



NATO Foundation
Defense College

CONFRONTING CRIMINAL/ TERRORIST THREATS

**THE RESHAPING
OF NON-STATE ACTORS**

The NDCF is a unique think-tank: international by design and based in Rome, due to its association with the NATO Defense College. Its added value lies in the objectives stated by its charter and in its international network.

The charter specifies that the NDCF works with the Member States of the Atlantic Alliance, its partners and the countries that have some form of co-operation with NATO. Through the Foundation the involvement of USA and Canada is more fluid than in other settings.

The Foundation was born nine years ago and is rapidly expanding its highly specific and customer-tailored activities, achieving an increasingly higher profile, also through activities dedicated to decision makers and their staffs. Actually the it is active in three areas: high-level events, strategic trend research and specialised decision makers' training and education. Since it is a body with considerable freedom of action, transnational reach and cultural openness, the Foundation is developing a wider scientific and events programme.

**CONFRONTING CRIMINAL/TERRORIST
THREATS**

The reshaping of non-State Actors

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CONFRONTING CRIMINAL/ TERRORIST THREATS

THE RESHAPING
OF NON-STATE ACTORS

High-Level Advanced Research Workshop

Organised by
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THE NATO SCIENCE FOR PEACE AND SECURITY PROGRAMME,
THE POLICY CENTER FOR THE NEW SOUTH AND THE NATO DEFENSE COLLEGE

Special thanks to
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Confronting Criminal/Terrorist Threats. The Reshaping of Non-State Actors, Rome, 9 December 2019



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Confronting Criminal/Terrorist Threats
The Reshaping of Non-State Actors
Rome, 9 December 2019

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ALESSANDRO MINUTO-RIZZO
President, NATO Defense College Foundation, Rome

WELCOME REMARKS

The NATO Defense College Foundation, as well as the College itself, has a focus on international security, on the well-being of our Euro-Atlantic community of values and interests.

In recent years we have witnessed an evolution of the concept of security which is enlarging with the passing of time. In the same way the actors are also changing. The state-nation was traditionally at the center of the scene, but this is not really true anymore. Non-state actors of various kinds are showing a different reality, groups and sometimes also individuals, active and often dangerous.

In the past security was mainly meant as a military matter, this is over and now we have to adapt to a new paradigm of asymmetric hostilities, cyber threats and so on.

Geopolitics was considered to be an issue for specialists and sometimes to be boring. In today's international environment it is back at the center of the scene and public opinion is taking an interest to the emerging scenarios.

The corollary is that we cannot divide the issues according to established tradition. Diplomacy, trade, economics, finance are mixed together and interacting, making essential a good understanding and a clever analysis. Both are clearly more difficult than in the past.

This is not the first time that we discuss the issues of terrorism, illicit trade and extremism. Every time we try to address the problems in a new perspective and from different angles, reality evolves before our eyes. Volatility is a word of entry into our time.

We are witnessing the emergence of a new generation of terrorism after the time of Al Qaeda and the fight against the Islamic state. This new set of risks is following social trends which are the product of a more globalised world.

We have organised the works of today in three panels. The first on rethinking strategies against the new generation of terrorists, which means in today's context.

Then the virtual dimension of terrorism, trafficking and laundering. It includes

cyber trafficking, financing and other criminal activities. We therefore address the crime-terror nexus from this specific angle.

The third panel is about countering threats on the ground. The new blended non state threats affect the security of NATO's allies and partners. And let's not forget that security has a new sense including societal, and health.

I only add that we have started this work of analysis some time ago, opening an innovative debate on the links between criminality, terrorism and extremism. An important element being illicit trade and the flow of money coming from it.

In conclusion we have to better understand realities and to improve the way of confronting our enemies. Shading light on phenomena that are difficult by their nature.

I think that we have put together the best international expertise for the discussion.

Our established methodology is to promote an open, high level exchange of views, in a spirit of respect and scientific freedom.

I thank those who are supporting us in our efforts, in this case Philips Morris International, the NATO Science for Peace and Security Programme, our media partners, the NATO Defense College and of course the team of the Foundation.



ALESSANDRO POLITI
Director, NATO Defense College Foundation, Rome

POLITICAL SUMMARY

The nexus between trafficking, organised crime and terrorism has continued its evolution and has been particularly marked by three experiences: that of the self-styled Islamic State, the second taking place in the vast uncontrolled grey zones in the Sahel and the last regarding the cyber dimension. This was clear already in the late Nineties, but now it is a widely accepted evidence: security is multi-dimensional and the new set of risks is following social trends that are the product of a more globalised world.

It is quite clear that the connection between organised crime and terrorism has for, the time being, settled in the sector of criminal trafficking; per se not a new phenomenon since the Cold War, but with a much higher relevance since the birth of al Qaeda. Osama bin Laden, having a managerial background, was able to create in parallel with the terrorist network also a business organisation to sustain the underground operations of his militants.

The evolution of second generation of jihadist terrorism featured a majority of militants whose reasons to join terrorist groups were much less religious and much more secular (defending Muslims, self-empowerment and -aggrandizement, group dynamics among friends, often with petty criminal background). This is the human material that went to build up the “Islamic State” and that contributed to the bureaucracy of this entity, gaining a first-hand experience not only in tax collecting (still the main revenue), but also trafficking.

The military victory over the so-called Caliphate is for the time just military: ISIS has shown that after one century the borders created by the Sykes-Picot agreement were contestable and local governments are still struggling to rebuild their legitimacy; the terrorist risk persists and terrorists have been recycled from Syria to Yemen or Libya and, more worrying, the trafficking networks have been reconfigured but not stifled.

Here it is important to distinguish between fragile and consolidated countries. A more fragile government has more probability to become host of parasiting

criminal and/or terrorist groups, because trafficking is an inverse function of governmental rule of law, territorial and administrative control. These failures entail a failing political control because the criminal or terrorist groups established its own de facto power and rules, possibly helped by the incompetence and corruption of the local ruling class. Poverty, lack of opportunities, corruption are among the main factors that can drive to radicalisation and hence to terrorism or organised crime. Trafficking is not important to start low-cost, isolated and demonstrative terrorist acts, but it is the lynchpin for sustained terrorist operations and influence expansion in a fragile context.

In more consolidated countries, the economic dimension of trafficking is less crucial to cover the costs of a terrorist attack and more important in the acquisition of weapons, forged identities, technologies and technical knowledge. Here the cyber dimension is much more important, cost effective and profitable.

An issue that seems to regard more the Euro-Atlantic region are the signs of a possible return of ideologically motivated terrorism, most visibly right-wing one. It appears that it could be linked to the worsening of socio-economic conditions due to a globalisation dynamic that creates social disparity and polarisation. It is still a nascent phenomenon, but it would be unwise to underestimate or ignore it.

One recurring recommendation from different speakers was the need to overcome fragmentation in the fight against trafficking, organised crime and terrorism. Some aspects are purely operational and here it is possible to integrate more effectively strains that are unnecessarily separated in at least two cases. The first is between counterterrorism and activities to prevent violent extremism (PVE or CVE – Countering Violent Extremism), because an effective prevention reduces the overload on intelligence, police and armed services engaged into counterterrorism. The second is the integration of intelligence and criminal investigations in the appropriate ways regarding the trafficking dimension that fuels instability in weaker countries and supports terrorist logistics and operations.

The political fragmentation can be further reduced, but has some less tractable problems rooted in national interests, local political culture and lack of agree definitions.



FEDERICA LOLLO
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Foundation, Rome*

BACKGROUND POLICY PAPER

The 27th of October, President Donald Trump proudly announced the death of Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, leader of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). He killed himself during a raid in the Barisha village (Idlib Province, north-western Syria, near the Turkish border) by elements of the 75th Ranger Regiment and the Delta Force.

As in other cases, the death of a chief does not mean the end of an organisation. DAESH immediately designed as his successor the emir Abu Ibrahim al-Hashimi al-Qurayshi and, according to the Defense Intelligence Agency, the group is regaining foothold in Syria as a consequence of the US troops withdrawal. In the past, even the territorial defeat did not prejudice the survival of the organisation, which worked out new ways of acting and being funded.

In order to successfully neutralise these organisations, it is important to dismantle the brand-new social and cultural substratum supporting the construction of a multitude of terrorist organisations and groups in the region and abroad. While at the beginning this terrorism pretended to be based on religion, now more mundane (and Western) values seem to drive its recruitment (like revenge, self-empowerment, power, money and reputation).

The employment of Western technologies to jihadism includes the massive use of social media channels to convey propagandistic messages and the adoption of business criminal models that involve illegal activities at the core of their funding. These funds fuel terrorist attacks around the world and counterterrorism should take into consideration also these aspects.

Terrorists and extremists have been using the Internet to create relatively safe and anonymous havens to plan their future movements. Different reports illustrate what terrorists and criminals are doing to take advantage of the Net: hiding, recruiting, sharing their beliefs through propaganda, and fundraising.

In particular, over the past years, social media platforms have been at the core of ISIL propaganda activities. In the analysis “*Measuring the Impact of ISIS Social*

*Media Strategy*¹ is showed the interaction among ISIS Twitter accounts and the accounts of other Twitter users. The table below, comparing ISIS activities of the organisation with those of normal random users, in 2015, highlights how deeply the group was penetrating the social media community:

Table 1 – ISIS-Tweets are tweets posted by a known seed of ISIS-related accounts. Legit-Tweets is a randomly sampled set of users and their tweets. Retweets and mentions of these two sets (ISIS and Legit) by the overall Twitter community are also extracted.

Dataset	Accounts	Tweets
ISIS-Tweets	23,880	17,434,323
ISIS-Related	551,869	10,436,603
ISIS-MEntions	745,721	19,570,380
Legit-Tweets	23,880	17,454,068
Legit-Related	1,753,195	12,175,619
Legit-MEntions	2,161,106	17,479,990

In the first six months of 2016, Twitter suspended 235.000 accounts suspect of promoting terrorism. From then, online platforms have been trying to share their contacts database and to regulate their users’ contents avoiding as much as possible to jeopardize their privacy and freedom of expression.

In September 2019, Facebook announced it would enlarge its definition of terrorist organisations and would deploy more artificial intelligence tools to improve the detection of posts that might be in some ways related to terrorism. One and a half year ago, Telegram started collaboration with Europol to counter online terrorist activities asking its own users to spot inappropriate contents.

As mentioned, social media promotion of terrorism also passes through illicit financing activities. From the paper “Social Media and Terrorist Financing. What are the Vulnerabilities and How Could Public and Private Sectors Collaborate Better?”² it emerges that terrorists use social media to finance their activities in three ways:

- The solicitation of donations on content-hosting services, mostly applying traditional payment methods such as banks;
- The communications through encrypted services;
- The misuse of crowd funding online services under the labels of humanitarian causes.

1 *Measuring the Impact of ISIS Social Media Strategy*, Majid Alfifi, Parisa Kaghazgaran, James Caverlee and Fred Morstatter, MIS2, 2018, Marina Del Rey, CA, USA. MIS2 is the workshop *Misinformation and Misbehavior Mining on the Web*; it was held in conjunction with WSDM 2018, Feb 9, 2018 – Los Angeles, California, USA, 2018.

2 *Social Media and Terrorist Financing. What are the Vulnerabilities and How Could Public and Private Sectors Collaborate Better?*, Tom Keatinge and Florence Keen, Global Research Network on Terrorism and Technology: Paper No. 10, Royal United Services Institute for Defence and Security Studies, 2019.

All these elements prove that social media analysis may provide a valuable overview of the terrorist groups' activities and could represent a valuable tool to implement strategies against terrorism.

However, despite the increase of the virtual dimension of counterterrorism operations, counterterrorism on the ground remains a pillar in the hard security domain. Both the EU and NATO member states and partners have decided to collaborate against terrorism working within the framework of the *UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy* (adopted in September 2006 and reviewed every 2 years). At present, it is the only instrument available for the international community to enhance its multilateral efforts in the field.

Yet, the complexity of the current socio-geopolitical environment spawns new variables to consider in the implementation of counterterrorism strategies in order to guarantee security in its wider sense – for example, securing human rights to health, religion and freedom of expression. Indeed, the ambiguity in the definition attempts of “terrorism”, often found in national legislation and entailed tools to combat it, leave a conceptual, political and legislative vacuum that some governments may exploit for their own repressive policies.

Session I

STRATEGIES AGAINST THE NEW GENERATION TERRORISM



Kilis, Turkey - January 20 2017: Syrian refugees from Aleppo and Idlib in Turkey. Most of them live in refugee camp near the Syrian border



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Electronic display board with multiple lines of text, likely a bus schedule or public information.

SİSTEM PEN
PENCİRE KAPAKLARI

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في جميع أنحاء العالم

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جميع الحوالات
في جميع



STEFANO SILVESTRI
*Vice President, NATO Defense College Foundation,
Rome*

THE DOUBLE FRAGMENTATION OF COUNTERTERRORISM AND TERRORISM

We know many different terrorist brands. While today, globally, the most lethal terrorists are those that claim to be Islamist (or jihadist), we have dealt and in some cases we are still dealing with separatists, supremacists (racists), anarchists, extreme leftists and rightists, and others. Terrorism is an unfortunate permanent feature of our societies, appealing to fringes of much diverse inspiration.

To try to manage and reduce this threat we rely mainly on police investigations and societal activities, but priority should be given, when terrorist attacks happen, to reduce the reaction time, to limit and manage damages, to swiftly neutralize the criminals. Organized terrorism, however, is a specific threat that can and should be dealt with, as organized crime, and that can be beaten, as we have done with ETA, IRA, the Red Brigades and many other terrorist groups.

Today, the main terrorist organizations are international and Islamic related. After 9/11, the USA and their allies have started a War on Terror, conducted both through police and intelligence operations, but mostly cantered on military interventions.

The military victories (against the Talibans, Al-Qaeda, and the so called Caliphate) however have not eliminated the threat, nor the organizations targeted, even if they have achieved some significant successes. Today the terrorists are more dispersed, but also regrouping, and, in the case of the Talibans, they are slowly getting back their territory and power in Afghanistan. The military operations have certainly decreased the ability, if not the willingness, to operate in our Western territories.

Meanwhile, however, in line with the creeping deconstruction of the globalized society, also the fight against terrorism is becoming more fragmented. The fragmentation already influences the choice of terrorists' objectives. Islamist related terrorists are more active and deadly in the Middle East, Africa, South East Asia, where they have significant organizations, logistics, etc.. They are much less effec-

tive in Europe, the USA and Russia even if, according to their propaganda, those countries are the greater evil.

Unable or unwilling to mount great surprise attacks against us, they increasingly rely on the voluntary actions of lone wolves and of homemade, do-it-yourself militants. Those may be less destructive than organized attack groups, but they are also more difficult to identify and prevent, expendable and very cheap. They are an easy way for a terrorist organizations to maintain a degree of psychological pressure over their enemies.

Counterterrorism is fragmented too. The end of the War on Terror is not in sight, while its human and economic costs have grown to barely acceptable levels and its popularity is sharply declining. President Trump is trying to shift more and more responsibilities to the US allies and to local authorities, and is planning reductions and withdrawals of military forces, irrespective of the situation.

