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As a special type of political violence, terrorism comes in several guises. It manifests itself as disproportionate or draconian state repression in internal conflicts, and also as a particular type of violation of the laws of war in international conflicts. Most often, however, it is associated with indiscriminate violence by non-state actors engaged in an asymmetric conflict against established governments or sectors of the public. Whether used by state actors or violent non-state actors, terrorists and their masters often show little or no respect for civilians and non-combatants. In applying violence without moral restraints, they violate not only the laws of the land where their attacks take place but also international human rights law (in peacetime) or international humanitarian law (in times of war). Paradoxically, fighting terrorism is also often accompanied by transgressions of such laws, even by democratic states. Especially in recent times, hardliners have argued that in order to combat terrorism effectively there is an unavoidable trade-off between human security and human-rights observance. Others hold that human-rights observance and effective counter-terrorism are not only fully compatible; in their view, one cannot successfully control terrorism without maintaining the moral high ground and upholding the rule of law. It came as a shock to many that, in the name of its so-called War on Terror, a great democracy like the United States could, after the events of 11 September 2001, curtail so many democratic freedoms and safeguards—human rights that had taken centuries to be embraced. Other countries with less solid rule-of-law traditions followed the example of the Bush administration and have curtailed human rights in the name of counter-terrorism even further. The net result has been a double assault on human rights by terrorists and counter-terrorism. To help make sense of the controversies surrounding terrorism, counter-terrorism, human rights, and humanitarian law, this new four-volume collection from Routledge builds on the success of an earlier Routledge Major Work (Terrorism (2005) (978-0-415-31650-7) edited by David Rapoport). It answers the need for an authoritative reference work that brings together vital scholarship and key documents from NGOs and governmental organizations on these issues. Fully indexed and with comprehensive introductions to each volume, newly written by the editor, Alex P. Schmid, a leading scholar in the field, Terrorism and Human Rights is an essential work of reference. It is destined to be valued by political scientists, terrorism experts, human-rights advocates, and international lawyers.

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