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COUNTER-TERRORISM THE PARADOXICAL FIGHT:

Accountability in the International Arena for States' Responses to Terrorism

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ABSTRACT

The fight against terrorism entered the international agenda with full strength after the 11 September 2001 events. The development of terrorism into a transnational phenomenon urged states and intergovernmental organisations to act and to cooperate for its prevention and elimination. Hence, the 9/11 was followed by a boom of instruments, policies, legislations and campaigns focused on countering terrorism internally and over seas. However, this counter-terrorism “euphoria” has called the attention of scholars, experts and activists since the United States’ controversial invasion to Afghanistan later that year. Several violations of human rights and of international rule of law started being identified in different aspects of states’ efforts to deal with the challenge. In the end, the struggle against terrorism became a paradoxical fight: in order to protect fundamental rights and national security states put at stake esteemed values for the democratic order. Thus, this paper analyses how important international players i.e. United Nations, the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, the European Union and the Council of Europe are responding to this overwhelming scenario and explores their capabilities to properly address states’ misconducts regarding counter-terrorism measures. It concludes that, apart some good practices e.g. in the European level, a lot remains to be done to strengthen accountability in the supranational sphere.

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