Due to that, counterterrorism, carried out by many different centres, becomes inevitably part and parcel of the various national security and foreign policies. National priorities, frequently different and sometime at odds with each other, are becoming dominant. Thus, the fight against terrorism is becoming more selective.

It becomes more difficult to agree on who are the terrorists and who are not. And even dealing with commonly recognized terrorists, different people have different priorities on whom to strike first. A terrorist for Turkey may not be a terrorist for the Saudis, and a terrorist for Israel is not a terrorist for Iran, and so on. The War on Terror risks becoming increasingly part of covert, proxy wars.

There is no easy solution. It is important, however, to try to limit these consequences of fragmentation. The use of terrorists for covert operations and proxy wars is a highly risky business, as we have learnt this from the experience of the fight against the Soviets in Afghanistan. Terrorists have their own agenda and they are well capable of attacking their former sponsors, should the need and the opportunity arise. It seems however that this lesson has not been fully learned. It is therefore necessary to counter fragmentation through a better and more intense diplomatic and political activity, trying to manage and reduce those conflicts where terrorist contribution is sought.

To counter fragmentation we may want to reduce the ambitions projected on the War on Terror, lowering our expectations, but we must not forget that a brutal revision of our priorities might have disastrous consequences for those that have been our allies and friends. The transition from the War on Terror to a terror conflict management must be done with outmost caution.

Counterterrorism in our Western countries is already well developed, even if the circulation of information should become more complete and rapid. A priority should be the policing of the web, particularly of the so called dark web, trying to disrupt this powerful source of inspiration and aid for many homemade terrorists. For the same reason, greater attention should be given to social chats and groupings.

Inevitably, fragmentation of the terrorist groups increases the need of their self-financing. The main way they have to get money is through criminal activities, entering the criminal markets of blackmail, protection selling, drug and other trafficking both on the web and in the physical dimension. This puts terrorist organizations in the same box of organized crime and suggests the need for cooperation or even integration between the two. Both are major players of the black economy. They have different motivations, that may create some misgivings, but their overall interests, in the short term, is to avoid fighting each other and to recognize the advantages of a closer cooperation.

Thus, counterterrorism should prioritize the activities against the black economy, recycling and so on, trying to put the organized crime under greater and greater stress, with the aim of weakening this operational alliance, isolating terrorist organizations and diminishing their ability to self-finance.

Of course, we will not get rid of terrorism; on the contrary we should recognize that some terrorism, like some criminality, are permanent features of our societies. What we can and should do is to fight and progressively destroy or neutralize organised terrorism, so that it will become less deadly and its social and cultural appeal will diminish.



ELI KARMON

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LEVANT AND GULF JIHADISM AND ITS RAMIFICATIONS

The Syrian civil pacific uprising of 2011 has transformed into an Islamist/jihadi rebellion because the US, and the West in general, have “outsourced” the conflict to mainly three regional actors, with conflicting strategic and Islamist political interests: Turkey, Saudi Arabia and Qatar.

At the same time, they have permitted Iran, Hezbollah and the numerous Iranian funded Shia militias to militarily support and save the criminal Assad regime.

Actually, only the Russian military intervention since September 2015 has saved the Damascus regime from crumbling and helped it retake control of 2/3 of Syrian territory.

Rami Khouri even claims that the international community’s weak response to the war crimes on both sides, and its apparent de facto acceptance of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad’s tenure, foretell continuing regional authoritarian and violent political systems for the foreseeable future.¹

As a result, the Syrian civil war has been transformed into a battle front for influence by regional and global powers, as can be seen today in northern Syria.

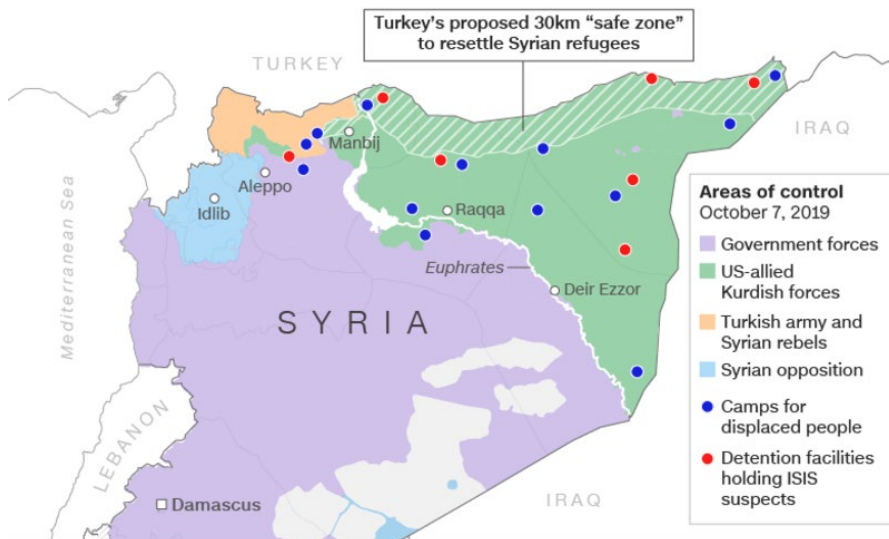
This reflects Syria’s historical geopolitical position as a “strategic pivot” around which regional and international powers have competed for influence or hegemonic control of the Levant and wider Western Asia.²

The strategic landscape in the Middle East and beyond has significantly changed since the defeat and dismantling of the Islamic State (IS) in 2017-2018.

1 Rami G. Khouri, “The Implications of The Syrian War for New Regional Orders in The Middle East,” *MENARA Working Papers*, No. 12, September 2018.

2 Ibid.

After the complete demise of the territorial entity called the Islamic State, in the March 2019 Battle of Baghuz Fawqani in eastern Syria, by the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), and the killing by US Special Forces of the “Caliph” Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi in northern Syria (27th of October 2019), the fate of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) organization and its global factions still depends in great measure on the situation on the ground in Syria and Iraq.



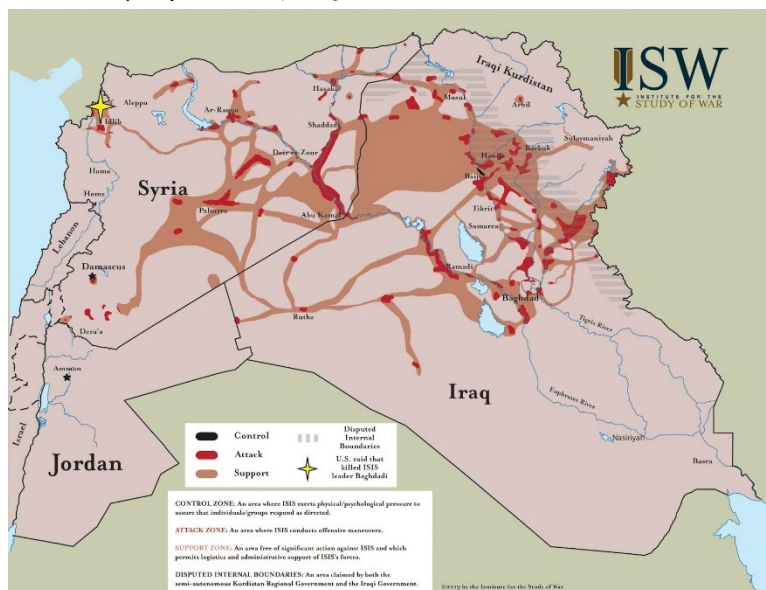
Source: Conflict Monitor by IHS Markit, Institute for the Study of War - CNN
Graphic: Tamara Qiblawi and Henrik Pattersson

Two developments impact on the threat of jihadi terrorism to Europe and elsewhere, as result of ISIS leadership’s two strategic decisions, before the fall of Mosul in late July 2017:

- the building of an underground insurgency in Iraqi Sunni territory and
- the relocation of jihadi fighters, mainly to Afghanistan and Libya. Yemen and Sinai have been difficult relocation sites, Yemen because of the strong al-Qaeda presence and competition, and Sinai because the Egyptian army’s fierce battle against its presence.

The dispersion of ISIS forces worked in Iraq from July to December 2017, and in Syria from May 2018 until the defeat of the last pocket of resistance in Baghuz in April 2019. Indeed, if we look to the ISIS operating areas and the huge number of terrorist and guerrilla attacks in Iraq, it seems the strategy has worked well.

ISIS Sanctuary Map: October 27, 2019



Source: ISW (Institute for the Study of War)

Turkey's plan to build a "safe buffer zone" in Kurdish territory in northern Syria, after it already occupied the province of Afrin in a previous operation in early 2018, only partially materialised, because the latest US military redeployment in the region and Russian intervention in support of Assad forces' attempt to stop the Turkish advance.

The latest Turkish intervention has complicated even more the situation, on the backdrop of the challenge presented by the fate of the Idlib province, huge enclave controlled by some 20-25.000 fighters, mostly pro-al-Qaeda jihadi forces, pro-Turkish militias and some Turkish military observation points, coordinated with Russian ones.

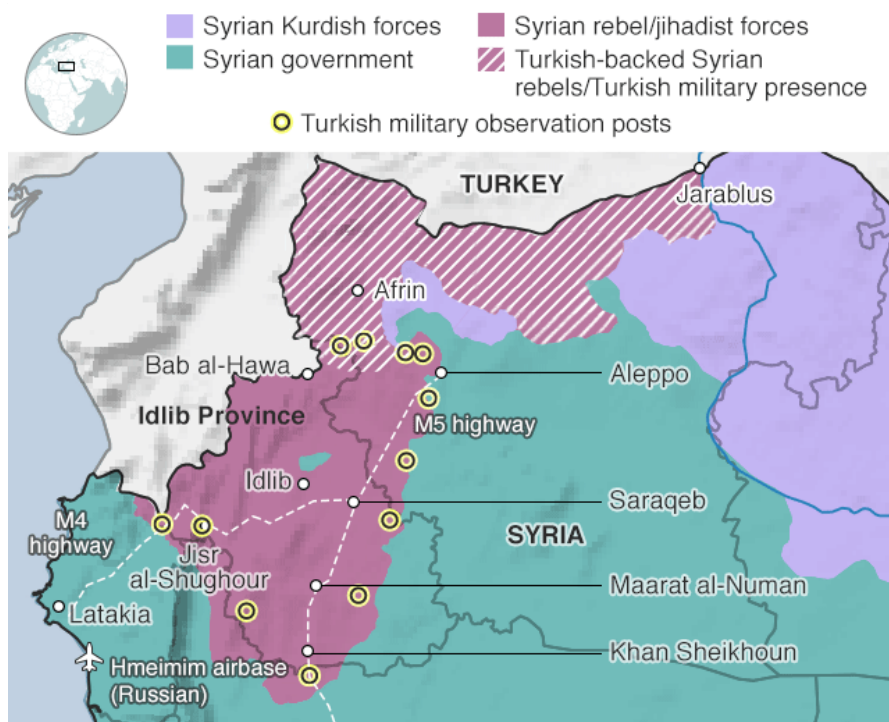
At the writing of this paper in late December 2019, the Syrian army, backed by Russian air force bombings, already began their planned slow offensive in Idlib, a major short-term threat leading to a humanitarian disaster.

The high number of Central Asian jihadi groups in the Idlib province represents not only a possibility of their relocation to Afghanistan, from where they can threaten Russia, the Caucasus, the Central Asian states, China and India, but also to Europe. Many of them could return to Germany, Scandinavia and other countries from where they came and where they already enjoyed political asylum status.

Foreign fighters in Idlib include the Katibat al Tawhid wal Jihad, affiliated with the Al-Nusrah Front, consists of militants from Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. The Kyrgyz amir of the group, Abu Saloh (Sirojiddin Mukhtarov), an aggressive propagandist of al-Qaeda's ideology, organized jointly with the Uighur

terrorists from the Turkestan Islamic Party the explosion in the Chinese embassy in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, in August 2016. The Russian Federal Security Service has accused him of organizing an explosion in the metro of St. Petersburg on the 3rd of April 3 2017. The number of the KTJ militants is about 400 people, mostly Uzbek jihadists.

Idlib province



Source: IHS Control Monitor, 3 Sep 2018, ISW; Suriye Gündemi - BBC

The Katibat Imam al-Bukhari detachment was created in Afghanistan on the basis of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan and pledged loyalty to the Taliban. In 2012, KIB moved to Syrian Idlib Province and distinguished itself as one of the major rebel groups fighting the Assad regime. Today one group of the KIB is based in Afghanistan, fighting together with the Taliban. About 300-350 militants are known to fight in the KIB. KIB is close ideologically to al-Qaeda linked Al-Nusrah Front and Ahrar al-Sham.

The so-called “Chechen groups”, formed from the inhabitants of the North Caucasus of Russia and Georgia, call themselves “independent” factions: Ajnad al Kavkaz, Junud al-Sham, Jaish al-Usrah, Jamaat Katibat Ibadar-Rahman and Liwa al Muhajireen wal Ansar, which are part of the Hayat Tahrir al-Sham. Unlike

the Uzbek and Uighur jihadist groups, there is no singular identical ideological doctrine among the “Chechen groups”.

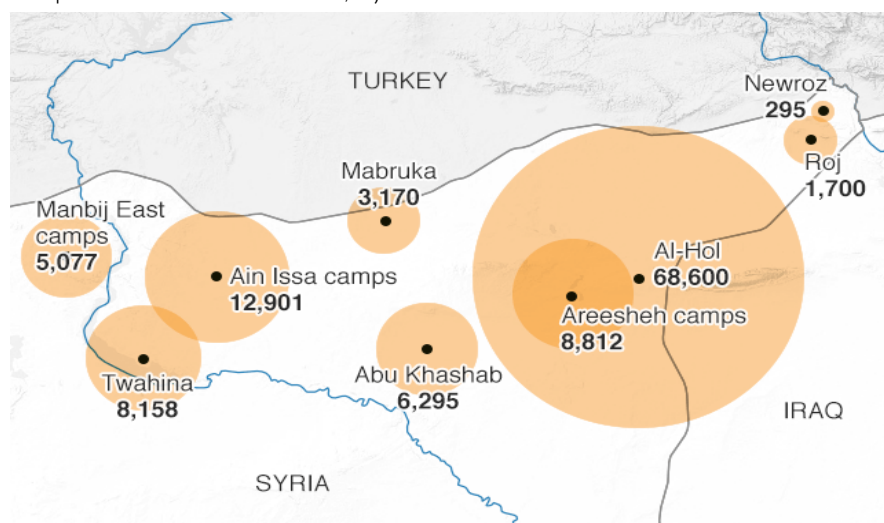
Finally, the Turkistan Islamic Party (TIP), Chinese Uighur-dominated jihadists have concentrated in Idlib and could relocate to Turkey or Afghanistan and threaten China and its interests in the region.

Another threat is represented by the refugee camps in northern-eastern Syria, controlled by the pro-western Kurdish and SDF forces, themselves under threat of a Turkish military occupation.

The possibility of break-outs of imprisoned ISIS jihadists, but also the massive number of their women companions and children in the camps, whose fate is not yet decided, represent a serious problem for the West.

