DISEC

BACKGROUND GUIDE

Secretary-General
Terry Wang

Director-General
Jordan Baker

Delegate Experience
Nastasja Vásquez

Global Partnerships
Daniela Maciel
Sebastian Jimenez

Under-Secretaries-General
Nachiketh Anand
Alina Castillo
Seonghyun Chang
Naina Dhawan
Ximena Faz
Kellie Fernandez
Grace Harb
Adiva Ara Khan
Anshul Magal
Analucia Tello
Sofia Velasco
Renata Venzor

Dear delegates,

My name is Mathias Carstens, and I am very proud to be your Director in the United Nations Disarmament and International Security Committee (DISEC) for Session I in NHSMUN 2025. I was born in Venezuela, in 2006. I am currently studying Computer Engineering at the Universidad Católica Andrés Bello in Caracas, the capital city of my country. Besides studying, I am a big sports fan, especially soccer, basketball, and baseball. My favorite teams are Real Madrid, Boston Celtics, and New York Yankees.

This is my second year on NHSMUN staff, I have had the opportunity to be Assistant Director of DISEC in NHSMUN 2024, to debate and be chair at different conferences in my native country, and to be the Logistics Secretary for LAIMUN, one of the most prestigious conferences that are organized annually in Venezuela.

Esteemed delegates, research is essential to construct solid arguments that will result in high-level sessions of debate. I encourage you to prepare yourselves, with the help of the Background Guide, to ensure that your participation can be as precise, interesting, and enriching as possible and strictly adhere to decency, respect, and the general regulations and procedures of Model United Nations.

Finally, I hope to offer you a conference with the greatest educational and organizational level. See you all in the committee in March! Please don't hesitate to get in contact if you have any questions regarding NHSMUN, the Background Guide, the debate rules, or anything else. In order to assist you have a more pleasurable NHSMUN experience, I'm happy to address any questions you may have!

Looking forward,

Mathias Carstens
Director of DISEC
Session I
nhsmun.disec@imuna.org

NHSMUN
National High School Model United Nations

Secretary-General
Terry Wang

Director-General
Jordan Baker

Delegate Experience
Nastasja Vásquez

Global Partnerships
Daniela Maciel
Sebastian Jimenez

Under-Secretaries-General
Nachiketh Anand
Alina Castillo
Seonghyun Chang
Naina Dhawan
Ximena Faz
Kellie Fernandez
Grace Harb
Adiva Ara Khan
Anshul Magal
Analucia Tello
Sofia Velasco
Renata Venzor

Dear Delegates,

I am pleased to welcome you to the Disarmament and International Security Committee (DISEC)! My name is Arturo Tirado, and I am very excited to serve as your Director for session two. I am very enthusiastic about collaborating with all of you in this upcoming session. My previous experience includes participation in NHSMUN 2022, representing Poland in the UN-Habitat committee, an experience that was both enriching and fulfilling. After this experience, I had the opportunity to return as an Assistant Director for DISEC at NHSMUN 2024! I am humbled and honored to participate in my second year as part of the NHSMUN staff. I look forward to using this knowledge and expertise to guide productive and insightful discussions during our time together.

I was born in Caracas, Venezuela, where all my family is from, though I have spent the past fourteen years calling Mexico City my home. Currently, I am studying innovation and development engineering at Tecnológico de Monterrey. Outside of school, I love painting and practicing tennis and volleyball, plus I have got some great moves on the dance floor. Cooking is another love of mine; I whip up some pretty tasty dishes if I do say so myself. And if I am not sleeping, I am either engrossed in a good book or catching the latest flick at the movies. Traveling is another passion of mine, especially when it involves tasting cuisines from around the globe. Italian food has my heart, but I am always up for something new. I also love outdoor activities, whether soaking up the sun at the beach, hiking, or diving into any water sport. Water sports are my jam! But above all, hanging out with friends and family takes the top spot.

Serving as an Assistant Director was a very enriching experience that allowed me to guide discussions and learn from brilliant minds full of innovative ideas, further broadening my perspective. Connecting with so many different people, each offering unique perspectives, really broadened my horizons and energized our discussions on important global issues. The collaborative nature of the conference made the conversations both intellectually stimulating and inspiring. NHSMUN has been an unforgettable experience because it captures the essence of constructive dialogue and collaborative work to solve the challenges our world faces today. Mathias and I have chosen two topics of utmost importance for discussion in the Disarmament and International Security Committee. We have compiled this Background Guide with very relevant information and recent events about the topics under discussion. We encourage you to use this resource as a guiding reference, fostering informed and insightful deliberations. I am so excited about working with you and hearing your great ideas!

Kind Regards,
Arturo Tirado
Director of DISEC
Session II
nhsmun.disec@imuna.org

Table of Contents

A Note on the NHSMUN Difference

Esteemed Faculty and Delegates,

Welcome to NHSMUN 2025! We are Terry Wang and Jordan Baker, and we are this year's Secretary-General and Director-General. Thank you for choosing to attend NHSMUN, the world's largest and most diverse Model United Nations conference for secondary school students. We are thrilled to welcome you to New York City in March.

As a space for collaboration, consensus, and compromise, NHSMUN strives to transform today's brightest thinkers, speakers, and collaborators into tomorrow's leaders. Our organization provides a uniquely tailored experience for all through innovative and accessible programming. We believe that an emphasis on education through simulation is paramount to the Model UN experience, and this idea permeates throughout numerous aspects of the conference:

Realism and accuracy: Although a perfect simulation of the UN is never possible, we believe that one of the core educational responsibilities of MUN conferences is to educate students about how the UN System works. Each NHSMUN committee is a simulation of a real deliberative body so that delegates can research what their country has said in the committee. Our topics are chosen from the issues currently on the agenda of that committee (except historical committees, which take topics from the appropriate time period). We also strive to invite real UN, NGO, and field experts into each committee through our committee speakers program. Moreover, we arrange meetings between students and the actual UN Permanent Mission of the country they are representing. Our delegates have the incredible opportunity to conduct first-hand research, asking thought-provoking questions to current UN representatives and experts in their respective fields of study. These exclusive resources are only available due to IMUNA's formal association with the United Nations Department of Global Communications and consultative status with the Economic and Social Council. No other conference goes so far to deeply immerse students into the UN System.

Educational emphasis, even for awards: At the heart of NHSMUN lies education and compromise. Part of what makes NHSMUN so special is its diverse delegate base. As such, when NHSMUN distributes awards, we strongly de-emphasize their importance in comparison to the educational value of Model UN as an activity. NHSMUN seeks to reward students who excel in the arts of compromise and diplomacy. More importantly, we seek to develop an environment in which delegates can employ their critical thought processes and share ideas with their counterparts from around the world. Given our delegates' plurality of perspectives and experiences, we center our programming around the values of diplomacy and teamwork. In particular, our daises look for and promote constructive leadership that strives towards consensus, as real ambassadors do in the United Nations.

Debate founded on strong knowledge and accessibility: With knowledgeable staff members and delegates from over 70 countries, NHSMUN can facilitate an enriching experience reliant on substantively rigorous debate. To ensure this high quality of debate, our staff members produce detailed, accessible, and comprehensive topic guides (like the one below) to prepare delegates for the nuances inherent in each global issue. This process takes over six months, during which the Directors who lead our committees develop their topics with the valuable input of expert contributors. Because these topics are always changing and evolving, NHSMUN also produces update papers intended to bridge the gap of time between when the background guides are published and when committee starts in March. As such, this guide is designed to be a launching point from which delegates should delve further into their topics. The detailed knowledge that our Directors provide in this background guide through diligent research aims to increase critical thinking within delegates at NHSMUN.

Extremely engaged staff: At NHSMUN, our staffers care deeply about delegates' experiences and what they take away from their time at NHSMUN. Before the conference, our Directors and Assistant Directors are trained rigorously through hours of workshops and exercises both virtual and in-person to provide the best conference experience possible. At the conference,

delegates will have the opportunity to meet their dais members prior to the first committee session, where they may engage one-on-one to discuss their committees and topics. Our Directors and Assistant Directors are trained and empowered to be experts on their topics and they are always available to rapidly answer any questions delegates may have prior to the conference. Our Directors and Assistant Directors read every position paper submitted to NHSMUN and provide thoughtful comments on those submitted by the feedback deadline. Our staff aims not only to tailor the committee experience to delegates' reflections and research but also to facilitate an environment where all delegates' thoughts can be heard.

Empowering participation: The UN relies on the voices of all of its member states to create resolutions most likely to make a meaningful impact on the world. That is our philosophy at NHSMUN too. We believe that to properly delve into an issue and produce fruitful debate, it is crucial to focus the entire energy and attention of the room on the topic at hand. Our Rules of Procedure and our staff focus on making every voice in the committee heard, regardless of each delegate's country assignment or skill level. Additionally, unlike many other conferences, we also emphasize delegate participation after the conference. MUN delegates are well researched and aware of the UN's priorities, and they can serve as the vanguard for action on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Therefore, we are proud to connect students with other action-oriented organizations to encourage further work on the topics.

Focused committee time: We feel strongly that face-to-face interpersonal connections during debate are critical to producing superior committee experiences and allow for the free flow of ideas. Ensuring policies based on equality and inclusion is one way in which NHSMUN guarantees that every delegate has an equal opportunity to succeed in committee. In order to allow communication and collaboration to be maximized during committee, we have a very dedicated administrative team who work throughout the conference to type up, format, and print draft resolutions and working papers.

As always, we welcome any questions or concerns about the substantive program at NHSMUN 2025 and would be happy to discuss NHSMUN pedagogy with faculty or delegates.

Delegates, it is our sincerest hope that your time at NHSMUN will be thought-provoking and stimulating. NHSMUN is an incredible time to learn, grow, and embrace new opportunities. We look forward to seeing you work both as students and global citizens at the conference.

Best,

Terry Wang   Jordan Baker
Secretary-General   Director-General

A Note on Research and Preparation

Delegate research and preparation is a critical element of attending NHSMUN and enjoying the debate experience. We have provided this Background Guide to introduce the topics that will be discussed in your committee. We encourage and expect each of you to critically explore the selected topics and be able to identify and analyze their intricacies upon arrival to NHSMUN in March.

The task of preparing for the conference can be challenging, but to assist delegates, we have updated our **Beginner Delegate Guide** and **Advanced Delegate Guide**. In particular, these guides contain more detailed instructions on how to prepare a position paper and excellent sources that delegates can use for research. Use these resources to your advantage. They can help transform a sometimes overwhelming task into what it should be: an engaging, interesting, and rewarding experience.

To accurately represent a country, delegates must be able to articulate its policies. Accordingly, NHSMUN requires each delegation (the one or two delegates representing a country in a committee) to write a position paper for each topic on the committee's agenda. In delegations with two students, we strongly encourage each student to research each topic to ensure that they are prepared to debate no matter which topic is selected first. More information about how to write and format position papers can be found in the NHSMUN Research Guide. To summarize, position papers should be structured into three sections:

I: Topic Background – This section should describe the history of the topic as it would be described by the delegate's country. Delegates do not need to give an exhaustive account of the topic, but rather focus on the details that are most important to the delegation's policy and proposed solutions.

II: Country Policy – This section should discuss the delegation's policy regarding the topic. Each paper should state the policy in plain terms and include the relevant statements, statistics, and research that support the effectiveness of the policy. Comparisons with other global issues are also appropriate here.

III. Proposed Solutions – This section should detail the delegation's proposed solutions to address the topic. Descriptions of each solution should be thorough. Each idea should clearly connect to the specific problem it aims to solve and identify potential obstacles to implementation and how they can be avoided. The solution should be a natural extension of the country's policy.

Each topic's position paper should be **no more than 10 pages** long double-spaced with standard margins and font size. **We recommend 3–5 pages per topic as a suitable length**. The paper must be written from the perspective of your assigned country and should articulate the policies you will espouse at the conference.

Each delegation is responsible for sending a copy of its papers to their committee Directors via myDais on or before **February 21, 2025**. If a delegate wishes to receive detailed feedback from the committee's dais, a position must be submitted on or before **January 31, 2025**. The papers received by this earlier deadline will be reviewed by the dais of each committee and returned prior to your arrival at the conference.

Complete instructions for how to submit position papers will be sent to faculty advisers via email. If delegations are unable to submit their position papers on time, please contact us at info@imuna.org.

Delegations that do not submit position papers will be <u>ineligible</u> for awards.

Committee History

The Disarmament and International Security Committee (DISEC) was created in 1945 by the General Assembly when the United Nations was initially chartered.[1] The committee was created to discuss topics related to the promotion of international peace. With this purpose, the committee should focus on issues such as disarmament any regional issues that pose a threat to general international security and promote cooperation in the interest of strengthening the stability of volatile conflicts. Lying outside of its mandate is any matter which requires coercive action. Issues that require coercive action, such as military involvement or the creation of new international legislation, are typically passed up to the Security Council. Over time, DISEC's mandate has changed very little due to its tendency to set long-term goals that are often recycled from committee session to committee session. For example, they have never been able to create legally binding resolutions.

There are no restrictions on DISEC membership, and all 193 United Nations member states are entitled to participate in the committee. The rules of procedure for DISEC include a three-stage structure that is followed for the sessions: general debate, thematic discussions, and action on draft resolutions.[2] As a part of the General Assembly, they must also have verbatim reporting. Verbatim reporting is an official, word-for-word record of a committee session which is translated into the six languages of the United Nations.[3] DISEC has played an incredibly pivotal role in discussions regarding the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), which nurtured international norms against nuclear weapons proliferation. DISEC has also helped key disarmament treaties come to life, including the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Convention on Cluster Munitions. Additionally, DISEC has been rather fundamental in raising global awareness about the dangers of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and the genuine importance of disarmament.

DISEC is one of the main committees of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), which serves as a deliberative body for member states to discuss and negotiate disarmament and international security issues. Although it lacks legislative power, it has a profound impact on resolutions and recommendations that shape global norms and policies. In the past, DISEC has collaborated with many entities, such as the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA), regional organizations such as the African Union and OSCE, and various other civil society groups, to promote disarmament. These partnerships are essential for enhancing the effectiveness of disarmament initiatives and addressing global security challenges.

Since its establishment in 1945, DISEC's commitment to disarmament through promoting transnational cooperation has resulted in significant achievements in international security. In 2006, DISEC summits led to the adoption of multiple resolutions working to limit nuclear weapons activity, which prompted many states to sign the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT). The CTBT bans all signatories from producing nuclear explosions and uses technology to monitor the status of states' nuclear progress, working to increase transparency and build trust between international governments.[4] DISEC's primary goal is to ensure global security and peace. In their arguments, delegates should be sure to emphasize this goal while also prioritizing equal representation for all members of the committee.

1   "DISEC: Disarmament & International Security Committee: Imuna: NHSMUN: Model UN," IMUNA, accessed September 19, 2024, https://imuna.org/nhsmun/nyc/committees/disec-disarmament-international-security-committee/.
2   "United Nations, Main Body, Main Organs, General Assembly," United Nations, accessed September 21, 2024, https://www.un.org/en/ga/first/.
3   "Verbatim Reporting | Department for General Assembly and Conference Management," United Nations, accessed September 21, 2024, https://www.un.org/dgacm/en/content/verbatim-reporting.
4   "The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT)." CTBTO. Accessed September 20, 2024. https://www.ctbto.org/our-mission/the-treaty.

TOPIC A:
COMBATING GUERRILLA ACTIVITY IN LATIN AMERICA

Introduction

A guerrilla group is a non-state armed actor that uses unconventional, asymmetric warfare tactics. They use it to challenge the authority and control of a recognized government.[1] Guerillas are characterized by the use of irregular military methods, a decentralized organizational structure, and the pursuit of goals motivated by their beliefs.[2] These groups often seek to gain local populations' support and erode the state's legitimacy. Non-State Armed Actors (NSAGs) are individuals or groups with the ability and willingness to use force and are not part of the government or military structure.[3] They differ from state security forces by having organizational and operational autonomy. These groups are often driven by varying political, ideological, religious, and economic interests.[4]

The presence and continued existence of guerrilla groups in Latin America have been a core determinant of regional events. They have affected the stability, security, and economic development of the region.[5] Guerrilla groups have committed mass atrocities, controlled important territories, and undermined the authority of governments.[6] Examples include the Shining Path in Peru and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) in Colombia.[7] Feelings of anger and resentment due to poverty, inequality, corruption, and lack of access to basic services fuel these groups.[8] These conditions formed discontent amongst the people and led them to join guerilla movements. The history of harsh governments, civil wars, and outside influence in Latin America has also increased these problems. NSAGs would frequently take advantage of the lack of strong authority and weak institutions to solidify their control and influence.[9]

The presence of guerilla groups has posed a consistent challenge to peace in Latin America. These groups can contribute to increased corruption, violence, and political instability. Ongoing criminal warfare between non-state armed actors and governments continues to strengthen guerilla groups who intend to advance political and social disorganization.[10] Their presence and activities significantly challenge the region's stability, security, and governance. Addressing their threats will require addressing law enforcement, counter-insurgency tactics, socio-economic solutions, and political reforms to improve the capacity and legitimacy of the state.

History and Description of the Issue

Origins and Most Influential Guerrilla Movements in Latin America

The concept of guerilla warfare started with significant historical events of the 19th and 20th centuries, including the Peninsular War in Spain.[11] It was used as a technique for an inferior group to resist or challenge the power structure in a particular environment. Spanish and Portuguese fighters were called *guerillos* when fighting against Napoleon's French army.

---

1 "Chapter 3: Guerrillas," ODIN - OE Data Integration Network. Accessed August 7, 2024. https://odin.tradoc.army.mil/TC/Chapter_3:_Guerrillas.
2 "Chapter 3: Guerrillas," ODIN - OE Data Integration Network.
3 Claudia Hofmann and Ulrich Schneckener, "Engaging Non-State Armed Actors in State- and Peace-Building: Options and Strategies," *International Review of the Red Cross* 93, no. 883 (September 2011): 603-621, https://www.corteidh.or.cr/tablas/r28824.pdf
4 Claudia Hoffman and Ulrich Schneckener, "Engaging Non-State Armed Actors in State- and Peace-Building: Options and Strategies," Int'l Rev, Red Cross 93, no. 883: 603-621.
5 "The Challenges to Peace in Latin America: From Guerrilla Warfare to the Fight Against Organised Crime – IDEES," IDEES, 2022, https://revistaidees.cat/en/the-challenges-to-peace-in-latin-america-from-guerrilla-warfare-to-the-fight-against-organised-crime/
6 "The Challenges to Peace in Latin America: From Guerrilla Warfare to the Fight Against Organised Crime – IDEES," IDEES.
7 Benjamin R. Young, "It's Time to Designate Venezuela as a State Sponsor of Terrorism," RAND, August 22, 2024, https://www.rand.org/pubs/commentary/2024/08/its-time-to-designate-venezuela-as-a-state-sponsor.html,
8 Anthony Wright, "An Evaluation of the FARC, MLN-T, FMLN :The Impact of Guerrilla Warfare on Democratic Stability in Latin America" (bachelor's thesis, Union College, 2017), 12, https://digitalworks.union.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1260&context=theses
9 Wright, "An Evaluation of the FARC, MLN-T, FMLN," 12.
10 Farid Benavides, "The Challenges to Peace in Latin America: From Guerilla Warfare to the Fight Against Organised Crime," Centre d'Estudis de Temes Contemporanis, May 12, 2022, https://revistaidees.cat/en/the-challenges-to-peace-in-latin-america-from-guerrilla-warfare-to-the-fight-against-organised-crime/,
11 Robert Young, "The Guerrilla and the Peninsular War," *The Saber and Scroll Journal*, Volume 10, no. 2 (2021): 67-79, https://saberandscroll.scholasticahq.com/api/v1/articles/31282-the-guerrilla-and-the-peninsular-war.pdf
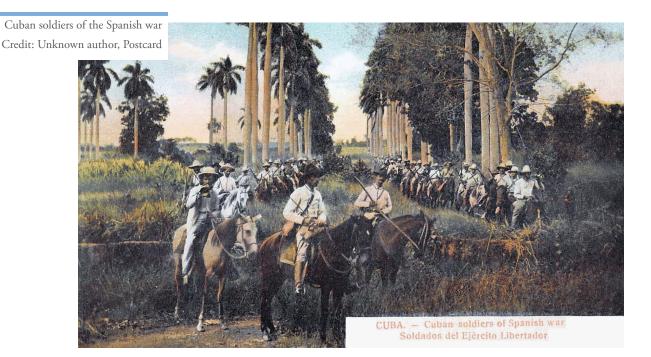
These irregular fighters would then coin the term *guerilla* to reference "little war" in Spanish.[12] It has since been a weapon of protest for those who wish to correct some wrong or injustice. In many instances, guerrilla methods have allowed groups without many resources to demoralize and often undermine more powerful opponents. The decentralized and asymmetric aspect of guerrilla warfare allows them to compensate for conventional military disadvantages.[13] The autonomy of their actions and decentralization enable them to adapt quickly to changing circumstances. This also allows them to exploit weaknesses in their opponents' strategies. Common tactics include striking weak targets, avoiding direct conflict, controlling territory, and utilizing local support.[14] Traditional armies are designed for large-scale engagements and territorial control. Therefore, they often struggle to adapt to the hit-and-run tactics of guerrilla operations.

Ernest "Che" Guevara largely ignited and popularized guerilla warfare in Latin America. He is often thought of as the main theorist of guerilla warfare in Latin America due to his role in the Cuban Revolution and his book *Guerilla Warfare*. In this book, he outlined his strategy of creating small groups, referred to as *focos*, as the necessary factor for insurgency. The *foco* theory states that rural guerilla leaders should advance as the main point of insurgencies and would eventually also be responsible for leading the subsequent economic and social transformations necessary.[15] His work was notable as it was read and used by insurgents throughout Latin America during the 1960s and 1970s.[16]

The first successful Guerrilla War in Latin America occurred in Cuba. It is known as The Cuban Revolution, which occurred from 1953-1959. Led by Fidel Castro and Che Guevara, this movement sought to overthrow Fulgencio Batista's regime.[17] Part of his warfare strategy included training young people by a veteran of guerrilla warfare. They adopted hit-and-run attacks, ambushes, and other unconventional tactics to harass and undermine the superior forces occupying the island.[18]

12   Martin Walker, "Guerilla Warfare's Epic History," Wilson Quarterly, 2013, https://www.wilsonquarterly.com/quarterly/winter-2013-is-democracy-worth-it/guerilla-warfares-epic-history.
13   Robert Brown Asprey, "guerrilla warfare."
14   Robert Brown Asprey, "guerrilla warfare."
15   Dirk Kruijit, "Che Guevara and Guerilla Warfare,"
16   Richard L. Warsnop, "Guerilla Movements in Latin America," CQ Press, July 19, 1967, https://cqpress.sagepub.com/cqresearcher/report/guerrilla-movements-latin-america-cqresrre1967071900#:~:text=Guevara's%20Guerrilla%20Guide%20for%20Latin,guerrilla%20warfare%20in%20Latin%20America.
17   Merle King, "Cuba: A Case Study of a Successful Attempt to Seize Political Power by the Application of Unconventional Warfare," *The American Academy of Political and Social Science* 341, no. 1 (May 1962): 42-52, https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/000271626234100106.
18   Roberto Malta, "Guerrilla Warfare in Latin America," Rise to Peace, December 11, 2018, https://www.risetopeace.org/2018/12/11/

Cuban soldiers of the Spanish war

Credit: Unknown author, Postcard

Other actions included the confiscation of rural lands, the expansion of social services, and the suppression of opposition groups, among others. Other crucial elements included the replacement of the army with a new militia and the delaying of elections. They spread propaganda on the radio and in newspapers to further promote their ideologies. [19]

The Cuban Revolution was the starting point of the rise of guerrilla tactics, providing important lessons and inspiration for later movements in the region. Following the Cuban Revolution, Che Guevara continued a campaign of guerillas worldwide, becoming an ambassador figure to the Soviet Union, China, the Middle East, Africa, and much of Latin America.[20] Prominent later figures directly drew inspiration from the Cuban guerrillas' tactics and strategies. Examples of this are the Sandinista Revolution in Nicaragua, the Shining Path in Peru, the Zapatista Army of National Liberation in Mexico, the Montoneros in Argentina, the Tupamaros in Uruguay, and the M-19 in Colombia.[21]

In more recent years, Latin America has witnessed numerous influential and effective guerrilla groups.[22] These insurgent organizations have established advanced systems for managing and distributing weapons, ensuring firearms, explosives, and other materials to carry out their attacks and operate in the region. One of the most contemporary examples is the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC). A guerrilla group formed in 1964 fought for more than 50 years against the Colombian government. They portrayed a "romantic" image, making the group seem like noble, brave, and courageous revolutionaries. They fought for justice and stood up for the rights of the oppressed rural poor against capitalist

elites and the Colombian state.[23] This narrative made it hard for the government to establish counterinsurgency efforts. They worked on decreasing the trust between people and state institutions. This lowered the cooperation between civilians and security forces and made it harder to regain stability and security. However, the government and the FARC agreed to their demobilization in 2016 as part of a peace agreement.[24] This came after years of threats to regional security and stability.

Also, the National Liberation Army (ELN) stands out from Colombia. It is one of the groups that has participated in the armed struggle against the Government of Colombia for over 50 years. It was created in 1964 by a group inspired by the successful Cuban Revolution. Their ideology was aimed at overthrowing the Colombian state and establishing a socialist society.[25] Since its founding, the ELN has engaged in an uninterrupted armed struggle against the Colombian military and security forces. The group carried out thousands of infrastructure attacks, abductions, and other violent actions. This was done within the framework of a weak state that would support this revolutionary agenda. Since 2016 and through 2024, the government has negotiated with the ELN for a ceasefire. [26]

Another relevant guerrilla group in the region is the Shining Path. Established in the 1970s in the Andes, Peru, the group has engaged in an armed struggle against the government for decades. They have attempted to overthrow the state and replace it with a communist peasant revolution.[27] Their extreme methods included car bombs, assassinations, and massacres of civilians who were considered to be informers or simply "class enemies," which are individuals or groups

guerrilla-warfare-in-latin-america/rmalta/

19 Kling, "Cuba: A Case Study of a Successful Attempt to Seize Political Power by the Application of Unconventional Warfare," 42-52.

20 Dirk Kruijit, "Che Guevara and Guerilla Warfare," Globalizations 20 (8): 1528-39, 2022, https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2022.2066055#abstract.

21 Fard Benavides, "The Challenges to Peace in Latin America: From Guerilla Warfare to the Fight Against Organized Crime," Regional Perspectives on Development Cooperation, December 5, 2022, https://revistaidees.cat/en/the-challenges-to-peace-in-latin-america-from-guerrilla-warfare-to-the-fight-against-organised-crime/#:~:text=The%20second%20half%20of%20the,laid%20waste%20to%20these%20plans.%20.

22 Peter Polack, Guerrilla Warfare: Kings of Revolution, *Casemate Publishers*, 2015. https://www.google.co.ve/books/edition/Guerrilla_Warfare/osnXDwAAQBAJ?hl=es&gbpv=1&dq=guerrilla+warfare&printsec=frontcover.

23 InSight Crime, "FARC,"

24 InSight Crime, "FARC," *InSight Crime*, accessed July 8, 2024, https://insightcrime.org/colombia-organized-crime-news/farc-profile/

25 InSight Crime, "National Liberation Army (ELN)," InSight Crime, accessed July 12, 2024, https://insightcrime.org/colombia-organized-crime-news/eln-profile/

26 Santiago Torrado, "Proceso de paz con el ELN: fin del cese al fuego, secuestro y participación, de la sociedad civil y crisis de los diálogos con el gobierno de Gustavo Petro," El País, August 24, 2024, https://elpais.com/america-colombia/2024-08-22/proceso-de-paz-con-el-eln-fin-del-cese-al-fuego-secuestro-participacion-de-la-sociedad-civil-y-crisis-de-los-dialogos-con-el-gobierno-de-gustavo-petro.html.

