and in any order. The visitor can spend as much time as they would like reading information, observing diplomats in the General Assembly hall, and viewing the art. There are many pieces of art in the Visitor Centre, including several that speak to the actions of the United Nations against terrorism.

Images of Destruction and Humanity Exhibit

The first exhibit that a visitor sees when they walk inside is a large pop-up exhibit with many large pictures. There are awful, gruesome pictures that show the destruction that has been caused, both in New York and around the world, by terrorist acts. There are buildings being torn to shreds and streets covered in debris. Interestingly, there are no pictures of human suffering in the exhibit. None of the pictures showing the aftermath of a terrorist attack have any humans; they only show buildings and infrastructure that have been destroyed. There are, however, many pictures of humans in the exhibit, only the focus is on positivity. Mirroring pictures of destruction are pictures of hope, of prosperity, of people coming together to celebrate, cooperate, and thrive. There are pictures of children playing, of families smiling, of friends eating dinner

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together. Different races, religions, and cultures are shown in the pictures together. In the pictures, human life is celebrated and people are brought together instead of torn apart.

There is one part of this exhibit that proves that a picture can speak a thousand words. There are two couches, facing away from each other, and each facing a different scene. One shows a building that has been destroyed by an act of terrorism. With the amount of devastation caused to the building, one can only assume that lives were lost. If a visitor sits in the other couch, they look at a picture of many people, of different colors and backgrounds, eating together, laughing, smiling, talking, and being together. There is a light in the middle of the picture, perhaps showing the light that can come from people coming together. The most interesting part of this exhibit is that the visitor can choose where they want to sit. They can choose if they want to see the destruction, devastation, and loss that humans have brought upon each other, or they can see the light. They can see the hope, the positivity, the prosperity that loving each other and supporting each other brings.



Figure 1 – photograph taken by Katelyn Hekkert (April 25, 2019)

This speaks volume to the marketing strategy of the United Nations. One of the focuses of each of the resolutions following the September 11 attacks, as well as the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, stress that each member state plays a part in combatting terrorism. The

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exhibit shows that people cannot recover alone, and that no one is ever truly alone. In even the darkest of times, individuals, cities, countries, and the world, can survive tragedies if they come together to support one another. Showing support, like the United Nations immediately did with Resolution 1368 after the attacks, helps those who are suffering to recover. Providing resources, even if it is just the compassion of another human, can make a world of difference to help people overcome tragedies.

Similarly, it demonstrates to every individual that walks through the UN Visitor Centre that they play a role in combatting terrorism. Loving one another, providing support, choosing to see the light and positivity in the world while also recognizing the pain humans go through, is how a single person can help fight terrorism. The exhibit creates contrasting emotions in the viewer: both anger and hope. It enables the viewer to realize that terrible events have occurred throughout the world, and there is hate, fear, and anger that spreads because of it; but, there is also something that every single person can do to try to combat that and make the world a better place.

Faces of the World Exhibit

There was another exhibit, close to the images of destruction and humanity, entitled 'Faces of the World'. This exhibit featured photos of many individuals around the world. The individuals were of different age, race, gender, culture, background, religion, and lifestyle, yet they all seemed to have something in common. There was a description of each person next to their picture, including where they were from and a brief background. This exhibit demonstrated the United Nations' focus on human rights and the similarities and differences that all humans have.

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Figure 2 – photograph taken by Katelyn Hekkert (April 25, 2019)

The purpose of this exhibit was to evoke a sense of both individuality and togetherness in the viewer. The pictures made powerful statement to the viewer: ‘These are the faces of the world. You are a face of the world. Their problems are your problems and we must come celebrate our differences and overcome our struggles to live in this world together.’ The exhibit celebrated the ‘faces of the world’, and by making the viewer feel like they were a face of the world, made them feel as if they were being celebrated.



Figure 3 – photograph taken by Katelyn Hekkert (April 25, 2019)

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The United Nations used several strategies to support New York City after the September 11 attacks. While not all resolutions were helpful in combatting terrorism, they finalized a comprehensive strategy that combines a determination to maintain international peace and security with the protection of human rights and the support from UN agencies of all member states. The United Nations also speaks to individual citizens of the world, using emotion to convey their message of peace and humanity. The United Nations was effective in their collective response to the terrorist attacks because governments alone cannot change the world. They can set new precedents and procedures in place to combat violence on a large scale. Although they can make overall changes on an international scale, it is up to the cumulative effort of every individual human to support each other, and accept both our similarities and our differences to live peacefully in the world together.

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