Populations of camps for displaced people

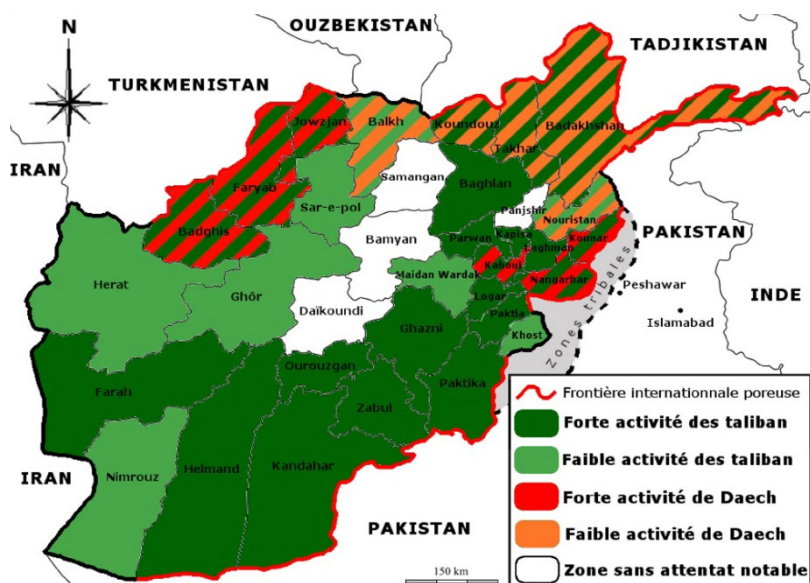
IS suspects' families are detained at al-Hol, Roj and Ain Issa



Source: UN OCHA, 29 September 2019, REACH, April/May 2019, ReliefWeb - BBC

The relocation to Afghanistan has succeeded quite well, as ISIS controls parts of north-west and north-east of the country, after fierce battles with the Taliban. Bruce Hoffman, director of the Center for Security Studies at Georgetown University, sees Afghanistan as a possible new base for ISIS now that it has been driven from Iraq and Syria.

“ISIS has invested a disproportionate amount of attention and resources in Afghanistan” he said, pointing to *“huge arms stockpiling”* in the east.



Carte établie par David Gaüzere d'après les bulletins d'information mensuels du CEREDAF, réalisation Marchand.G 2017

However, there are conflicting evaluations of the threat of ISIS Khorasan Wilayat (Afghanistan province). In August 2019, the New York Times reported that senior United States military and intelligence officials are sharply divided over how much of a threat ISIS in Afghanistan poses to the West, a critical point in the Trump administration's debate over whether American troops stay or withdraw after nearly 18 years of war.

American military commanders in Afghanistan have described the ISIS affiliate there as a growing problem that is capable of inspiring and directing attacks in Western countries, including the United States. But intelligence officials in Washington disagree, arguing the group is mostly incapable of exporting terrorism worldwide. The officials believe that it remains a regional problem and is more of a threat to the Taliban than to the West.

The same divisions remain at the end of 2019. The Wall Street Journal reported on December 26, that according to US officials, the "*Islamic State in Afghanistan, known as ISIS-Khorasan (ISK), has become the strongest branch of the militant group outside of Iraq and Syria*" posing a persistent threat despite a US-led offensive. The branch has received a stream of funding from ISIS in Iraq and Syria, a sign of the group's importance to its leadership. According to this report the group has as many as 2.000 fighters and seeks to target the West.

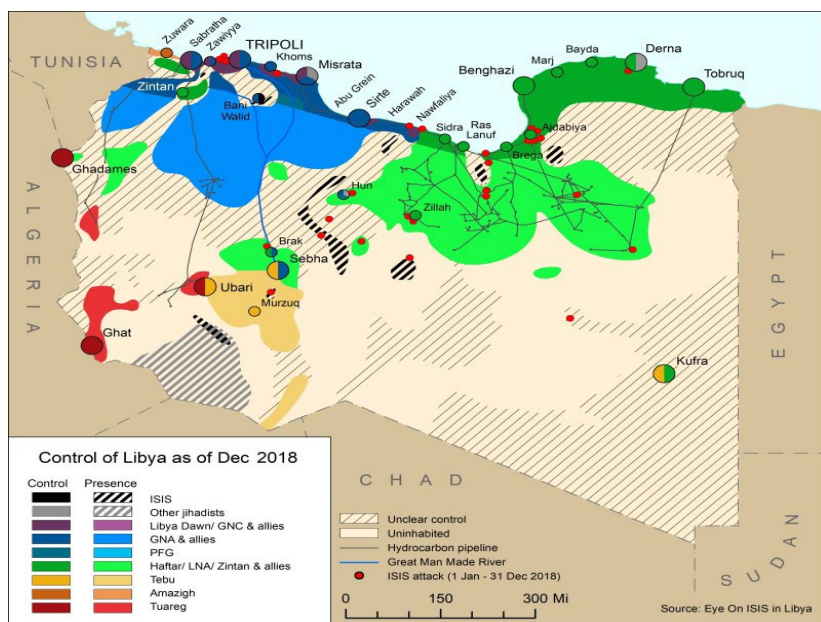
According to Al-Jazeera, Afghan authorities claim that a sustained bombing campaign by US and Afghan forces has significantly reduced the threat. Only around half of the group's 4.000 fighters are thought to still be active across Afghanistan, in contrast to just six months ago, when ISIS was seen as a major threat.

Afghan authorities say it is only a matter of time before the group is eliminated.

Michael Kugelman argues that ISK is remarkably resilient and offers a powerful case study of the Islamic State's ability to create autonomous affiliates that flourish and endure and live on after the US raid that led to Baghdadi's death in Syria on October 26 and the losses of territory it has endured in Syria and Iraq.³

ISIS in Libya. After losing its strongholds in Derna (June 2015) and Sirte (December 2016), ISIS has concentrated in Libya on the Tunisian border and the desert, where it built new training bases. From there it staged numerous suicide attacks in Tunisia, including the 2015 Tunis Bardo National Museum and Sousse attacks (against British tourists), and probably the May 2017 Manchester Arena suicide bombing.

During the last two years, the group has been able to recover and reorganize, waging two separate campaigns: high-profile attacks on symbolic state institutions and a campaign in the southwestern desert. However, as a result of the Libyan National Army's (LNA) ongoing campaign to "liberate" southern Libya from terrorists and to reopen its oil fields, ISIS may experience an erosion of its ability to operate in the Fezzan.⁴



3 Michael Kugelman, "The Islamic State Will Outlive Baghdadi. Afghanistan Shows How," *Foreign Policy*, November 5, 2019.

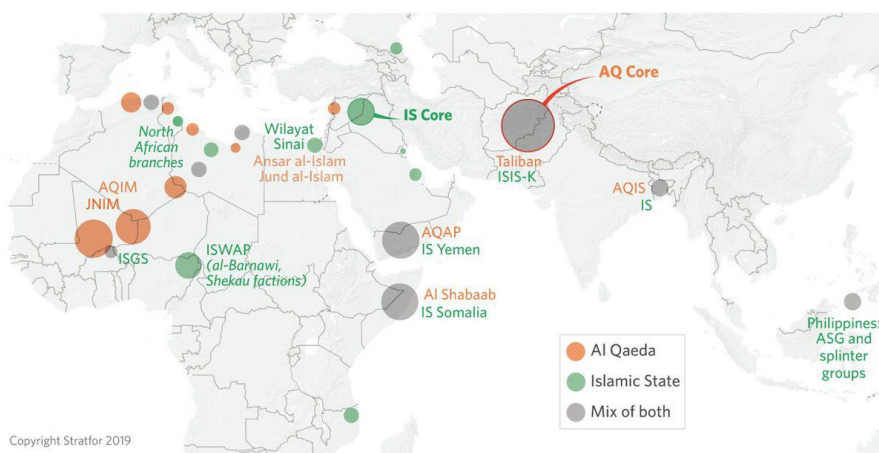
4 Lachlan Wilson, Jason Pack, "The Islamic State's Revitalization in Libya and its Post-2016 War of Attrition," *CTC Sentinel*, Vol. 12, Issue 3, March 2019.

On the global arena, although Abu Baker al-Baghdadi has boasted in his last video in April 2019 that ISIS has new provinces in Africa, Turkey and India, actually al-Qaeda is much stronger in Syria, Yemen, Somalia, Northern Africa and the Sahel. In one of the most brutal and lethal attacks in recent memory, the Islamic State in Greater Sahara (ISGS) raided a military barracks in Inates, Niger on the 10th of December 2019, killing more than 70 soldiers. This was not only a devastating attack for Niger, but also represented a major warning for two of Niger's neighbours also fighting against ISGS, Burkina Faso and Mali. The al-Qaeda-loyal group known as Jama'at Nasr al-Islam wal Muslimin (JNIM), or Group for the Supporters of Islam and Muslims, is also active throughout the Sahel. While JNIM has been a more consistent threat than ISGS, for the first time ISGS is now eclipsing JNIM in media attention as a result of its major attacks.

The map of ISIS and al-Qaeda zones of influence actually does not represent the real complexity of the jihadist arena. The partial list of the groups fighting in Idlib is an example.

Jihadist Areas of Influence

Core and franchise areas of al Qaeda and the Islamic State in 2018



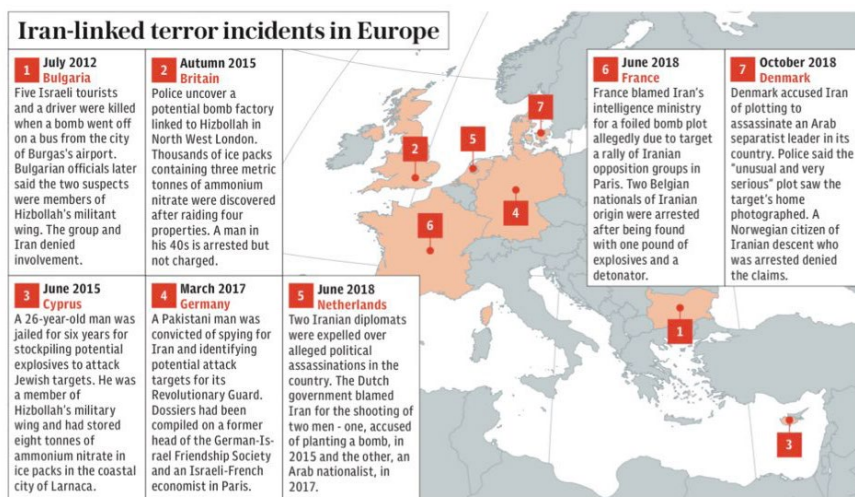
The neglected Shia radical organizations. Europe is underestimating, or rather trying to ignore, the Iranian/Hezbollah terrorism on the continent, even after the foiled terrorist plots during 2018.

Dozens of pro-Iranian Shia militias, headed by the Hezbollah, whose military branch was designated a terrorist organization by the EU, invaded Syria and later Iraq since 2012, to fight alongside the bloody Bashar al-Assad regime. It is of note that the European authorities, as well as academic experts, do not speak out about the potential threat from these Shia jihadists and the radicalization of at least part of the European Muslim youths, in the Shia revolutionary Khomeinist spirit.

The 2012 wave of terrorist attacks by Hezbollah and Iran against Israeli, Jewish

and also Western targets, which exposed their activity in Bulgaria, Cyprus, France and Netherlands, Kenya and India, or the fact that the German Security Service has identified at least 950 Hezbollah activists in Germany, did not receive either much attention from European experts.

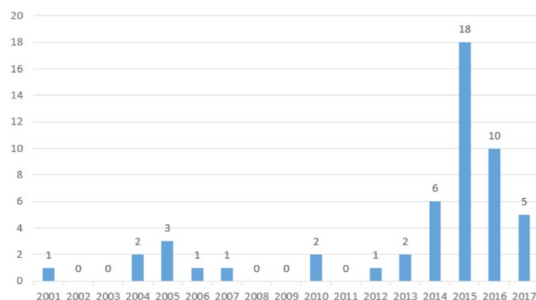
The foiled Iranian bombing of the large annual gathering of the Iranian opposition group the People's Mojahedin (MEK) in France, in July 2018, the arrest of an Iranian diplomat in Germany (actually the head of its intelligence in Europe, stationed in Vienna, Austria), as well as the French Police raid in October on the headquarters of the Hezbollah Shia Center Zahra, in Grande-Synthe in northern France, connected to the Iranian terrorist activity, should serve as waking calls, before the threat materializes in more attacks.



Source: The Telegraph, 9 June 2019

Finally, the rise of the right-wing terrorist threat in Europe to Muslim communities can also have an impact on an upsurge of violence from home-grown and immigrant terrorists.

Figure 1 Extreme right-wing explosive attacks, 2001-20017



Challenges for Europe on the short term, three events can influence the formation of new immigrant waves towards Europe:

- the “liberation” of the Idlib province in northern Syria by Syrian governmental forces with Russian support;
- the dislocation of Kurdish populations by Turkish occupation of northern Syria;
- and the advancement of ISIS, and al-Qaeda in Africa: in the Sahel, Mali, Burkina Faso, Congo.

Europe: long-term challenges are serious issues which will require the European Union members to decide on common coordinated strategies.

The policy for the returning Foreign Fighters (FFs). The number of jihadi FFs in Syria and Iraq is without precedent, exceeding that of those who went to wage jihad in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq, Yemen or Somalia. According to the EU-ROPOL 2018 and 2019 Reports, around 5.000 individuals from the EU were believed to have travelled since 2011 to conflict areas in Iraq and Syria. About 1.500 FFs returned home and more than 1.000 are dead, although accurate figures are not available.

A large number appeared to have been taken prisoner or detained in Iraq and Syria. Some were reportedly being held in Kurdish camps (including women and minors) or by the Iraqi authorities; others were detained in Turkey. According to Spain, some former foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs) were able to settle in Turkey.

Therefore, from a numerical point of view, the threat related to returnees appears less important than feared. However, returnees to Europe may have: combat and operational experience; gained an enhanced capability to commit acts of terrorism; and be particularly dehumanized and prone to violence upon their return. They also serve as role models and might be involved in recruiting and radicalising others.

The number of European foreign terrorist fighters travelling or attempting to travel to the Iraqi and Syrian conflict zone in 2018 was very low. Cases of travelling to alternative areas of conflict were reported, although current numbers also appear to be very low. Rather than attempting to travel to the conflict zone, the focus of jihadist networks in EU Member States has shifted towards carrying out activities in the EU – both online and offline.

Radicalization in prisons, including the policies of punishment and liberation of prisoners. The prisons have been one of the most dangerous areas of radicalization and risk to be even a more enhanced threat in the near future.

Indeed, about 500 hard-core jihadists – 254 in France alone – are to be freed from European jails in the next two years. European law-enforcement need to focus on monitoring radicalized multiple offenders that may have a higher probability to carry out a terror attack. The example of the knifing attack by Usman

Khan in London on the 29th of November 2019, released from prison in 2018 on licence after serving half of his sentence for terrorist offences, and some other cases are a vivid reminder to this threat.