27 "Shining Path," *Encyclopædia Britannica*, accessed July 12, 2024, ,https://www.britannica.com/topic/Shining-Path

who are considered to be in opposition to the interests and goals of the working class and the revolutionary movement. Their ruthless methods, coupled with the extreme poverty and marginalization of the Andean regions, granted Shining Path a chance for development.[28] The Shining Path engaged in an insurgent war with 7,000 guerillas to attempt to overthrow the government. They aimed to implement communist rule in the 1980s and 1990s but failed. However, this insurgency resulted in a major loss, with 70,000 people dead or missing between 1980 and 2000.[29] While the arrest of the movement's leader, Abimael Guzmán, in 1992 helped the state manage the impact of the guerilla—violence, displacement, and economic issues that Shining Path left behind continue to echo inside Peru.[30]

Another example can be seen with the Zapatista Army of National Liberation (EZLN), a revolutionary group located in Chiapas, Mexico. The Zapatistas have been waging a continuing armed struggle against the Mexican government since their appearance in 1994.[31] The movement began due to concerns with the incoming North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and how it threatened the rights of Mexico's indigenous people.[32] They argue that the agreement favored big companies at the expense of land rights. This threatens traditional farming practices and Indigenous identities, increasing pre-existing inequalities and marginalization.[33] The group demanded greater autonomy and self-determination of indigenous communities. They also moved for the protection of land rights, access to basic social services, and economic opportunities.[34] Violence was used to draw attention alongside other more peaceful strategies of resistance. Their movement is centered on nonviolent civil disobedience, parallel institutions, and mobilizing international solidarity networks.[35]

These major guerrilla groups in Latin America share several common characteristics. The first common characteristic is that they all seek societal transformation through revolutions. They believe in class struggle. This means they believe there is a conflict between the working class, the government, and the upper classes. The fight to eliminate inequality in opportunities and access to basic services is a common goal.[36] Another common characteristic among these groups is promoting a socialist society to overthrow the capitalist system that they believe has hindered their access to opportunities.[37] A third common characteristic is the stance against the influence of the United States in its internal affairs. They attempt to challenge and disturb this regional dominance held by the US. They believe that the American presence was an obstacle to the successful execution of their set of revolutionary tasks.[38]

It is important to note that most of Latin America's revolutionary insurgencies were unsuccessful, except the Cuban Revolution and the Sandinista Revolution. Most were unsuccessful as they either resulted in the signing of peace agreements, the movements retreated to rural jungle areas, or traditional armies defeated them.[39] While they are considered to be unsuccessful in overthrowing the government, they were still extremely influential in the continuation of violence in the region. The guerrilla movements in Latin America have

28   InSight Crime, "Shining Path."
29   "Shining Path guerillas launch deadly ambush," France 24, October 11, 2008, https://www.france24.com/en/20081011-shining-path-guerrillas-launch-deadly-ambush-peru.
30   Daniel Alarcón, "Peru Processes the Death of Abimael Guzmán," *The New Yorker*, September 19, 2021, https://www.newyorker.com/news/postscript/peru-processes-the-death-of-abimael-guzman
31   "Zapatista National Liberation Army," *Encyclopædia Britannica*, accessed July 12, 2024, ,https://www.britannica.com/topic/Zapatista-National-Liberation-Army
32   Iker Reyes Godelmann, "The Zapatista Movement: The Fight for Indigenous Rights in Mexico," *Australian Institute of International Affairs*, July 30, 2014, https://www.internationalaffairs.org.au/news-item/the-zapatista-movement-the-fight-for-indigenous-rights-in-mexico/
33   Godelmann, "The Zapatista Movement."
34   "Zapatista National Liberation Army," *Encyclopaedia Britannica*.
35   Edgar H. Clemente, "Mexico's Zapatista Indigenous Rebel Movement Says It Is Dissolving Its 'Autonomous Municipalities'," *PBS News*, November 6, 2023, https://www.pbs.org/newshour/world/mexicos-zapatista-indigenous-rebel-movement-says-it-is-dissolving-its-autonomous-municipalities
36   Walter Laqueur, Guerrilla Warfare: A Historical and Critical Study (Routledge, 2022), https://www.google.co.ve/books/edition/Guerrilla_Warfare/6psuDwAAQBAJ?hl=es&gbpv=1&dq=guerrilla+warfare&printsec=frontcover.
37   Walter Laqueur, Guerrilla Warfare: A Historical and Critical Study (Routledge, 2022), https://www.google.co.ve/books/edition/Guerrilla_Warfare/6psuDwAAQBAJ?hl=es&gbpv=1&dq=guerrilla+warfare&printsec=frontcover.
38   RAF, "The Guerilla, the Resistance, and the Anti-Imperialist Front," May 1982, https://socialhistoryportal.org/sites/default/files/raf/en/0019820500%20EN.pdf
39   Fard Benavides, "The Challenges to Peace in Latin America: From Guerilla Warfare to the Fight Against Organized Crime,"

deeply influenced the region's security. They are driven by strong ideologies and anti-imperialist goals and have their roots in rural areas. Latin America is currently one of the most dangerous regions worldwide, and many scholars have traced this pattern of violence back to guerilla groups.[40]

Warfare Techniques and Operations of Guerrilla Movements

Latin America has seen various guerrilla groups fighting against state power. These groups have used a wide range of methods that resulted in immense damage to civilians and regular military forces.[41] Guerrillas' strategies follow the traditional principles: relying on mobile, decentralized units, local knowledge of the territory, and the ability to blend in with civilian populations. These factors have granted them agility and adaptability.[42] They have also allowed them to challenge the power of conventional state security forces.

At the core of their operation is territorial control and shadow governance in remote and rural areas.[43] Guerrilla groups seek to replace the state's presence and authority with their systems. This includes their form of governance, law enforcement, taxation, and service provision in these territories. This allows them to acquire resources, enlist new followers, and establish a network of backing within the nearby community, which might be excluded by the national government. They exploit knowledge of the territory, mobility, and blending in with people. This strategy allows them to conduct many of their operations. Their objective is to exhaust the immense firepower and assets of national armed forces instead of engaging in head-on conflicts.[44]

Ambush and hit-and-run are common techniques used in regional guerrilla warfare. Guerrilla forces depend on surprise to attack military convoys, police patrols, and various forms of strategic infrastructure. By quickly striking and then dispersing, they avoid direct confrontation with the better-trained and equipped security of the state. It is mobility and flexibility that permit them to maintain the initiative and keep striking their opponent.[45] One well-known incident occurred

---

40   Fard Benavides, "The Challenges to Peace in Latin America: From Guerilla Warfare to the Fight Against Organized Crime,"
41   Brian Jenkins, "The Five Stages of Urban Guerrilla Warfare: Challenge of the 1970s", 1971, https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/papers/2008/P4670.pdf
42   "The Art of Guerilla Warfare: General Principles | Stop Fossil Fuels," *Stop Fossil Fuels*, accessed July 16, 2024, https://stopfossilfuels.org/strategy-principles/art-guerrilla-warfare-gubbins/full-text/
43   Cristóbal Kay, "Conflict and Violence in Rural Latin America," Working Paper Series No. 312 (The Hague: Institute of Social Studies, 2000), https://repub.eur.nl/pub/19057/wp312.pdf
44   Andreas Feldmann, "A Shift in the Paradigm of Violence: Non-Governmental Terrorism in Latin America since the End of the Cold War," Revista de Ciencia Política (Santiago) 25, no. 2 (2005): 3-36, https://doi.org/10.4067/s0718-090x2005000200001.
45   "Basics of Guerilla Warfare | Tactical Experts | TacticalGear.com," TacticalGear.com, accessed July 12, 2024, https://tacticalgear.com/

Recruitment of minors by guerrilla groups
Credit: Braya234

in Peru in 1989, when Shining Path guerrillas ambushed a military convoy in southern Peru, specifically in the Andean mountains. They killed 12 soldiers and two civilians and wounded at least 17 people, being the most brutal attack of the decade in the country.[46]

Another guerrilla tactic applied in Latin America is kidnapping and taking hostages. Revenues are generated through ransom demands, and political pressure is exerted on governments. Targets have been government officials, security personnel, and civilians. Some high-profile cases have received enormous media attention. For example, in 1980, a siege of the embassy of the Dominican Republic was carried out by M-19 guerrillas in Bogotá, Colombia. They held nearly 60 people, including 15 ambassadors, as hostages, along with diplomats from across Latin America. 18 of them were held captive for 61 days before flying to safety in Cuba with millions of dollars in ransom.[47]They sought support from local communities, often by providing social services and security in areas under their control. Yet their treatment of civilians was also often coupled with coercion, violence, and other human rights abuses that could undermine their popular legitimacy. The objective is to subjugate the population and prevent them from supporting or collaborating with government forces. This includes the forcible recruitment of fighters, sexual exploitation, the use of child soldiers, and the imposition of "revolutionary taxes."[48]

The funding of these activities is also relevant. Most funds are produced by engaging in illegal economic practices. Some examples of this include taxation on their manufacturing, weapons, drug trafficking, and other contraband goods. They also extort money, kidnap people, and conduct a host of other crimes. This illicit funding provides the money necessary for buying weapons, equipment, and supplies—and provides incentives for recruitment.[49] The distribution of small arms, light weapons, and advanced weaponry represents one of the most profitable means of illicit financing for guerrilla factions in Latin America.[50] The contraband is used to fight their combatants and sustain their military capacities. These groups generally have access to those resources through stockpiles, trafficking, manufacturing their own weapons, or modifying existing ones.[51] These access methods involve a complex system of intermediate sellers, safe houses, and different transportation methods. This blurs any possibility of tracing those weapons back to their origin and final destination.[52] These illicit weapons flows are a priority target for disruption by governments in the region and international agencies seeking to undermine the guerrilla groups. However, the complexity of these trafficking networks, coupled with unprotected borders and the collaboration of corrupt authorities, make it difficult to control.[53] Beyond the illicit trade in guns, some of these groups get involved in the contraband of narcotics, minerals, and animals. This is typically done in the territories they control, allowing the efficient distribution of illicit goods across borders into black markets.[54] Organizations such as the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia and the National Liberation Army have long been heavily involved in the

experts/basics-of-guerilla-warfare
46 "Shining Path guerrillas launch deadly ambush," *FRANCE 24*, October 11, 2008, https://www.france24.com/en/20081011-shining-path-guerrillas-launch-deadly-ambush-peru
47 Zakia Shiraz, "Diplomats Under Siege: The M-19 and the Dominican Embassy Takeover of 1980," *figshare*, accessed July 13, 2024, https://figshare.le.ac.uk/articles/journal_contribution/Diplomats_Under_Siege_The_M-19_and_the_Dominican_Embassy_Takeover_of_1980/11638023
48 Diakonia Lebanon International Humanitarian Law (IHL) Resource Desk, "Forcible Recruitment of Adults by Non-State Armed Groups in Non-International Armed Conflict," (May 2019), https://apidiakoniase.cdn.triggerfish.cloud/uploads/sites/2/2021/05/Forcible-Recruitment-EN-May-2019.pdf
49 Thomas Hegghammer, "The recruiter's dilemma: Signalling and rebel recruitment tactics," 2013, https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0022343312452287
50 David Pérez Esparza, Carlos A. Pérez Ricart, and Eugenio Weigend Vargas, eds. Gun Trafficking and Violence: From The Global Network to The Local Security. Cham: Springer, 2019. https://www.google.co.ve/books/edition/Gun_Trafficking_and_Violence/B_cqEAAAQBAJ?hl=es&gbpv=1&dq=gun+trafficking+latin+america&printsec=frontcover
51 Guillermo Vázquez del Mercado, "Arms Trafficking and Organized Crime: Global Trade, Local Impacts," *Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime*, August 2022, https://globalinitiative.net/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/GI-TOC-policy-brief_Arms-trafficking-web-1.pdf
52 United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, "Organized Crime Module 3 Key Issues: Firearms Trafficking," accessed July 12, 2024 https://www.unodc.org/e4j/en/organized-crime/module-3/key-issues/firearms-trafficking.html.
53 Angelika Rettberg and Juan Felipe Ortiz-Riomalo, "Golden Opportunity, or a New Twist on the Resource–Conflict Relationship: Links Between the Drug Trade and Illegal Gold Mining in Colombia," 2016, https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0305750X16303382
54 Harold Trinkunas, "The Network Effect: Trafficking in Illicit Drugs, Money, and People in Latin America," Brookings, December 3, 2015, https://www.brookings.edu/articles/the-network-effect-trafficking-in-illicit-drugs-money-and-people-in-latin-america/.

production, taxation, and trafficking of cocaine and other drugs.[55]

Such a complex and combined approach has explained how such groups have retained and continued revolutionary projects for decades in parts of Latin America. That includes territorial control, asymmetric warfare, illicit financing, civilian coercion, and transnational linkages. These guerilla groups' tactics have evolved from a classical type of guerrilla movement into something far more decentralized regarding resistance and self-government. Therefore, decision-making and operations have become more widespread among individuals and are less dependent on a central authority. Operationally, they focused on rural, peasant-based roots, with heavy recruitment from the poor countryside and using the sentiment of their struggles to their advantage.[56] Relying on rural populations has been a central point for guerilla groups as it was outlined as a primary strategy in Che Guevara's *Guerilla Warfare*. According to Guevara, the development of *focos* would be necessary for a successful socialist revolution, so guerilla groups always focus on developing these rural revolutionaries. As a way of gaining control, they look for support from local communities. They achieve this by providing services and security that the government fails to provide in exchange for controlling said area. This approach helps to offset the superior firepower of national government forces. [57]

Impact of Guerrilla Movements on National and Regional Security

The impact of guerrilla groups on regional security in Latin America is multifaceted and deeply destabilizing. This is because of the various factors that generate a complicated, self-sustaining cycle of instability. This undermines the ability of governments to maintain order and deal with the security threats that guerrilla groups present.[58] Guerrilla operations have posed a significant threat to regional security, politicians, and institutions through several connected mechanisms. One of the grave threats was that of asymmetric warfare tactics, which helped them maintain their territorial occupation.[59] It is also common for guerrilla forces to attack critical infrastructure. They target transportation networks, communication systems, and energy facilities. These attacks create instability and uncertainty. They disrupt the economy and weaken business and investment confidence. Altogether, it weakens national governments and causes power voids to be filled by criminal networks or other further forces of destabilization. This has had far-reaching implications for the delivery of public services and human rights protection. Additionally, these power voids help achieve their goal of territory occupation to expand their reach and influence.

Gun violence also plays an important role in security. The spread of small arms, explosives, and other military-grade equipment within guerrilla groups feeds into a larger escalation of violence and insecurity. These illicit weapons began to circulate beyond the immediate conflicts involving insurgents. As these arms were sold and passed on by guerrilla groups, they began to reach the hands of other non-state actors, criminal organizations, and civilians.[60] This would form a snowball effect of cycles of violence and retaliation well outside the context of the original guerrilla movements. The availability of these weapons reduces the state's monopoly on the legal use of force. It empowered armed actors who could now engage in illegal activities. That includes kidnapping, extortion, targeted assassinations, and mass killings. The transnational nature of these illicit weapon networks has enabled the spread of these destabilizing activities. Consequently, the rule of law and the strength of government institutions are undermined, creating a climate of fear and lawlessness that further destabilizes the community.

55   Daniel Castro, ed. "Revolution and Revolutionaries: Guerrilla Movements in Latin America," Rowman & Littlefield, 1999, https://www.google.co.ve/books/edition/Revolution_and_Revolutionaries/DVV7AAAAQBAJ?hl=es&gbpv=1&dq=guerrilla+latin+america&printsec=frontcover

56   Robert Brown Asprey, "Guerrilla Warfare,"

57   Robert Brown Asprey, "Guerrilla Warfare."

58   "Sobering Impact of Conventional Weapons Deserves 'No Less Attention' Than Weapons of Mass Destruction, First Committee Told," United Nations Meetings Coverage and Press Releases, October 23, 2023, https://press.un.org/en/2023/gadis3724.doc.htm

59   Harry Villegas, "Guerrilla Warfare: Authoritative, Revised, New Edition," (New York: Seven Stories Press, 2020), https://www.google.co.ve/books/edition/Guerrilla_Warfare/uNAuEAAAQBAJ?hl=es&gbpv=1&dq=guerrilla+operations&printsec=frontcover.

60   William D. Hartung, "The New Business of War: Small Arms and the Proliferation of Conflict," CIAO (Columbia International Affairs Online), accessed August 5, 2024, https://ciaotest.cc.columbia.edu/olj/cceia/cceia_01haw01.pdf

When recruiting, Guerrilla movements often raid villages and recruit young men and women by force by separating them from their families or communities. Forceful recruitment has had a damaging impact on security and stability, both at the local and regional levels. These practices violate the fundamental human rights of the affected civilians and undermine the foundations of a peaceful and prosperous society. It also weakened the authority and legitimacy of the government— opening the door for the guerrilla to challenge political systems. One example is the Shining Path of Peru, as they raided schools and other educational centers. They abducted students and teachers for induction into their ranks.[61] This has deprived children not only of the right to education but also exposed them to the horrors of armed conflict. The guerrilla groups have also adopted extrajudicial executions, torture, and other forms of violence. They do it to suppress any dispute within their ranks or punish those who refuse to cooperate. This created an atmosphere of fear and repression. It also further undermined the human rights of concerned persons and communities.[62] By recruiting citizens using force into their ranks, these groups were able to raise large fighting forces very rapidly.[63] They could then effectively challenge the security forces of national governments. These coerced recruits placed enormous strain on the capacity of the guerrilla movements to wage their insurgencies effectively.

Besides forced recruitment, some guerrilla groups participated in the exploitation of vulnerable communities, especially indigenous populations.[64] They took advantage of historical grievances and economic disparities through co-opting, corrupting, and conning people. These people were actively recruited from these communities and were promised social and economic justice.[65] An example of this can be seen by indigenous populations in Venezuela's Amazon who have been largely affected by Colombian guerilla groups. These groups have made major advancements into Indigenous territories in the Amazon, which have torn apart and destabilized communities, pushed an illicit gold rush market, and in turn, threatened the existence of ancient cultures that have preserved the Amazon rainforest for generations.[66] These groups have falsely promised to work with the communities and provide economic assistance. However, once that assistance was accepted, these groups were forced to work for the guerillas and become enslaved to them. Groups like the ELN and FARC have been the main actors behind this exploitation. There is growing fear amongst these communities that the only way for them to survive will be to leave their ancestral lands in the Amazon or agree to be exploited by guerillas.[67]

The exploitation of vulnerable communities by guerrilla groups is a serious threat to national security. It takes away their future and provides guerrilla groups with new recruits. Often, vulnerable groups who forcibly join guerilla movements risk capture or death.[68] This was seen with Indigenous Peruvian guerilla militants who were mostly captured or killed by the government during an attempted coup in 1968.[69] This can also destabilize regional security by allowing new elements to increase illegal activities like weapons human, and drug trafficking. Also, the trauma and social disruption these communities face can lead to distrust in government institutions and encourage radicalization. Many governments will also have to pull resources to try to help these communities, which can reignite conflict between the state and guerilla groups.

61   Gustavo Gorriti, "The Shining Path: A History of the Millenarian War in Peru," (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2023), https://books.google.co.ve/books?hl=es&lr=&id=BeA4CQAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PP1&dq=shining+path&ots=jEvimpGGku&sig=WyO7_feg31ux9Yh8PKI7ZWli_xA&redir_esc=y
62   Caterina Roman, "Successes and Challenges in Recruiting and Retaining Gang Members in Longitudinal Research: Lessons Learned From a Multisite Social Network Study," ResearchGate, accessed August 5, 2024, https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Caterina-Roman/publication/305364238_Successes_and_Challenges_in_Recruiting_and_Retaining_Gang_Members_in_Longitudinal_Research_Lessons_Learned_From_a_Multisite_Social_Network_Study/links/5b080137a6fdcc8c252d4beb/Successes-and-Challenges-in-Recruiting-and-Retaining-Gang-Members-in-Longitudinal-Research-Lessons-Learned-From-a-Multisite-Social-Network-Study.pdf
63   Center for Civilians in Conflict, "The People's Perspectives: Civilian Involvement in Armed Conflict."
64   Venezuela Investigative Unit, "A Cultural Occupation: The Guerillas and the Indigenous in Venezuela's Amazon," InSight Crime, April 6, 2022, https://insightcrime.org/news/cultural-occupation-guerrillas-and-indigenous-venezuelan-amazon/#:~:text=The%20guerrillas%20have%20occupied%20territories,corrupting%20power%20of%20dirty%20money.
65   Center for Civilians in Conflict, "The People's Perspectives: Civilian Involvement in Armed Conflict," accessed July 8, 2024, https://civiliansinconflict.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Peoples_Perspectives_Executive_Summary.pdf
66   Venezuela Investigative Unit, "A Cultural Occupation: The Guerillas and the Indigenous in Venezuela's Amazon,"
67   Venezuela Investigative Unit, "A Cultural Occupation: The Guerillas and the Indigenous in Venezuela's Amazon,"
68   Dirk Krujit, "Che Guevara and Guerilla Warfare,"
69   Dirk Krujit, "Che Guevara and Guerilla Warfare,"

Ultimately, guerilla groups impact national and regional security on multiple fronts. By undermining governments and delegitimizing states, these groups make it more difficult to maintain peace and security among its citizenry. Moreover, guerilla groups are often linked to several lucrative and illicit businesses to fuel their activities, which also threaten security. Recognizing that many governments in Latin America have suffered from decades of weak governments, guerilla groups add to existing structural challenges. These groups tend to cross borders throughout Latin America and threaten local populations with limited resources. Many governments either do not have the proper scope or resources to address these illicit cross-border activities that target vulnerable groups, which only amplifies guerilla groups' negative impact.

Government tactics and counterinsurgency strategy

Governments have to use a multifaceted strategy of counterinsurgency (COIN) operations.[70] They are implemented to fight against guerrilla and armed insurgencies. They apply military measures and political, economic, and social actions to end the insurgency and to restore lost control.[71] The use of military force to engage and disrupt the guerilla groups has been one of the key features of most governments' counterinsurgency approach.[72] The capability of the military to project power, mobility, and technological advantages can be brought into play to neutralize rebel forces.[73] These operations, based on regular conventional military units of infantry, armor, and artillery, culminate in military operations such as ambushes and raids against the strongholds of the guerilla groups and their supply lines. Their sheer firepower and rapid manipulation have the potential to be very imposing

to the insurgents, who are more accustomed to hit-and-run tactics.[74]

Elite special operations forces have also been used, with a focus on high-value target interception. The tactics go from direct action raids to detached killings or capturing of rebel commanders to covert infiltration for intelligence gathering and sabotage purposes against insurgent operations.[75] Governments also make use of advanced technology to enhance military response to such groups. Aerial surveillance platforms such as aircraft and satellites provide huge opportunities for constant patrol and observation of insurgent movements and activities.[76] Electronic sensor and signal intelligence assets permit security forces to detect, track, and intercept rebel communications. Precision-guided ammo and armed drones enable selective surgical strikes against identified insurgent targets.[77]

However, the use of these militarization tactics tends to have negative effects on human rights and transparency. An example can be seen in Mexico, which has decided to implement a militarization strategy as a response to Mexican groups. Since this strategy was set in place in 2006, the country has seen an increase in the number of human rights violations. Some of these include executions, forced disappearances, and torture. Additionally, the country has seen an increase in the amount of violence.[78] Since the Mexican government implemented this strategy, there have been cases of arbitrary arrests of civilians, abuse of force, and even executions of unarmed civilians reported. The stance of international organizations such as the Inter-American Court of Human Rights is to oppose the use of military force. This was stated in the 2018 judgment on the case Alvarado Espinoza and others vs. México, where

70 Yuri Neves, "Counterinsurgency as an Approach to Organized Crime in Latin America," Georgetown Security Studies Review, May 24, 2019, https://georgetownsecuritystudiesreview.org/2019/05/24/counterinsurgency-as-an-approach-to-organized-crime-in-latin-america/
71 U.S. Department of State, "Counterinsurgency Guide," accessed July 9, 2024, https://2009-2017.state.gov/documents/organization/119629.pdf
72 Nieves, "Counterinsurgency as an Approach to Organized Crime in Latin America."
73 Department of the Army, Tactics in Counterinsurgency, FMI 3-24.2 (Washington, DC: Headquarters, Department of the Army, 2009), https://irp.fas.org/doddir/army/fmi3-24-2.pdf
74 Headquarters Department of the Army, "Tactics in Counterinsurgency."
75 Headquarters Department of the Army, "Tactics in Counterinsurgency."
76 Shiri Krebs, "Above the Law: Drones, Aerial Vision and the Law of Armed Conflict – A Socio-Technical Approach," International Review of the Red Cross 924 (December 2023), https://international-review.icrc.org/articles/above-the-law-drones-aerial-vision-and-the-law-of-armed-conflict-924
77 Krebs, "Above the Law," 104.
78 "México: La militarizaicón de la seguridad pública amenaza los derechos humanos," Human Rights Watch, August 26, 2024, https://www.hrw.org/es/news/2022/08/26/mexico-la-militarizacion-de-la-seguridad-publica-amenaza-los-derechos-humanos.

they established that military forces should only be used in extraordinary circumstances.[79]

Along with military operations, the governments respond with population control measures. They are designed to limit the insurgents' freedom of movement and their access to civilian resources.[80] This can include setting curfews, using checkpoints, and creating restricted areas. Civilians must obtain permits or passes to move out of their immediate local areas, and their movements are monitored and regulated through security checkpoints. This development complicates the ease for guerrilla fighters to blend into the local populace, gather intelligence, or move supplies undetected.[81] Sometimes, it also involves moving civilians to "strategic hamlets" or safe villages. These settlements are meant to protect people from insurgent attacks and help separate them from the insurgents.[82] In this approach of forced resettlement, local communities are uprooted from their traditional homes and villages and concentrated in purpose-built, government-controlled settlements. The idea here is to physically separate the civilian population from the insurgents, thereby denying the guerrillas once more access to local resources, intelligence, and possible future recruits.[83] This also implies that homes may be searched without a warrant, and suspects in insurgent ties detained indefinitely.[84] Another common counterinsurgency operation is the use of technology. Governments invest heavily in surveillance technologies, including aerial monitoring, electronic tracking, and data analysis.[85] These tools help trace and disrupt insurgent activities.[86] Analysis tools and methods help intelligence agencies make sense of the data gathered by advanced surveillance technologies. Analysts use these tools to spot patterns, trends, and anomalies, giving a clear view of the insurgency's structure, logistics, and future plans.[87] This information is quickly shared with field units to guide targeted strikes, ambushes, and other efforts against the insurgents.[88]

Governments can also institute an active infiltration and subversion of the insurgent communication network. The intelligence agencies can hack their encrypted channels to gain direct, open access to strategies and command-and-control structures for their supply chains. This inside information can be utilized further for the launch of precision strikes, ambushes, or turning of informants against the insurgency.[89] These technological solutions are complemented by more traditional means of gathering human intelligence. Governments invest fairly large sums in recruiting and handling the networks of informants within the local community. Such informants can provide fine-grained information in real-time about insurgent movements, safe houses, and supply caches, among many other details difficult to learn from remotely conducted surveillance.[90]

An example is the conflict between the Guatemalan government and the Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca (URNG). The URNG was an umbrella organization of leftist guerrilla groups who wanted to end deep social and economic inequalities and topple the then-authoritarian government.[91] In response, the Guatemalan government reacted with a multifaceted COIN strategy that included military operations, such as the campaign led by General Efraín Ríos Montt in the

79 Alvarado Espinoza and others vs. México, IACHR (2018), https://www.corteidh.or.cr/docs/casos/articulos/seriec_370_esp.pdf.
80 Georgetown Security Studies Review, "Counterinsurgency as an Approach to Organized Crime in Latin America,"
81 Harald Håvoll, COIN Revisited: Lessons of the Classical Literature on Counterinsurgency and Its Applicability to the Afghan Hybrid Insurgency, NUPI Report, Security in Practice No. 13 (Oslo: Norwegian Institute of International Affairs, 2008), 5. https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/92745/Lessons%20of%20the%20classifical%20literature%20on%20counterinsurgency.pdf
82 NATO, "Counterinsurgency: A Generic Reference Curriculum."
83 Håvoll, COIN Revisited, 5.
84 Håvoll, COIN Revisited, 5.
85 Jayadeva Ranade, "Surveillance in Counter-Terrorism, Counter-Insurgency and Warfare," 2010, https://archive.claws.in/images/journals_doc/1397563019Jayadeva%20Ranade%20%20CJ%20Winter%202010.pdf
86 R. Scott Moore, "The Basics of Counterinsurgency," accessed July 19, 2024, https://smallwarsjournal.com/documents/moorecoinpaper.pdf
87 Anna O. Pechenkinaa and D. Scott Bennettb, "Violent and Non-Violent Strategies of Counterinsurgency," Journal of Artificial Societies and Social Simulation 20, no. 4 (2017): 11, https://www.jasss.org/20/4/11.html
88 R. Scott Moore, "The Basics of Counterinsurgency."
89 Barnett, "Defeating Insurgents with Technology," 70.
90 Jeffery R. Barnett, "Defeating Insurgents with Technology," Air and Space Power Journal (1996): 70. https://apps.dtic.mil/sti/pdfs/ADA527945.pdf
91 "Peace & Conflict In Guatemala: An Overview," Pionero Philanthropy, accessed July 9, 2024, https://www.pionerophilanthropy.org/peace-and-conflict-in-guatemala/

early 1980s, which entailed structured destruction of villages and infrastructure to cut support for insurgents.[92] Military actions were supported by creating Civil Defense Patrols (PACs). These patrols forced local civilians into paramilitary roles. They had to monitor and report on suspected guerrilla activities. The government's efforts involved extensive military operations and the harsh "scorched earth" campaign. These tactics caused mass killings, forced disappearances, and human rights abuses. Rural and indigenous populations were mainly targeted. This worsened social divisions and brought the conflict into communities.[93] The Guatemalan government's counterinsurgency strategy also included political, economic, and social actions. They used psychological warfare and propaganda to reduce support for the URNG. Development programs aimed to improve infrastructure, health services, and education in conflict areas.[94]

Besides these security-oriented measures, the governments usually try cooperating with local populations. They do it through civil action programs, infrastructure developments, and humanitarian aid. This aims to tackle the fundamental reasons for grievances and socio-economic conditions. That is because those generally fuel insurgencies.[95] Other actions include legal measures to stop uprisings. They enacted emergency powers and anti-terrorism laws. These actions disrupted the insurgents' funding and allowed them to negotiate with more moderate insurgent groups. The goal was to gain concessions and political amnesty in exchange for their surrender.[96] Governments will also attempt to construct international arrangements and treaties. These treaties typically permit cross-border cooperation in tracking, interdicting, and prosecuting insurgent activities. Efforts to cut off insurgents' access to safe havens, external funding, and supply chains can weaken their power. By targeting these resources, the insurgency's capabilities are significantly reduced.[97]

Parallel to these legal tools, governments could also pursue political solutions to the conflict through direct negotiations with more moderate groups within the insurgency. Negotiated settlements incentivize insurgents to defect, surrender, or break apart their groups. By removing the most extreme members, these settlements can weaken the insurgency. Offering insurgents a chance to achieve their goals in peace can reduce public support for their cause. As a result, the desire to continue the armed struggle diminishes over time.[98] Using legal and political tools, combined with military operations and intelligence efforts, can create a powerful approach against insurgencies. Disrupting the support networks of insurgents and encouraging them to defect are crucial strategies. At the same time, addressing the underlying issues and grievances that caused the conflict is essential. By tackling the root causes of the insurgency, governments can work toward a more lasting and effective resolution to the crisis.

