

Missing the Forest for the Trees: A Call for Strategic Counterterrorism Ten Years after 9/11

by [Matthew Levitt \(/experts/matthew-levitt\)](/experts/matthew-levitt)

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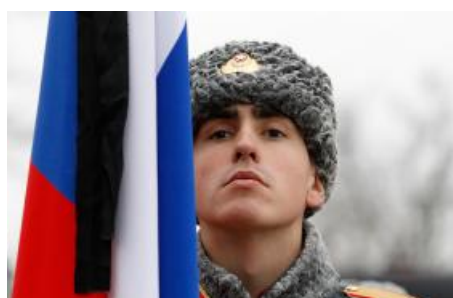
On September 11, 2011, Matthew Levitt, director of The Washington Institute's Stein Program on Counterterrorism and Intelligence, delivered a plenary keynote address at "World Summit on Counterterrorism: Terrorism's Global Impact," the eleventh annual conference of the International Institute for Counterterrorism in Herzliya, Israel. The following is an excerpt from his prepared remarks.

In all likelihood, every one of us here today remembers where we were the morning of September 11, 2001. I was at home, sitting down to tackle another chapter of my PhD dissertation. That was easier said than done, however, since I was also working full time as an FBI counterterrorism intelligence analyst. As the 9-11 Commission Report laid out in detail, the months leading up to 9/11 were full of the type of "chatter" that tells you enough to be on edge but not enough to empower agencies and departments to take particularly tangible action. Indeed, the operational tempo at the FBI shot sky high the previous year with the millennial crisis and then the bombing of the USS Cole and remained high through September 10, 2001. We all know what came next...

[Download Dr. Levitt's full prepared remarks \(PDF\).](#)

http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/html/pdf/Levitt_ICTlecture_20110911.pdf ❖

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