The fate of women and children in camps and prisons in Syria and Iraq. Since the proclamation of the caliphate in July 2014, increasing numbers of women and girls who have travelled to Syria and Iraq, were thought to have a passive role, as victims, “jihadi brides” or mothers to the “cubs of the caliphate”. Many European member states initially did not prosecute females returning from ISIS territory nor did they offer them “exit programs” aimed at de-radicalisation, disengagement or reintegration.

Recent studies present a disturbing picture: ISIS women often received sniper training, carried Kalashnikovs and wore suicide vests; they became members of the Al-Kahansaa brigade (the ISIS religious police) and were involved in propaganda and recruitment, grooming other women and girls online to travel to the caliphate. Compared to men, women are less often known to the police and women less often hold criminal records. As the male contingent is thinning out and being placed under increased supervision by law enforcement authorities, in the future women may increasingly be involved in operational roles. In 2016, the French police arrested three radicalized women aged 19, 23 and 39, who had pledged allegiance to ISIS and were planning a terrorist attack on the Gare du Lyon train station.

Growing numbers of radicalised converts to Islam represent an operational threat. Already in the immediate period after 9/11 the growing number of radicalized converts participating in the global jihad has posed serious operational but also cultural and social problems to the European authorities.

The percentage of converts appears to be higher for women compared to men. In Germany, one third of all the female departing to Syria were converts, compared to 17% of the males. The situation in the Netherlands is similar. In France, female converts are 25% of all female departees, compared to 20% for men. The number of conversions to radical Islam in the French suburbs is increasing among non-Muslim. Conversions often happen as a copycat phenomenon, especially among groups of youths, when one member of a group converts the rest with whom he might share a background in petty crime or delinquency. A further reason is that other traditional religions are perceived as structurally “heavy and complicated” compared to Islam.

The threat posed by lone actors ranks high on the list of terrorism-related security concerns. The concept of “lone wolf” is extremely important to clarify, as it has a major impact on the operational aspects of the law enforcement agencies’ activity in preventing and neutralizing terrorist activities. In recent years especially, discussions about these perpetrators have focused primarily on those associated with or

inspired by ISIS and other jihadist entities. However, a significant portion of lone actors actually hail from right-wing extremist milieus.

In her recent research, Noémie Bouhana & al suggest (in “Analysing Lone-Actor Terrorism in Context, April 2019), that lone actors are not that lone. She found that both physical and online links with other extremists are critical to the adoption and stability of the motivation to engage in terrorism, and the acquisition and maintenance of the capability to act. Moreover, comparison between actors on the basis of ideology didn’t reveal meaningful differences. While the contemporary terrorist threat is commonly associated with Islamist extremist groups such as al-Qaeda and ISIS, a significant proportion of lone-actor attacks are perpetrated by individuals with a right-wing extremist background.

The process of violent radicalisation takes place above all with the help of the Internet because there is no longer any separation between online and off-line life. It should be taken in consideration that the more aggressive policy of European law enforcement agencies and the major Internet companies (Google, Facebook, YouTube, lately also Telegram), have compelled the jihadist groups and other radicals to find other platforms for their propaganda and recruitment activities, such as RocketChat, TamTam, Hoop, 8Chan, etc.. This trend will probably continue as the radicals of all colours will try to adapt to the new more restricted environment.

Finally, *the focus should be on prevention of radicalisation rather than de-radicalisation*, as several EU Horizon2020 projects try to promote during the last 3-4 years.



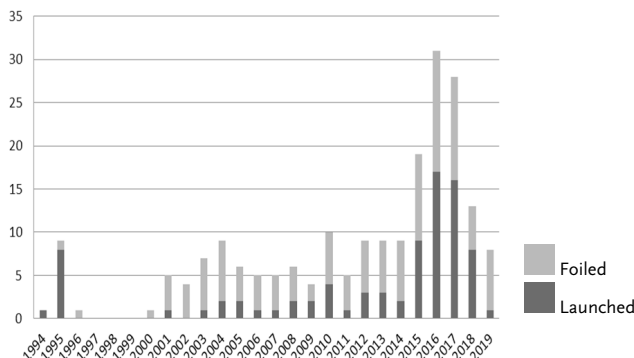
PETTER NESSER

*Senior Researcher, Norwegian Defence Research
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THE NEW GENERATION TERRORISM

The terror attack in London on 29 November 2019 received worldwide attention and caused heated debates about jihadi prisoners. The attacker was a released prisoner who had been part of an al-Qaida terrorist plot in the UK in 2012. A terror cell uncovered in the Netherlands a few days earlier received much less attention, despite the fact that the Dutch terror plot was potentially very lethal. A two-member cell allegedly planned suicide bombings for the Christmas holidays. We have an “attack bias” in how we assess and debate terrorism. We focus on launched attacks, typically the latest one. This is a problem because attacks are the “tip of the iceberg,” what is left after security services have done their job at foiling plots. Analyses based on launched attacks only risks misrepresenting threat levels, trends in modus operandi, and relative threats from different actors. We must base analyses and shape policies based on assessments of both launched and foiled attacks. Despite that there are over two years since a jihadi attack killed more than ten people in Europe, the attack activity remains high in the region. While there was a sharp drop in attacks following 2017, the number of plots and attacks in 2018 was still higher than in any given year before 2015.

Jihadi attack activity in Europe 1994-2019

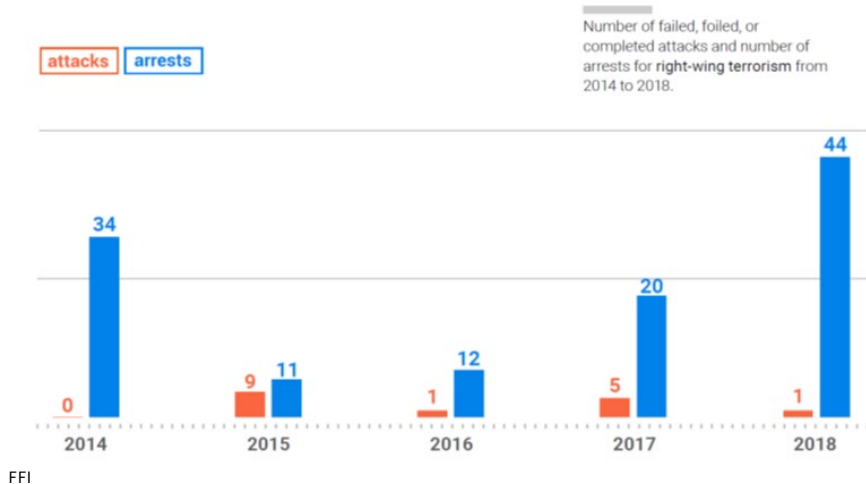


The main reason for the recent drop in attacks is that European counterterrorism has toughened. Small, simple attacks get launched, while more complex, lethal plots get foiled. However, counterterrorism is never constant, and the potential for new lethal waves of terror is probably higher than at previous moments in the history of jihadism. No one foresaw the Islamic State terror wave at the time of Bin Laden's death. Jihadists were in a much weaker state back then than they are today. The sheer scope of today's jihadism calls for serious concern.

European jihadism got a major boost from the Syria war. There have never been more European foreign fighters. Never before have so many Europeans been classified as Islamist extremists. Never before did European prisons house so many militant Islamists. Furthermore the jihadi movement remains a formidable insurgent and terrorist actor and the root causes of jihadism are ever-present.

The movement has grown exponentially in recent times, and we witness increased activity in Africa and parts of Asia today. Added to this, European countries remain legitimate targets for jihadis who are well aware that attacks on Europeans generate publicity, polarization and opportunities to recruit.

Right-wing attacks, plots and arrests in EU (Europol T-Sat, 2019)



The future jihadi threat to Europe will likely be less visible than before. The terrorists will mobilize and build cells online. Attackers may depend less on networks than we have seen in the past, more similar to the lone wolves of the far right.

While there has been an uptick in attacks and plots by the far right in Europe, levels are not comparable to jihadism. We will likely see new attacks, such as the Norway terrorist who tried to replicate Christchurch. It seems less likely, however, that we will see sustained terror campaigns by the far right.

Unlike jihadis far right militants are not involved in multiple conflict zones, and cannot gain strategic depth and capacity from such zones to the same extent. Even though some have travelled to places like [Ukraine](#), far right foreign fighting is on a different scale.

Session II

THE VIRTUAL DIMENSION OF TERRORISM, TRAFFICKING AND LAUNDERING



In this image made from a ISIS video posted on YouTube, a jihadist hammers away at a face on a wall in Hatra, a UNESCO World Heritage site, in the southwest of Mosul. In 2017, ISIS made up to 100 billion dollars smuggling antiquities through Internet and





LOUISE SHELLEY

Chair Director, Terrorism, Transnational Crime and Corruption Center/ University Professor, Schar School of Policy and Government, George Mason University, Fairfax

FACING CYBERWORLD CRIME: DIFFERENT APPROACHES HAMPER LAW ENFORCEMENT

The phenomena of crime, terrorism and money laundering are fundamentally different in the cyberworld than they are in the tangible world. Operating online, individuals have a greater opportunity to remain anonymous than if they are carrying out their activities in the real world where they are required to meet and interact with people to carry out their activities. Pernicious non-state actors often operate as networks rather than rigid organizations because they can more easily segment their activities. Furthermore, they can carry out their activities faster online than in the tangible world.

Other important differences between crime in the real and the cyberworld are the nature of the products. In the cyberworld, products are often not tangible as computer criminals and even some terrorists sell malware, ransomware and botnets, products that exist only in the online world. These new tools of cyber criminals are often not violent but are highly destructive. They also facilitate the theft of intellectual property and individuals' identities which can result in great costs to companies and also to individuals.

The perpetrators of criminal activity in the cyberworld involve states as well as non-state actors. Often the non-state actors are co-opted by states.

Activity in the cyberworld provides many advantages for the criminals and the terrorists. They can reach individuals of different socio-economic backgrounds. They can contact individuals in rural areas off traditional trade routes. The pernicious non-state actors can deliver goods rapidly and at competitive prices because of lesser overhead. Unlike legitimate corporations, they do not need to get patents or protect trademarks. Moreover, they can sell counterfeit goods.

A key area of online activity is the theft of personal data and intellectual property. Especially targeted is intellectual property before it is commercialised. These thefts are committed by individual criminals, terrorists and state actors. They are extremely costly to companies and to governments. This activity, so prevalent in the cyber-world, represents a cross-over threat between states and individual crim-

inals. A disproportionate share of the cybercrime is perpetrated in areas of concern for NATO: the Soviet successor states and the Balkans. There are several reasons that this is the case. First, there is the absence of good opportunities in these countries for worthwhile legitimate economy. There are many people in the Balkans and the countries of the former USSR with sophisticated cyber skills. Law enforcement in the region lack the training and know how to tackle cybercrime. The ability of the illicit actors to operate with anonymity makes it more difficult to counter their activities. Furthermore, the weak regulation in these regions of computer crime compounds the possibility of executing illicit activity online and getting away with it.

A particular problem is the problem of transnational criminals operating in the Darknet (it is the part of the Internet below the private deep web that uses custom software and hidden networks superimposed on the architecture of the Internet). In the Darknet, there are the most criminal products for sale: malware, Trojans, ransomware, drugs, child pornography, stolen identities and weapons. There are also illicit services for sale such as those of hitmen. Individuals can also arrange to buy kidneys on the dark web and arrange for illicit kidney transplants.

There are many risks arising from engaging in trade on the web and the Darknet. The range of illicit products is very diverse: drugs, humans, arms, pharmaceuticals, wildlife parts, numerous counterfeits, and antiquities from both Latin America and the Middle East. There is an absence of quality controls and online platforms are not monitoring sellers. Rating services for products may not be genuine. Customers have no recourse when fraudulent products are advertised on the web or the drugs they purchase online or in the Darknet turn out to be fatal. This is true because fraud is common and uncontrolled. Many who participate on line as buyers and sellers are engaging in subterfuge.

Activities in on line marketplaces are becoming even more treacherous as purchasers can pay with cryptocurrencies. This is occurring both online and on the dark web. Individuals can purchase the drug (fentanyl) from China through the web platform Baidu and pay for it with cryptocurrencies that provide anonymity to all involved in the transaction. Some use bitcoin but many more criminal cryptocurrencies have arisen that are used to make purchases on the dark web. The broad use of cryptocurrencies makes it hard for law enforcement to identify purchasers and sellers.

Addressing criminal activity in the cyber world is a major challenge because participants in the illicit activity may operate across numerous countries requiring much multinational cooperation by law enforcement. Further complicating this cooperation is the fact that there are often neither common regulation across countries, nor harmonized laws. Some states may protect online perpetrators that also serve the state.

There are many differences in approach to this pernicious cyber activity by NATO member states. Members of the EU favour more regulation of web plat-

forms. There is also less abuse of online platforms in the EU than in the US. This disparity is explained by the fact that there is generally more illicit entrepreneurship in the US than in Europe where the illicit world mirrors the legitimate.

Different approaches to privacy and the greater privacy protections in the cyberworld among EU countries lead to an absence of a harmonised response among NATO members. In general, European countries are more eager to advance regulating the cyberworld where the US has placed greater emphasis on self-regulation. The absence of a coherent response among NATO members suggest that there will be significant difficulties in dealing with criminals, terrorists and money launderers in the cyberworld in coming decades.



JEFFREY HARDY

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ILLICIT TRADE AND THE UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

ILLICIT TRADE IS THE SCAR ON THE FACE OF LEGAL TRADE

From smuggling, counterfeiting and tax evasion, to illegal pharmaceuticals, alcohol, petroleum, and wildlife, illicit trade is pervasive across all sectors. Profits from one illegal activity are frequently used to finance a different type of illicit trade. It is well established that illicit trade also propels organized crime; research shows connections between oil theft and drug cartels in Mexico; insurgents and human traffickers in Thailand; human smugglers in Libya; terrorists in Ireland; militant groups in Nigeria; rebel movements in Mozambique, and of course, ISIS. Most frightening are the links to armed conflict and terrorist financing that heighten threats to national and global security and creates significant deterrents for business, which thrives in stable, peaceful environments. These malignancies weaken law enforcement and destabilize communities and economies.

While each form of illicit trade has its own characteristics and drivers, we often see the same criminal groups using the same routes and means of transport and the same concealment methods behind multiple forms of illicit trade. All transport intermediaries whether it is air, sea or express and postal carriers are all vulnerable to illicit trade. Border controls are compromised, corruption continues to plague government institutions responsible for enforcement and regulatory gaps further drive illicit trade.

TRACIT'S MISSION TO MITIGATE ILLICIT TRADE

The transnational problem of illicit trade has clearly grown well beyond the capabilities of individual governments. A segmented approach to tackling illicit trade precludes our ability to consider the interconnected nature of the problem and to appreciate commonalities and points of convergence across sectors. What is needed is a sustained, holistic and coordinated response to address the multi-

faceted nature of this threat. Equally important is the recognition that the private sector can be an important partner in the fight against the unfettered flow of fake and harmful goods across borders.

The Transnational Alliance to Combat Illicit Trade (TRACIT) is responding to this challenge by leading business engagement with national governments and intergovernmental organizations to ensure that private sector experience is properly integrated into rules and regulations that will govern illicit trade. TRACIT represents companies and organizations that have a shared commitment to combatting illicit trade and ensuring the integrity of supply chains.