Current Status

Post-Peace Agreement Challenges in Colombia

The Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) is a guerrilla group created in 1964 in Colombia. This group was formed as the military wing of the Colombian Communist Party.[99] Their objective is to represent the rural population on issues related to social and economic injustices.[100] It is the largest of all Colombian rebel groups, with an estimated 10,000 armed soldiers and thousands of supporters.[101] The FARC had involved the Colombian government in an armed dispute that continued for over five decades. This conflict led to huge loss of life, displacements, and disruption to Colombian society.[102] The FARC employed a decentralized structure of regional fronts, allowing it to maintain a constant presence

92   "Efraín Ríos Montt," *Encyclopædia Britannica*, accessed August 5, 2024, https://www.britannica.com/biography/Jose-Efrain-Rios-Montt
93   Rachel Sieder and Richard Wilson, "Negotiating Rights: The Guatemalan Peace Process," 1997, https://rc-services-assets.s3.eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/02_Guatemala.pdf
94   Rachel Sieder and Richard Wilson, "Negotiating Rights: The Guatemalan Peace Process,"
95   Humza Kazmi, "Counterinsurgency and the Rule of Law," University of Pennsylvania Journal of International Law 33, no. 3 (2012): 871. https://www.law.upenn.edu/live/files/972-kazmi33upajintll8712012pdf
96   Kazmi, "Counterinsurgency and the Rule of Law," 872.
97   United States Department of The Army, "Counterinsurgency."
98   United States Department of The Army, "Counterinsurgency."
99   "FARC," *Encyclopædia Britannica*, September 4, 2024, https://www.britannica.com/topic/FARC
100   InSight Crime, "FARC," *InSight Crime*, November 23, 2023, https://insightcrime.org/colombia-organized-crime-news/farc-profile/
101   "FARC," Enclyclopedia Britannica.
102   InSight Crime, "FARC."

Agreement between Colombian Government and FARC

Credit: Gobierno de Chile

and carry out a range of attacks, particularly in remote and marginalized regions.[103] These attacks included ambushes, kidnappings, assassinations, and the use of improvised explosives across the Colombian countryside. The group also engaged in the lucrative illegal drug and weapon trade, using the proceeds to fund its armed activities.[104] Over time, the FARC adapted its tactics and diversified its income streams in response to the Colombian government's counterinsurgency efforts. Some of them included US military aid and the use of elite security forces. However, the group sought to establish a permanent territorial presence and governing structures in areas under its control.[105] In 2016, a Peace Accord was signed by the Colombian government and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia. It sought to end over 50 years of armed conflict between the two parties in the state.[106] The formal peace negotiations began in October 2012 with an agreement that the Colombian government and FARC would enter into talks in Havana, Cuba.[107]

Over the next four years, both parties engaged in tough and strained negotiations. Those negotiations included issues such as land reform, political participation of FARC, victims' rights, termination of armed conflict, and drug trafficking.[108] Both parties had to concede and make many compromises to further the process. The process was carefully constructed as it had the United Nations verification to ensure that FARC combatants would indeed lay down their arms in a transparent and verifiable manner.[109] In 2017, the FARC turned over the last of its accessible weapons to UN representatives. The total number of weapons that were turned in was more than 8,000 firearms and approximately 1.3 million cartridges. With this action, the Colombian government declared an official end to its conflict with the FARC and began its transition into a political party.[110]

The other key part of the agreement was political participation. Recognizing the FARC's transition from an armed insurgency

103   InSight Crime, "FARC."
104   InSight Crime, "FARC."
105   InSight Crime, "FARC."
106   "The peace process in Colombia," Government.no, last updated June 27, 2024, https://www.regjeringen.no/en/topics/foreign-affairs/peace-and-reconciliation-efforts/norways_engagement/peace_colombia/id2522231/
107   Regjeringen, "The peace process in Colombia."
108   United Nations, "Implementation of Colombia Peace Accord Gaining Traction, Special Representative Tells Security Council, as It Prepares to Discuss Expanding Verification Mission | Meetings Coverage and Press Releases," United Nations, July 12, 2023, https://press.un.org/en/2023/sc15353.doc.htm
109   United Nations, "Implementation of Colombia Peace Accord."
110   "FARC," Encyclopædia Britannica, September 4, 2024, https://www.britannica.com/topic/FARC

into a political actor permitted the formation of the Commons as a legal political party.[111] To ensure a smooth transition, it was agreed that FARC would have ten guaranteed seats in the Colombian Congress for two electoral periods, regardless of their electoral performance. This provision created the ground for the integration of FARC into the democratic processes of Colombia and minimized the risk of further insurgencies.[112] They also discussed rural development and land reform, given that land inequality had been an important factor in the conflict.[113] This agreement considers reforms in the countryside. For example, improving infrastructure, increasing access to basic services in rural areas, and developing programs to enhance agricultural productivity and living conditions.[114]

This peace accord definitely sealed its place in history, ending over five decades of conflict. It promised the demobilization of thousands of FARC combatants, their socioeconomic integration, and the promotion of peace and development in the war-torn area. Although a peace accord had been signed, not all FARC members accepted the conditions under which they were to demobilize. According to them, the peace accord is failing in practice. These dissidents have reorganized, symbolizing a large, destabilizing force in Colombia.[115] They state that the government has not complied with its commitments to land reform, economic support, and security guarantees for the demobilized combatants.[116]

One of the primary challenges is the refusal of certain FARC elements to fully demobilize and reintegrate into civilian life as stipulated by the peace accord.[117] Some mid-level commanders and rank-and-file members have broken away from the FARC's central leadership. They have rejected the terms of the agreement and opted to maintain their armed struggle. These dissident groups have been able to capitalize on the persistent

appeal of the romanticized guerrilla image, as well as the lingering socioeconomic and governance gaps in the regions historically affected by the conflict.[118] Two of the primary objectives of the FARC dissident groups include the need to maintain an armed presence and the ability to retain control over strategic areas of the country.[119] Whereas the FARC, in general, demobilized, these sub-groups refused to disarm and have since then tried to maintain their political and military influence. These sub-group threats include continued violence, entrenched power, impediments to reconciliation, potential escalation, and obstacles to recovery and development. They wish to prevent any advance by government security forces, intimidate local populations, and state dominance over the areas in their sway. They do so by maintaining access to arms and a robust operational capacity.

Dissident groups are tied to their continued presence in lucrative illicit economies that have been fueling the Colombian conflict.[120] They have been seeking to expand their control over illegal trade and mining with extortion. This has allowed them to maintain a huge revenue stream and to continue their campaign of violence and intimidation against local communities, security forces, and former members of the FARC who have accepted the peace process. Most importantly, the gun trade has been intrinsic to the strategy of FARC dissidents.[121] The dissident groups involved in illicit gun trafficking have mostly turned weapons from the legal market or acquired them via black market channels. Thus, this helped them continue violent actions as well as control over the areas where their influence can be traced back. The availability of firearms directly impacts the capacity of FARC dissidents to engage in violent actions. Armed with a diverse arsenal, they can confront government forces and rival

111 Angela Barajas, "Colombia's FARC unveils new political party," *CNN*, (August 2017) https://edition.cnn.com/2017/08/31/americas/colombia-farc-new-political-party/index.html
112 United Nations Security Council, Document S/2023/477 (27 June, 2023) https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/S_2023_477.pdf
113 United Nations Security Council, Document S/2023/477 (27 June, 2023)
114 United Nations Security Council, Document S/2023/477 (27 June, 2023)
115 Adam Isacson, "A Long Way to Go: Implementing Colombia's Peace Accord after Five Years," WOLA, November 23, 2021, https://www.wola.org/analysis/a-long-way-to-go-implementing-colombias-peace-accord-after-five-years/
116 Isacson, "A Long Way to Go."
117 United Nations Security Council, Document S/2023/477 (27 June, 2023)
118 Isacson, "A Long Way to Go."
119 "Colombia, FARC Guerrillas 'Return to Arms' | How Does Law Protect in War? - Online Casebook," ICRC, accessed August 8, 2024, https://casebook.icrc.org/case-study/colombia-farc-guerrillas-return-arms
120 InSight Crime, "Ex-FARC Mafia," March 11, 2024, https://insightcrime.org/colombia-organized-crime-news/ex-farc-mafia/
121 InSight Crime, "Ex-FARC Mafia."

criminal organizations for control of lucrative drug trafficking routes.[122] This violence serves a dual purpose: it intimidates local populations and asserts dominance in contested areas. The dissidents' ability to inflict fear and chaos enables them to continue their activities with diminished opposition. Moreover, the constant threat of violence acts as a powerful tool for recruitment and retention, as individuals may join out of fear or a desire for protection.[123]

The challenge of dealing with the trade of guns by the dissidents of FARC is further complicated by the geographical spread of their activities. They have been very successful in making a presence in areas previously controlled by FARC, remote and marginalized parts of the country. They had been using their access to illicit arms to hold onto these territories through their use of violence, extortion, and other associated crimes.

The FARC dissidents have been in a position to make alliances with other criminal organizations, like the National Liberation Army (ELN) and different drug trafficking groups. This further complicates this security landscape and challenges the government's building of lasting peace.[124] What helped most for the dissidents was that this alliance extended the scope of their operation. It also brought resources and intelligence to them, besides presenting a very tough challenge for the state's counterinsurgency and law enforcement initiatives. Therefore, the post-agreement period in Colombia seems less directly focused on taking power at the national level. The dissidents' objectives revolve around maintaining territorial control, keeping engagements in illicit economies, and hampering the process of peace implementation.[125] The primary objectives are the diminishing of the government's actions, creating friction among the demobilized ranks of FARC, and obstructing the extension of state presence into traditional areas of their control.

This approach allows the guerrilla groups to preserve their relevance and bargaining power within the evolving political landscape without directly confronting the Colombian state and its security forces in a bid for national power.[126] They seek to consolidate their position in regional influence by holding on to these streams of illicit revenue and by disrupting the peace process since this has hindered the government in seeking lasting stability and security.[127] It is important to note that this shift in objectives does not necessarily mean the guerrilla groups have abandoned their long-term aspirations of political influence or the establishment of a parallel governance structure in their areas of control.[128] However, their current approach is more tactical and focused on preserving their local dominance rather than directly seeking to seize power at the national level.

Ultimately, post-peace agreement Colombia represents a new frontier in this country's quest for stability and security.[129] The strategies of the guerrilla groups have changed, but nothing has changed in their commitment to safeguarding their authority and control. Overcoming this challenge will require a sustained and coordinated effort as Colombia works to consolidate the progress made through the historic peace accord and build a more just and secure future for all its citizens.[130]

Guerilla Activity in the Darien Gap

The Darien Gap is a 60-mile stretch in the jungle located between Colombia and Panama. It is located in the center of Central America and forms both a natural and geopolitical boundary between those countries.[131] Today, it stands as an infamous illustration of how Latin American countries are

122 Mark Wilson, "FARC During the Peace Process," William J. Perry Center, 2020, https://wjpcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/FARC-During-the-Peace-Process-.pdf
123 Wilson, "FARC During the Peace Process."
124 InSight Crime, "Ex-FARC Mafia."
125 "FARC Dissident Groups - Colombia Peace," Colombia Peace, accessed August 8, 2024, https://colombiapeace.org/farc-dissident-groups/
126 Javier Cárdenas et al., "Perceptions of FARC Dissident Groups in Colombia: Implications for Future Peace," MEAC Findings Report 17 (New York: United Nations University, 2022), 3. https://unidir.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/FARCdissidentColombia_FINAL-1.pdf
127 Cárdenas et al., "Perceptions of FARC Dissident Groups in Colombia," 3.
128 Wilson, "FARC During the Peace Process."
129 Wilson, "FARC During the Peace Process."
130 Isacson, "A Long Way to Go."
131 "Darién," Encyclopædia Britannica, accessed August 8, 2024, https://www.britannica.com/place/Darien-region-Panama

Weapon Trafficking
Credit: Berkó Pál

challenged in claiming control and holding security within their borders.[132] It is a region of outstanding biodiversity, hosting rare species proliferating in tropical rainforests. On the other hand, it is a landscape of extreme ruggedness, steep mountains, and no infrastructure.[133] Any crossing of the Darien Gap is dangerous because there are few trails to point the route. This isolation is a challenge to the development of the region. The governments of Colombia and Panama have failed to control the region. This makes it difficult to provide basic services to the communities living there.

The Darien Gap has become a critical passageway for migrants who intend to travel from South America toward North America.[134] Hundreds of thousands of migrants, including families and minors, engage in this risky journey annually. This leaves them at risk of such dangers as adverse weather conditions, animals, and treacherous terrain.[135] Migrants are often at the mercy of violence, extortion, and exploitation by criminal gangs controlling these areas in what proves to be a dangerous journey.[136] More than 500,000 people crossed the Darien Gap in 2023, many bound for the United States. Thousands of Venezuelans, Haitians, and Ecuadorians, as well as others from Asia and Africa, have suffered grave abuses crossing this treacherous terrain.[137]

The Darien Gap is an ideal hideout place and operational base for many guerrilla groups because of its isolation and inaccessibility. Notably, the National Liberation Army and dissidents of the FARC operate in the Gap. They use it for their illegal activities like drug trafficking, arms smuggling, and extortion due to the lack of law enforcement.[138] The dense jungle provides cover for the cultivation and transportation of illicit drugs. Guerrilla groups use the Darien Gap as a corridor to move drugs from production areas in Colombia to distribution networks across Central America and beyond.[139] For example, FARC's 57th Front is active on the Colombia-

132 Encyclopædia Britannica,"Darién."
133 Encyclopædia Britannica, "Darién."
134 "'The Jungle May Swallow You': Surviving the Darien Gap," Norwegian Refugee Council, accessed August 8, 2024, https://www.nrc.no/feature/2023/the-jungle-may-swallow-you-surviving-the-darien-gap/
135 Norwegian Refugee Council, "'The jungle may swallow you': Surviving the Darién Gap."
136 Diana Roy and Sabine Baumgartner, "Crossing the Darién Gap: Migrants Risk Death on the Journey to the U.S.," Council on Foreign Relations, July 22, 2024, https://www.cfr.org/article/crossing-darien-gap-migrants-risk-death-journey-us
137 Human Rights Watch, "Neglected in the Jungle: Inadequate Protection and Assistance for Migrants and Asylum Seekers Crossing the Darién Gap," April 3, 2024, https://www.hrw.org/report/2024/04/03/neglected-jungle/inadequate-protection-and-assistance-migrants-and-asylum-seekers
138 International Crisis Group, "Bottleneck of the Americas: Crime and Migration on the Darien Gap," November 3, 2023, https://www.crisisgroup.org/latin-america-caribbean/andes/colombia-central-america/102-bottleneck-americas-crime-and-migration
139 Javier Lizcano Villalba and Raquel Ballestin, "How Organized Crime Profits from Migrant Flow Across Colombia's Darién Gap," InSight Crime, November 24, 2022, https://insightcrime.org/news/organized-crime-profits-migrants-darien-gap/

Panama border. Through it, they traffic drugs into the Central American sub-continent.[140] It is also known to collaborate with transnational drug trafficking organizations, notably those from Mexico and Colombia. The guerrilla unit has also been implicated in the discovery of coca plantations and cocaine processing laboratories in the Darien area.[141] In addition, the porous borders of this region facilitate arms and ammunition with ease. The guerrilla groups procure weapons and move them through the Darien Gap to fuel their armed struggle for territorial expansion. The 57th Front is the major FARC unit that funnels weapons into Colombia through the Darien Gap.[142] This stretch also contains a series of small bays that the maritime traffickers use to reach both the Caribbean and Pacific coasts of Colombia by sea.[143]

The presence of guerrilla groups within the Darien Gap presents huge geopolitical implications for Colombia, Panama, and the region. The activities conducted by the groups of guerrillas in the Darien Gap represent a spillover of deep-rooted conflict in Colombia. Despite peace settlements, dissident factions remain who continue to wage attacks from this region to be out of the radar of regime forces and to keep their revolt going. The existence of these guerrilla groups along its borders is a severe threat to Panama's security.[144] Cross-border incursions, spillover of violence, cross-border crimes, and destabilizing effects from illicit activities are all challenges that the Panamanian and Colombian government has to wrestle with.[145] These issues collectively challenge regional stability and, therefore, demand cooperative and multi-faceted solutions.

Therefore, the role played by the Darien Gap as a transit route for migrants and illicit goods contributes to broader regional instability.[146] The presence of drugs, arms, and displaced persons across the region creates security challenges and undermines efforts at promoting peace and development in Central America.

In addition to these guerrilla groups, other criminal gangs in the Darien Gap include the Gaitanist Self-Defense Forces of Colombia and Los Rastrojos, both natives of Colombia. The Gaitanist Self-Defense Forces of Colombia, also known as the Gulf Clan, is among the strongest and most influential criminal organizations currently fighting in Colombia.[147] The Gulf Clan was originally founded by individuals who formerly worked for the demobilized paramilitary groups, and many members of it were guerrillas such as FARC, which have experience in similar insurgent tactics, drug trafficking, arms smuggling, and extortion.[148]

Alliances between groups are based on shared interests, often related to drug trafficking and controlling territory. These alliances tend to be unstable and can easily turn into violent competition over land, beliefs, or power.[149] This happens because the groups are trying to dominate profitable areas, especially those involved in producing or moving drugs. Guerrilla groups are usually motivated by politics or ideology, while criminal organizations are more focused on making money.[150] These fundamental differences often lead to conflicts, especially when one group sees the other as threatening their goals or territory.

140   "FARC 57th Front in Panama," InSight Crime, 2016, ,https://insightcrime.org/panama-organized-crime-news/farc-57th-front-in-panama/.
141   "FARC 57th Front in Panama," InSight Crime.
142   "FARC 57th Front in Panama," InSight Crime.
143   Kim Cragin and Bruce Hoffman, "Arms Trafficking and Colombia," 2003, https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/monograph_reports/2005/MR1468.pdf
144   "FARC 57th Front in Panama," InSight Crime.
145   Orlando Quiñones Marriaga, "Transnational Consequences of the Colombia – FARC Peace Process," Centro de Estudios Estratégicos del Ejército del Perú, July 11, 2024, https://ceeep.mil.pe/2024/07/11/consecuencias-transnacionales-del-proceso-de-paz-colombia-farc/?lang=en
146   Norwegian Refugee Council, "'The jungle may swallow you': Surviving the Darién Gap."
147   Juan Diego Cárdenas, "Gaitanistas License Migrant Smuggling in Colombian Darién Gap: Report," InSight Crime, November 24, 2023, https://insightcrime.org/news/hrw-gaitanistas-lmigrant-smuggling-colombian-darien-gap/
148   Cárdenas, "Gaitanistas License Migrant Smuggling in Colombian Darién Gap."
149   Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime, "On the Border: The Gulf Clan, Irregular Migration and Organized Crime in Darién" (Geneva: Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime, November 2022), 1, https://globalinitiative.net/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Andre%CC%81s-Cajiao-Paula-Tobo-Mariana-Botero-Restrepo-On-the-border-The-Gulf-Clan-irregular-migration-and-organized-crime-in-Darie%CC%81n-GI-TOC-November-2022.pdf
150   Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime, "On the Border: The Gulf Clan, Irregular Migration and Organized Crime in Darién" (Geneva: Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime, November 2022), 1.

The Colombian government developed Operation "Agamemnon," targeting the Gulf Clan, to mitigate the drug and arms trafficking by these groups.[151] Operation "Agamemnon" is a mixture of military effort, police, and intelligence to dismantle the infrastructure of this group and capture the different leaders. Currently, they have arrested more than 177 members.[152] Panama has similarly implemented Operation Shield to combat guerilla groups and other militants who contribute to migrant smuggling in the Darien Gap.[153] The Colombian and Panamanian governments have been working together to attempt to slow down migration through the Darien Gap to help protect vulnerable individuals as well as remove control from guerilla groups.

The Darien Gap serves as a refuge for these guerrilla fighters, allowing them to carry out hit-and-run attacks and maintain a presence in the area despite efforts by state forces to assert control.[154] The harsh conditions of the jungle offer cover and logistical advantages for guerrilla operations, making it difficult for conventional military forces to engage with them effectively.[155]

Both governments have undertaken a myriad of development programs aimed at breaking these supply chains, improving socio-economic conditions, and offering alternative livelihood means to local communities.[156] They are banking on an enhanced border security measure by improving surveillance technology and patrols to assist in intercepting the flow of illegal arms. The Colombian and Panamanian security forces have been involved in joint operations to clamp down on cross-border smuggling routes.[157] They formally announced

they would be working together to end the irregular movement of both goods and people through the Darien Gap, provide more legal pathways for migrants to reach their destinations, and increase services for individuals across the border for 60 days.[158]

The authorities understand that just improving security won't solve the root causes of violence and instability in the Darien Gap. So they are also running development programs, sometimes with other governments, to boost the economy, education, healthcare, and community power and control.[159] This aims to address the socioeconomic factors fueling the problems. The Colombian and Panamanian governments can create more stability and safety by focusing more on supporting the local communities and their well-being.[160] This could reduce the incentive for people to turn to illegal activities and instead promote sustainable development in the Darien Gap region. The Darien Gap is one of the most politically strategic areas in Latin America.[161] Its remote location and poor living conditions have made it a safe haven for guerrilla groups, with serious humanitarian and geopolitical consequences. Colombia, Panama, and regional actors could mitigate these concerns by addressing deeper drivers of instability and offering assistance to the affected populations.[162]

Sustainable Development Goals

All UN member states have adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which is based on 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).[163] The SDGs are intended to address the world's multifaceted challenges and promote global

151   "Colombia Captures 181 Clan del Golfo Members," Diálogo Américas, March 8, 2021, https://dialogo-americas.com/articles/colombia-captures-181-clan-del-golfo-members/.
152   Diálogo Americas, "Colombia Captures 181 Clan del Golfo Members."
153   Caitlyn Yates and Juan Pappier, "How the Treacherous Darien Gap Became a Migration Crossroads of the Americas," Migration Policy Institute, September 20, 2023, https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/darien-gap-migration-crossroads.
154   International Crisis Group, "Bottleneck of the Americas: Crime and Migration on the Darien Gap."
155   Fundación Ideas para la Paz, "On The Border: The Gulf Clan, Irregular Migration And Organized Crime In Darién,"
156   Cragin, Kim, and Bruce Hoffman, "Arms Trafficking and Colombia,"
157   Cragin, Kim, and Bruce Hoffman, "Arms Trafficking and Colombia,"
158   Caitlyn Yates and Juan Pappier, "How the Treacherous Darien Gap Became a Migration Crossroads of the Americas,"
159   "US, Panama Partnering to Address Darien Gap Migration," VOA News, July 1, 2024, https://www.voanews.com/a/us-panama-partnering-to-address-darien-gap-migration/7681748.html
160   "Paving the Road to Peaceful Coexistence for Migrant and Resident Populations in the Darien," InfoSegura, accessed August 8, 2024, https://infosegura.org/en/blogs/paving-road-peaceful-coexistence-migrant-and-resident-populations-darien-0
161   "The Darien: a Gap between Hope and Despair | Office of the Special Envoy for Refugees and Migrants from Venezuela," IOM, accessed August 8, 2024, https://respuestavenezolanos.iom.int/en/stories/darien-gap-between-hope-and-despair
162   Cragin, Kim, and Bruce Hoffman, "Arms Trafficking and Colombia,"
163   United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development," accessed August 8, 2024, https://sdgs.un.org/2030agenda

peace.[164] DISEC plays a unique role in attaining sustainable development goals, as it specializes in security matters. Without international peace, the 2030 SDGs remain out of reach, putting DISEC in a crucial position to address them. Likewise, moving toward fulfilling the SDGs will strengthen the international community's ability to address guerrilla groups' practices.

Addressing guerrilla activity in Latin America is directly related to Goal 16: Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions.[165] The objective is to "promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all, and build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels."[166]

For example, Target 16.1 aims to "significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere."[167] This objective is strongly related to addressing guerrilla activity in Latin America. In this region, violence and instability are driven by many guerrilla groups and other armed actors. Several actions aiming to strengthen the rule of law and governance, enhance social and economic development, and ensure the effective reintegration of former combatants are essential. Additionally, it is important to improve security conditions, enhance international cooperation, and protect human rights to contribute to lasting peace and stability.

Target 16.4 is another main goal. It aims to "significantly reduce illicit financial and arms flows, strengthen the recovery and return of stolen assets, and combat all forms of organized crime by 2030."[168] This objective is particularly pertinent to Latin America. In this region, guerrilla activities are often sustained through illicit financial transactions and arms trafficking. These groups can be further weakened by reducing their operational capabilities. This can be achieved through improved border controls, international agreements, and effective disarmament programs. Also, strengthening the recovery and return of stolen assets, supplemented by effective policing and community engagement, can weaken organized crime groups.

Addressing guerrilla activity in Latin America can also directly relate to Goal 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth. The objective is to "promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all."[169] An example is Target 8.5, which aims to "achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value by 2030."[170] This way, governments can provide alternatives to becoming part of armed groups. It can be done by engaging in productive, full employment, with a guarantee of decent conditions of work, with special attention to youth employment, and promoting gender equality and inclusion. Such actions advance individual livelihoods and contribute to social stability and economic development, diminishing the appeal and impact of guerrilla activities.

The SDGs are integrated, and addressing guerrilla activity in Latin America is an important piece that fits into the SDGs. As a UN body, DISEC must continue to address this issue to ensure that the SDGs will be achieved.

Bloc Analysis

Points of Division

To properly address the issue, it is essential to understand how governments have responded to criminal organizations globally.[171] Policy measures adopted by countries against

164   United Nations, "Sustainable Development Goals: 17 Goals to Transform our World," accessed July 30, 2024, https://www.un.org/en/exhibits/page/sdgs-17-goals-transform-world
165   United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, "Goal 16 | Department of Economic and Social Affairs," accessed July 30, 2024, https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal16
166   United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, "Goal 16."
167   "Goal 16: Target and Indicators | Department of Economic and Social Affairs," United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, accessed July 30, 2024, https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal16
168   "Goal 16: Target and Indicators | Department of Economic and Social Affairs."
169   United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, "Goal 8 | Department of Economic and Social Affairs," accessed July 30, 2024, https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal8
170   "Goal 8: Target and Indicators | Department of Economic and Social Affairs," United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, accessed July 30, 2024, https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal8.
171   UNODC, "Strategic Vision for Latin America and the Caribbean 2022-2025," accessed August 3, 2024, https://www.unodc.org/res/

criminal groups range from very aggressive military actions to strictly judicial ones. Understanding these differences is important to the effectiveness of anti-crime measures, the rule of law, and the human rights landscape within these countries.[172] Therefore, the government's response can be divided into three main categories: high, moderated, and low government response to criminal groups.

High government response to criminal groups

Countries that belong to this bloc have a quick and strong approach to criminal groups. In countries where a high response is employed, the governments apply a very violent approach to countering criminal-group violence. This often involves the use of extrajudicial killing, whereby security forces deliberately execute individuals without judicial process or oversight. Justification for this is often presented as a quick way to eliminate threats.[173] Another common practice is torture, which security forces use to extract information or intimidate suspects. Also, the disproportionate use of military force is meant to imply a massive display of armed forces in civilian areas. It uses heavy armament, aerial bombardments, and large-scale ground assaults. While aimed at the efficient dissolution of criminal groups, these techniques often result in a large number of civilian victims, property destruction, and displacement of communities.

These aggressive tactics have encouraged wide-scale human rights violations and disrespect for the rule of law and due process. In these confrontations between government forces and criminal groups, civilians are often caught in the crossfire. They can also be part of the collateral damage that results in immense human suffering and the loss of public confidence.[174] Security forces act with impunity, given the absence of accountability or oversight, and continue to carry out unlawful detentions and extra-judicial killings and suppress dissent. This

tends to undermine the legal framework and judicial processes in the interests of practical suppression of criminal activity. Therefore, it erodes the justice system and encourages a culture of lawlessness. Such measures may sometimes be effective in mitigating an immediate threat but too often perpetuate cycles of violence and aggravate social divisions. It also has negative implications for that state's reputation within the international community.

Countries that take this approach include Mexico, where the government has utilized the military to combat drug cartels, leading to violent clashes and human rights concerns.[175] El Salvador has also implemented mass arrests and severe measures to suppress gang violence. Similarly, Brazilian police and security forces have been criticized for using excessive force and extrajudicial killings when confronting organized crime, particularly in the country's impoverished favela neighborhoods.

Moderated government response to criminal groups

Countries that belong to this bloc have a balanced approach to criminal groups. In countries with a moderated response, the governments apply a more measured balance between the rule of law and security measures. The approach is based on using judicial processes to ensure suspects are brought to justice through proper legal channels.[176] This ensures the integrity of the judicial system. Intelligence gathering enables the authorities to prevent and disrupt the criminal network with less reliance on force. While they may turn, at times, to heightened security actions or the use of force, these are carefully controlled and used as a last resort. The emphasis is on the legal and cooperative methods to break up criminal organizations and to ensure that operations are conducted within the framework of the law.

strategy/STRATEGIC_VISION_LATIN_AMERICA_AND_THE_CARIBBEAN_2022_2025_ENE17_EDsigned.pdf

172   Sabrina Adamoli et al., Organised Crime Around the World, HEUNI Publication Series No. 31 (Helsinki: HEUNI, 1998), http://old.heuni.fi/material/attachments/heuni/reports/6KdD32kXX/Hreport_31.pdf

173   David H. Ucko and Thomas A. Marks, "Organized Crime as Irregular Warfare: Strategic Lessons for Assessment and Response", National Defense University Press, last modified September 7, 2023, https://ndupress.ndu.edu/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/3512123/.

174   Ucko and Marks, "Organized Crime as Irregular Warfare: Strategic Lessons for Assessment and Response"

175   Diana Roy, "Mexico's Long War: Drugs, Crime, and the Cartels", CFR, last accessed October 10, 2024, https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/mexicos-long-war-drugs-crime-and-cartels/.

176   Counter Terrorism in the International Law Context, (Vienna: UNODC, 2021), https://www.unodc.org/pdf/terrorism/CTLTC_CT_in_the_Intl_Law_Context_1_Advance_copy.pdf

Another core element of this strategy is international cooperation, whereby governments work together with neighboring countries and international organizations in efforts to crack down on transnational crime.[177] This makes the system of anti-crime initiatives more effective and leads to the rooting out of causes of organized crimes. Through judicial processes, intelligence gathering, and international cooperation, this approach seeks to strike a balance between security and the protection of human rights. This approach aims to build trust in government institutions and respect for the rule of law while avoiding aggressive tactics that could lead to human rights violations and social unrest.[178]

Examples of countries in this bloc include the Dominican Republic, Slovakia, and Botswana. Slovakia has several laws addressing criminal groups to prevent organized crime. They have initiated several campaigns through state and non-state actors that work within the community to prevent the spread of crime groups. Moreover, Botswana falls into this bloc with several policies in place to address criminal groups with harsh penalties for many offenses.

Low government response to criminal groups

Countries belonging to this bloc generally respond peacefully to criminal groups. In countries with a low government response, the governments apply a strategy that conveys a strong trust in the rule of law and human rights. The law enforcement apparatus, together with efficient intelligence gatherers, is the core of any anti-crime policy.[179] Any move against the criminals would be carried out within the limits of the rule of law; no activity is undertaken outside the spectrum endorsed by the law. The use of force is thus limited and closely monitored to avoid abuses and excesses, including the linked requirement for transparency. It is based on legal and non-violent means, which place considerable emphasis on tackling the root causes of organized crime through socio-economic development, education, and community engagement.[180]

This strategy also includes the close collaboration of international organizations and neighboring countries in the assistance to combat transnational crime. Such cooperation allows these countries' anti-crime measures to be more effective, making this a comprehensive approach to fighting crime networks. The approach seeks to uphold democratic values and institutions by upholding the rule of law and human rights, avoiding severe measures that turn off the public's trust and social stability. The goal is for sustainable peace and security, achieved through the pursuit of root causes of organized crimes and not forceful suppression.

Some countries that belong to this bloc include Sweden and Luxembourg. Sweden, for example, does not criminalize membership in an organized crime group and provides several alternative forms of punishment for criminal groups rather than incarceration. Similarly, while Luxembourg has laws against organized crime groups, it experiences these groups on a much smaller scale, resulting in a less severe approach towards criminals.

Committee Mission

The Disarmament and International Security Committee addresses disarmament and global challenges and threats to peace that affect the international community. It seeks out solutions to the challenges in the international security regime.[181] Among the most impending dangers in Latin America flows from guerrilla movements. This threat directly falls under the mandate of DISEC.[182]Countering the threat from guerrilla groups in Latin America is a complex, multidimensional process. These non-state armed actors generally have different levels of support among local populations. This occurs mostly in areas where the state is

177 *Counter Terrorism in the International Law Context*
178 *Counter Terrorism in the International Law Context*
179 UNODC, "Special investigative techniques and intelligence gathering", last accessed October 11, 2024, https://www.unodc.org/e4j/en/organized-crime/module-8/key-issues/special-investigative-techniques/intro.html/.
180 Catalina Perdomo and Catalina Uribe Burcher, *Deterring the Influence of Organized Crime on Local Democracy*, (Stockhold: IDEA, 2016), https://www.idea.int/sites/default/files/publications/protecting-politics-deterring-the-influence-of-organized-crime-on-local-democracy.pdf
181 "Disarmament and International Security (First Committee)," United Nations General Assembly, accessed August 7, 2024. https://www.un.org/en/ga/first/
182 "Disarmament and International Security (First Committee)." United Nations General Assembly.

not very present or lacking in legitimacy.[183] In addition, the decentralized structure and asymmetrical tactics that characterize guerrilla groups make them difficult to deter by conventional military means alone.[184]

Moreover, the underlying causes of guerrilla activity often call for comprehensive and long-term solutions that must go beyond mere security measures. These include socioeconomic inequality, political marginalization, and illicit economies such as weapon trafficking. These deep-rooted causes must be addressed to achieve sustainable peace, stability, and security. Delegates will play a crucial role within this committee through debate and collaboration. While exploring this topic, delegates must investigate how the UN and other international bodies engage on this topic. Thus, it is important to understand the drivers and complexities of guerrilla movements. Delegates should consider the role of the UN and other international bodies, promote comprehensive approaches that balance security measures and efforts to address root causes and foster regional cooperation and coordination. Lastly, it's essential to integrate a human rights perspective and emphasize inclusive and sustainable solutions that engage diverse, relevant parties and address long-term challenges.

---

183   S. Kalyanaraman, "Conceptualisation of Guerrilla Warfare," *Strategic Analysis: A Monthly Journal of the IDSA*, (Apr-Jun 2003, Vol. XXVII, No. 2) https://ciaotest.cc.columbia.edu/olj/sa/sa_apr03/sa_apr03kas01.html
184   Kalyanaraman, "Conceptualisation of Guerrilla Warfare."

Glossary

Asymmetric warfare: warfare that is between opposing forces which differ greatly in military power and that typically involves the use of unconventional weapons and tactics (such as those associated with guerrilla warfare and terrorist attacks).[1]

Autonomy: the freedom for a country, a region or an organization to govern itself independently. [2]

Bombardments: an attack in which bombs are dropped on it continuously.[3]

Cartel: a group of separate companies that agree to increase profits by fixing prices and not competing with each other.[4]

Counterinsurgency: action taken against a group of people who are trying to take control of a country by force.[5]

Decentralized organization: structure that allows more decision-making authority in the hands of middle management. In such organizations, these middle managers have enough decision-making power to run daily operations without checking in with superiors.[6]

Disarmament: act of reducing, limiting, or abolishing weapons.[7]

Dissident: a person who strongly disagrees with and criticizes their government, especially in a country where this kind of action is dangerous.[8]

Extrajudicial: happening outside the normal power of the law.[9]

Favela: a poor area in or near a Brazilian city, with many small houses that are close together and in bad condition.[10]

Geopolitical: connected with the political relations between countries and groups of countries in the world, as influenced by their geography.[11]

Ideological: based on or relating to a system of ideas and ideals, especially concerning economic or political theory and policy.[12]

Leninist: someone who believes in the social, political, and economic principles and theories developed from Marxism by the Russian politician V. I. Lenin.[13]

Marxist: that follows Marxism. Marxism posits that the struggle between social classes—specifically between the

1 "Asymmetric Warfare," *Merriam-Webster*, accessed August 14, 2024, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/asymmetric%20 warfare.
2 "Autonomy," *Oxford Learner's Dictionaries*, accessed August 14, 2024, https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/us/definition/english/ autonomy?q=autonomy.
3 "Bombardment," *Oxford Learner's Dictionaries*, accessed August 14, 2024, https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/us/definition/ english/bombardment?q=Bombardments
4 "Cartel," *Oxford Learner's Dictionaries*, accessed August 14, 2024, https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/us/definition/english/ cartel?q=Cartels
5 "Counter-insurgency," Oxford Learner's Dictionaries, accessed August 14, 2024, https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/us/ definition/english/counter-insurgency?q=Counterinsurgency.
6 "Decentralized Organizational Structure," *MasterClass*, accessed August 14, 2024, https://www.masterclass.com/articles/decentralized- organizational-structure.
7 "What Does Disarmament Mean?" *Disarm Secure*, accessed August 14, 2024, https://www.disarmsecure.org/disarmament-101-resources/ what-does-disarmament-mean
8 "Dissident," *Oxford Learner's Dictionaries*, accessed August 14, 2024, https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/us/definition/english/ dissident_1?q=Dissident.
9 "Extrajudicial," *Oxford Learner's Dictionaries*, accessed August 14, 2024, https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/us/definition/ english/extrajudicial?q=Extrajudicial
10 "Favela," Oxford Learner's Dictionaries, accessed August 14, 2024, https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/us/definition/english/ favela?q=Favela
11 "Geopolitical," Oxford Learner's Dictionaries, accessed August 14, 2024, https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/us/definition/ english/geopolitical?q=Geopolitical.
12 "Ideology," *Merriam-Webster*, accessed August 14, 2024, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/ideology.
13 "Leninist," *Cambridge Dictionary*, accessed August 14, 2024, https://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/leninist.

bourgeoisie, or capitalists, and the proletariat, or workers—defines economic relations in a capitalist economy and will lead inevitably to a communist revolution.[14]

Neoliberal: relating to a type of liberalism that believes in a global free market, without government regulation, with businesses and industry controlled and run for profit by private owners.[15]

Paramilitary: organized group of individuals, often with a hierarchical structure and clear leaders, that operates with the aim of achieving specific goals through the use of force or violence.[16]

Spillover: the results or the effects of something that have spread to other situations or places.[17]

Stockpiles: a large amount of food, goods, or weapons that are stored ready for future use.[18]

INTERPOL: is the world's largest international police organization. It has administrative capabilities to help countries work together to fight international crime.[19]

Authoritarian: favoring or enforcing strict obedience to authority, especially that of the government, at the expense of personal freedom.[20]

Ranks: a grade of official standing in a hierarchy.[21]

14 "Marxism," Investopedia, last modified August 14, 2024, https://www.investopedia.com/terms/m/marxism.asp.
15 "Neoliberal," *Oxford Learner's Dictionaries*, accessed August 14, 2024, https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/us/definition/english/neoliberal?q=Neoliberal
16 "Paramilitary Group," *ScienceDirect*, accessed August 14, 2024, https://www.sciencedirect.com/topics/social-sciences/paramilitary-group
17 "Spillover," *Oxford Learner's Dictionaries*, accessed August 14, 2024, https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/us/definition/english/spillover?q=Spillover
18 "Stockpile," *Cambridge Dictionary*, accessed August 14, 2024, https://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/stockpile
19 "Researching Administrative Law," *Case Western Reserve University Law Research Guides*, accessed August 14, 2024, https://lawresearchguides.cwru.edu/c.php?g=872654&p=6292714
20 "Authoritarian Tactics," *The Spokesman-Review*, July 31, 2020, https://www.spokesman.com/stories/2020/jul/31/authoritarian-tactics/.
21 "Ranks," *Merriam-Webster*, accessed August 14, 2024, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/ranks

TOPIC B:
TERRORISM IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

Introduction

Between 2002 and 2018, the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) accounted for 36.1 percent of terrorist occurrences, 49.3 percent of terrorist-induced casualties, and 21.4 percent of conflict-related deaths worldwide.[1] The threat of transnational and domestic terrorism in this region poses an immediate risk to international security. However, the proliferation of terrorism in this region is relatively new. In the last few decades, between 1970 and 1990, terrorist attacks moved from Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) and Europe and Central Asia (ECA) to the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), South Asia (SAS), and sub-Saharan Africa (SSA).[2]

Due to the increase of terrorist organizations and attacks in the region, the MENA has been affected in several ways, which increases instability and insecurity. On the one hand, the presence of terrorist groups and attacks has increased and deepened political instability across the region. Terrorism often undermines state authority and weakens governments and institutions. These groups exploit the vacuum it creates to further their terror.[3] Similarly, it intensifies and prolongs regional conflicts and gives more space for proxy wars to happen. A proxy war is an armed conflict where a third party directly or indirectly sponsors state or non-state forces to influence the outcome. An example of this is the War on Terror, initiated by the United States as a counterterrorist military campaign after the September 11, 2001 attacks to fight against international terrorism. The War on Terror aggravated the preexisting regional crisis, which ultimately led to proxy wars and more instability in the region.[4]

Terrorism also poses a threat to civilians, as their safety is jeopardized and creates humanitarian crises. This threat has largely resulted in population displacement for those in the MENA. In 2022, in the MENA region, there were 16.2 million internally displaced people (IDPs). This number constitutes 23 percent of the global population of IDPs, making the MENA the region with the second highest concentration of IDPs, just after sub-Saharan Africa.[5] Similarly, the MENA has one of the world's most significant refugee crises, as seen in countries like Syria, Iraq, and Yemen. This leads to overcrowding of refugee camps and strain on neighboring countries. Lastly, these humanitarian crises create further issues that feed instability and terrorism, such as human rights violations, interrupted civil liberties, and a lack of resources.

Another issue that is caused and exacerbated by terrorism is a security crisis. This affects not only countries in the region but also those outside it. Terrorist groups in the MENA region often operate across borders, threatening the security of neighboring countries. The Sahel region, for example, has seen spillover effects from the conflicts in Libya and Mali, contributing to a broader security crisis. In the same way, MENA-based terrorist organizations have carried out several attacks outside their main operating area, also targeting Western countries, which have led to intense security measures.

Economic issues also play a massive role in maintaining and increasing terrorism in a region. The MENA has historically faced economic disparities. Since the emergence of terrorism, the economy of these countries and the region as a whole has faced significant disruption. Some of the most direct effects are human casualties and the devastation of industries' infrastructures, particularly in the agricultural sector.[6] On the other hand, indirect effects may include reduced foreign investment (FDI), capital flight, and unemployment.

1   Wukki Kim and Todd Sandler, "Middle East and North Africa: Terrorism and Conflicts," *Global Policy* 11, no. 4 (June 5, 2020): 424–38, https://doi.org/10.1111/1758-5899.12829.
2   Kim and Sandler, "Middle East and North Africa: Terrorism and Conflicts," 424–38.
3   Kim and Sandler, "Middle East and North Africa: Terrorism and Conflicts," 424–38.
4   Ola Tunander, "War on Terror and Transformation of World Order ," Peace Research Institute Oslo, 2004, https://www.prio.org/publications/3211.
5   International Organization for Migration (IOM), "Regional Snapshot: The Middle East & North Africa - Quarterly Report (January – March 2023) | Displacement Tracking Matrix," IOM, April 29, 2024, https://dtm.iom.int/reports/regional-snapshot-middle-east-north-africa-quarterly-report-january-march-2023.
6   Hashmat Ullah Khan, "An Analytical Investigation of Consequences of Terrorism in the Middle East," *Journal of Economic Criminology* 4 (May 1, 2024): 100067–67, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeconc.2024.100067.

Terrorism often results in the diversion of public and private resources away from economic development and toward protective measures, which destroys capital and halts the economic growth of a country.[7] In addition, an essential pillar of the economies of countries in the MENA region is oil. This sector has been significantly impacted. Terrorist operations have damaged critical infrastructure, therefore disrupting supply routes and causing fluctuations in oil production.[8]

Moreover, the MENA region's terror-affected states frequently see a shift in their economies toward illegal operations, such as the trafficking of weapons, to foster continuous violence and instability. Since the weight of violence and instability collapses legal and economic pathways, the black market for weapons becomes a vital source of funding for many actors, including terrorist organizations.[9] By giving terrorist organizations the weaponry they need to carry out their operations, this illegal arms trade contributes to the cycle of bloodshed and further destabilizes the area. The consequences go beyond the borders of the region because these illegal arms networks frequently operate in neighboring countries and even international markets. These matters impact security risks globally and produce conflicts in other susceptible areas. The consequences of this instability highlight the need to restore stability and safeguard economic resources as they affect domestic and international markets.

Furthermore, with the continued advances in technology, terrorist operations have changed. Terrorist organizations are now utilizing digital platforms to further their influence and reach. With the rise of cyberterrorism, these groups can attack vital infrastructure, interfere with communication networks, and spread propaganda with unparalleled speed and anonymity. Governments and security agencies face enormous hurdles due to this technical advancement, necessitating the development of new tactics and resources to identify, stop,

and neutralize these new threats. The growing prevalence of cyberattacks in terrorism highlights the necessity for creative counterterrorism strategies that can keep up with the quickly changing face of contemporary combat.[10]

These are only a few of the difficulties and dangers that terrorism has brought to the region. Solutions must be found to bring safety to the area and strengthen global security, following DISEC's mandate and scope. Every member of the committee must collaborate to find comprehensive answers to this issue and establish long-term peace and stability in the area. For the complex dynamics of terrorism in the Middle East and North Africa to be adequately addressed, cooperation, and dedication from all delegates will be necessary.

History and Description of the Issue

Origins and context of terrorism in MENA

Before the 21st century, terrorism in MENA was not as present. Terrorism in the region began around the 1970s with the emergence of Palestinian secular movements like Al Fatah and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine.[11] It evolved following the Iranian Islamic revolution and the creation of Iranian-backed Hezbollah. Terrorism then increased significantly in the Middle East from the 1990s-2000s as a result of unstable governments following conflicts and war, particularly in Afghanistan.[12]

To understand the motives of terrorism in the region from a historical perspective, it is important to consider societal divisions that occurred post-colonialism and post-conflict.[13] The impact of foreign influence on terrorist activity can be traced back hundreds of years. However, it is believed that the most impactful change in the Middle East comes

7 Harrison Bardwell and Mohib Iqbal, "The Economic Impact of Terrorism from 2000 to 2018," Peace Economics, Peace Science and Public Policy27, no.2 (2021): 227-261.https://doi.org/10.1515/peps-2020-0031.
8 Khan, "An Analytical Investigation of Consequences of Terrorism in the Middle East," 100067–67.
9 Khan, "An Analytical Investigation of Consequences of Terrorism in the Middle East," 100067–67.
10 Gabriel Weimann, *Cyberterrorism How Real Is the Threat?*, (Washington DC: United States Institute of Peace, 2004), https://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/sr119.pdf.
11 John Moore, "The Evolution of Islamic Terrorism: An Overview," PBS, Accessed September 11, 2024, https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/target/etc/modern.html.
12 John Moore, "The Evolution of Islamic Terrorism: An Overview."
13 Serge Stroobants, "Terrorism in the Middle East and North African Region," in *Handbook of Security Science* (Tampa: Springer Nature, 2022), 1109–28.

from the Sykes-Picot Agreement of 1916.[14] This agreement occurred between the United Kingdom and France in 1916, which divided the Ottoman Empire's various Arab territories following World War I.[15] This agreement created a map that largely cut through several ethnic and religious communities in the Middle East, which shaped the region for years to come. Many claim this agreement is responsible for the mass violence in the Middle East as the treaty influenced the rise of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) as well as other regional occupations. The frustrations resulting from this agreement have continued to feed anti-Western and insurgency terrorist motivations in the Middle East to this day.[16] Many more instances of outside influence have provided grounds for radicalization in the modern Middle East. An example of this can be seen with Afghanistan and the Soviet occupation that lasted until 1989, showcasing how foreign influence triggered the creation of insurgent movements constrained to using terrorist guerilla tactics.[17]

A second driver of terrorism in the Middle East is insurgent movements using terrorist tactics to achieve their goals. Thus, terrorism appears as a high-impact, low-cost strategy that is used in place of or in addition to guerilla warfare.[18] Such approaches have their roots in historical occurrences in the Middle East, including the Iranian Revolution and the Taliban's actions in Afghanistan. The third source of motivation for terrorist activities is the many ethno-religious conflicts in the Middle East. Terrorists have historically been motivated by conflicts between the various branches of the major religions practiced in the area.[19]

In regard to North Africa, historical, political, social, and economic elements interact to give rise to terrorism. The foundation for many of the issues that would eventually drive terrorism was set by the colonial history of the region, especially under French and Italian authority.[20] The Indigenous population harbored deep-seated anger due to the arbitrary borders imposed by colonial powers, the suppression of local cultures, and the commercial exploitation of resources. Several North African countries had socio-economic difficulties, authoritarian governments, and political unrest after gaining independence in the middle of the 20th century. Radical ideologies gained traction as a result of these regimes' inability to confront unemployment, poverty, and lack of political participation. Because of this, many Islamist groups gained momentum and popularity.[21]

These common problems unify the North African states despite differing beliefs and conflicts, damaging the legitimacy of the states. Political, historical, and social tensions will likely continue to spark social unrest and insurrection. Beyond this, ethnic fragmentation can be a major factor in some ethnic groups' continued cultural claims and the emergence of internal unrest, such as the Kabyles or Berbers. North Africa is marked by internal conflicts and rebellions, which characterized the weakness of the region for many years, from the end of the colonial period to the Arab Spring. For example, in 1991, the government canceled the legislative elections in Algeria. This started the Algerian Civil War, known as "the decade of terrorism" or the "black decade."[22] With the advent of the Armed Islamic Group (GIA) during this Civil War, Algeria became a hub for terrorism in North Africa in the 1990s. The military suppressed these groups, and following the suppression, Islamist guerrilla organizations like the Armed Islamic Group (GIA) surfaced. Since then, there has been a persistent threat of terrorist attacks by insurgent militias because the state does not have complete authority over its territory.[23]

After the 90s and especially after 2011, North Africa has come to be recognized as a central location for terrorism. Terrorist groups in the area are taking more and more ground both inside

14   Stroobants, "Terrorism in the Middle East and North African Region."
15   "A Century On: Why Arabs Resent Sykes-Picot," Al Jazeera, Accessed September 12, 2024, https://interactive.aljazeera.com/aje/2016/sykes-picot-100-years-middle-east-map/index.html.
16   Stroobants, "Terrorism in the Middle East and North African Region."
17   Stroobants, "Terrorism in the Middle East and North African Region."
18   Stroobants, "Terrorism in the Middle East and North African Region."
19   Stroobants, "Terrorism in the Middle East and North African Region."
20   Kim and Sandler, "Middle East and North Africa: Terrorism and Conflicts," 424–38.
21   Stroobants, "Terrorism in the Middle East and North African Region."
22   Djamila Ould Khettab, "The 'Black Decade' still weighs heavily on Algeria," *Al Jazeera*, November 3, 2015, https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2015/11/3/the-black-decade-still-weighs-heavily-on-algeria.
23   Stroobants, "Terrorism in the Middle East and North African Region."

and outside of the region. The rise of Daesh, also known as the Islamic State, and its affiliates in Tunisia, Libya, and the Sahel was verified by the formation of the Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (ISGS).[24] The current climate, which is characterized by political instability and vast areas of ungoverned territory, continues to be advantageous to terrorist groups.

It is believed that modern transnational terrorism began in 1968 when terrorist groups staged significant attacks. It encompasses the rising prominence of the religious fundamentalist terrorists.[25] Out of 201,183 attacks between 1970 and 2019, 52,969 of them occurred in the MENA area. Similarly, of the 569,743 injuries and 456,249 fatalities caused by all acts of terror worldwide, 143,807 and 217,832 were sustained in this region. This means that 20 countries accounted for about 25 percent of all terror attacks between 1970 and 2019.[26]

One significant event that changed terrorism in the MENA was the September 11 attacks on the United States. Before this, many of the region's conflicts were civil. During this period, terrorist activities primarily revolved around conflicts perpetrated in turn by both state-sponsored and the so-called "independent" terrorist groups.[27] It exacerbated instability and created uncertainties that have led to the growth or emergence of larger terrorist groups that increasingly controlled more human resources, firepower, and financial resources. Hence, the 2000s and 2010s have witnessed a shift from insurgency-focused terroristic activities to ideologically motivated attacks increasingly targeting the civilian population.[28]

The presence of terrorist organizations and guerilla groups worsened after the Arab Spring in 2011. The Arab Spring was a social and political movement that began in 2010 when protests and popular uprisings spread across several countries in the Arab region.[29] They were driven by widespread discontent with corruption, lack of freedoms, and poverty. This movement brought about the fall of some governments, such as Tunisia and Egypt. It destabilized some others, leaving governments and institutions very fragile. The instability created by these events created a power vacuum that existing extremist groups quickly exploited. Power vacuum refers to the absences or gaps of authority that are left in a conflict.[30] It facilitated the creation of new groups that saw an opportunity to gain political participation in the chaos. The power vacuum allowed many of these extremist groups to take control in various regions, exploiting the situation to expand their influence and strengthen their dominance amid the chaos. A great example of this is the case of Libya, where terrorist groups seized control following the overthrow of its leader, Muammar Gaddafi.[31] Extremist organizations such as Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and its affiliates emerged in Libya. Weapons proliferated throughout the country and later the region.[32]

The MENA region has a complicated history of colonization, political and social issues, and continuous battles, all of which have contributed to terrorism. Divisions and animosities from the colonial era persisted after independence when many countries experienced authoritarian regimes, extreme poverty, and inequality. The emergence of extreme Islamism in the 1990s and these issues created the conditions for the growth of terrorism in the area. Despite being driven by a yearning for change, as mentioned before, the 2011 Arab Spring further destabilized the area and left a power vacuum that extremist organizations took advantage of to increase their influence and control.