Addressing illegal trade – whether that be smuggling of alcohol, illegal logging, counterfeit pesticides or petroleum theft and trafficking in persons – presents common challenges. TRACIT believes businesses can be made smarter by sharing intelligence and resources across sectors to more effectively counter illicit trade while governments can be more successful by taking an integrated and holistic approach in addressing all forms of illicit trade. All stakeholders have an interest in stamping out illicit trade; and all benefit from collective action.

INTERNATIONAL GOVERNANCE AGENDA TO ADDRESS ILLICIT TRADE

TRACIT drives global governance and works with several key intergovernmental organisations including several United Nations (UN) agencies, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the World Trade Organisation and the World Customs Organisation. Specifically, our engagement with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development has produced tangible results including the initiation of a sustained dialogue on illicit trade at an IGO-level that is communicated to national governments; and production of a report, “*Mapping the impact of illicit trade on the UN Sustainable Development Goals*”.

ILLICIT TRADE AND THE UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Illicit trade in all its forms undermines the collective effort to achieve the UN SDGs and stands in direct juxtaposition to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Illicit trade undermines achievement of the macro-economic and societal goals. The crowding-out effect of illicit trade drains revenue and growth potential from the legal economy (SDG 1 & SDG 8).

Illicit trading provides a substantial portion of the incomes of organized criminals and terrorists groups (SDG 16). All forms of illicit trade deplete natural resources (SDG 14 & 15) and ultimately dupe consumers or unknowing intermediaries into false purchases (SDG 12). In other cases, illicit trade acutely undermines the achievement of specific SDGs. IUU fishing depletes coastal regions’ food supply (SDG 2) and prevents the sustainable management and protection of oceans (SDG 14); illicit trade in pharmaceuticals threatens the health of consumers (SDG 3); and

the presence of human trafficking and forced labour in illicit supply chains strikes at the core of human decency and our shared moral values (SDG 8).

Two of the SDGs – 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) and 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions) – are impacted by all forms of illicit trade.

All types of illicit trade threaten inclusive economic growth and significantly hinder achievement of SDG 8. Lost taxes rob governments of revenues intended for schools, infrastructure and other public services. Illegal and unfair competition reduces sales and dampens the ability of companies to create lasting and dignified job opportunities. Taken together, economic leakages across the sectors susceptible to illicit trade create an annual drain on the economy of US\$2,2 trillion and present a triple threat to financing the necessary “*billions to trillions*” dollar gap needed to reach the SDGs.

Illicit trade in all its forms stands in direct juxtaposition to SDG 16, by feeding violence and breeding corruption, undermining trust in institutions and the rule of law, and generating enormous illicit financial flows. The links between illicit trade and organized crime are well established, from human trafficking networks and tobacco smuggling, to fuel theft by drug cartels and the involvement of the mafia and organized criminal groups in the trade of counterfeit products and proceeds of these crimes being used to fund armed conflicts and terrorism.

Overall, it is established that illicit trade presents deterrence to all 17 of the UN SDGs – holding back progress, increasing costs and pushing achievement of the goals further away.

MITIGATING ILLICIT TRADE MUST BE MADE A PRIORITY

As governments go about formulating policies and implementing programs to achieve the SDGs, a first order consideration should be to reduce the deterrent forces of illicit trade and plug the fiscal leakages associated with it. This approach has the immediate effect of adding resources and revenues back into the global economy, putting more policy tools back on the table, and reducing timelines, costs and other hurdles to achieving the Goals. Consequently, a more level playing field, without the economic drags of illicit trade, can improve the efficiency and effectiveness of policies and programs governments are taking to stimulate growth, employment and investment to achieve the SDGs.

The impacts of illicit trade cannot be examined effectively in isolated sectors, nor can they be addressed separately from other crimes. It is crucial for groups like the NATO Defense College Foundation, in their mission to address terrorism or organized crime, to look at ways to cut the flow of funding generated by illicit trade and to look at the interdependencies and overlapping problems caused by illicit trade. Any long-term solution will be dependent on sustained collaboration between governments and the private sector. Combined, these actors can play an important role in determining responsive and evidence-based work programs.

TRACIT offers to work with partners to convene stakeholders, improve awareness, expand the knowledge base, and energize the global dialogue.



LEA PEREKRESTS

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TERRORISM AND ITS IMPACT

My presentation will have three parts: the first concerning the institute and its research; the second regarding the key findings of our annual Global Terrorism Index (GTI) 2019 and the final will touch upon the return of far right terrorism.

The Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP) is an independent, not-for-profit think tank dedicated to building a greater understanding of the key drivers of peace, as well as identifying the economic benefits that increased peacefulness can deliver.

Our index, the GTI, is based on the Global Terrorism Database (GTD); the most authoritative data source on terrorism today. The GTI produces a composite score so as to provide an ordinal ranking of countries on the impact of terrorism. The GTD is unique in that it consists of systematically and comprehensively coded data for 170.000 terrorist incidents.

The GTI was developed in consultation with the Global Peace Index Expert Panel. The GTI scores each country on a scale from 0 to 10; where 0 represents no impact from terrorism and 10 represents the highest measurable impact of terrorism. Countries are ranked in descending order with the worst scores listed first in the index.

Allow me, incidentally, what might seem an academic digression on the definition of terrorism, but is a crucial matter for practitioners as the continuing debate in the UN shows. Defining terrorism is not a straightforward matter. There is no single internationally accepted definition of what constitutes terrorism and the terrorism literature abounds with competing definitions and typologies. IEP accepts the terminology and definitions agreed to by the GTD and the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START).

The GTI therefore defines terrorism as “*the threatened or actual use of illegal force and violence by a non-state actor to attain a political, economic, religious, or social goal through fear, coercion, or intimidation*”. This definition recognises that terrorism is

not only the physical act of an attack but also the psychological impact it has on a society for many years after. Therefore, the index score accounts for terrorist attacks over the prior five years.

In order to be included as an incident in the GTD, the act has to be “*an intentional act of violence or threat of violence by a non-state actor*”. This means an incident has to meet three criteria in order for it to be counted as a terrorist act:

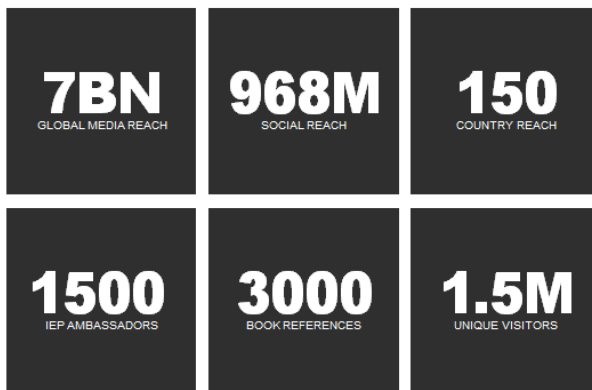
- The incident must be intentional – the result of a conscious calculation on the part of a perpetrator.
- The incident must entail some level of violence or threat of violence – including property damage as well as violence against people.
- The perpetrators of the incidents must be sub-national actors. This database does not include acts of state terrorism.

In addition to this baseline definition, from 1997 two of the following three criteria have to be met in order to be included in the START database:

- The violent act was aimed at attaining a political, economic, religious or social goal.
- The violent act included evidence of an intention to coerce, intimidate or convey some other message to a larger audience other than to the immediate victims.
- The violent act was outside the precepts of international humanitarian law.

In cases where there is insufficient information to make a definitive distinction about whether it is a terrorist incident within the confines of the definition, the database codes these incidents as “*doubt terrorism proper*”. In order to only count unambiguous incidents of terrorism, this study does not include doubted incidents.

Our research is used extensively by organisations including the OECD, Commonwealth Secretariat, World Bank and the United Nations and our work is included in 1.000s of university courses, while over 200.000 downloads of IEP reports are accounted in the last 12 months.



The key findings of this report are:

- Deaths from terrorism down by 15%,
- 98 countries improved compared to 40 that deteriorated,
- Terrorism is still wide spread: 71 countries suffered at least 1 death.
- Four more countries suffered a death than in 2017 – second highest ever,
- Only 26 countries had no incidents in last 5 years,
- Deaths in Europe down 70% to 62. On this total 40 occurred in Turkey,
- Talibans are the deadliest terrorist group in the world, with deaths up 71%,
- Talibans account for 38% of all terrorist deaths,
- Afghanistan is the country most affected by terrorism; followed by Iraq, Nigeria, Syria and Pakistan,
- Far-right terrorist attacks are on the increase: up 320% in five years, whereas we have had 77 deaths by far-right terrorism in the first nine months of 2019.

To resume: terrorism as a general phenomenon is on the retreat, but it is still rather diffused and the five countries where it is concentrated are unfortunately the top five since at least a decade.

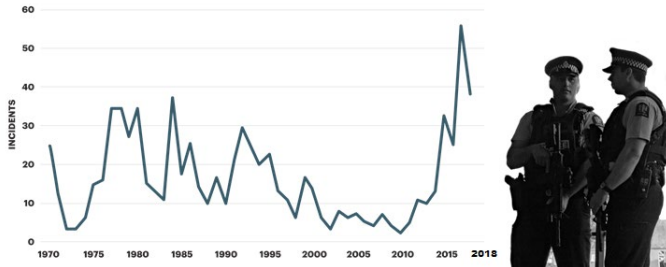
If one wants to look at trends:

- Deaths from terrorism are now 52% lower than their peak in 2014. Luckily, the fall in deaths has been largest in Iraq, Syria, and Nigeria.
- Bombings and armed assaults have been the most common type of terrorist attack over the past two decades.
- Between 2002 and 2018, South Asia, MENA and sub-Saharan Africa accounted for 93% of all deaths from terrorism. The largest number was recorded in MENA, with more than 93.700 fatalities. [These numbers should help sobering the debate on terrorism in Western countries by bringing some necessary perspective. Note of the Editor].
- The average country score in the MENA region improved for the third year in the row.
- South Asia has had the highest impact from terrorism since 2002, while Central America and the Caribbean region has had the lowest impact.

Far Right Terrorism in its historic curves both in the long and short term is captured by the following two graphics.

Far-right terrorist incidents in the West, 1970-2018

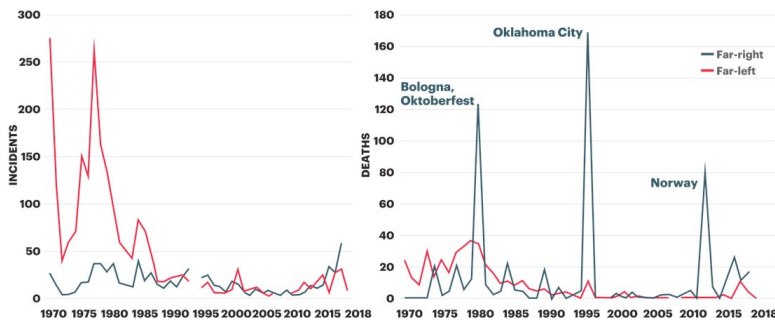
There has been a 320% increase in far-right terrorism in the past five years.



Source: START GTD, IPE Calculations

Political terrorism in the West, far-left vs far-right, 1970-2018

Far-left terrorism was more common over the past fifty years, but far-right terrorism was deadlier.



Source: START GTD, IPE Calculations

However, far-right terrorism remains still a small fraction of total terrorism worldwide. Even in the West, historically nationalist or separatist, Islamist, and far left terrorism has been much more common.

Session III

COUNTERING THREATS ON THE GROUND

التحذير

من معصية الأمير والتخذييل عن النفير

تأليف
مكتب البحوث والدراسات





FILIPPO MUSCA

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MEETING THE THREAT OF ORGANISED CRIME AND TERRORISM IN PEACE OPERATIONS

Multilateral peace operations are confronting a number of interconnected and reciprocally strengthening security challenges, that have causes and effects which cut right across borders, the international security, peacebuilding and development agendas. The evolving nexus between organized crime and terrorist groups, which depends on several different interdependent variables and events at the national, regional and international level, offers one of the examples of these security challenges which represents increasing threats to the international community.

There is no need to further stress how much that the primary strategic relationship between criminal and terrorist groups is financial. Terrorist groups are adopting business criminal models to their own structures and activities, involving illegal activities at the core of their funding. Drug trafficking, arms trafficking, human trafficking, oil trafficking, trafficking in cultural property, money laundering; and more corruption.

Activities of terrorists and organised criminals often strengthen each other, where terrorists engage either directly or indirectly in organised crime activities for financial gains. Such benefits, in turn contribute to undermining state security, stability and social and economic development, which may create or maintain the conditions for organised criminal groups to flourish. The ore fragile is a state, the more possible is for criminal and terrorist groups to take root.

The role of organized crime and terrorist groups in armed conflict and its relationship with multilateral peace operations has clearly varied in different contexts. Organized criminal groups as well as terrorist groups can be spoilers in peace processes, as their illicit activities flourish in volatile settings, while political groups could set up illicit conflict economies in order to continue fighting. Consequently, failing in understanding the ways in which criminal and terrorist groups actually develop and implement their illicit activities will further undermine international efforts to build peace, security and the rule of law. The longer such groups are left

untouched, the better able they are to entrench themselves and eventually even to criminalize the state. In preventing and confronting these phenomena, it is important to challenge not only the consequences but also the drivers and root causes. Activities that aim to target drivers and root causes, must be proactive, aiming at preventing organized crime by addressing the push and pull factors that might produce or enable it. As a matter of fact, only a limited number of multilateral peace operations have dealt directly with the diverse drivers of organized crime.

The root causes and drivers are complex, diverse, interconnected and sensitive to geographical, socio-economic, cultural, political and geopolitical contexts. Dynamics at the national and regional levels are another key dimension to consider, especially in the ways they impact on the livelihood of different communities. In planning and designing peace operations in a given country or region, existing criminal organizations and terrorist groups (their links and interconnections), corruption phenomena and related illicit markets that are enabled, should be properly understood and factored-in. This is, obviously, also true for any other development initiative in fragile and conflict affected countries and for countries in transition.

Among other factors, policy-makers and other relevant actors should consider:

- globalisation and the evolution of organized criminality in developed and developing countries alike, including in conflict and post-conflict situations;
- poverty and lack of opportunities for legitimate employment that can attract (or force) individuals into a life of crime;
- poor governance and the corrosive influence of organized crime and corruption in state-building processes, development and elections

Because these factors and their relationship to each other are challenging to investigate, they tend to be forgotten or pushed into the background in the process of developing peace - and state - building strategies, in which criminal justice, law enforcement or security approaches have traditionally been dominant, depending on the specific context.

There is a narrow window of opportunity to make a positive mark, before organized crime and corrupt practices take root in fragile countries. In order to durably uproot organized criminal groups and terrorist groups, interventions must be based on an accurate understanding of the political, social and economic context, and how such interventions may impact. The contrary would lead to responses that fail to address the enablers and underlying dynamics of criminal and terrorist organizations. Unintended or counter-productive consequences of certain policy responses can be prevented if such responses are crafted on a robust assessment of the actors connected to the specific situation.