Understanding terrorism's origins and the conditions that have allowed it to flourish is crucial for combating it in the MENA

24 "The Islamic State in the Great Sahara" European Council of Foreign Relations, accessed September 7, 2024, https://ecfr.eu/special/sahel_mapping/isgs.
25 Kim and Sandler, "Middle East and North Africa: Terrorism and Conflicts," 424–38
26 Stroobants, "Terrorism in the Middle East and North African Region."
27 Stroobants, "Terrorism in the Middle East and North African Region."
28 Stroobants, "Terrorism in the Middle East and North African Region."
29 "What is the Arab Spring, and how did it start?," Al Jazeera, December 17, 2020, https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/12/17/what-is-the-arab-spring-and-how-did-it-start
30 "The Conceptual Taxonomy of Power-vacuums," ProQuest, 2014, https://www.proquest.com/docview/1652449440?sourcetype=Scholarly%20Journals.
31 Zineb Abdessadok, "Libya Today: From Arab Spring to failed state," *Al Jazeera*, May 30, 2017, https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2017/5/30/libya-today-from-arab-spring-to-failed-state.
32 Stroobants, "Terrorism in the Middle East and North African Region."

region. By comprehending its source and motives, we can create solutions and efforts to bring about peace and stability in the area, prevent more casualties, and fortify institutions that will avert future crises.

Major terrorist groups and their activities

Terrorism and organized crime have played a major role in shaping the interactions and relationships of the international community. A major hub for terrorism is the Middle East and North Africa. The first major terrorist group can be traced back to the 19th and 20th centuries. It was a group known as the Red Hand that employed violent resistance tactics to fight off colonial rule and fight nationalism.

There are several terrorist groups present in the Middle East and North Africa that are globally influential today. However, recognizing the main terrorist organizations by analyzing their activities can be very challenging. Many of these groups have regional branches, and others work together or share leadership. This makes it hard to know which group is responsible, especially since they mostly deny their actions, particularly in conflict areas. It is also incredibly difficult to identify these groups in power because of constantly changing leadership, operational secrecy, and a lack of standard definitions. Although there are common elements to characterize terrorism and terrorist groups, there is no universally accepted definition, creating incredibly complex debates. According to the Global Terrorism Index 2024, the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) and Hamas are two of the top terrorist groups responsible for the most deaths.[33] In 2023, the four terrorist groups accountable for the most deaths were ISIS and Hamas in the Middle East, and Jama'at Nusrat Al-Islam wal Muslimin (JNIM) and Al-Shabaab in North Africa. These four groups combined caused a total of 4,443 deaths.[34]

Other terrorist groups with major impacts in the Middle East and North Africa include Al-Qaeda, the Taliban, Hezbollah, the Houthi Movement (Ansar Allah), and the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK).

The Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), also called ISIL (Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant) is a Sunni jihadist group that claims religious authority over Muslims. The group calls itself a caliphate, which is a government ruled by religious authority and strict Islamic Sharia law.[35] ISIS was created in 2013 as a branch of al-Qaeda. ISIS was able to gain significant traction and attention because of the chaos from the Syrian Civil War and the power vacuum that was left when the United States withdrew its troops in 2011. Over the next few years, ISIS was able to grow its influence and reign by capturing different territories like Mosul and Raqqa.[36] They grew during this eight-year period because of the amount of territory they held, the large pool of jihadists they had, and the collection of resources overall. An international coalition forced ISIS out of its stronghold in Syria in 2019, but the group continues to operate secretly in Syria and Iraq. Even though ISIS lost much territory and leaders, they continue to carry out attacks in these areas.[37] ISIS also controls at least 19 branches and networks across Asia, Africa, and Europe.[38] With a similar purpose to ISIS, an offshoot of the Pakistani Taliban group called ISIS-K (Islamic State Khorasan Province) was formed in 2014. Khorasan is a region that includes parts of Iran, Afghanistan, and Central Asia.[39] Their beliefs target non-Muslim civilians, Muslim minorities, and secular government officials. This terrorist group is known for its extreme cruelty, attacking civilians and government buildings, including schools, mosques, and public areas.[40] ISIS-K is labeled as a worldwide terrorist group in many countries and organizations, including the US, European Union, Canada, Australia, and the United Nations. This decision was made

33   "The Deadliest Terror Groups in 2024," Vision of Humanity, March 14, 2024, https://www.visionofhumanity.org/deadliest-terror-groups-in-2024/.
34   Vision of Humanity, "The Deadliest Terror Groups in 2024."
35   "The Islamic State (Terrorist Organization)," RAND, accessed July 2, 2024, https://www.rand.org/topics/the-islamic-state-terrorist-organization.html.
36   https://www.wilsoncenter.org/article/timeline-the-rise-spread-and-fall-the-islamic-state
37   "Islamic State of Iraq and Ash-Sham (ISIS)," National Counterterrorism Center, September 2022, https://www.dni.gov/nctc/ftos/isis_fto.html.
38   National Counterterrorism Center, "Islamic State of Iraq and Ash-Sham (ISIS)."
39   Ashley Jackson, "What Is ISIS-K, The Terror Group Allegedly Responsible for the Moscow Concert Hall Attack?," POLITICO, March 26, 2024, https://www.politico.eu/article/islamic-isis-khorasan-concert-hall-attack-russia-terrorist/.
40   "How Moscow Terror Attack Fits Isis-K Strategy to Widen Agenda, Take Fight to Its Perceived Enemies," Clemson News, March 25, 2024, https://news.clemson.edu/how-moscow-terror-attack-fits-isis-k-strategy-to-widen-agenda-take-fight-to-its-perceived-enemies/.

Hezbollah Fighters
Credit: Tasnim News Agency Reporter

after efforts by US and Afghan forces, along with a Taliban offensive against the group.[41]

Another major terrorist group is Hamas. The intifada of 1987 to 1993 was the first grassroots movement against Israeli occupation. Intifada is an Arabic term that means *uprising,* and it has been used to refer to Palestinian resistance to Israeli occupation forces. It started as civil disobedience and protest turned into violent conflict. However, this period led to significant change and allowed for the creation of the Palestinian Authority and the Oslo Accords. The second intifada happened from 2000 to 2005. This period was much more violent, and there was a significant rise in suicide bombings and military response on both sides.[42] Hamas won the 2006 elections and took control of the Gaza Strip away from the Palestinian Authority in 2007 using violence.[43] Hamas has clearly outlined its goals of destroying Israel and has detailed its use of violence to achieve this goal. Throughout the years, Hamas has dropped tens of thousands of bombs into Israel from Gaza and has committed several suicide attacks. The group has also created attack routes into Israel by building

tunnels from Gaza to Egypt, in which they traffic weapons.[44] Hamas invaded the south of Israel in October 2023, killing roughly 1,400 people and kidnapping 251 more.[45] The Israeli military, in response, launched an offensive to destroy Hamas. By April 2024, nearly 33,000 Palestinians had died as a result of this conflict.[46]

Al-Qaeda is a militant Islamist organization founded by Osama Bin Laden in 1980. The organization became much more recognized after the attacks carried out in the U.S. on September 11, 2001. Al-Qaeda started by recruiting members from the Islamic world to support Muslims fighting against the Soviet Union during the Afghan War.[47] The Jihad (Holy War) movement became stronger when they won the conflict in Afghanistan. That is because the war created a global Muslim solidarity. The soldiers who returned home brought Jihadist ideologies with them. Also, defeating the Soviet Union was seen as a divine victory for the jihadist movement. Their experienced fighters, called Mujahedin, continued fighting in Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Algeria. The group decided to use violence against non-Islamic states in the region in 1989. Al-

41   Jackson, "What Is ISIS-K, The Terror Group Responsible for the Moscow Attack?"
42   https://www.vox.com/2018/11/20/18080066/israel-palestine-intifadas-first-second
43   Sarah El Deeb, "What Is Hamas? The Group That Rules the Gaza Strip Has Fought Several Rounds of War with Israel," AP News, October 15, 2023, https://apnews.com/article/hamas-gaza-palestinian-authority-israel-war-ed7018dbaae09b81513daf3bda38109a.
44   Deeb, "What Is Hamas? The Group That Rules the Gaza Strip."
45   "Hamas Hostages: Stories of the People Taken from Israel," BBC News, July 1, 2024, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-67053011.
46   Kali Robinson, "What Is Hamas?," Council on Foreign Relations, April 18, 2024, https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/what-hamas.
47   "Al-Qaeda," Encyclopedia Britannica, July 2, 2024, https://www.britannica.com/topic/al-Qaeda.

Qaeda evolved into the *Makhtab al-Khidamat* organization, also called the Services Office, which had branches all over the world, including Afghanistan, Pakistan, and the US.[48] Later, they began to provide training camps for their affiliated groups. They started offering intelligence and military training to their members and allied organizations, like Al-Jihad (Islamic Jihad), by 1990 in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Sudan.[49]

The Taliban are an ultraconservative religious and political terrorist group that emerged in Afghanistan in the year 1990. The Taliban was created when the Soviet soldiers left Afghanistan, the communist government fell, and the country became chaotic. Chaos ensued because as the Afghan regime collapsed, the state was left in crisis, disrupting the civilian order. Translating to mean "students," the Taliban initially consisted of a small group of religious students who wanted to fight corruption and crime in Afghanistan.[50] Most Talibans are Pashtuns, an ethnolinguistic group that lives between the south of Afghanistan and the northwest of Pakistan. They are considered the biggest ethnic group in Afghanistan.[51] Pashtuns are believed to have started in religious schools funded by Saudi Arabia. In these schools, a strict form of Sunni Islam was taught. The group promised to keep security and peace and enforce their version of the Islamic Law in Pashtun areas situated on the Pakistan and Afghanistan border.[52] The Taliban provided a haven for al-Qaeda members before the September 11 attacks in the US. With this safe place, al-Qaeda was able to recruit, train, and send terrorists to other countries. Afghanistan was under the Taliban's control until 2001, when the US overthrew them as a movement against al-Qaeda. Most of the insurgent attacks in Afghanistan are attributed to the Taliban, which include small-scale ambushes, hit-and-run attacks, and also high-profile attacks.[53]

Hezbollah is a Shiite Muslim terrorist organization and political party from Lebanon. Since it has its political organization, security armies, and social services system, it is also called "a state within a state." During the Lebanese Civil War that lasted fifteen years, Hezbollah was founded and backed by Iran. The group is against Western influence in the Middle East and Israel.[54] Hezbollah is considered a terrorist group by many countries, including the US, because of its history of terrorist activities around the world. Some other countries just consider their military group as terrorists. Hezbollah has become a large military force and threat to Israel due to the strong ties it has with Syria and Iran. If the border conflicts between Hezbollah and Israel escalate, there is a danger of creating another front end to the current conflict between Hamas and Israel, which would be very damaging to Lebanon, as it has a volatile economy.[55]

The Houthi movement is an Islamic fundamentalist group from the north of Yemen and a significant force in Yemen's civil war. They arose from a minority Shi'i Islam sect, the Zaydī Muslims, who were opposed to having external influence on the Yemeni government.[56] In Yemen's current civil war, the Houthi rebels are one of the two main factions involved. They have control over the country's west coast, which includes the capital, Sana'a. The terrorist group started in the 1990s as a cultural revival movement for the Zaydi sect.[57] In the early 2000s, they took up arms because of the government's repression. The Houthi rebels became a powerful military force with the help of Iran during the civil war. They caught significant international attention in 2023 when they launched drone strikes and bombs into Israel and attacked commercial ships in the Red Sea, affecting international trade.[58]

The Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), also called Kongra-Gel, was founded in 1978 as a militant group from Kurdistan. Kurdistan is a region in parts of Iran, Iraq, Syria, and Turkey.

48 "Al-Qaeda International," Federal Bureau of Investigation, accessed July 3, 2024, https://archives.fbi.gov/archives/news/testimony/al-qaeda-international.
49 Federal Bureau of Investigation, "Al-Qaeda International."
50 "Taliban," Encyclopedia Britannica, July 1, 2024, https://www.britannica.com/topic/Taliban.
51 "Pashtun," Encyclopedia Britannica, accessed July 20, 2024, https://www.britannica.com/topic/Pashtun.
52 "Who Are the Taliban?," BBC News, August 12, 2022, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-south-asia-11451718.
53 "Afghan Taliban," National Counterterrorism Center, accessed July 3, 2024, https://www.dni.gov/nctc/groups/afghan_taliban.html.
54 Kali Robinson, "What Is Hezbollah?," Council on Foreign Relations, July 2, 2024, https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/what-hezbollah.
55 Robinson, "What Is Hezbollah?"
56 Adam Zeidan, "Houthi Movement," Encyclopedia Britannica, June 28, 2024, https://www.britannica.com/topic/Houthi-movement.
57 Anna Gordon, "Yemen's Houthi Rebels: Who Are They and What Is Their Goal?," Time, January 12, 2024, https://time.com/6554861/yemen-houthi-rebels-history-cause-israel-hamas-war/.
58 Robinson, "What Is Hezbollah?"

Their goal is to gain control of all Kurdish areas and create an independent state, following Marxist-Leninist ideas. Another goal of the PKK is to form a union of Kurdish territories with some autonomy and also to gain rights and recognition for the citizens of Kurdistan. The PKK is located in Iraq and has mostly targeted the southeast of Turkey, where most Kurds live.[59] When a two-and-a-half-year truce ended in July 2015, Turkey's struggle against the PKK began some of its most turbulent years in over four decades. Between 2015 and 2017, the violence destroyed neighborhoods in urban and metropolitan areas in Turkey. In 2017, the conflict spread to rural regions in the southeast territories of the country. As the Turkish military drove more extremists out of the territory, the conflict shifted to northern Iraq and northern Syria in 2019.[60]

Addressing the Risks of Weapons Utilization by Terrorist Groups

Criminal groups use weapons to carry out their illicit activities, create fear and control, eliminate rivals, and resist attempts by the government to stop them. Illicit weapons trafficking is highly related to terrorist groups obtaining firearms. To do so, they frequently depend on suppliers and smugglers.[61] Although private individuals play a large role in arms trafficking, several governments also have a role in this illicit trade. Illegal weapon trafficking from governments to armed groups is a recurring global issue. These activities often occur under the radar, fueling conflicts and destabilizing regions.[62] Criminals use these weapons to commit violent crimes against civilians and the military in conflict areas. They exploit weaknesses in trade and financial systems to smuggle weapons out of a country. Terrorists use trafficked weapons to strengthen their operations in trafficking schemes, fugitive protection, guerrilla

activity, and smuggling routes. Criminals also commit war crimes, terrorism, and breaches of human rights using these illicit weapons.[63]

Terrorist groups use guns to carry out many of their attacks.[64] They use these weapons to commit and support many crimes such as kidnapping, drug trafficking, wildlife and cultural product smuggling, assaults on financial or legal institutions, and attacks on military, governmental, or international organizations. Since limited quantities of firearms are needed to carry out an attack, these weapons can be obtained through small-scale trafficking, artisanal manufacturing, modification, or reactivation. Most research states that terrorist groups do not sell weapons to other groups. Instead, they are often importers of weapons, often sourcing them from organized crime groups (OCGs).[65]

The use of weapons by terrorist groups has caused great concern and has been discussed worldwide in organizations and government agencies such as the European Union and the United Nations. Terrorist groups rely on the use of weapons, especially assault rifles, to carry out their attacks. Additionally, terrorist organizations use guns to maintain control over people and territories. Therefore, cutting off the supply of arms and ammunition would impede the ability of terrorist groups to gain power and control, as other methods are complicated to implement on a large scale.[66]

There is a wide variety of weapons and firearms. Those most commonly used by terrorist groups include small arms and light weapons (SALW), ghost guns or privately-made firearms, improvised explosive devices (IEDs), and weapons of mass destruction (WMDs).[67] The UN definition of small weapons includes those that one person can operate. It also

59   "Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK)," National Counterterrorism Center, accessed July 4, 2024, https://www.dni.gov/nctc/ftos/pkk_fto.html.
60   "Türkiye's PKK Conflict: A Visual Explainer," International Crisis Group, June 11, 2024, https://www.crisisgroup.org/content/turkiyes-pkk-conflict-visual-explainer.
61   "Weapons Trafficking: Homeland Security," U.S. Department of Homeland Security, accessed July 9, 2024, https://www.dhs.gov/hsi/investigate/weapons-trafficking.
62   Illicit Trade Group, "Illegal Arms Trafficking."
63   U.S. Department of Homeland Security, "Weapons Trafficking: Homeland Security."
64   "Terrorist Groups," United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, April 2020, https://www.unodc.org/e4j/en/firearms/module-7/key-issues/terrorist-groups.html.
65   United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, "Terrorist Groups."
66   "Terrorism and Trafficking in Weapons," United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, accessed July 10, 2024, https://sherloc.unodc.org/cld/en/education/tertiary/organized-crime/module-16/key-issues/terrorism-and-trafficking-in-weapons.html.
67   "Conventional Terrorist Weapons," United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, accessed July 10, 2024, https://www.unodc.org/images/odccp/terrorism_weapons_conventional.html#:~:text=Terrorists%20use%20both%20explosive%20bombings,sniping%2C%20armed%20attacks%20and%20massacres.

defines light weapons as those that require two people or a team to carry, can be transported in a small vehicle or a pack animal, and must be operated by a team.[68] Due to the trafficking and spread of SALW, it is considered a major threat to international security. The illegal trade has affected human rights, sustainable development, economic prosperity, and social progress. When illicit trafficking takes place in armed conflicts involving terrorist groups, it intensifies the conflict and creates security risks. Illegal SALW flows can worsen security conditions by escalating and prolonging conflicts, as seen in Mali, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and South Sudan.[69]

Ghost guns are easily assembled by anyone using unfinished, unregulated frames or receivers and components bought separately or as a kit. These guns are fully functional and just as lethal as serialized firearms. These kits and parts are marked as being untraceable and unregulated. This makes them more attractive to those engaging in criminal activity. These guns are the primary choice for terrorist groups since they are not serialized and unregulated in areas where gun laws exist. Due to the easy accessibility of ghost guns, terrorist groups endanger

international security and override existing laws by preventing them from stopping gun violence and solving crimes.[70]

Most explosives used by terrorists are referred to as "improvised" by the UN. Raw materials for these explosives are stolen from military or commercial supplies. Raw materials are also manufactured from fertilizers and other easily available household components. These homemade explosives are known as Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs).[71] IEDs are created with both military and non-military components and are most commonly used by terrorist groups, guerrillas, and other non-state actors. They are also used against conventional military forces. When used as roadside bombs, IEDs can sever communication lines, disrupt traffic, and damage or destroy targeted vehicles. Sometimes, IEDs are used to create hidden detonators in entryways or buildings, leaving anyone who enters dead or injured. These types of explosives were the most used weapons by the insurgents in the Afghanistan and Iraq wars. IEDs will most likely remain the number one choice for terrorist groups and guerrillas in the future due to their low cost, ease of use, and high effectiveness.[72]

68   "Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW)," Bonn International Center for Conversion, accessed July 10, 2024, https://warpp.info/en/m5/articles/small-arms-and-light-weapons-salw.
69   Mary Fitzgerald et al., "Small Arms Light Weapons (SALW)," International Centre for Counter-Terrorism, July 28, 2021, https://www.icct.nl/project/small-arms-light-weapons-salw.
70   "Ghost Guns," Brady, accessed July 10, 2024, https://www.bradyunited.org/resources/issues/what-are-ghost-guns.
71   United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, "Conventional Terrorist Weapons."
72   Peter Mansoor, "Improvised Explosive Device," Encyclopedia Britannica, June 28, 2024, https://www.britannica.com/technology/

Weapons of Terrorists Attempting to Infiltrate Into Israel
Credit: Matanya

Weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) are weapons that can cause massive numbers of deaths and destruction in such magnitude that it is extremely dangerous for any type of terrorist group or hostile power to have access to them. WMDs include nuclear, biological, chemical, radiological weapons, and explosives.[73] After the attacks on the Twin Towers on September 11, 2001, there have been major concerns about the possibility of terrorist groups gaining access to and using WMDs or radiological dispersal devices (RDD). One terrorist group that has expressed interest in obtaining and using such weapons is al-Qaeda. There have been concerns regarding the existence of a black market for nuclear materials related to organized crime due to the discovery of the Abdul Qadeer Khan network. Terrorist groups and organized crime have been linked to other criminal activities, such as drug trafficking, which raises concerns about these groups channeling WMD materials to contribute to other illegal activities. In Central Asia and the Caucasus, numerous poorly secured nuclear, chemical, and biological facilities are near trafficking routes. This poses a significant threat.[74]

Terrorist groups that look for territorial and political control have the highest demand for weapons. Al Qaeda, ISIS, Boko Haram, Ansar al-Sharia, and Abu Sayyaf are some examples of terrorist groups that need large amounts of weapons and ammunition to take and keep territory. Several insurgent groups are classified as terrorist organizations at national or international levels, which increases the demand for illicit weapons. Organized crime groups (OCGs) trade small amounts of weapons. The demand for firearms from terrorist groups is specialized and includes a wide range of arms and ammunition. Because of this demand, large-scale gun trafficking is needed to keep up terrorist activity.[75]

ISIS uses guns and ammunition produced in at least 21 different countries, including China, Russia, and the United States.[76] Transporting firearms and ammunition requires complex trafficking networks with secure routes. Large terrorist groups like ISIS primarily obtain weapons through large-scale trafficking. Moreover, according to the Global Terrorism Database, guns are the second most common weapon used by al-Qaeda. This weapon accounts for 692 attacks and plots out of a total of 1909 incidents worldwide.[77]

Reports state that hundreds of weapons, including rocket-propelled grenades (RPGs), rocket launchers, anti-aircraft missiles, and AK-47 rifles, have been intercepted by security operatives in some locations in northeastern Nigeria. These weapons arrived in Nigeria through Libya and Mali. Boko Haram may obtain some of its weaponry from Chad and members of the Nigerian military. The "ant trade" involves the exchange of weapons between OCGs. Interceptions of weapons destined for Boko Haram suggest that larger shipments are common in the region. Major civil conflicts in Africa have largely ended, which reduced the demand for guns and SALW. Firearms smuggled during those conflicts continue to circulate, which provide another source of weaponry for Boko Haram.[78] Additionally, Tunisian authorities have seized weapons and ammunition trafficked from Libya. These were shipped by smugglers financed by terrorist groups linked to al-Qaeda. They are concerned about connections between Tunisian radical armed groups and Libyan entities. Algerian authorities report that some small-scale intercepted arms come from minor trafficking from Libya. Other military actions against convoys and depots indicate trafficking by terrorist and criminal networks.[79] Weapons trafficking is a major contributor to fueling terrorist organizations as it allows for arming these groups.

improved-explosive-device.

73 "Weapon of Mass Destruction," Encyclopedia Britannica, accessed July 10, 2024, https://www.britannica.com/technology/weapon-of-mass-destruction.

74 "An Unrealized Nexus? WMD-Related Trafficking, Terrorism, and Organized Crime in the Former Soviet Union," Arms Control Association, accessed July 10, 2024, https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2007-07/features/unrealized-nexus-wmd-related-trafficking-terrorism-and-organized-crime-former#:~:text=General%20Trends%20of%20Post%2D2001%20WMD%20Trafficking&text=Most%20known%20trafficking%20incidents%20involve,percent%20of%20the%20trafficking%20transactions.

75 United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, "Terrorist Groups."

76 United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, "Terrorist Groups."

77 United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, "Terrorist Groups."

78 United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, "Terrorist Groups."

79 United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, "Terrorism and Trafficking in Weapons."

The Exploitation of Vulnerable Groups by Terrorist Organizations

The exploitation of vulnerable groups by terrorist organizations is common in the MENA region. These groups use harsh methods to achieve their goals. They often target people and communities that are poor, marginalized, or disadvantaged. Vulnerable groups like children, women, trafficked individuals, ethnic minorities, and religious groups are especially at risk. Terrorist groups grow by recruiting individuals, which causes more division and violence in society. They achieve this by taking advantage of these populations through coercion, bribery, or force. To create effective counter-terrorism strategies and help those at risk, it is important to understand how and why these groups exploit vulnerable populations.