In strategic and operational planning processes and prior to designing any intervention, a cross-sectoral and multidisciplinary analysis of the political economy of illicit activities will be crucial. This methodology should consider data, analysis and insights of civil society organizations that are active at the national and regional

level, as well as the views of local communities. In the context of this analysis, all relevant actors should also consider best practices and lessons learned in devising, promoting and financially supporting alternative livelihood programmes for communities that are particularly vulnerable to organized crime.

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SAKHER DUDIN

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DAESH: SUCCESSES AND FAILURES OF A CAMPAIGN

I would like to talk about the peculiar phenomenon of the Islamic State (of Iraq and the Levant) ISIL-ISIS / DAESH, knowing that in the Arab Region the latter denomination is preferred because it avoids unpleasant confusions between this quasi-state entity and the Islamic religion.

Knowing that this Takfiri formation has established for the first time in the region since 2013 a de facto government around its capital Raqqa, that was then extinguished in March 2019 in the Syrian town of Al-Baghuz Fawqani after a last stand, it represents a good case study whereby we can analyse the successes or failures of our counterterrorism and prevention strategies in the region and as an international community in its complex make-up.

The group itself is not new. Its roots go back to 1999, when it was called Jama'at al-Tawhid wal-Jihad and pledged allegiance to al-Qaeda, taking part to the Iraqi insurgency following the 2003 invasion of Iraq. At that time it was led by the well-known terrorist chief Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, who was killed by an air strike in 2006, after his position in house of the Iraqi village of Hibhib was given away by terrorists dissenting with his tactics of indiscriminate bomb attacks in Iraq. Jama'at al-Tawhid wal-Jihad, after undergoing a series of transformations, it ended up with the Islamic State in 2014.

A crucial role in the transformation was played by Abu Ali al-Anbari, the deputy of al-Zarqawi. When Anbari returned from Pakistan in January 2006, he presented a plan to merge al-Qaeda in Iraq with other, local forces to establish the Mujahideen Shura Council. Anbari headed the council, using his new nom de guerre, Abdullah Rasheed al-Baghdadi.

The response to Daesh has also undergone many phases and has included the involvement of both local and global actors. Around the world, we also see the threat of white supremacist terrorism – that is actually a larger domestic threat for many countries in Europe and North America – and we need to have a strategy that covers all of these forms of terrorism. Over the course of my intervention, I

will be highlighting a number of key points that will allow us to reflect on best practices related to counterterrorism and prevention.

While my colleagues on the panel have and will be addressing this point, allow me to make a few contributions on this – the short-term aspect – of counterterrorism, entailing the supremacy of politics over the military.

Military operations must be preceded and followed by a political work that addresses political grievances and provides an alternative model to the system established by the terrorist entity. If we take the Daesh case, there are real political and economic grievances in both Iraq and Syria that caused local populations to sympathize with this terrorist group. Short and long-term success of counterterrorism operations depends on providing an alternative model. In the same way, we need to at least acknowledge the grievances (perceived and real) of groups and individuals that carry out attacks in the name of racial or religious superiority.

An important aspect of counterterrorism emerges from the importance on empowering local communities and focussing on traditional solidarity narratives. In other terms, military operations must have legitimacy within local communities and must promote credible voices. This involves empowering the communities that are affected by the actions of terrorist organizations – not demonising them. Here we have the outstanding example of the Sahwa or Abna Al-Iraq Movement in Iraq and their success in fighting against Al-Qaeda in Iraq.

It is worthwhile to remember that the Sahwa was born between 2005 and 2006 in the al-Anbar province (one of the most intractable ones in terms of COIN) under the initiative of one of the minor sheikhs of the powerful Dulaymi tribal confederation. A first split between the Dulaymis and the local Takfiris happened the 25th of October 2004, when Sheikh Dhari al-Dulaymi, chairman of the council in the town of Mahmoudiya, was shot to death under the accusation of being a pro-US collaborationist. Some days after at least six Takfiris were found executed in an abandoned flat, as a message not to mess with a powerful family.

The tribal movement started in late 2005, but was only revealed in September 2006 with the creation by tribes from Ramadi of an alliance (the “al-Anbar Salvation Council – Majlis inqadh al-Anbar) under the leadership of Abd al-Sattar al-Rishawi (or Abu Risha), a minor sheikh from the Dulaymi confederation.

Unfortunately, despite the spectacular successes in pacifying difficult cities like Ramadi and Falluja by mid-2007, also because local families resented strongly the Takfiris’ interference in their own grey economy and illegal trafficking networks, the movement was first opposed and isolated by the Shi’ite leadership in Baghdad and then dropped by the US themselves; at this point the choices were stark: being subjected by revenge killings, being unemployed or submitting to Daesh. All in all an abysmal failure, due to myopic politics from all sides, after a success in empowering local communities and leveraging traditional solidarity narratives.

Another important component of counterterrorism is connected to development and good governance. Employment is an essential ingredient; proof is that

many of Daesh's recruits came from former Baathist party members who had been unable to find jobs in post-2003 Iraq. Dissolving the structures without any filtering and transitional selective justice meant that masses of Iraqis were solidly disenfranchised.

Basic services offer also a lot of scope in winning hearts and minds. We see it exactly with insurgent groups (such as Hezbollah in south Lebanon, Hamas in Gaza and Jaysh al Mahdi in southern Iraq), who reap success of building local support for themselves by providing basic services to disenfranchised groups. Providing food and catering for basic needs is another powerful tool as it happens in Yemen. There we see how food has been used in famine-like conditions to buy allegiances by groups, including the Houthis as well as groups like Al-Qaeda and ISIS.

A final important aspect is the fight against narratives. Among the root causes of terrorism is the manipulation of religion, ethnic or sectarian motives. While it would be wrong to attribute this cause as the sole or primary cause of terrorism, it would also be a mistake not to take this factor seriously, also because the history of the world is full of pertinent examples.

We need to strengthen moderate voices whether we are talking about religiously moderate voices in the Middle East or progressive and tolerant voices in Europe and North America. Unfortunately today, contrary to common perception, we are seeing the politics of exclusion, intolerance, racism and xenophobia on the streets and at the highest levels of many countries in Europe and North America. Countries that declare themselves models of democracy, show disquieting evolutions that risk to become normal.

On the other hand, we are seeing courageous public movements led by youth in Lebanon, in Iraq, in Sudan that are progressive, tolerant, anti-sectarian, egalitarian, and inclusive. The way we deal with these two types of politics will impact the security and stability we will see in the world, in the years and decades to come.

To give a very local example, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan anticipated this challenge years ago, with H.M. King Abdullah convening an Islamic Conference in Amman in 2005 and adopting the key Three Points of the Amman Message.

These Three Points reaffirmed the legitimacy of Islam's various sects and schools of thought and condemned the practice of takfir (declarations of apostacy) and of releasing fatwas by those outside of the scholarly religious traditions. This is a practice that was and is being used by terrorist groups worldwide. It is such a vision that is needed in the region and those who promote such a vision should be supported.

Leaving conflicts unresolved also becomes a way for extremist groups to recruit disgruntled young people who are aware of the injustices taking place around them. An example of this is the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, where youth in the Middle East have seen first-hand the failure of diplomacy and democracy, and have felt an inability and paralysis by their politicians to change these circumstances. What extremists groups thrive at is taking out any nuance from politics, and

they also offer radical solution to something that has gone unresolved. As we begin to look at effective ways to counter radicalization and extremism, we must keep in mind that our actions as politicians matter, and that the youth are judging us to a standard. If we fail them with our diplomacy, they will look elsewhere.



RICHARD HOOKER

Professor, National Security Strategy, National War College, Washington D.C.

THE MAIN LESSONS OF MAJOR COUNTERINSURGENCY OPERATIONS

I would first of all thank you very much for the invitation to an event that is in the forefront in discussing the new nature of international security. I will focus on the major lessons that one can draw from recent COIN (Counter Insurgency) operations, but before I would like to remember that our COIN doctrines are far from new.

Before WWII the US services, Army and Marine Corps specifically, had had concrete experience in counter-guerrilla operations in the Indian Wars, the Civil War and the Philippines occupation and reported clear successes due to a considerable amount of force used. The proliferation of partisans during the II WW and the Soviet exploitation and support of Communist and national liberation movements' guerrillas gave considerable impulse to the development of new counter-guerrilla doctrines. One of the earliest was the one written in the FM 31-16 (Field Manual, 1963) that underlined the breadth of knowledge of non-military factors needed for COIN: *"A basic essential in any type of counterguerilla intelligence operation is a thorough understanding of the target area and society, in all its aspects, augmented by a complete understanding of the prevailing internal and external forces supporting or subverting the society. (...) The basic inventory of intelligence on a specific area and situation is derived from the areas and country studies supplemented with situational intelligence collected more recently on the scene"*.

In 1968 the FM 100-5 shows an interesting shift in language that will be adopted half a century after in the political-strategic discourse: *"The term 'counterinsurgency' is used by the joint services, other governmental agencies, and many foreign countries. Within the U.S. Army, depending on the context, use of "stability operations" or "internal defense and internal development" is preferred to 'counterinsurgency'"*. That said, we know how the Viet-Nam war ended in 1975 and what is the first lesson we can derive.

The first is that Western democracies seem ill suited for long, drawn out counter insurgencies, campaigns that typically last 15-20 years (Viet-Nam 15 years,

Northern Ireland 32 years, Afghanistan 19 years, Iraq 17 years etc.). There are three reasons for that state of affairs:

- The focus on short election, budget and media cycles and leader turnover is not geared to extended conflicts
- Maintaining voter support over time is inherently problematic;
- ... and invariably these end up costing far more than anticipated, influencing the internal budget and political debate.

Just to understand, a typical electoral cycle is 4-5 years, which mean that, even with relatively well trained and experienced political personnel, six months are lost in entering government, one good year in electoral campaign, leaving to government three and half or less time of very divided attention to direct the campaign, assuming that majorities are stable. Typically the brunt is carried by the Foreign and Defence ministers, often squabbling over quite recurring turf battles and major political and strategic controversies. Budget cycles are yearly, which means that a quarter of the year is devoted to fierce budgetary battles, where defence expenditure is not the most popular item, no matter how patriotic and motivated may be a population in a democratic regime.

Media cycles are obviously shorter because they are determined by the production cycle of the news: half a day for dailies; three-four days for weeklies, but hours for radio, TV and, most importantly wire services. Wire services were always 7/24 operations, but clearly the proliferation of social media has created a much denser media noise and multiplied the surprises for governmental and political press officers. Since consensus has always been a precious political commodity, managing the news cycle, and especially the output, has been a primary problem for decision makers. In normal times, if there is something definable as normal, in a protracted COIN campaign problems are the norm, but in hostile media campaigns, smaller staffs around a politician can be easily saturated for one week or two (sometimes even more). The insurgency intelligence has just to reap abundantly from open sources about vulnerabilities and political fault lines, while the higher conflict direction struggles to stay abreast with the latest scandal.

Leader turnover is another open secret: soldiers rotate every six months, commanders generally every 12, intelligence officers it depends; key ministerial and parliamentary staffers generally stay those four years, but are not always dedicated to the COIN effort and politicians rotate in the conditions described above. Each time people have to re-learn and at least, if already veterans, to re-adjust vis-à-vis a terribly persistent and sticky adversary.

Maintaining voter support is an art, especially when a conflict is ongoing. Few in the general public do what would be ideal *"Keep calm and carry on"*, most are influenced by the latest dramatic news coverage and too many would like to see real action and victories where success is literally a painstaking job, mostly to be carried out of the limelight. Masses and even more the modern atomised masses

have their own morale fluctuations, and every professional knows that enthusiasm is terribly short lived and disillusionment can surge beyond repair for very complex dynamics and reasons.

War expenditure calculations and forecasts have not even been an art; they are plain plug-and-pray things. No matter the florid state of finances at the start of the war, no matter the sophisticated models and the experienced administrators and economists, it is easier to keep on budget a Soviet kombinat or a failing airline than a war. Low Intensity Conflict? Yes, welcome to the High Intensity Costs: Viet-Nam was worth one trillion dollars of today and \$168.000 of the time for each enemy killed in action.

Costs, together with coffins, are powerful eroding agents of any solid consensus.

The second reason working against democracies in conflict is that COIN usually requires us to link our ultimate success to host nation governments that more often than not are corrupt and ineffective – the very reason the insurgency exists in the first place. And the horror cycle in this case is regularly the same:

- We usually begin with high confidence that we can remake or improve ministries and governance;
- We often want to model these structures on our own;
- ... and we underestimate the resources required while overestimating the probabilities of success.

Initial confidence and optimism are human, as one quote of Lawrence of Arabia aptly put it “*Young men make wars, and the virtues of war are the virtues of young men. Courage and hope for the future*”. Less excusable, but understandable are the efforts to model other societies and political systems on our own. Since we think that our political model works better, why not offer it to other people? Serious mistake, if we look at our own history: how much did it take to change old patrician and oligarchic “democracies” into the truly democratic systems we know? Why should it be shorter to pass from a monarchic or authoritarian system to ours for another society? Nature (human nature included) does not make jumps and, when we see a turnaround that seems quick and sudden, we forget what a long preparation it costed.

Political and social change is a Herculean task that needs an enormous investment of time, patience and effort, to see the real fruits well beyond the next re-election. Even victorious guerrillas know that changing (for better always) a society takes much more time and push than winning the war. Twenty years is just a generation and the one following the war is deeply scarred by it under the surface of prosperity and social transformation.

The third reason is that our governments and our militaries are ill equipped to conduct “war among the people”:

- Our laws and values collide with the realities of caveats, collateral damage, sub-state actors and media distortions;

- Our departments and agencies are not inclined towards effective coordinated or synchronized action with each other – much less other coalition partners
- ... and our militaries are not typically designed for these kinds of operations.

There are several reasons behind this lack of preparation and faulty execution. Militaries are designed according to political (and hence service-industrial priorities) and it is interesting to see that generally great powers are badly equipped for COIN (witness Afghanistan for Soviet Union and the Uighur region for China). COIN has not the “glitz” of great conventional campaigns, it is an ungrateful, unglamorous, tedious, repetitive, soldier-consuming process that requires endurance, understanding, detail and patience (including the aforesaid caveats, collateral damage, sub-state actors and media distortions). It is easy to say “Divide and conquer”, but “Divide et impera” means that Caesar won (commanding the battlefield), but it took one full year to effectively conquer Gaul and pacify it (total eight years), while Caesar started the third Roman Republic civil war. COIN does not require big ticket military items, while it requires a lot of politic, diplomacy, intelligence and policing to reduce the political space of the insurgent and, either defeat them or negotiate with them,

Lack of coordination is a typical pest of big structures and understanding coalition partners requires getting outright from one’s own mental and cultural setting and immersing oneself in the dimension of the other. Lawrence of Arabia or von Lettow-Vorbeck are the typical examples of Westerners that effectively used local allies, while Custer is the typical negative study case.

Concluding on a higher level, in the USA, the examples of Viet Nam, Iraq and Afghanistan teach us that major counter insurgencies rarely engage truly vital interests, invalidate our strengths, and magnify our weaknesses – giving inferior opponents opportunities to contest us and even defeat us – politically if not militarily. Viet-Nam was justified by the domino theory (it did not happen), Afghanistan by the need of avoiding another 9/11 (al Qaeda after this bloody exploit was never able again to attempt it) and Iraq by the WMD programme of Saddam Hussein. Guerrillas rarely win on the battlefield, but not infrequently arrive to the negotiating table and politics is the final objective of any military campaign.

When the outcomes are negative, they are bound to cause great stress to our armed forces, our electorates and our political discourse, often without compensating gains.



Kabul, Afghanistan - Alliance fighters prepare for battle with Taliban forces north of Kabul, Monday, October 21, 1996. According to the Global Terrorism Index 2019, in 2018 Taliban are still the deadliest terrorist groups worldwide



182nd NATO Military Committee in Chiefs of Defense Session, NATO Headquarters, 14-15 January 2020. The meeting focused on the approach to current and future threats aiming to enable NATO Commanders to deal with the changing security environment.



SACT

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CLOSED ROUND TABLE ON INTEGRATION OF CT AND CVE RECOMMENDATIONS

The 10th of December the NDCF convened, under the auspices of the NATO Emerging Challenges Division Science for Peace and Security Programme, a closed round table (please see attached programme) on the integration of Counterterrorism and Countering Violent Extremism operations and activities.¹ The following points are the recommendations emerged from a fruitful debate.

1. The integration between CT and CVE at international and often at national level has been rather low. Good case studies exist (successful CVE initiatives in Aarhus in Denmark, Mechelen in Belgium, Los Angeles, EXIT and Hayat programmes in Germany and city programmes in Los Angeles), but good practices are insufficiently evaluated and disseminated. Apart from practical difficulties, political dynamics incline often more towards an active short-term use of force than in-depth pacification, extending overseas deployments at the expense of lives and treasury.
2. Integration is possible if an integrated approach is devised from the start. In principle NATO's CT definition includes also prevention, although NATO's operations do not run CVE activities. Since CT is of particular interest in the Southern Region, the cooperation with NATO's MD and ICI partners on CT/CVE integration is essential as well as cooperation with the EU and UN.

¹ NATO defines counterterrorism "All preventive, defensive and offensive measures taken to reduce the vulnerability of forces, individuals and property against terrorist threats and/or acts, to respond to terrorist acts. In the frame of the NATO Comprehensive Approach, this can be combined with or followed by measures enabling recovery after terrorist acts". According to the European Commission definition "P/CVE can therefore be considered a broad umbrella term categorising activities that seek to prevent or mitigate violent extremism through various non-coercive measures united by the objective of counteracting the factors of violent extremism. P/CVE is widely understood to include, for instance, community debates on sensitive topics, media messaging, inter-faith and intra-faith dialogues, training of state governance and security actors, and a variety of initiatives with individuals deemed to be 'at risk' of joining or being attracted to violent extremist groups, such as vocational training and mentorship programmes".

3. Integration between these two domains can be illustrated considering them like activities in the energy sector. At upstream level countering violent extremism programmes are concentrated on the prevention of potential terrorist recruitment. Midstream is where counterterrorism comes to the fore, while CVE programmes continue to counter and disrupt terrorism recruitment narratives and actual recruitment with non-kinetic means. Downstream is the phase where CVE works on disengaging, rehabilitating and reintegrating terrorists that mostly are not in leadership positions or have not adopted a hard core attitude and behaviour.
4. The first and third level are clearly part of the national domain, where NATO can project stability with its specific strengths in training, education and interoperability of minds, especially with regards to building up and consolidating resilience in defence institutions.
5. Across the whole process the preservation of trust between different actors, local authorities and local society is essential to achieve maximum synergy and effectiveness. In essence this means that each actor is responsible for its own trustees and for not damaging the trust that local people place in another collaborating actor. It implies reciprocal respect for each specific operational boundary and avoiding counterproductive encroachments.
6. The midstream phase can be typically one where a NATO crisis management or cooperative security operation has started and where coordination between the NATO command, local authorities and other international bodies is more intense. Apart from military operational priorities, it is important to keep trust and narrative convergence between CVE, information warfare and propaganda, as well as a reasonably credible justice at local level.
7. All these activities take place in an international political-diplomatic environment that is conducive to success and a specific local political context that is decisive for the outcome of CT and CVE. Since the local level is decisive (beginning bottom up from local communities to central government), its overall consent is key in making the difference between time buying operations and decisive ones.
8. In any case an effective CT/CVE integration allows a reduction of popular hostility, a prevention of further intakes of terrorist recruits, a relative deterrent from war crimes and the exploitation of political weak spots within terrorist groups.

SPEAKERS BIOGRAPHIES

WELCOME REMARKS

Alessandro Minuto-Rizzo

President, NATO Defense College Foundation, Rome

After having served at the Italian Embassy in Washington, D.C. and as Commercial Counsellor at the Embassy of Italy in Prague, Amb. Minuto-Rizzo worked as Head of the External Relations Office of the EEC from 1981 to 1986. In the next years, his career focused on Europe and Space Policy. In 1997 he was appointed Diplomatic Counsellor of the Minister of Defence Nino Andreatta, then of his successors Carlo Scognamiglio and Sergio Mattarella. In 2000, Amb Minuto-Rizzo held the position of Italian Ambassador to the Western European Union and to the Political and Security Committee of the EU, of which he was among the founding members. He was Deputy Secretary General of the Atlantic Alliance, between 2001 and 2007. His mandate was mostly carried out in the strategic-political industrial area, in relations with sensitive countries such as those in the Gulf and the Southern Mediterranean. He is the author of the books: “The road to Kabul” (Il Mulino-Arel, 2009); “A political journey without maps, diversity and future in the Greater Middle East” (Rubbettino, 2013), and “NATO and the Middle East: The Making of a Partnership” (New Academia Publishing, 2018).

Stephen Mariano

Dean, NATO Defense College, Rome

Stephen Mariano is currently the Dean of the NATO Defense College in Rome. Previously, he served as Associate Dean of Outreach & Research at the National Defense University’s National War College in Washington, D.C. He also directed the Strategies and Initiatives Group for the Secretary of the Army and was an inaugural member of the Chief of Staff of the Army’s Strategic Studies Group. His deployment experience includes service as Deputy Director of Strategy, Plans

and Assessments at the Multinational Security Transition Command-Iraq and in Afghanistan as Military Advisor to NATO's Senior Civilian Representative. He taught military strategy and comparative military systems at the U.S. Military Academy in New York as well as politics and U.S. foreign policy at the Royal Military College of Canada. He was formerly U.S. Army War College Fellow at Queen's University's Center for International Relations and U.S. Army's Senior Fellow at Harvard University's Weatherhead Center for International Affairs.

POLITICAL SUMMARY

Alessandro Politi

Director, NATO Defense College Foundation, Rome

Alessandro Politi is the director of the NATO Defense College Foundation, the only NATO-affiliated NGO think tank. A political and strategic analyst with 30 years of experience, he was political advisor of two KFOR Commanders. He was senior researcher for the Italian MoD (CeMiSS-Centre for Military and Strategic Studies) responsible for the strategic monitoring of Latin America. He also created and has led the Global Outlook project within CeMiSS, published in Italian and English (third edition, 2015). He has contributed to the Italian Defence White Paper. He has directed the CEMRES research on CBMs in the framework of the 5+5 Defence Initiative, presenting the conclusions to the Ministers in Granada. He teaches geopolitics and intelligence at the SIOI. He teaches conflict management, Crisis, peace-making and analysis at different governmental centres. He has been acting director of the School of Intelligence Analysis at a private establishment in Rome. He has been advisor in Italy and abroad to four Defence ministers (among which the actual President of the Italian Republic, Hon. Mattarella), one National Armaments Director, one Intelligence Co-ordinator, one Chairman of the Oversight Intelligence Committee, one Head of the Italian delegation to the NATO Parliamentary Assembly (former EU HR, on. Federica Mogherini). Born in Germany, lives in Rome. He has published as author or co-author 37 books on strategic and security matters. His most recent publications are on the Belt and Road Initiative. His most recent book is the NDCF Shaping Security Horizons – Strategic Trends 2012-2019 volume, a global predictive analysis tailored to the needs of decision shapers.

BACKGROUND POLICY PAPER

Federica Lollo

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She is Programme Manager at the NATO Defense College Foundation since 2016. She started her career working in different international bodies such as the International Organisation of the Francophonie and the United Nations Institute

for Training and Research in the Multilateral Diplomacy Programme. In 2018 she collaborated at the volume “I Balcani occidentali al bivio. La NATO, KFOR e il ruolo dell'Italia”, edited by Informazioni della Difesa, the official magazine of the General Staff of Defense, with the article “The Organised Crime in the Balkans.”

SESSION I

Mohammed Alyahya

Editor-in-Chief, Al Arabiya.net – English, Dubai

Mohammed Alyahya is the Editor-in-Chief of Al Arabiya.net – English in Dubai. During his career, he held several positions in various international research centres, including Senior Fellow at the Gulf Research Center, in Jeddah, as well as non-resident Fellow at the Atlantic Council in Washington, D.C. Mr Alyahya's writing has featured, among others, in the New York Times, the Financial Times, the Guardian, Newsweek, and The Telegraph. He regularly contributes to and appears on a series of global news networks, including the BBC and CNBC. His analyses have been published by the Royal United Services Institute, the European Council on Foreign Relations and the Atlantic Council.

Stefano Silvestri

Vice President, NATO Defense College Foundation, Rome

Stefano Silvestri is the Vice President of the NATO Defense College Foundation. He has been a lead writer for *Il Sole 24 Ore* since 1985. Between January 1995 and May 1996, he served as Under Secretary of State for Defence, and over the years consultant to the Prime Minister's Office under various Governments. As a professional journalist, he has been special correspondent and columnist for *Globo* (1982) and member of the Policy Committee of *Europeo* (1979). Former President of the International Affairs Institute in Rome, previously he was Professor for Mediterranean Security Issues at the Bologna Centre of Johns Hopkins University and has worked at the International Institute for Strategic Studies in London. He is currently a member of the administrative council of the Italian Industries Federation for Aerospace, Defence and Security (AIAD), and of the Trilateral Commission.

Ely Karmon

Senior Research Scholar, International Institute for Counter-Terrorism, and Senior Research Fellow, Institute for Policy and Strategy, Interdisciplinary Center, Herzliya
Ely Karmon holds a MA and a PhD in Political Science from Haifa University. He is Senior Research Scholar at The International Institute for Counter-Terrorism (ICT) and Senior Research Fellow at the Institute for Policy and Strategy of the Interdisciplinary Center (IDC) in Herzliya, Israel. He lectures on International Terrorism and CBRN at the MA Counterterrorism Studies at IDC. He is Associ-

ate Fellow at the International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation and Political Violence, in London, and member of the International Permanent Observatory on Security Measures during Majors Events at the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute, in Turin. Dr Karmon is a member of the Atlantic Forum of Israel and he is involved in NATO workshops on terrorism and the Mediterranean Dialogue. He served as advisor to the Israeli Ministry of Defence and the Anti-Semitism Monitoring Forum of the Israeli Prime Minister's Government Secretariat.

Petter Nesser

Senior Researcher, Norwegian Defence Research Establishment, Terrorism Research Group, Oslo

Petter Nesser is a Senior Research Fellow at the Norwegian Defence Research Establishment (FFI – Forsvarets Forskningsinstitutt). Trained in Social Science, Middle Eastern Studies and Arabic, Dr Nesser has conducted extensive research on jihadism in Europe, focusing on motivational drivers, recruitment and radicalisation processes. Among his several publications, figures the book *Islamist Terrorism in Europe: A History* (Oxford University Press, 2016, reprinted 2018). Over the years, his research is focusing further on two specific phenomena: social dynamics and leadership in transnational terrorist networks and jihadism in the Middle East after the end of the territorial dimension of ISIS.

Fernando Reinares

Director and Senior Analyst, Violent Radicalisation and Global Terrorism Programme, Elcano Royal Institute, Madrid

Fernando Reinares is Director and Senior Analyst at the Violent Radicalisation and Global Terrorism Programme of the Elcano Royal Institute, in Madrid; other than Wilson Center Global Fellow, and Adjunct Professor at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C. He was the first President of the Expert Group on Violent Radicalisation of the European Commission (2007-2009) and advisor for counterterrorism policy issues at the Spanish Ministry of the Interior (in 2004 and in 2006). During his career, he has received several awards and academic honours such as the Postdoctoral Prize of the College of Doctors and Graduates in Political Science and Sociology and the Award for Research Excellence in Social and Legal Sciences (granted by Universidad Rey Juan Carlos for the first time in history). Also, he was decorated with the Cross of Military Merit (2009) and the Police Merit Cross (2012). In 2016, he was appointed Riojano Ilustre, the highest distinction that the Government of La Rioja granted to people.

Ahmad Masa'deh

Former Secretary General, Union for the Mediterranean, Amman

He served as Minister, Ambassador and chief of an international organisation. Today, Ahmad Masa'deh practices law and is the Managing Partner of Khalaf Masa'deh & Partners Ltd. Between 2006 and 2010, Dr Masa'deh was the 7th Ambassador of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan to the European Union, Belgium, Norway and Luxembourg. He was also the Jordanian Coordinator at the Union for the Mediterranean and Jordan's Representative to NATO. In January 2010, Dr Masa'deh was elected Secretary-General of the Union for the Mediterranean. From 2000 to 2005 he was Assistant Professor of International Business Law at the University of Jordan where he also held the position of Assistant Dean for Development.

Louise Shelley

Omer L. and Nancy Hirst Endowed Chair Director, Terrorism, Transnational Crime and Corruption Center, and University Professor, Schar School of Policy and Government, George Mason University, Fairfax

Louise Shelley founded and is the current Director of the Terrorism, Transnational Crime and Corruption Center (TraCCC). She published several books such as *Human Trafficking: A Global Perspective* (Cambridge, 2010), *Dirty Entanglements: Corruption, Crime and Terrorism* (Cambridge University Press, 2014) and *Dark Commerce: How a New Illicit Economy is Threatening our Future* (Princeton University Press, 2018). Professor Shelley has received Guggenheim, Fulbright, Rockefeller, National Science Foundation and many other fellowships and grants to support her research activities. She served for six years on the Global Agenda Councils at the World Economic Forum, first on the illicit trade and then as the inaugural co-chair of organised crime council. Dr Shelley appears frequently in the media, currently lectures at universities and at multinational bodies and has testified repeatedly before Congress and foreign and multinational organisations on financial crime and illicit flows, illicit trade, human trafficking, and the crime-terror relationship. She helps to convene the Anti-Corruption Advocacy Network (ACAN) and is a life member of the Council on Foreign Relations.