Women recruited by ISIS, often called "jihadi brides," are initially recruited thinking they will help with front-line duties. However, they are used to solving the combatants' "marriage crisis" and handling domestic tasks like cooking, cleaning, and raising children.[80] The "marriage crisis" refers to the lower marriage rates of many men in the Middle East. Most men in the Middle East do not marry until they are thirty years old, which is why jihadi brides are used to lure men into ISIS.[81] ISIS recruiters promise women a perfect life, but a manifesto by the al-Khansaa Brigade, a female branch of the Islamic State, makes it clear that women's roles are limited to the home. Women are encouraged to have children to ensure the group's survival by raising the next generation of jihadists. Recruiting brides is important for ISIS because it helps attract and keep male fighters in the group. Women are used as a recruiting tool and incentive. Male foreign fighters are promised a bride. Additionally, they are promised a monthly income of USD 600-1,000 and free housing. ISIS also gives fighters a stipend for each child they have within the Islamic State.[82]

Terrorist organizations such as al-Qaeda use female jihadis as suicide bombers. Female suicide bombers can also be known as 'Black Widows' since many had lost their husbands during battle. Female suicide bombers are very committed to the cause and willing to give their lives for it. Most female suicide bombers come from very traditional Islamic countries where they may have a lower status in society. Although women have participated in wars, some men have opposed using women as weapons or exploiting their bodies as weapons. Terrorists who use women as weapons have a tactical benefit. Women can pass security checks more easily, giving them easier access to targets. This makes female suicide attacks potentially more deadly than male attacks. Female assaults often attract more media attention, expanding the terrorist group's reach. Female suicide bombers are often referred to as 'failed women' because they are either divorced, infertile, victims of sexual assault or widows. This means they cannot fulfill their traditional obligations as wives or mothers. In effect, these women may believe that by sacrificing themselves, they can regain their social standing.[83]

The Federal Bureau of Investigation defines human trafficking as the illicit exploitation of someone.[84] Traffickers lure victims using violence or false promises of suitable employment or loving relationships. Victims are forced to work as prostitutes, domestic, restaurant, or manufacturing workers for low or no pay. Human trafficking is a horrible crime that exploits the most vulnerable people.[85] Terrorist groups use human trafficking (HT) to exploit individuals and carry out terrorist acts. Terrorist groups using HT for funding are less common than HT for other exploitative goals. The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) stated that the small sums earned by ISIS indicated that HT is not a significant source of income for them.[86] Those held prisoners by terrorist groups are made to work so that soldiers can concentrate on their tasks. This slavery

80 Katarina Montgomery, "ISIS Recruits Brides to Solve Middle East 'Marriage Crisis,'" The New Humanitarian, April 22, 2016, https://deeply.thenewhumanitarian.org/syria/articles/2015/05/08/isis-recruits-brides-to-solve-middle-east-marriage-crisis.
81 Mia Bloom, "How ISIS Is Using Marriage as a Trap," HuffPost, May 2, 2015, https://www.huffpost.com/entry/isis-marriage-trap_b_6773576.
82 Montgomery, "ISIS Recruits Brides to Solve Middle East 'Marriage Crisis.'"
83 Anne Preesman, "Female Suicide Bombers: An Uncomfortable Truth," King's College London, March 16, 2021, https://www.kcl.ac.uk/female-suicide-bombers-an-uncomfortable-truth.
84 "Human Trafficking," Federal Bureau of Investigation, accessed July 15, 2024, https://www.fbi.gov/investigate/violent-crime/human-trafficking.
85 Federal Bureau of Investigation, "Human Trafficking."
86 "Why Terrorist Organizations Use Human Trafficking," ACAMS Today, January 25, 2023, https://www.acamstoday.org/why-terrorist-organizations-use-human-trafficking/.

reduces operational expenses and improves organizational efficiency for terrorist groups.[87]

The most common kinds of trafficking are sexual exploitation and forced work. Victims are trafficked to be in forced or false marriages, commit fraud, produce explicit content, or have organs removed. Most victims trafficked for sexual exploitation are women. More than half of victims trafficked for forced labor are men.[88]According to reports from 2019, human trafficking is a profitable industry for armed organizations globally.[89] It produces an estimated USD 150 billion each year. This makes it one of the most profitable crime industries.[90] Terrorist organizations use a wide variety of violence to achieve their goals. This includes abduction, sexual violence, enslavement, and other actions to control individuals and spread their ideology.[91]

A clear example of the use of HT to target populations is how ISIL has threatened ethnic minorities, particularly the Yazidi group. Yazidis are both a religious and ethnic minority who are indigenous to Kurdistan. Among these minorities, the Shia Turkmen, Shia Shabak, and Christian populations were labeled "infidel unbelievers" and therefore persecuted. ISIL sells Yazidi women and resorts to human trafficking for financing purposes. This terrorist group also makes both executions and kidnappings. ISIL participated in trading unmarried women and girls in open slave markets. Boys were forcibly recruited and given new names, trained for battle in camps, and used as human shields.[92]

Sexual violence related to conflict is a weapon of war and a source of profit for armed organizations. Wars are still fought with the thought of controlling women's reproduction by force. Sexual assault has been performed in public, terrorizing communities and splitting families by the transgression of taboos, symbolizing that nothing is holy and no one is safe.[93] Terrorist groups also utilize HT victims to recruit new members. This tactic can be seen in IS publicity operations to attract potential male warriors to join their cause. The propaganda of sexual slavery acts as an incentive for recruits with the promise of brides and forced intimacy. Trafficking in women has been used to reward warriors, as well as a recruitment strategy to attract men from very traditional Muslim countries where dating and intimacy before marriage are forbidden.[94] Terrorist groups also let individual militants earn money by selling women. IS gives female slaves to its warriors, with prices varying according to marital status, age, number of children, and beauty. These slave markets are designed to be internal only. As a result, it is unclear whether the IS slave trade constitutes terrorist financing. The sale and resale of Yazidi women and girls outside of IS is prohibited and punishable by death, as they are considered spoils of war, and prevents them from being sold back to their families.[95]

A document seized by US Special Forces in the Syrian Arab Republic supported the collection and forced removal of "infidels." They declared that their life and organs should not be honored and could be extirpated with impunity. Since 2011, more than 25,000 surgical procedures have been made in neighboring countries' refugee camps and IS-controlled areas in Syria.[96] In these procedures, they have removed the organs of 15,000 Syrians and sold them on the illicit market.[97] Interpol raised concern over organ trafficking in North Africa. This happened especially among poor areas and displaced people like migrants and refugees.[98] Boko Haram and Al-

87   "Why Terrorist Organizations Use Human Trafficking." ACAMS Today.
88   "Trafficking in Persons and Terrorism," United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, accessed July 15, 2024, https://sherloc.unodc.org/cld/en/education/tertiary/organized-crime/module-16/key-issues/trafficking-in-persons-and-terrorism.html.
89   United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, "Trafficking in Persons and Terrorism."
90   Jamille Bigio, "Human Trafficking Helps Terrorists Earn Money and Strategic Advantage," Foreign Policy, January 31, 2020, https://foreignpolicy.com/2020/01/31/human-trafficking-helps-terrorists-earn-money-and-strategic-advantage/.
91   United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, "Trafficking in Persons and Terrorism."
92   "Identifying and exploring the nexus between human trafficking, terrorism, and terrorism financing," United Nations Security Council - Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, 2019, https://www.un.org/securitycouncil/ctc/sites/www.un.org.securitycouncil.ctc/files/files/documents/2021/Jan/ht-terrorism-nexus-cted-report.pdf.
93   "Report of the Secretary-General on conflict-related sexual violence," United Nations Security Council, April 16, 2018, https://www.un.org/sexualviolenceinconflict/wp-content/uploads/report/s-2018-250/SG-REPORT-2017-CRSV-SPREAD.pdf.
94   Nikita Malik, "Trafficking Terror, How Modern Slavery and Sexual Violence Fund Terrorism," The Henry Jackson Society, 2017, https://henryjacksonsociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/HJS-Trafficking-Terror-Report-web.pdf.
95   ACAMS Today, "Why Terrorist Organizations Use Human Trafficking."
96   ACAMS Today, "Why Terrorist Organizations Use Human Trafficking."
97   ACAMS Today, "Why Terrorist Organizations Use Human Trafficking."
98   ACAMS Today, "Why Terrorist Organizations Use Human Trafficking."

Child Soldier
Credit: Agustín Víctor and Miguel Casasola

Shabaab have been accused of trafficking children into soldier positions, as well as using them for suicide attacks. ISIL has recently rationalized the captivity of women as a form of protection. ISIL has built a market that terrorizes women while also making a profit for the group. Women trafficked through the ISIL market are known as "sabaya," meaning slaves. They are purchased by wholesalers who photograph and promote them to customers.[99] Sexual violence, domestic slavery, and other types of sexual enslavement are crucial to IS, Boko Haram, and Al-Shabaab's operations. For example, in IS-controlled territory in Iraq, Sunni women and girls were subjected to forced marriages and sexual abuse as punishment for defying IS laws.[100]

A child soldier is someone under 18 who serves in an armed force. This term includes both forcefully recruited youth and those who join freely. Customary international humanitarian law prohibits the use of child soldiers. It states that children must not be recruited into armed groups and must not be allowed to participate in hostilities, whether in international armed conflicts or civil wars.[101] Between 2005 and 2022, more than 105,000 children were identified as having been recruited and used by warring sides, but the actual number of cases is believed to be much higher. Child soldiers of both sexes face a wide range of exploitation and abuse. The warring sides use them not only as soldiers but also as scouts, cooks, porters, guards, messengers, and other roles. Children join an armed force or group for a variety of reasons. Armed actors may abduct, intimidate, force, or influence individuals. Others are driven by poverty and are obligated to provide for their family. Others group for survival or to preserve their communities. Regardless of their role, the recruitment and employment of minors by military forces is a severe violation of child rights and international humanitarian law.[102]

Thousands of children fight as soldiers in armed conflicts worldwide. Many of them are imprisoned due to national security concerns, usually for links to terrorist or violent extremist groups. These children mostly participate in suicide missions, fight on the front lines, or serve as spies or messengers. Girls might be forced into sexual slavery.[103] Terrorist and violent extremist organizations are mostly responsible for

99   United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, "Trafficking in Persons and Terrorism."
100   ACAMS Today, "Why Terrorist Organizations Use Human Trafficking."
101   Mia Bloom, "Child Soldiers in Armed Conflict," The International Institute for Strategic Studies, accessed July 15, 2024, https://www.iiss.org/publications/armed-conflict-survey/2018/armed-conflict-survey-2018/acs2018-03-essay-3/.
102   "Children Recruited by Armed Forces or Armed Groups," United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund, accessed July 15, 2024, https://www.unicef.org/protection/children-recruited-by-armed-forces#:~:text=Thousands%20of%20children%20are%20recruited,believed%20to%20be%20much%20higher.
103   "Children and Armed Conflict," Human Rights Watch, June 20, 2024, https://www.hrw.org/topic/childrens-rights/children-and-armed-conflict.

serious abuses of children's rights. There is evidence that groups such as Boko Haram, Al-Shabaab, and ISIL have, in times of armed conflict, recruited, used, abducted, sexually assaulted, killed, and injured children. They have also denied them access to humanitarian support, attacking schools, hospitals, and protected personnel.[104]

Human rights law establishes that 18 is the minimum legal age for recruiting someone in conflict. Recruiting children under the age of 15 as soldiers violates international humanitarian law and is considered a war crime by the International Criminal Court.[105] Despite these prohibitions, the use of child soldiers in armed conflicts has increased during the last 20 years. ISIS is the most known armed organization that has trained hundreds, if not thousands, of minors for military service since it rose to worldwide prominence in 2014.[106] ISIS has also used child soldiers extensively in its propaganda. Child soldier recruiting is a serious concern, with the internet allowing armed organizations to reach out to young people who are not in the battle zone.[107]

Families often play a major role in child recruitment within terrorist organizations. Children at ISIS-controlled schools mainly were offered by their families or found in orphanages. Some ISIS parents appear to be publicly encouraging their children's participation instead of just allowing it. ISIS employs children because they are easier to teach and can be more receptive to information. They prevent them from attending public school and send them to ISIS schools instead.[108] These schools not only indoctrinate children but also allow recruiters to look for ability. Children with strong communication skills are employed as recruiters, taking on public speaking positions to recruit others. Child recruiters recruit both adults and youth to join them by promising prestige, purpose, and adoration from the general public.[109]

Historically, terrorist organizations have formally included

children. They have created youth wings or specialized brigades. This is intended to provide them with intellectual training to maintain "coherent" political beliefs. Some examples come from Hamas and Hezbollah. The militias make children create strong ties with the organization. By this, they replace their family members with militia members to form a new "family." This also prevents the youth from trying to escape the militia, leaving them with nowhere to go.[110]

Girls have played an important role in armed conflicts, which make up 30 percent of the world's child soldiers. Their responsibilities in armed groups include domestic work, sexual enslavement, and combat activity. Domestic labor is vital to the groups' successful operation, which isn't considered a lesser responsibility. ISIS excludes girls from their recruiting of juvenile fighters. This distinguishes it from other groups that utilize minors on the front lines. ISIS maintains gender segregation, separating boys and girls, and refuses to involve women in battle. Other terrorist groups, including Al-Qaeda and Boko Haram, have employed girls and women to devastating effect. ISIS treats women as commodities rather than as front-line campaigners.[111]

Challenges in Border Security and Its Role in Facilitating Terrorist Infiltration

Border security is an important aspect that must be considered when tackling terrorist activity. Terrorist organizations can use borders to commit crimes and transfer weapons. Also, borders can be used to intercept terrorist threats. This refers to terrorists crossing borders risk being detected and apprehended by border security. Several examples demonstrate the most significant border security challenges related to terrorism. These include the southern borders of the European Union (EU), the southwestern border of the United States (US), the borders of Afghanistan, Pakistan and India, and several

104 "Handbook on Children Recruited and Exploited by Terrorist and Violent Extremist Groups: The Role of the Justice System," United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, accessed July 15, 2024, https://www.unodc.org/documents/justice-and-prison-reform/Child-Victims/Handbook_on_Children_Recruited_and_Exploited_by_Terrorist_and_Violent_Extremist_Groups_the_Role_of_the_Justice_System.E.pdf.
105 "Child Recruitment and Use," Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, accessed July 15, 2024, https://childrenandarmedconflict.un.org/six-grave-violations/child-soldiers/.
106 Bloom, "Child Soldiers in Armed Conflict."
107 Bloom, "Child Soldiers in Armed Conflict."
108 Bloom, "Child Soldiers in Armed Conflict."
109 Bloom, "Child Soldiers in Armed Conflict."
110 Bloom, "Child Soldiers in Armed Conflict."
111 Bloom, "Child Soldiers in Armed Conflict."

borders in North Africa.[112]

Borders are used for more than just security. Successful counterterrorism border security policies need to consider its economic, political, and social functions. Some countries use borders to gain control over others. Allowing terrorists to cross borders increases the risk of conflicts between countries and contributes to regional instabilities. Although they seem to have many limitations, they are a source of great national power. Also, states can use this to their advantage, using technology, gathering information, and allowing surveillance. This makes borders vulnerable to terrorist groups. This can be done if strategies are focused on intercepting terrorists and their plans.[113]

In 2018, ISIS was reported to have assembled a force of around 40,000 Foreign Terrorist Fighters (FTFs) who had left their home countries to fight with the group. This raised the possibility that FTFs may attempt to enter the EU to carry out an attack. This is especially important given ISIS' continuous strategic development since losing territory in Syria.[114] The issue of terrorist infiltration is very pressing in countering terrorism activity. The most important issue is the rising threat in the northern part of the Sahel. JNIM operates in a lot of areas of Mali, Burkina Faso, and Niger. The Islamic State operates in the Greater Sahara (ISGS) and has established itself in the three-border region. Around 100,000 people have been forced to evacuate their homes in Burkina Faso as a result of the rising violence.[115] Even if these terrorist organizations' focus stays local, they can create migratory pressure. Large migrations of people, even within the region, have the potential to worsen conflict.[116]

Pakistan is part of the "Greater Middle East." It has been a center for terrorist activity for decades. The border security between Pakistan, Afghanistan, and India is complicated because of the geography and politics of the countries. The region's border is crossed by terrorist groups very easily.[117] This is because of the instability of their borders and the government's lack of enforcement. The Taliban have used Pakistan as a haven since they were driven out of power during Operation Enduring Freedom. Most of the group's leaders lived there, where they trained as a backup base. There are a lot of crossing sites between Afghanistan and Pakistan. Because of this, the Taliban easily cross the border to carry out assaults against the Afghan government and people. They are rarely stopped or intercepted.[118] On the Afghan side, part of the region that Taliban militants pass through is already under Taliban control.[119] On the Pakistani side, regions surrounding these crossing sites are either uncontrolled or patrolled by security personnel who ignore the Taliban's actions.[120] It is estimated that there are about 200 crossing points between Afghanistan and Pakistan. Only two of them have border regulations. These regulations include immigration, customs, and security checkpoints. The other crossing locations are used by smugglers, drug traffickers, and the Taliban fighting in Afghanistan.[121] Terrorist infiltration and weapons smuggling through borders into Kashmir is one of the major sources of conflict between India and Pakistan. This is a serious problem that is costing India a lot of money as they implement it for national and citizen security.[122]

In December of 2023, a terrorist incident took place in Iran's southeastern region of Sistan and Baluchestan. This attack killed 11 police officers. Four terrorists responsible

112   Sajjan M. Gohel, "Prevention of Cross-Border Movements of Terrorists: Operational, Political, Institutional and Strategic Challenges for National and Regional Border Controls," International Centre for Counter-Terrorism, accessed July 16, 2024, https://www.icct.nl/sites/default/files/2023-01/Chapter-15-Handbook.pdf.
113   Gohel, "Prevention of Cross-Border Movements of Terrorists."
114   Simon Deignan and Thomas Wuchte, "Securing Borders Collaboratively to Prevent the Movement of Foreign Terrorist Fighters," RSIS and KAS, June 10, 2018, https://www.kas.de/documents/288143/288192/Terrorism_Deignan_Wuchte.pdf/c06432f9-8c82-8cbf-4e76-c7e188c2b456.
115   Pauline Le Roux, "Exploiting Borders in the Sahel: The Islamic State in the Greater Sahara," African Center for Strategic Studies, June 10, 2019, https://africacenter.org/spotlight/exploiting-borders-sahel-islamic-state-in-the-greater-sahara-isgs/.
116   Seung-Whan Choi and Idean Salehyan, "No Good Deed Goes Unpunished: Refugees, Humanitarian Aid, and Terrorism," Conflict Management and Peace Science, February 1, 2013, https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0738894212456951.
117   Gohel, "Prevention of Cross-Border Movements of Terrorists."
118   Gohel, "Prevention of Cross-Border Movements of Terrorists."
119   Antonio Giustozzi, Decoding the New Taliban: Insights from the Afghan Field, (London: Hurst, 2009), pp. 281-284.
120   Giustozzi, Decoding the New Taliban: Insights from the Afghan Field, pp. 281-284.
121   Borhan Osman and Fazal Muzhary, "Jihadi Commuters: How the Taliban cross the Durand Line," Afghanistan Analyst Network, October 17, 2017, https://www.afghanistan-analysts.org/jihadi-commuters-how-the-taleban-cross-the-durand-line/.
122   Gohel, "Prevention of Cross-Border Movements of Terrorists."

for the attack were apprehended. Some of the police officers killed were Sunnis. This shows how terrorist groups do not differentiate between religion and nationality. Jaish-ul-Adl, a terrorist group, was responsible for the attack. This attack was one of the bloodiest in years in the region near Iran's border with Afghanistan and Pakistan. In February 2024, two people accused of terrorist activity were arrested in Iran's northern province of Golestan. These terrorists had explosive materials. In the same month, two other terrorists were captured in southern Iran. These two terrorists possessed arms. The arms were later confiscated. In March 2024, border guards at Iran's Nehbandan border stopped a terrorist group from entering the country. Border guards remained vigilant and engaged in an armed struggle with the terrorists. They finally succeeded by not letting them enter the country. They discovered many explosive materials. This material included mines, remote control transmitters and receivers, ammunition, night vision cameras, and other materials.[123]Threats of terrorism also have occurred in migration. For example, a record number of suspected terrorists have crossed through the southern border of the United States. This includes at least 56 individuals apprehended at the southern border in the last nine months. These migrants were on the Terrorist Screening Database. Terrorist groups, especially al-Qaeda, represent a big threat to the US borders.[124] In all of these cases, border security is very difficult to achieve. Borders are lengthy, the terrain is challenging, and its unregulated access is likely to persist even in the best circumstances. As a result, even with stronger border controls, border security still poses challenges that affect these regions.

Strong border security is very important to prevent terrorists from trespassing.. These borders include land, air, and sea borders. It is important to prevent the illegal trafficking of weapons, ammunition, explosives, dangerous materials, products, and goods used for terrorist purposes.[125] The global Border and Security Management initiative aims to prevent terrorists from crossing borders and reduce their flow. This improves border security and collaboration between governments. Improving knowledge of "best practices" helps to reduce the flow of terrorists across borders. The Border Security and Management Program helps countries implement these practices into their counterterrorism plans. It also helps improve the capabilities of border soldiers.[126]

Strong border security is the first measure to be taken against terrorist travel. There is a project named Project Sharaka, funded by the EU. This project gives frontline soldiers INTERPOL policing material and knowledge. There are eight states included in the project. These are Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine, and Tunisia. The goal is to help these states detect and intercept terrorists using technology and police operations. The project connects border soldiers to INTERPOL's global police communications network. They focus mostly on airports, seaports, and national borders. This allows them to share real-time information and access their global crime databases. In this database, personnel can view the stolen or lost travel documents. Terrorists steal these documents to return to conflict zones. This ensures that countries have the necessary counter-terrorism expertise, equipment, and capabilities. This allows governments to determine their counter-terrorism actions, predict risks, and give early warnings throughout the area.[127] Ultimately, a lack of proper security at border crossings is a major culprit of terrorist infiltration and terror attacks. Preventing the flow of terrorists and weapons trafficking that arm these organizations is essential to curb the issue.

The Impact of Emerging Technologies on the Rise of Cyber Terrorism and Digital Threats

The terrorist threat to society has changed a lot over the past 20 years. In the past, governments created mitigation methods for large-scale attacks. Recently, there have been many smaller and less sophisticated terrorist acts. Even so, these attacks are no less

123   "Iranian Border Guards Thwart Terrorist Infiltration Attempt," Tehran Times, March 9, 2024, https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/495955/Iranian-border-guards-thwart-terrorist-infiltration-attempt.
124   Joanner Pena, "Rubio, Graham, Colleagues Warn Against Terrorist Infiltration of Southern Border," Senator Rubio, August 5, 2022, https://www.rubio.senate.gov/rubio-graham-colleagues-warn-against-terrorist-infiltration-of-southern-border/.
125   "Border Security and Management," United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism, accessed July 16, 2024, https://www.un.org/counterterrorism/border-security-management.
126   United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism, "Border Security and Management."
127   "Project Sharaka," International Criminal Police Organization, accessed July 16, 2024, https://www.interpol.int/en/Crimes/Terrorism/Counter-terrorism-projects/Project-Sharaka.

horrific. They include many victims and fear-inducing events. The nature of the threat will evolve with new technologies and opportunities for terrorist groups. Cyberterrorism is an example of a dangerous new frontier.[128] Cyberterrorism is also known as digital terrorism. It is defined by the Wigan Council as attacks against computer systems by terrorist groups to cause fear, panic, or disrupt the system.[129] While it is common to hear of cyber threats, cyberterrorism creates a new concern. Terrorists can access secret material for profit or just malicious purposes. Terrorists can use the internet to finance their activities, train other terrorists, and plan attacks. They hack government and private systems to get sensitive information and steal money to use in their activities.[130] Acts of cyberterrorism are carried out using computer servers, other devices, and networks accessible through the public internet. These attacks are commonly directed at secure government and other restricted networks. Some targets include banks, military bases, power plants, air traffic control centers, and water infrastructure.[131]

Cyberterrorists are state and non-state actors who use cyberattacks to achieve their goals. Terrorist groups, rebels, and jihadists have used the internet to carry out attacks. They also use it to radicalize and recruit people, distribute propaganda, communicate, and cause disruption. This type of terrorism uses the same strategies as normal cyberattacks. This type of terrorism uses distributed denial-of-service (DDoS) assaults, malware, social engineering methods, phishing, and other means to reach their targets.[132] Cyberterrorism does not use physical violence to hurt innocents. Because of this, most people do not know what it is and how dangerous it is. Currently, companies and organizations are using more online services to reduce costs and improve efficiency. With this, it is more likely for IT systems to be hijacked by cyberterrorists.[133]

Cyber attacks are now more common, even though they are not normally made public. Cyberterrorists can be divided into five categories: organized crime, hacktivism, non-state terror organizations, lone wolves, and states. The goals of each organization are different from each other. Even if they have different goals, they can all cause worldwide devastation. The more money they raise, the more devastating these attacks can become.[134] The Congressional Research Service estimates that cybercrime costs USD 388 billion a year in 24 countries.[135] This number only includes individuals who engage in illegal cyberattacks for financial benefit. It does not include cyberattacks for other reasons.[136]

Cyberterrorists use different means to achieve their goals. Advanced Persistent Threat (APT) attacks are one of them. They use sophisticated security breaching tools to gain access to the network. Once inside the network, they remain undetected for some time. While they are undetected, they steal data. APT attacks target organizations with high-value information. This type of information can be in the defense, industrial, healthcare, and financial sectors. Cyberterrorists also employ computer viruses, worms, and malware to attack IT control systems. They are used to attack utilities, transportation networks, power grids, critical infrastructure, government agencies, and military systems. Cyberterrorists also use denial-of-service (DoS) attacks. These prohibit real users from accessing computer systems, devices, or websites. Attackers often target important infrastructures and governments. One of the most common ways for terrorists to make their way into cyberspace is hacking. Its objective is to gain illegal access to sensitive data of organizations, governments, and companies. Ransomware is another type of virus. It encrypts data or information systems until the victim pays a ransom. These attacks can also involve the leaking of data. Lastly, phishing is an attack that attempts to get information from a target's

128 Emil Metropoulos, "Global Cyber Terrorism Incidents on the Rise," Marsh McLennan, accessed July 17, 2024, https://www.marshmclennan.com/insights/publications/2018/nov/global-cyber-terrorism-incidents-on-the-rise.html.
129 Wigan Council, "Cyber Terrorism."
130 Wigan Council, "Cyber Terrorism."
131 Rahul Awati, Robert Sheldon, and Katie Terrell Hanna, "Cyberterrorism," TechTarget, February 9, 2024, https://www.techtarget.com/searchsecurity/definition/cyberterrorism#:~:text=Cyberterrorism%20is%20usually%20defined%20as,violence%20or%20results%20in%20violence.
132 "Cybersecurity and Cyber Terrorism," Fairleigh Dickinson University, accessed July 17, 2024, https://online.fdu.edu/program-resources/cybersecurity-and-cyber-terrorism/.
133 Wigan Council, "Cyber Terrorism."
134 Metropoulos, "Global Cyber Terrorism Incidents on the Rise."
135 Fairleigh Dickinson University, "Cybersecurity and Cyber Terrorism."
136 Fairleigh Dickinson University, "Cybersecurity and Cyber Terrorism."

Maryland Air National Guard Monitoring Cyber-Attacks
Credit: The National Guard

email address. Then that information is used to gain access to systems or steal their identity.[137]

The rise of experienced hackers, sometimes funded by states, leads to the development of more advanced tools. These tools can be spread around the world through the illegal market.[138] Information and communication technologies (ICTs) can be used to support terrorist acts or to attack terrorists. ICTs can aid, facilitate, and participate in these acts. In particular, the internet can be used for terrorist purposes. These include propaganda, financing, training, planning, and execution of terrorist attacks and cyberattacks. That is why the word cyberterrorism is used to describe how terrorists use the Internet for malicious purposes.[139] Physical operations that are carried out industrially are becoming operational. These industries include electric utilities, water treatment, sanitation, and emergency systems. By 2030, there will be 30 billion connected devices in use. This will increase the number of people vulnerable to attacks on the network. Companies are now very dependent on their systems and data. Any attack on the system can have a big impact on their economy. It can

also risk reputation, sales, and profits. This makes cyberattacks capable of causing an entity to collapse overnight.[140]

The dangers posed by cyberterrorism to governments, businesses, and individuals have greatly increased. This is because new technologies are constantly being created. Cyberattacks increased in frequency and severity in 2021.[141] IBM found that the average data breach cost to businesses grew from 3.86 million in 2020 to 4.24 million dollars in 2021. Trend Micro estimates a 1,318 percent spike in ransomware attacks on the online trading platform Robinhood and the banking sector last year. In doing so, sensitive customer information is exposed. Also, assaults on corporate email systems grew by four percent in the first quarter of 2021, with 164 malicious applications connected to COVID-19 schemes discovered during that time.[142]

One example of cyberterrorism is the disruption of key websites. The goal is to disrupt traffic to websites that serve many users, and their disruption could cause public discomfort. Unauthorized access is another method. Attackers aim to gain access to specific systems or change communications that

137   Awati, Sheldon, and Hanna, "Cyberterrorism."
138   Metropoulos, "Global Cyber Terrorism Incidents on the Rise."
139   "Cyberterrorism," United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, June 2019, https://www.unodc.org/e4j/en/cybercrime/module-14/key-issues/cyberterrorism.html.
140   Metropoulos, "Global Cyber Terrorism Incidents on the Rise."
141   Dan Lohrmann, "Cyber Attacks: Is the 'Big One' Coming Soon?," Government Technology, March 12, 2021, https://www.govtech.com/blogs/lohrmann-on-cybersecurity/cyber-attacks-is-the-big-one-coming-soon.html.
142   Maryville University, "Cyber Terrorism: What It Is and How It's Evolved."

control military or other important technologies. Terrorists also disrupt key infrastructures, disrupt cities, threaten public safety, or cause fear. They can do it by attacking a water treatment facility, causing a regional blackout, or disrupting an oil or gas pipeline.[143] For example, in Ireland, an internet-connected controller controls the water pressure of a water system. It was hacked and disrupted by terrorists. This left a water outage in over 160 homes.[144] Cyber Espionage is also used by terrorists to spy on other countries and gather secret or private information. This information can be the locations of troops or military tactics.[145]

Criminal groups have done most cyberattacks, but no case was severe enough to raise business concerns. This changed in 2017 with the WannaCry and NotPetya outbreaks. These two attacks affected companies in more than 150 countries. This resulted in business interruption and other losses totaling more than 300 million dollars, reputational damage, and loss of consumer data.[146] Despite recent leadership losses, groups such as ISIS and Al Qaeda continue to pose cyber risks.[147] In the past, the target of cyberterrorism was mostly the government. Now, businesses and other organizations are also targets. This is why cybersecurity measures are very important to combat this problem. The National Cybersecurity Alliance is a collaboration that wants to raise cybersecurity awareness. It also wants to make society safer. It contributes to the global fight against cybercrime and terrorism. The Council of Europe Convention on Cybercrime is the world's first international convention focused on this crime. It invited governments to work together and exchange information. As of 2024, 69 states have already joined this alliance. Another 22 have been invited to join. The United Nations has proposed a similar convention that includes many different issues. These address international collaboration and authorities' access to digital evidence.[148]

Current Status

Case study: Taliban's Return to Power in Afghanistan and its Regional Implications

One of the most significant changes facing terrorism in the region in recent years was the return of the Taliban to Afghanistan. The Taliban are a predominantly Pashtun nationalist and Islamic fundamentalist political and militant group. The Taliban's control of Afghanistan began during the Afghan civil war. The group controlled almost 70 percent of Afghanistan from 1996 to 2001. However, in 2001, the situation changed following the September 11 terrorist attacks perpetrated by Al-Qaeda. In 2001, an international coalition led by the United States invaded Afghanistan to dismantle the terrorist organization after the Taliban refused to hand Osama bin Laden over.[149]

Despite the presence of the United States, the Taliban did not disintegrate. Less than ten years after their removal from power, the Taliban reassembled in Pakistan across the border and started reclaiming territory. The Taliban had retaken power by August 2021. Their swift offensive came as the United States withdrew its remaining troops from Afghanistan as outlined in a 2020 peace agreement with the group.[150] In 2014, NATO forces withdrew from most combat operations, and the Taliban, in consequence, intensified their onslaught and took control of substantial areas of rural Afghanistan. Under these conditions, President Trump negotiated the terms of the final US withdrawal from Afghanistan, which President Biden honored by pledging to remove all troops by August 31, 2021.[151]

After the US and its allies' failure to capture and control the bulk of Afghanistan since 2001 and the persistence and resilience of the Taliban, it was only a matter of time before

143 Awati, Sheldon, and Hanna, "Cyberterrorism."
144 James, "9 Recent Cyber Attacks on the Water and Wastewater Sector," Wisdiam, May 5, 2024, https://wisdiam.com/publications/recent-cyber-attacks-water-wastewater/.
145 Awati, Sheldon, and Hanna, "Cyberterrorism."
146 Metropoulos, "Global Cyber Terrorism Incidents on the Rise."
147 Maryville University, "Cyber Terrorism: What It Is and How It's Evolved."
148 Awati, Sheldon, and Hanna, "Cyberterrorism."
149 Imperial War Museums, "Afghanistan War: How Did 9/11 Lead to a 20-Year War?," Imperial War Museums, 2022, https://www.iwm.org.uk/history/afghanistan-war-how-did-911-lead-to-a-20-year-war.
150 Lindsay Maizland, "What Is the Taliban?," Council on Foreign Relations, January 19, 2023, https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/taliban-afghanistan#chapter-title-0-1.
151 Thiemo Fetzer et al., "Why Did the Taliban Take over Afghanistan so Fast?," Institute for New Economic Thinking, August 18, 2021, https://www.ineteconomics.org/perspectives/blog/why-did-the-taliban-take-over-afghanistan-so-fast.

the Taliban would return to power. The Taliban takeover not just changed the power equation in Afghanistan, but their ties with various terrorist and extremist groups. In this regard, it is essential to analyze how the return of the Taliban to control Afghanistan, a country so strategically located, would affect the MENA region and terrorism in it. One of the main concerns regarding terrorism and the Taliban in the region is that many terrorist organizations may find support in the Taliban government. Under the Taliban's rule, Afghanistan could become a haven for terrorists capable of launching international attacks. Regardless of the Taliban's statement affirming that "Afghanistan's soil will not be used against the security of any other country," many international observers and experts distrust the government.[152] Many are distrusting of the government after what happened when the Taliban hid Osama Bin Laden, former Al-Qaeda leader and one of the foremost perpetrators of the September 11 attacks.[153]

Moreover, in 2022, the UN conducted a report by the team tasked to monitor the Taliban. The report stated that the Taliban "remains close" to Al-Qaeda and that "Al-Qaeda has a haven under the Taliban and increased freedom of action." According to the UN study, al-Qaeda is probably recruiting, training, and raising money in Afghanistan. However, the report stated that it is improbable that it will carry out a global strike before 2023 at the latest.[154]

According to a report published in 2024, Al Qaeda is now back and actively operating in Afghanistan. The terrorist group is running militant training camps; sharing the profits of the Taliban's illicit drug, mining, and smuggling enterprises; and funneling the proceeds to affiliated jihadi groups worldwide. The report was done by a private, London-based threat analysis firm, whose directors did not want to be identified.[155] The report's research was conducted in Afghanistan during the last few months of 2023. It includes a list of senior Al-Qaeda operatives and their roles in the Taliban government. It also includes how the organization finances its operations

and where it gets its income, which ranks millions of dollars in weeks from gold mines in Afghanistan's northern Badakhshan and Takhar provinces that employ tens of thousands of workers.[156]

As seen, now that the Taliban can operate freely in the country, they can not only provide Al-Qaeda with many forms of support but also other terrorist groups. By regaining power in the Afghan state, the Taliban have significantly improved their access to resources, placing them in a prime position to plunder it for their benefit. The presence of terrorist organizations in the country, backed by the Taliban government, can cause unrest to worsen in nearby countries, especially in the Middle East and North Africa. Terrorist organizations may pose a more significant threat to other nearby countries like Pakistan, India, and the Central Asian republics.

The victory of the Taliban also poses a risk of increasing the number of militants of extremist and terrorist groups, not only within the country's borders but also outside them. This could directly lead to dire consequences for the region and international security. Many jihadist organizations view the Taliban's victory as a significant win over international forces, which might encourage and inspire other extremist organizations throughout the world. Since the Taliban's ability to restore authority after 20 years of fighting serves as a powerful propaganda weapon, this accomplishment might increase recruitment. Similarly, other terrorist organizations may be influenced by The Taliban's vision of Islamic law and administration, which might result in the development of similar ideologies. This may cause instability in areas with sizable Muslim populations, such as the MENA region. For instance, the Taliban are engaged in information warfare incorporating frames across all communication modalities. Their core messages are communicated via frames across the television, the Internet, social media, printed materials, speeches, and interpersonal communications. According to a study made in 2020, all of these modalities are used to spread

152   Lindsay Maizland, "What is the Taliban?"
153   Lindsay Maizland, "What Is the Taliban?"
154   United Nations Security Council, Report 419, Letter dated 25 May 2022 from the Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1988 (2011) addressed to the President of the Security Council, S/2022/419, 3-5 (May 26, 2022), https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/n22/333/77/pdf/n2233377.pdf
155   Lynne O'Donnell, "Al Qaeda Is Back—and Thriving—in Afghanistan," *Foreign Policy*, March 28, 2024, https://foreignpolicy.com/2024/03/22/al-qaeda-taliban-afghanistan-gold-mining/.
156   O'Donell, "Al Qaeda Is Back."

the Taliban's message and their government propaganda. The study points out, based on information obtained through interviews with Afghan citizens, that the Taliban has five core messages: violent jihad, the strict imposition of Sharia law, the fight against moral corruption, the establishment of an Afghan caliphate, and religious infidels. These messages are disseminated to make the population understand two key ideas: first, that it is necessary to purify Afghanistan of all that corrupts it, and second, that to achieve this, the country and its people must be defended, even resorting to violence if necessary. This propaganda opens the possibility of recruits for both the Taliban and terrorist groups that may operate in the area, which further opens the potential for more violence.[157]

As mentioned previously, with the presence of the Taliban, violence may increase in the region. For example, violence has increased along Afghanistan's border with Pakistan, which has historically supported the Taliban. It is thought that Pakistan has provided financial and logistical support to the Taliban. However, Islamabad has denied this in the past. Furthermore, Tehrik-e-Taliban, more commonly known as the Pakistani Taliban, an umbrella organization of several Islamist armed groups that operate along the Afghan–Pakistan border, has gained confidence with the Taliban's comeback to power. In late 2022, the group ended a cease-fire with the Pakistani government and launched attacks across the country. Pakistani officials have accused the Afghan Taliban of providing the militants with protection in Afghanistan.[158] There is also the potential for violent clashes between civilians and armed militant organizations, especially in response to severe government restrictions or measures imposed on the country. This is just one example of the type of violence that can spread throughout the country and the region. Such violence could spread beyond national borders and threaten international security, generating further instability and aggravating the

humanitarian crisis in MENA.

Case Study: The Recent Surge of ISIS-K Attacks

While the US and its Kurdish allies mostly eliminated the ISIS caliphate in Iraq and Syria, the Afghan chapter of ISIS is very active. Over two years since the Taliban seized control after the US pullout in 2021, the global focus has shifted back to Afghanistan.[159] Since the Taliban took over Afghanistan in 2021, the terrorist group Islamic State Khorasan Province (ISIS-K) has tried to expand its operations internationally. The organization wants to establish itself as the main adversary against authoritarian regimes. They want to do this even though they are considered authoritarian themselves. They want to use a massive media campaign to achieve their objective.[160] Inside Afghanistan, its soldiers are mostly dissatisfied ex-Taliban members and conservative young Afghans who oppose the Taliban. Its younger recruits are becoming more ethnically diverse. This attracts ethnic minority communities. It is rapidly recruiting from Afghans and Central Asians, notably Tajikistan, as well as Central Asian migrants in Turkey and Europe.[161]

ISIS-K poses a major risk to international security as they have engaged in several recent attacks. In May 2020, a maternity unit in Kabul was attacked, which killed 24 people.[162] In November 2020, 22 people were killed at Kabul University. In May 2021, ISIS-K perpetrated a vehicle bombing in front of a girls' high school, killing at least 85 people.[163] The organization was most active around 2018 when an ISIS-K suicide bomber killed 128 people at an election rally in Mastung, Pakistan, which was one of the worst assaults in the world that year. Although they do not have the same power as in 2018, ISIS-K continues to plot assaults in Afghanistan. According to the

---

157 S Hussaini and T Morris, "The Taliban's Information War: The Tactical Use of Frames," *Journal of Information Warfare* 19, no. 4 (2020): 89–109, https://www.jstor.org/stable/27033647.
158 Lindsay Maizland, "What Is the Taliban?"
159 "ISIS-K Attack in Moscow Highlights Growing Terror Threat from Afghanistan," Northern University, March 28, 2024, https://cssh.northeastern.edu/isis-k-attack-in-moscow-highlights-growing-terror-threat-from-afghanistan/.
160 Amira Jadoon and Nakissa Jahanbani, "Iran Terror Blast Highlights Success – and Growing Risk – of ISIS-K Regional Strategy," The Conversation, January 11, 2024, https://theconversation.com/iran-terror-blast-highlights-success-and-growing-risk-of-isis-k-regional-strategy-220586.
161 Ashley Jackson, "What Is ISIS-K, the Terror Group Allegedly Responsible for the Moscow Concert Hall Attack?," POLITICO, March 26, 2024, https://www.politico.eu/article/islamic-isis-khorasan-concert-hall-attack-russia-terrorist/.
162 Jessie Yeung, "Who Are ISIS-K, the Group Linked to the Moscow Concert Hall Terror Attack?," CNN, March 26, 2024, https://edition.cnn.com/2024/03/25/europe/isis-k-explainer-russia-moscow-attack-intl-hnk/index.html.
163 Yeung, "Who Are ISIS-K, the Group Linked to the Moscow Concert Hall Terror Attack?."

Institute for Economics and Peace, it is the country's most active terrorist group, responsible for 73 killings in 2023.[164] On August 26, 2021, two suicide bombers and gunmen assaulted hundreds of Afghans gathered at Kabul's airport. With this, they turned a desperate sight into one of horror in the final days before an airlift for refugees escaped the Taliban control.[165] The strikes killed at least 13 American service members and 170 Afghan civilians.[166] The attack was made by an ISIS-K suicide bomber.[167] The Islamic State claimed credit for the executions. The Islamic State affiliate in Afghanistan, ISIS-K, is significantly more extremist than the Taliban. The Taliban were not engaged in the strikes, and they denounced the explosions.[168]

On January 3, 2024, ISIS-K proved that it would do anything possible to achieve its goal of being the dominant regional competitor. ISIS-K claimed responsibility for a bomb strike in Kerman, Iran. The bomb killed more than 100 people.[169] It took place at a memorial session for a Lieutenant General in the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps who was murdered in a US drone strike in 2020. ISIS-K said the attack was a form of vengeance against him, who had led Iran's war against the Islamic State organization and its affiliates before his death. The incident demonstrates the effectiveness of ISIS-K's recruiting efforts. It also shows its growing capacity to target opponents and threaten regional stability.[170]

On January 28, 2024, ISIS-K attacked a Roman Catholic church in Istanbul, killing one person. Later, the Islamic State claimed credit. Then, the Turkish police apprehended 47 individuals.[171] The event showed the rising presence of ISIS-K in Turkey. The assault was the group's first successful strike in Turkey since 2017, when militants attacked an Istanbul nightclub, killing 39 people and injuring 80.[172] Since then, Turkish security services have applied major counter-terrorism operations against ISIS suspects in Turkey, Syria, and Iraq. The operations have prevented lethal terrorist strikes in big metropolitan areas and border regions. With the US withdrawal from Afghanistan, ISIS-K ceased its efforts abroad to focus more on Afghanistan. With this, they tried to weaken the Taliban, who regained control of the country after the Americans withdrew.[173] Between late 2022 and early 2023, ISIS-K members assaulted the Pakistani and Russian embassies in Kabul. They also targeted a hotel in the Afghan capital where Chinese business leaders were staying and detonated an air force facility.[174]

On March 22, 2024, ISIS-K attacked Moscow's Crocus City Hall music venue, killing over 130 people and injuring hundreds more.[175] This was Europe's bloodiest terrorist incident since the Beslan school attack in 2004.[176] The terrorist assault was the deadliest in Russia in more than 20 years. It serves as a reminder that the threat posed by ISIS and worldwide terrorism persists. Gunmen, described as Tajik nationals, broke into the performance hall with automatic weapons and began to fire on the 6,200-seat arena.[177] Following the bombing, ISIS officially claimed credit. This was ISIS-K's first successful strike in Russia, as well as its first large-scale attack outside of its typical operational region. ISIS-K most likely targeted Russia to demonstrate its capacity to spread its influence, and also Moscow's alliance with the Taliban and

164   Yeung, "Who Are ISIS-K, the Group Linked to the Moscow Concert Hall Terror Attack?."
165   Lolita C. Baldor et al., "Kabul Airport Attack Kills 60 Afghans, 13 US Troops," AP News, August 26, 2021, https://apnews.com/article/europe-france-evacuations-kabul-9e457201e5bbe75a4eb1901fedeee7a1.
166   Matthew Olay, "Kabul Airport Attack Review Reaffirms Initial Findings, Identifies Attacker," U.S. Department of Defense, April 15, 2024, https://www.defense.gov/News/News-Stories/Article/Article/3741245/kabul-airport-attack-review-reaffirms-initial-findings-identifies-attacker/.
167   Olay, "Kabul Airport Attack Review Reaffirms Initial Findings, Identifies Attacker."
168   Baldor et al., "Kabul Airport Attack Kills 60 Afghans, 13 US Troops."
169   Jadoon and Jahanbani, "Iran Terror Blast Highlights Success – and Growing Risk – of ISIS-K Regional Strategy."
170   Jadoon and Jahanbani, "Iran Terror Blast Highlights Success – and Growing Risk – of ISIS-K Regional Strategy."
171   Fuad Shahbazov, "What Does a Recent ISIS-K Terror Attack Mean for Turkey?," Stimson Center, March 14, 2024, https://www.stimson.org/2024/what-does-a-recent-isis-k-terror-attack-mean-for-turkey/.
172   Shahbazov, "What Does a Recent ISIS-K Terror Attack Mean for Turkey?."
173   Shahbazov, "What Does a Recent ISIS-K Terror Attack Mean for Turkey?."
174   Shahbazov, "What Does a Recent ISIS-K Terror Attack Mean for Turkey?."
175   "On the Terrorist Attack at the Crocus City Hall in Moscow," U.S. Mission to the OSCE, April 11, 2024, https://osce.usmission.gov/on-the-terrorist-attack-at-the-crocus-city-hall-in-moscow/.
176   U.S. Mission to the OSCE, "On the Terrorist Attack at the Crocus City Hall in Moscow."
177   Northern University, "ISIS-K Attack in Moscow Highlights Growing Terror Threat from Afghanistan."

Moscow Crocus City Hall Attack, Carried by ISIS-K in March 2024

Credit: Zeev Stein

continued military action against ISIS in Syria.[178]

ISIS-K has always considered Russia as one of its primary rivals. It has used anti-Russian language in its propaganda and has criticized the country's position in Afghanistan. This includes a suicide assault on Russia's embassy in Kabul in 2022. This attack killed two Russian Embassy officials and six Afghans.[179] The Islamic State organization has attacked Russia for a number of reasons. They include a long-time resentment over Moscow's previous actions in mostly Muslim territories such as Chechnya and Afghanistan. At the same time, Russia's alliances with governments opposed to ISIS have made Russia a main enemy of the terrorist organization and its affiliates. The most notable allies of Russia are Syria and Iran. Since the outbreak of Syria's civil conflict in 2011, Russia has been a crucial ally of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad. Russia has given military support to Syria against different opposition organizations. One of these organizations is the Islamic State group. This direct resistance to the terrorist organization and its goals has made Russia a target for the terrorist group.[180]

Russia's assistance with the Taliban adds to the hostilities

between Russia and ISIS-K. The Islamic State considers countries and parties that oppose its ideology as enemies of Islam. This includes entities that develop links with the Taliban. ISIS-K hopes to reduce Russian participation in the Middle East by assaulting Russian sites.[181] ISIS attacks attract a lot of attention. They also encourage supporters all around the world. As a result, for the Islamic State, the Moscow attack serves as a punishment against Russia and is also projected to have a global reach. This strategy can provide many benefits in terms of increased recruitment, finance, and influence throughout the jihadist spectrum. The identification of ISIS-K with this attack helps the group's reputation. This new crime, like ISIS-K's attack in Iran in January 2024 that killed over 100 people, reinforces its commitment to the Islamic State group's larger global jihadist objective. It also spreads the attractiveness of its ideology and recruitment campaigns.[182]

ISIS-K considers the Taliban as an enemy that must be destroyed. Ongoing military confrontations have increased the hatred between the two factions. The root cause remains their sectarian differences. ISIS-K sticks to the Jihadi-Salafism

---

178   U.S. Mission to the OSCE, "On the Terrorist Attack at the Crocus City Hall in Moscow."
179   Sara Harmouch and Amira Jadoon, "How Moscow Terror Attack Fits ISIS-K Strategy to Widen Agenda, Take Fight to Its Perceived Enemies," Clemson News, March 25, 2024, https://news.clemson.edu/how-moscow-terror-attack-fits-isis-k-strategy-to-widen-agenda-take-fight-to-its-perceived-enemies/.
180   Harmouch and Jadoon, "How Moscow Terror Attack Fits ISIS-K Strategy to Widen Agenda, Take Fight to Its Perceived Enemies."
181   Harmouch and Jadoon, "How Moscow Terror Attack Fits ISIS-K Strategy to Widen Agenda, Take Fight to Its Perceived Enemies."
182   Harmouch and Jadoon, "How Moscow Terror Attack Fits ISIS-K Strategy to Widen Agenda, Take Fight to Its Perceived Enemies."

doctrine and emphasizes the 'purity' of its anti-idolatry credentials.[183] The Salafi-jihad philosophy wants to make Muslims aware that their faith is in decline. They claim that their religion is in constant political, military, economic, and cultural decline. The Salafist jihadists offer a plan of action called jihad. They understand jihad in military terms. They believe that jihad will change the course of history and liberate them from this situation of decline.[184] On the other hand, the Taliban follow a different Sunni Islamic sectarian school, the Hanafi madhhab. ISIS-K sees it as inferior. The two groups also disagree on the role of nationalism. ISIS-K strongly opposes it, which contradicts the Taliban's goal of reigning over Afghanistan.[185]

ISIS-K has evolved by focusing on strategic targets designed to maximize damage. They have claimed responsibility for many operations. Common operations include a jailbreak in eastern Afghanistan, a memorial ceremony in Iran for a commander, and an attack on a Catholic church in Istanbul. It is very likely that they will continue to fight in Afghanistan and also claim assaults overseas. The media plays an important role in developing many of their conflicts. This is part of an attempt to stay relevant by attacking global targets. With this, they also counter Taliban claims that they can prevent terrorist groups from operating in their territory.[186]

Attacks from three main sources degraded ISIS-K's violence, political cohesion, and geographic impact. These sources include the U.S. military, the previous Afghan government, and the Taliban. However, the pressure failed to moderate ISIS-K's political and civilian objectives. Since May 2020, the new ISIS-K commander has prioritized building the group's capabilities over territorial battles. With this, they focus on crucial metropolitan locations such as Kabul.[187] As a result, the group appears to have resurfaced. ISIS-K has a significant local focus. This focus includes opposition to the international community's political and development presence

in Afghanistan. The organization also aims to target Afghans who have collaborated with the United States administration and others in the global community. ISIS-K is made up of foreign warriors from South Asia, the Middle East, and areas of Europe. There are indications that the group planned certain global assaults from Afghanistan. Since 2018, the United Nations has announced the discovery of ISIS-K-linked plots across Europe.[188] This case study highlights the evolution of ISIS-K. Even after its loss of territory and leadership, it has established itself as one of the most vital terrorist groups worldwide. The attacks they have carried out in Iran, Turkey, and Russia demonstrate the group's robust capabilities, making it a threat to international security.

Sustainable Development Goals

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was approved by the United Nations in 2015. This agenda is a shared vision for peace and prosperity for people and the planet. The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are the main part of it. They are an urgent call to action for all countries to work together. They understand that eradicating poverty must be combined with promoting health and education, decreasing inequalities, encouraging economic growth, addressing climate change, and protecting the seas and forests. Some goals related to addressing terrorism in the Middle East and North Africa are Goal 3: Good Health and Well-Being, Goal 5: Gender Equality, and Goal 10: Reduced Inequalities.[189]

The first SDG works to "end poverty in all its forms everywhere."[190] People, including children, when living in conditions of poverty, do not get food, money, or a way out. Sometimes, people living in this condition may turn to terrorism as a "way out" of poverty. It is also easier for a terrorist group to convince people living in poverty to join, promising them better opportunities for themselves and their families. That is why it is essential to combat poverty. This will

183 Asfandyar Mir, "The ISIS-K Resurgence," Wilson Center, October 8, 2021, https://www.wilsoncenter.org/article/isis-k-resurgence.
184 Assaf Moghadam, "The Salafi-Jihad as a Religious Ideology," Combating Terrorism Center, accessed August 8, 2024, https://ctc.westpoint.edu/the-salafi-jihad-as-a-religious-ideology/.
185 Mir, "The ISIS-K Resurgence."
186 Jackson, "What Is ISIS-K, the Terror Group Allegedly Responsible for the Moscow Concert Hall Attack?."
187 Mir, "The ISIS-K Resurgence."
188 Mir, "The ISIS-K Resurgence."
189 "The 17 Goals," United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, accessed July 24, 2024, https://sdgs.un.org/goals.
190 "Goal 1: End Poverty in All Its Forms Everywhere," Sustainable Development Goals, accessed July 24, 2024, https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/poverty/.

reduce the need to resort to crime for a living and eliminate this recruitment front for terrorist groups.

SDG 4 aims to "ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all."[191] SDG 8 points to "promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all."[192] Some terrorist groups, like ISIS, take over schools to teach Islamist law. Children are easier to teach and more receptive to information. Because of this, terrorists instill these ideologies in them from a very young age. By indoctrinating children from a young age, it is easy for them to recruit them for their terrorist group or use them to recruit more children or even adults. That is why all children must have accessible education without the influence of extremist ideologies. Additionally, it is very important to ensure decent work for all. The lack of education and resources can lead people to resort to terrorism as an alternative. All of this would help to eradicate the recruitment of children and adults by creating new job opportunities and aspirations away from joining terrorist groups as an escape.

Finally, SDG 16 invites countries to "promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels."[193] Terrorism promotes the opposite, which is violence, exclusion, and injustice. That is why this goal may be considered the most important in the fight against terrorism. Target 16.1 of this goal calls to "reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere."[194] Target 16.2 calls for an "end [to] abuse, exploitation, trafficking, torture, and all forms of violence against children."[195] Similarly, target 16.4 looks to "reduce illicit financial and arms flows, strengthen the recovery and return of stolen assets, and combat all forms

of organized crime."[196] All of these targets are directed to the dangers of terrorist groups, such as abuse, exploitation, illegal trafficking, child involvement, organized crime, and violence. That is why it is extremely important to ensure peace and justice to fight terrorism at its roots.

All SDGs are of utmost importance to ensure the well-being of our society. Therefore, it is very useful to consider them when addressing terrorism in the Middle East and North Africa. With these in mind, better discussions and solutions to this global problem can be reached.

Bloc Analysis

Points of division

Having a clear idea of how terrorism works is crucial to eliminating it, as it will allow a focus on what needs to be addressed. The Global Terrorism Index (GTI) summarizes the important trends and patterns in terrorism over the last decade. The GTI score is calculated using five years, including deaths, incidents, hostages, and terrorism-related injuries.[197] The report was created using records from terrorist incidents since January 1, 2007. The current terrorism dataset has more than 66,000 terrorist incidents from 2007 to the present.[198] The GTI rates 163 countries using the four metrics over five years. The annual GTI of a country is calculated using a unique scoring system that accounts for the effect of incidents throughout the year.[199] The parameters of this index create three division points, in which the subject can be approached in different ways: countries that rank high on the GTI (from six to ten points), countries that rank moderate on the GTI (from four to six points), and countries that rank low on the GTI (from zero to four points).[200] These three blocs differ mainly

191 "Goal 4: Quality Education," The Global Goals, accessed July 24, 2024, https://www.globalgoals.org/goals/4-quality-education/.
192 "Goal 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth," The Global Goals, accessed July 24, 2024, https://www.globalgoals.org/goals/8-decent-work-and-economic-growth/.
193 "Goal 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions," The Global Goals, accessed July 24, 2024, https://www.globalgoals.org/goals/16-peace-justice-and-strong-institutions/.
194 The Global Goals, "Goal 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions."
195 The Global Goals, "Goal 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions."
196 The Global Goals, "Goal 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions."
197 "Global Terrorism Index," Institute for Economics & Peace, February 29, 2024, https://www.economicsandpeace.org/global-terrorism-index/.
198 Institute for Economics & Peace, "Global Terrorism Index."
199 Institute for Economics & Peace, "Global Terrorism Index."
200 "Global Terrorism Index 2024," Institute for Economics & Peace, accessed July 25, 2024, https://www.visionofhumanity.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/GTI-2024-web-290224.pdf.

in terms of the impact of terrorism in their countries and how they deal with it. The major differences between these blocs are seen in the frequency of terrorist attacks and how deadly they are. Other differences are the presence of terrorist groups, the political, social, and economic impacts, and the national and international security measures taken. These are all very important factors in determining what measures each country should take to combat terrorism and which countries share the same problems and interests.

Countries that Rank High on the Global Terrorism Index (Six-Ten)

Countries that rank high on the Global Terrorism Index have a score between six and ten points. Most of these countries have one or even more terrorist groups actively present. They also have a high presence of extremist violence. This can cause poverty, unemployment, and economic disparities, which results in more people joining terrorist groups out of necessity. Also, many of these countries have large ethnic, racial, and religious segregations. These are partially due to the extremist ideologies imposed by terrorist groups. Illegal trafficking in any of its branches is highly present. It is a key source of financing for terrorist activities. This illegal traffic poses many dangers to the security of its inhabitants. These countries also have a high rate of terrorist attacks, bombings, and death and injured citizens. Most of these countries have unstable governments that are susceptible to being exploited by terrorist organizations to gain control or influence. Many of these countries also share a common religion, Islam. This can cause extremist ideologies of terrorism to take hold. Also, the countries of this bloc support many measures to combat terrorism and foreign assistance for anti-terrorism efforts. They also support military operations made to protect international security. Some examples of countries that are part of this block include Burkina Faso, Israel, Pakistan, Syria, Afghanistan, Somalia, Iraq, and Colombia.