Jeffrey Hardy

Director-General, Transnational Alliance to Combat Illicit Trade, New York

Before being appointed as Director-General of the Transnational Alliance to Combat Illicit Trade in 2017, Jeffrey Hardy has been President of IDA Consulting, working with various international trade associations to help them navigate more effectively in key policy arenas and gain from emerging legislative and regulatory regimes. From 2004 to February 2017, he served as Director of the Inter-

national Chamber of Commerce's (ICC) Business Action to Stop Counterfeiting and Piracy (BASCAP). From 2010 to February 2017, he was Director of the ICC G20 CEO Advisory Group. From 1985 to 1998, Dr Hardy worked for the U.S. Department of Energy, where he served as International Energy Economist and Director of the U.S. Clean Cities programme. He is currently also Advisory Committee of the Mechanism for Combating Illicit Trade, a project of the Siracusa International Institute for Criminal Justice and Human Rights.

Lea Perekrests

Deputy Director of Operations, Europe and MENA, Institute for Economic sand Peace, Brussels

Lea Perekrests works in Brussels as Deputy Director of Operations, Europe and MENA region, at the Institute for Economics and Peace. She is also collaborating on various academic projects as a research assistant in the field of international relations. Since 2016, she has worked first as Advocacy Officer and then as Senior Policy Advisor for the Human Rights Without Frontiers International. Throughout her professional experiences and education, Ms Perekrests has gained strong skills in researching, negotiating, analysing case-studies, communicating, public speaking, and solution building.

SESSION III

Jana Arsovska

Associate Professor of Sociology, John Jay College of Criminal Justice, The Graduate Center, The City of University, New York

Jana Arsovska holds a PhD in International Criminology from Leuven University in Belgium where she studied transnational organised crime with a focus on the Balkans. Dr Arsovska has published extensively on organised crime and human trafficking in the Balkan region and, in particular, in Albania. Her most recent book, *Decoding Albanian Organized Crime: Culture, Politics, and Globalization* (University of California Press, 2015), has been recipient of several book awards. Over the years, she has acted as consultant regarding Albanian/Balkan organised crime for several organisations, including the World Bank, the UN and DCAF. Prior to her current position, she worked for the European Forum for Restorative Justice and underwent training at INTERPOL in Lyon, France.

Rida Lyammouri

Senior Fellow, Policy Center for the New South, Rabat

Rida Lyammouri is Senior Fellow at the Policy Center for the New South, and Associate Fellow with the Sahel Conflict Research Unit at Clingendael Institute, in the Netherlands. Mr Lyammouri has extensive experience in the areas of international development, humanitarian access, security, counter-terrorism and coun-

tering violent extremism in the Sahel region of Africa. His recent work included the conduct of fieldwork on population movement in the Sahel, assessments on humanitarian access to migrants in Gao (Mali) and the Gao Region – Algerian borders, and conflict prevention framework focused on the Sahel. He spent the past eight years tracking, researching, and studying conflicts in the region and the impact of insecurity on population movement and local economies. He has delivered more than 200 in depth analysis research reports to different United States Government agencies including Special Operations Command (SOCOM), Africa Command (AFRICOM), and for the Office of Transition Initiative (OTI) at the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

Filippo Musca

Acting General Director, Siracusa International Institute for Criminal Justice and Human Rights, Siracusa

Filippo Musca joined the Siracusa International Institute for Criminal Justice and Human Rights in 2008 as Coordinator of the Afghanistan Programme and has been the Deputy Director-General of the Institute since February 2014. From September 2018 he is the Acting Director-General. He is responsible for the development and effective implementation of the Institute's strategies, plans and priorities. He supports the Siracusa Institute President and Board of Directors in all administrative and financial issues related with the Institute's overall budget and the coordination of the development and implementation of agreed fundraising strategies with public and private donors. He holds a degree in International Relations and a Master in International Strategic Studies.

Sakher Dudin

Head, Public Awareness and Media Committee, Senate of Jordan, Amman

Born in Hebron, Senator Dudin obtained his BSc in architecture and engineering at the University of Jordan, and he is founder and principal of S.M. Dudin Architects & Engineers. During his professional career, he designed several residential neighbourhoods, universities and hotels in Jordan and across the Arab region. He also worked at the renovation of the Supreme Constitutional Court in Amman. He is currently a board member at AFKAR for Investments and Spectrum International Renewable Energy – Al Taif. Among his numerous activities, he is the founding member of Petra preservation Committee, as well as Esteedama Jordanian Renewable Energy Society and the Dura Charitable & Social Society. Senator Dudin is a member of the Foreign Affairs Association in Jordan. As member of the National Committee to Defend the Arabic Language, and is much interested in developing a modern interpretation of the Holy Quran.

Richard Hooker

Professor, National Security Strategy, National War College, Washington D.C.

Richard Hooker joined the National War College faculty in July 2018 after serving as Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for Europe and Russia at the National Security Council (NSC). From 2013 to 2017 he served as Director of the Institute for National Strategic Studies at the National Defense University. Previously, he was Deputy Commandant and Dean of the NATO Defense College in Rome. A former White House Fellow, Dr Hooker taught at the United States Military Academy at West Point and held the Chief of Staff of the Army Chair at the National War College in Washington, D.C. He also worked with the Office of National Service of the White House under President George H.W. Bush, with the Arms Control and Defense Directorate at the National Security Council during the Clinton Administration, and with the NSC Office for Iraq and Afghanistan under the administration of George W. Bush.



NATO Foundation
Defense College



CONFRONTING CRIMINAL/TERRORIST THREATS THE RESHAPING OF NON-STATE ACTORS

ORGANISED BY

the NATO Defense College Foundation

IN CO-OPERATION WITH

*NATO Science for Peace and Security Programme,
the Policy Center for the New South and the NATO Defense College*

ROME, THE 9TH AND 10TH OF DECEMBER 2019

Venue: Sala della Protomoteca, Musei Capitolini, Campidoglio, Rome



*This workshop
is supported by:*

The NATO Science for Peace
and Security Programme

- 13,30-14,00 Participants Registration
- 14,00-14,30 **Welcome remarks**
- Alessandro Minuto-Rizzo, President, NATO Defense College Foundation, Rome
 - Stephen Mariano, Dean, NATO Defense College, Rome

Session I

**STRATEGIES AGAINST THE NEW GENERATION
TERRORISM**

Although the Islamic State has been considerably weakened, it is still able to recruit significantly. In its essence, terrorism is less based on religious values and much more materially inspired by vengeance, power, money and reputation. Furthermore, its global dimension allows the creation of new criminal business models for the support of terrorist operations. This means rethinking antiterrorism strategies.

- 14,30-15,45 Chair: Mohammed Alyahya, Editor-in-Chief, Al Arabiya.net – English, Dubai
- Stefano Silvestri, Vice President, NATO Defense College Foundation, Rome
 - Ely Karmon, Senior Research Scholar, International Institute for Counter-Terrorism, and Senior Research Fellow, Institute for Policy and Strategy, Interdisciplinary Center, Herzliya
 - Petter Nesser, Senior Researcher, Norwegian Defence Research Establishment, Terrorism Research Group, Oslo
 - Fernando Reinares, Director and Senior Analyst, Violent Radicalisation and Global Terrorism Programme, Elcano Royal Institute, Madrid

Q&A

Session II

THE VIRTUAL DIMENSION OF TERRORISM,
TRAFFICKING AND LAUNDERING

The end of the main territorial presence in Syria and Iraq has forced a sizeable number of jihadist groups to transition towards decentralised structures relying heavily on the virtual dimension for propaganda, recruiting, communication, control and logistics. The last aspect includes cyber trafficking, financing and money laundering, all indispensable for carrying out attacks with a significant impact. The operational level of security and prevention activities needs to fully understand the terror-crime nexus also in this virtual dimension.

16,15 -17,30 Chair: Ahmad Masa'deh, Former Secretary General, Union for the Mediterranean, Amman

- Louise Shelley, Omer L. and Nancy Hirst Endowed Chair Director, Terrorism, Transnational Crime and Corruption Center/ University Professor, Schar School of Policy and Government, George Mason University, Fairfax
- Jeffrey P. Hardy, Director-General, Transnational Alliance to Combat Illicit Trade, New York
- Lea Perekrests, Deputy Director of Operations, Europe and MENA, Institute for Economics and Peace, Brussels

Q&A

Session III

COUNTERING THREATS ON THE GROUND

These new blended non state threats affect directly the security of both NATO's allies and partners, especially in complex emergency situations, when contingents and civilian personnel are deployed during specific crises. There is an emerging awareness that operations led by NATO or other international actors need also to guarantee security in its wider sense (health, physical, societal, etc.).

17,30 -18,45 Chair: Jana Arsovska, Associate Professor of Sociology, John Jay College of Criminal Justice, The Graduate Center, City of University New York, New York

- Rida Lyammouri, Senior Fellow, Policy Center for the New South, Rabat
- Filippo Musca, General Director, The Siracusa International Institute, Siracusa
- Sakher Dudin, Head, Public Awareness and Media Committee, Senate of Jordan, Amman
- Richard Hooker, Professor, National Security Strategy, National War College, Washington D.C.

Q&A

Closed door roundtable

INTEGRATING COUNTER VIOLENT EXTREMISM AND COUNTERTERRORISM

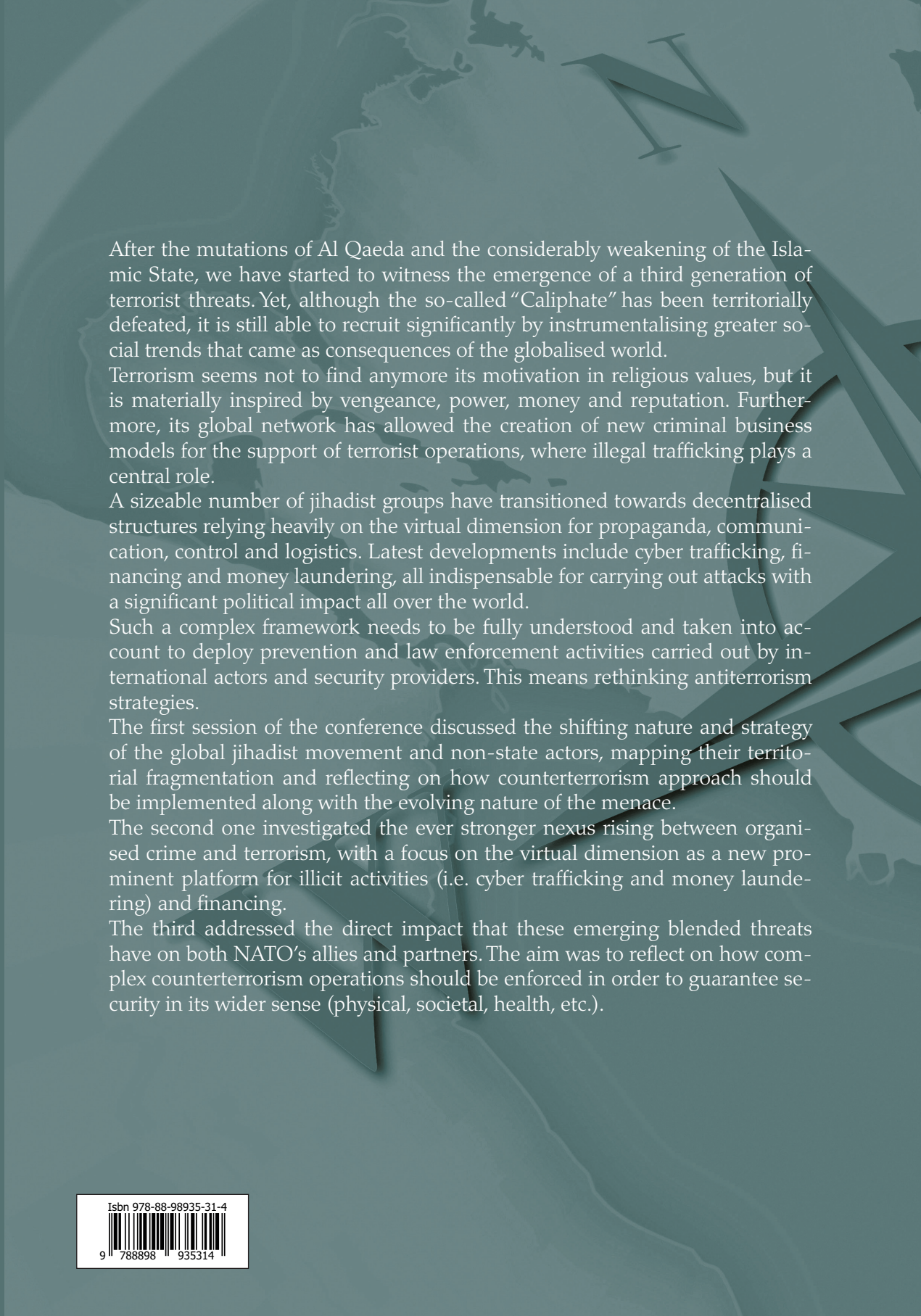
Counterterrorism and Countering Violent Extremism have for decades led an uneasy and parallel coexistence, only to discover by hard experience that, as during the Cold War, the solution could not be a security-trial-jail one. It is instead important to develop and reinforce much more cost/effective preventive tools and offer to captured and imprisoned terrorists alternative paths of disassociation, especially to avoid that prisons become new hotbeds. What are the models of existing and possible integrations and how can they be developed?

17,30 -18,45

- Kunaal Sharma, Deployment Strategist, Palantir Technologies; Ph.D., Columbia University, New York
- Abou Fassi-Fihri, Regional Director, Middle East and North Africa, Search for Common Ground, Amman
- Eyüp Turmus, Advisor and Programme Manager, Counterterrorism Section, NATO, Brussels
- Luca Guglielminetti, Expert, Radicalization Awareness Network Centre of Excellence, Amsterdam
- Elena Savoia, Senior Scientist, Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, Boston

Q&A





After the mutations of Al Qaeda and the considerably weakening of the Islamic State, we have started to witness the emergence of a third generation of terrorist threats. Yet, although the so-called “Caliphate” has been territorially defeated, it is still able to recruit significantly by instrumentalising greater social trends that came as consequences of the globalised world.

Terrorism seems not to find anymore its motivation in religious values, but it is materially inspired by vengeance, power, money and reputation. Furthermore, its global network has allowed the creation of new criminal business models for the support of terrorist operations, where illegal trafficking plays a central role.

A sizeable number of jihadist groups have transitioned towards decentralised structures relying heavily on the virtual dimension for propaganda, communication, control and logistics. Latest developments include cyber trafficking, financing and money laundering, all indispensable for carrying out attacks with a significant political impact all over the world.

Such a complex framework needs to be fully understood and taken into account to deploy prevention and law enforcement activities carried out by international actors and security providers. This means rethinking antiterrorism strategies.

The first session of the conference discussed the shifting nature and strategy of the global jihadist movement and non-state actors, mapping their territorial fragmentation and reflecting on how counterterrorism approach should be implemented along with the evolving nature of the menace.

The second one investigated the ever stronger nexus rising between organised crime and terrorism, with a focus on the virtual dimension as a new prominent platform for illicit activities (i.e. cyber trafficking and money laundering) and financing.

The third addressed the direct impact that these emerging blended threats have on both NATO’s allies and partners. The aim was to reflect on how complex counterterrorism operations should be enforced in order to guarantee security in its wider sense (physical, societal, health, etc.).

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