Israel, for example, ranks second in the GTI with a score of 8.1. Since 2007, 1,312 people have died as a result of terrorism. Terrorist deaths in Israel reached their highest in 2023, with 1,210 people killed and 4,537 injured in 20 attacks. Almost

all of them happened on the same day, when Hamas attacked Israel on October 7, 2023. This was the single largest terrorist strike since the GTI was created, the largest after the 9/11 attacks, and one of the largest attacks ever.[201]

Countries that Rank Moderate on the Global Terrorism Index (Four-Six)

Countries that rank moderate on the Global Terrorism Index score between four and six points. Most of these countries are geographically close to countries with a high presence of terrorist groups. They also have some presence of extremist violence in their territory. The presence of terrorism can also affect the economy and stability of each country. These countries can also be means for illegal trafficking, helping to transport and finance them. Some of these countries in the West are seen as enemies of various terrorist groups. As a result, these countries may suffer from sporadic terrorist attacks, resulting in deaths and injuries on a smaller scale than countries with a higher index. Among these countries, some have stable governments while others have unstable ones. These countries support increased counter-terrorism measures. They also support military operations to combat terrorism and can assist countries with a high terrorism index. Some examples of countries in this block include the United States, Chile, Yemen, Iran, Türkiye, Philippines, and Thailand.

In the United States, in the almost 23 years following the 9/11 attack, there have been few terrorist attacks in the country. One example is the attack on Naval Air Station Pensacola on December 6, 2019, made by Al-Qaeda, in which three people were shot and murdered. Since 9/11, Islamists have killed 107 individuals in the United States. While the U.S. has suffered violent assaults by jihadist individuals and groups, it remains a difficult target for terrorist groups. This is due to their defensive strategies. However, there have also been some attacks that have left no one dead. For example, the 2009 Christmas Day bomb, commanded by Al Qaeda, failed because the explosive did not operate. Another example is the Times Square bomb plan in 2010, when a bomb was installed in a vehicle undetected by the Taliban, but it did not detonate correctly. Regardless, the biggest threat for the country is

---

201   Institute for Economics & Peace, "Global Terrorism Index 2024."

individuals or pairs influenced by jihadist ideology who do not engage in considerable activities to alert the counterterrorism defensive system.[202]

Countries that Rank Low on the Global Terrorism Index (Zero-Four)

Countries that rank low on the Global Terrorism Index have a score between zero and four points. Most of these countries have little to no presence of terrorist groups in their territory. This bloc has less domestic terrorism than countries with moderate GTI. Terrorism does not have a significant impact on this bloc's countries economy or stability. These countries have very little impact from terrorism due to three different factors. The first factor is that their policies to combat terrorism are very strong. The second factor is that they are in a low-risk zone from terrorism or away from countries with a high index. The last factor is that terrorism has simply not spread in the country. This bloc actively supports anti-terrorism legislation to prevent its growth. Some countries of this bloc organize military operations to assist countries with a high GTI. They also help these countries to strengthen their governments to prevent terrorist groups from taking advantage. Some examples of countries in this block include Russia, Germany, France, the United Kingdom, Canada, Brazil, Japan, China, and more than half of the countries enlisted in the GTI.

In Japan, the 1995 subway sarin assault in Tokyo was the biggest terrorist event in Japan to date. Five thousand five hundred people were wounded and 12 killed. Fortunately, the country has not seen any recent terrorist incidents.[203] Japan strongly combats terrorism. This can be seen with the Japanese government, which uses the Self-Defense Force (SDF) to provide support, including medical services, transportation, and supply to countries affected by terrorism. These attacks are recognized as a threat to international peace and security by the United Nations Security Council.[204]

Committee Mission

The United Nations Disarmament and International Security Committee (DISEC) deals with disarmament, global concerns, and threats to international security and peace. It also moves to find solutions to problems in the global security system.[205] In the General Assembly, DISEC sets rules for cooperation to keep international peace and security. This includes the principles of disarmament and arms control. Based on these guidelines, it also suggests ideas to the Members or the Security Council. DISEC cannot directly act against terrorist groups in the MENA region. They also need help to make decisions for the Security Council. Nonetheless, it can bring issues to the attention of the Security Council for them to be considered.[206]

Fighting terrorism in the Middle East and North Africa is key to DISEC's global peace and security goals. Terrorism happens when security is weak. DISEC needs to improve global security measures to help stop terrorism on a large scale. Many countries in this region use specialized military forces to fight terrorism. DISEC must help these countries with security and military support.

Despite certain limitations, the Disarmament and International Security Committee can still suggest and lead efforts against terrorism in the MENA region. Delegates have a key role in this committee. They need to discuss and propose solutions to the problem. As more research is done, delegates should also consider how the United Nations and other international groups are connected to the topic. Terrorism in the Middle East and North Africa is a big issue of great global relevance. This makes it important for DISEC to find quick and effective solutions.

202   Peter Bergen and David Sterman, "Terrorism in America After 9/11," New America, December 15, 2023, https://www.newamerica.org/future-security/reports/terrorism-in-america/what-is-the-threat-to-the-united-states-today/.
203   Yasufumi Asai and Jeffrey L. Arnold, "Terrorism in Japan," Cambridge University Press, June 28, 2012, https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/prehospital-and-disaster-medicine/article/abs/terrorism-in-japan/0395D08D87A1E7786083428B9B64831B.
204   "Japan's Measures in Response to the Simultaneous Terrorist Attacks in the United States," Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, accessed July 30, 2024, https://www.mofa.go.jp/region/n-america/us/terro0109/measure.html.
205   "Disarmament and International Security (First Committee)," United Nations, accessed August 7, 2024, https://www.un.org/en/ga/first/.
206   "DISEC: Disarmament & International Security Committee," IMUNA, accessed August 7, 2024, https://imuna.org/nhsmun/nyc/committees/disec-disarmament-international-security-committee/.

Research and Preparation Questions

Your dais has prepared the following research and preparation questions as a means of providing guidance for your research process. These questions should be carefully considered, as they embody some of the main critical thought and learning objectives surrounding your topic.

Topic A

1. Are there any active guerrilla groups in your country, and how are they being addressed? Additionally, what impact have previously active guerrilla groups had on your country, both in the past and present?

2. What techniques do guerrilla groups in your country typically use, and what are the most effective strategies to neutralize them?

3. How do guerrilla groups affect security and peace in your country? Further, what influence do they have on regional and international security?

4. How do guerrilla groups' methods influence security dynamics? Do they contribute to conflicts between countries?

5. What are the distinct differences between guerrilla groups and other non-state actors? Why is it important to distinguish these differences when combating violence in warfare?

6. Why do guerrilla groups continue to thrive despite government attempts to counter them? Do you believe this is primarily a resource issue or a problem related to management and enforcement?

7. In the past, what attempts have been made in your country to combat guerilla groups or other armed non-state actors? Were they successful? If so, how can other states adopt similar policies? If not, why not, and how can those programs be improved?

8. Can guerilla groups be dealt with peacefully? When is negotiation or compromise possible, if at all? How can DISEC ensure that these solutions are practical and sustainable?

Topic B

1. How have countries inside and outside the Middle East and North Africa been affected by terrorism originating from or tied to this region? Additionally, has your country faced any terrorist threats or challenges, including illegal trafficking, insecurity, or infiltration?

2. What resolutions have already been passed to address this issue? Were they successful? Why or why not?

3. What role do local governments have in addressing the root causes of terrorism? How can they effectively engage their populations to prevent radicalization?

4. How has technology played a role in terrorist attacks? How can organizations prevent terrorist groups from acquiring, developing, and utilizing new technologies for harmful purposes?

5. What strategies can be implemented to allow for economic and educational opportunities in regions affected by terrorism? How could this help to prevent terrorism in the future?

6. How is ideological extremism related to terrorism, and how can countries prevent communities from becoming radicalized

and diffuse extremist propaganda? How should the international community address countries that actively promote or support such extremist ideologies?

7. Can governments and non-state actors negotiate deals to prevent the use of terrorism not only as a bargaining strategy but also as a means to intimidate, enforce ideologies, and disrupt peace?

8. How have marginalized groups such as women, children, ethnic minorities, and refugees been impacted by terrorism in the Middle East and North Africa?

Important Documents

Topic A

Eller, Jack David. "In the Shadow of the Giant: Gun Violence in Latin America and the Caribbean." in Gun Violence and Prevention - Connections, Cultures, and Consequences, ed. Jack Eller. IntechOpen, 2024. https://doi.org/10.5772/intechopen.1005048.

Ibáñez Londoño, Ana María. "New Tensions Unleashed by Colombia's Peace Process." SIPRI, September 18, 2013. https://www.sipri.org/commentary/blog/2013/new-tensions-unleashed-colombias-peace-process.

Jenkins, Brian. "The Five Stages of Urban Guerrilla Warfare: Challenge of the 1970s." 1971. https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/papers/2008/P4670.pdf.

Neves, Yuri. "Counterinsurgency as an Approach to Organized Crime in Latin America." Georgetown Security Studies Review. May 24, 2019. https://georgetownsecuritystudiesreview.org/2019/05/24/counterinsurgency-as-an-approach-to-organized-crime-in-latin-america/.

Stop Fossil Fuels. "The Art of Guerilla Warfare: General Principles | Stop Fossil Fuels." Accessed July 16, 2024. https://stopfossilfuels.org/strategy-principles/art-guerrilla-warfare-gubbins/full-text/.

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. "Organized Crime Module 3 Key Issues: Firearms Trafficking." Accessed July 12, 2024. https://www.unodc.org/e4j/en/organized-crime/module-3/key-issues/firearms-trafficking.html.

Topic B

Gohel, Sajjan M. "Prevention of Cross-Border Movements of Terrorists: Operational, Political, Institutional and Strategic Challenges for National and Regional Border Controls." International Centre for Counter-Terrorism. Accessed July 16, 2024. https://www.icct.nl/sites/default/files/2023-01/Chapter-15-Handbook.pdf.

Institute for Economics & Peace. "Global Terrorism Index 2024." Accessed July 25, 2024. https://www.visionofhumanity.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/GTI-2024-web-290224.pdf.

Kim, Wukki, and Todd Sandler. "Middle East and North Africa: Terrorism and Conflicts." Global Policy. June 5, 2020. https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/1758-5899.12829?campaign=wolearlyview.

Maryville University. "Cyber Terrorism: What It Is and How It's Evolved." January 20, 2022. https://online.maryville.edu/blog/cyber-terrorism/.

O'Brien, Jamison. "How Illicit Economies Fund Terrorism." Vision of Humanity. March 19, 2024. https://www.visionofhumanity.org/how-illicit-economies-fund-terrorism/.

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. "Handbook on Children Recruited and Exploited by Terrorist and Violent Extremist Groups: The Role of the Justice System." Accessed July 15, 2024. https://www.unodc.org/documents/justice-and-prison-reform/Child-Victims/Handbook_on_Children_Recruited_and_Exploited_by_Terrorist_and_Violent_Extremist_Groups_the_Role_of_the_Justice_System.E.pdf.

United Nations Security Council - Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate. "Identifying and exploring the nexus between human trafficking, terrorism, and terrorism financing." 2019. https://www.un.org/securitycouncil/ctc/sites/www.un.org.securitycouncil.ctc/files/files/documents/2021/Jan/ht-terrorism-nexus-cted-report.pdf.

Works Cited

Topic A

UN Sources:

IOM. "The Darien: a Gap between Hope and Despair | Office of the Special Envoy for Refugees and Migrants from Venezuela." Accessed August 8, 2024. https://respuestavenezolanos.iom.int/en/stories/darien-gap-between-hope-and-despair.

NATO. "Counterinsurgency: A Generic Reference Curriculum." Accessed July 18, 2024. https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2017_09/20170904_1709-counterinsurgency-rc.pdf.

United Nations Department for General Assembly and Conference Management. "Verbatim Reporting." Last accessed September 21, 2024. https://www.un.org/dgacm/en/content/verbatim-reporting.

United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. "Goal 16 | Department of Economic and Social Affairs." Accessed July 30, 2024. https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal16.

United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. "Goal 16: Target and Indicators | Department of Economic and Social Affairs." Accessed July 30, 2024. https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal16.

United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. "Goal 8 | Department of Economic and Social Affairs." Accessed July 30, 2024. https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal8.

United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. "Goal 8: Target and Indicators | Department of Economic and Social Affairs." Accessed July 30, 2024. https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal8.

United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development." Accessed August 8, 2024. https://sdgs.un.org/2030agenda.

United Nations General Assembly. "Disarmament and International Security (First Committee)." Accessed August 7, 2024. https://www.un.org/en/ga/first/.

United Nations Meetings Coverage and Press Releases."Sobering Impact of Conventional Weapons Deserves 'No Less Attention' Than Weapons of Mass Destruction, First Committee Told." October 23, 2023. https://press.un.org/en/2023/gadis3724.doc.htm.

United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs. "The Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons – UNODA." Accessed July 8, 2024. https://disarmament.unoda.org/the-convention-on-certain-conventional-weapons/.

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). Counter Terrorism in the International Law Context. Vienna: UNODC, 2021. https://www.unodc.org/pdf/terrorism/CTLTC_CT_in_the_Intl_Law_Context_1_Advance_copy.pdf.

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. "Organized Crime Module 3 Key Issues: Firearms Trafficking." Accessed July 12, 2024. https://www.unodc.org/e4j/en/organized-crime/module-3/key-issues/firearms-trafficking.html.

United Nations Security Council, Document S/2023/477. June 27, 2023. https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/S_2023_477.pdf.

United Nations. "Disarmament | United Nations." Accessed July 9, 2024. https://www.un.org/en/global-issues/disarmament.

United Nations. "Functions and Powers of the General Assembly," Accessed August 7, 2024. https://www.un.org/en/ga/about/background.shtml.

United Nations. "United Nations, Main Body, Main Organs, General Assembly." Last accessed September 21, 2024. https://www.un.org/en/ga/first/.

United Nations. "Sustainable Development Goals: 17 Goals to Transform our World." Accessed July 30, 2024. https://www.un.org/en/exhibits/page/sdgs-17-goals-transform-world

UNODC. "Strategic Vision for Latin America and the Caribbean 2022-2025." Accessed August 3, 2024. https://www.unodc.

org/res/strategy/STRATEGIC_VISION_LATIN_AMERICA_AND_THE_CARIBBEAN_2022_2025_ENE17_
EDsigned.pdf.

Non-UN Sources

Adamoli, Sabrina, Andrea Di Nicola, Ernesto U. Savona and Paola Zoffi, Organised Crime Around the World.
HEUNI Publication Series No. 31. Helsinki: HEUNI, 1998. http://old.heuni.fi/material/attachments/heu-
ni/reports/6KdD32kXX/Hreport_31.pdf.

Alarcón, Daniel. "Peru Processes the Death of Abimael Guzmán." The New Yorker. September 19, 2021. https://
www.newyorker.com/news/postscript/peru-processes-the-death-of-abimael-guzman.

Anderson, Nelson J. "Guerrilla Warfare." Military Review. April 1942. https://www.armyupress.army.mil/Journals/
Military-Review/English-Edition-Archives/mr-history-page/MR-Categories-Guerrilla-Warfare/Apr-1942-An-
derson/.

Arjona, Ana, Nelson Kasfir, and Zachariah Mampilly, eds., "Rebel Governance in Civil War." Cambridge University
Press. 2015. https://books.google.co.ve/books?hl=es&lr=&id=FXGgCgAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PT49&dq=p
atterns+of+guerrilla+governance&ots=GJWDbCUXbY&sig=fbmkf1vxqviBx2SK4dyTd7Effkc.

Bache, N. "Survival and effectiveness of a weapon system against a superior force (guerrilla warfare)." 1986. https://
onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1002/nav.3800330408.

Barajas, Angela. "Colombia's FARC unveils new political party." CNN, August 2017. https://edition.cnn.
com/2017/08/31/americas/colombia-farc-new-political-party/index.html.

Barmeyer, Niels. "The Guerrilla Movement as a Project: An Assessment of Community Involvement in the EZLN."
Latin American Perspectives 30, no. 1, 2003: 122-138. https://library.fes.de/libalt/journals/swetsfull-
text/15749581.pdf.

Barnett, Jeffery R. "Defeating Insurgents with Technology." Air and Space Power Journal, 1996: 70. https://apps.
dtic.mil/sti/pdfs/ADA527945.pdf.

Brown Asprey, Robert. "guerrilla warfare." Encyclopedia Britannica. Accessed July 12, 2024. https://www.britannica.
com/topic/guerrilla-warfare.

Cárdenas, Javier, Cristal Downing, Kyle Johnson, Ángela Olaya, and Juanita Vélez, "Perceptions of FARC Dissident
Groups in Colombia: Implications for Future Peace." MEAC Findings Report 17. New York: United Na-
tions University, 2022, 3. https://unidir.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/FARCdissidentColombia_FI-
NAL-1.pdf.

Cárdenas, Juan Diego. "Gaitanistas License Migrant Smuggling in Colombian Darién Gap: Report." InSight Crime.
November 24, 2023. https://insightcrime.org/news/hrw-gaitanistas-lmigrant-smuggling-colombian-darien-
gap/.

Castro, Daniel, ed. "Revolution and Revolutionaries: Guerrilla Movements in Latin America." Rowman & Little-
field. 1999. https://www.google.co.ve/books/edition/Revolution_and_Revolutionaries/DVV7AAAAQBAJ?hl
=es&gbpv=1&dq=guerrilla+latin+america&printsec=frontcover.

Center for Civilians in Conflict. "The People's Perspectives: Civilian Involvement in Armed Conflict." Accessed July
8, 2024. https://civiliansinconflict.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Peoples_Perspectives_Executive_Sum-
mary.pdf.

Clayfield, Anna. "The Guerrilla Legacy of the Cuban Revolution." Gainesville: University Press of Florida. 2019. https://books.google.es/books?hl=es&lr=&id=zYPSEAAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PP1&dq=impact+of+cuban+g uerrilla&ots=NK12kpHsh8&sig=-dy7UZywhSbJUS6YnhV3De2j9UM.

Clemente, Edgar H. "Mexico's Zapatista Indigenous Rebel Movement Says It Is Dissolving Its 'Autonomous Munici-palities'." PBS News. November 6, 2023. https://www.pbs.org/newshour/world/mexicos-zapatista-indige-nous-rebel-movement-says-it-is-dissolving-its-autonomous-municipalities.

Colombia Peace. "FARC Dissident Groups - Colombia Peace." Accessed August 8, 2024. https://colombiapeace.org/farc-dissident-groups/.

Cragin, Kim, and Bruce Hoffman. "Arms Trafficking and Colombia." 2003. https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/monograph_reports/2005/MR1468.pdf.

CTBTO Preparatory Commission. "The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT)." Last accessed September 20, 2024. https://www.ctbto.org/our-mission/the-treaty.

Denevan, William M. and Norman R. Stewart, "Andes Mountains," Encyclopædia Britannica. Accessed July 12, 2024. https://www.britannica.com/place/Andes-Mountains.

Department of the Army, Tactics in Counterinsurgency, FMI 3-24.2. Washington, DC: Headquarters, Department of the Army, 2009, https://irp.fas.org/doddir/army/fmi3-24-2.pdf.

Der Ghougassian, Khatchik and Leandro Piquet Carneiro. "Connecting Weapons with Violence: The South Ameri-can Experience." Monograph No. 25. Pretoria, South Africa: Institute for Security Studies. May 1998. https://issafrica.s3.amazonaws.com/site/uploads/Mono25.pdf.

Diakonia Lebanon International Humanitarian Law (IHL) Resource Desk. "Forcible Recruitment of Adults by Non-State Armed Groups in Non-International Armed Conflict." May 2019. https://apidiakoniase.cdn.trig-gerfish.cloud/uploads/sites/2/2021/05/Forcible-Recruitment-EN-May-2019.pdf.

Diálogo Américas. "Colombia Captures 181 Clan del Golfo Members." March 8, 2021. https://dialogo-americas.com/articles/colombia-captures-181-clan-del-golfo-members/.

Eller, Jack David. "In the Shadow of the Giant: Gun Violence in Latin America and the Caribbean." in Gun Vio-lence and Prevention - Connections, Cultures, and Consequences, ed. Jack Eller. IntechOpen, 2024. https://doi.org/10.5772/intechopen.1005048.

Encyclopædia Britannica, "FARC." Accessed July 12, 2024, https://www.britannica.com/topic/FARC.

Encyclopædia Britannica. "Darién." Accessed August 8, 2024. https://www.britannica.com/place/Darien-region-Panama.

Encyclopædia Britannica. "Efraín Ríos Montt," Accessed August 5, 2024. https://www.britannica.com/biography/Jose-Efrain-Rios-Montt.

Encyclopædia Britannica. "Guatemala - Civil War, Human Rights, Refugees | Britannica." Accessed August 5, 2024. https://www.britannica.com/place/Guatemala/Civil-war-years.

Encyclopædia Britannica. "Peninsular War." July 20, 1998. https://www.britannica.com/event/Peninsular-War.

Encyclopædia Britannica. "Zapatista National Liberation Army." Accessed July 12, 2024. ,https://www.britannica.com/topic/Zapatista-National-Liberation-Army.

Encyclopædia Britannica."Shining Path." Accessed July 12, 2024. https://www.britannica.com/topic/Shining-Path.

Felbab-Brown, Vanda. "Tackling Transnational Crime: Adapting U.S. National Security Policy." Brookings. April 11, 2008. https://www.brookings.edu/articles/tackling-transnational-crime-adapting-u-s-national-security-policy/.

Feldmann, Andreas. "A Shift in the Paradigm of Violence: Non-Governmental Terrorism in Latin America since the End of the Cold War." Revista de Ciencia Política (Santiago) 25, no. 2. 2005.: 3-36. https://doi.org/10.4067/s0718-090x2005000200001.

FRANCE 24. "Shining Path guerrillas launch deadly ambush | FRANCE 24." October 11, 2008. https://www.france24.com/en/20081011-shining-path-guerrillas-launch-deadly-ambush-peru.

Garzón Cuervo, Fabian Enrique. "Economic Motivations to Join Insurgencies in Colombia." PhD diss., Universidade de Lisboa, 2021. https://www.repository.utl.pt/bitstream/10400.5/21655/1/TD-FEGC-2021.pdf.

Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime. "On the Border: The Gulf Clan, Irregular Migration and Organized Crime in Darién." Geneva: Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime, November 2022, 1. https://globalinitiative.net/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Andre%CC%81s-Cajiao-Paula-Tobo-Mariana-Botero-Restrepo-On-the-border-The-Gulf-Clan-irregular-migration-and-organized-crime-in-Darie%CC%81n-GI-TOC-November-2022.pdf.

Gorriti, Gustavo. "The Shining Path: A History of the Millenarian War in Peru." Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press. 2023. https://books.google.co.ve/books?hl=es&lr=&id=BeA4CQAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PP1&dq=shining+path&ots=jEvimpGGku&sig=WyO7_feg31ux9Yh8PKI7ZWli_xA&redir_esc=y.

Government.no. "The peace process in Colombia." Last updated June 27, 2024. https://www.regjeringen.no/en/topics/foreign-affairs/peace-and-reconciliation-efforts/norways_engagement/peace_colombia/id2522231/.

Gramma. "Notes on the Ideology of the Cuban Revolution." February 7, 2022. https://en.granma.cu/cuba/2022-02-07/notes-on-the-ideology-of-the-cuban-revolution.

Guevara, Ernesto "Che". "Guerrilla Warfare." accessed July 9, 2024. https://faculty.chass.ncsu.edu/slatta/hi216/documents/che.htm.

Guevara, Ernesto. "Guerrilla Warfare." Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield. 2006. https://books.google.es/books?hl=es&lr=&id=vRg2GDIohVcC&oi=fnd&pg=PR1&dq=cuban+guerrilla+warfare&ots=US6uFieVHn&sig=su-3-AKUzaivedqVMEZeBNWqax4.

Guevara, Ernesto. "The Cuban Rebel Army: A Numerical Survey." Hispanic American Historical Review 58, no. 2. 1978.: 284-316. https://read.dukeupress.edu/hahr/article/58/2/284/150640/The-Cuban-Rebel-Army-A-Numerical-Survey.

Hartung, William D. "The New Business of War: Small Arms and the Proliferation of Conflict." CIAO (Columbia International Affairs Online). Accessed August 5, 2024. https://ciaotest.cc.columbia.edu/olj/cceia/cceia_01haw01.pdf.

Håvoll, Harald. COIN Revisited: Lessons of the Classical Literature on Counterinsurgency and Its Applicability to the Afghan Hybrid Insurgency, NUPI Report, Security in Practice No. 13. Oslo: Norwegian Institute of International Affairs, 2008, 5. https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/92745/Lessons%20of%20the%20classifical%20literature%20on%20counterinsurgency.pdf.

Hegghammer, Thomas. "The recruiter's dilemma: Signalling and rebel recruitment tactics." 2013. https://journals.

sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0022343312452287.

Hofmann, Claudia, and Ulrich Schneckener. "Engaging Non-State Armed Actors in State- and Peace-Building: Options and Strategies." International Review of the Red Cross 93, no. 883, September 2011: 603–621. https://www.corteidh.or.cr/tablas/r28824.pdf.

Human Rights Watch (Organization). "Maiming the People: Guerrilla Use of Antipersonnel Landmines and Other Indiscriminate Weapons in Colombia." New York: Human Rights Watch. 2007. https://www.google.co.ve/books/edition/Maiming_the_People/8szZAAAAMAAJ?hl=es&gbpv=1&bsq=guerrilla+human+rights&dq=guerrilla+human+rights&printsec=frontcover.

Human Rights Watch. "México: La militarización de la seguridad pública amenaza los derechos humanos." August 26, 2024. https://www.hrw.org/es/news/2022/08/26/mexico-la-militarizacion-de-la-seguridad-publica-amenaza-los-derechos-humanos.

Human Rights Watch. "Neglected in the Jungle: Inadequate Protection and Assistance for Migrants and Asylum Seekers Crossing the Darién Gap." April 3, 2024. https://www.hrw.org/report/2024/04/03/neglected-jungle/inadequate-protection-and-assistance-migrants-and-asylum-seekers.

Ibáñez Londoño, Ana María. "New Tensions Unleashed by Colombia's Peace Process." SIPRI. September 18, 2013. https://www.sipri.org/commentary/blog/2013/new-tensions-unleashed-colombias-peace-process.

ICRC. "Colombia, FARC Guerrillas 'Return to Arms' | How Does Law Protect in War? - Online Casebook." Accessed August 8, 2024. https://casebook.icrc.org/case-study/colombia-farc-guerrillas-return-arms.

IDEES. "The Challenges to Peace in Latin America: From Guerrilla Warfare to the Fight Against Organised Crime – IDEES." 2022. https://revistaidees.cat/en/the-challenges-to-peace-in-latin-america-from-guerrilla-warfare-to-the-fight-against-organised-crime/.

IMUNA. "DISEC: Disarmament & International Security Committee | IMUNA | NHSMUN | Model UN." Accessed August 7, 2024. https://imuna.org/nhsmun/nyc/committees/disec-disarmament-international-security-committee/.

InfoSegura. "Paving the Road to Peaceful Coexistence for Migrant and Resident Populations in the Darien." Accessed August 8, 2024. https://infosegura.org/en/blogs/paving-road-peaceful-coexistence-migrant-and-resident-populations-darien-0.

InSight Crime. "Ex-FARC Mafia in Venezuela." InSight Crime. September 20, 2022. https://insightcrime.org/venezuela-organized-crime-news/farc-in-venezuela/.

InSight Crime. "Ex-FARC Mafia." March 11, 2024. https://insightcrime.org/colombia-organized-crime-news/ex-farc-mafia/.

InSight Crime. "FARC 57th Front in Panama." 2016. ,https://insightcrime.org/panama-organized-crime-news/farc-57th-front-in-panama.

InSight Crime. "FARC." InSight Crime. Accessed July 8, 2024. https://insightcrime.org/colombia-organized-crime-news/farc-profile/.

InSight Crime. "FARC." InSight Crime. November 23, 2023. https://insightcrime.org/colombia-organized-crime-news/farc-profile/.

InSight Crime. "National Liberation Army (ELN)." InSight Crime. Accessed July 12, 2024. https://insightcrime.org/colombia-organized-crime-news/eln-profile/.

InSight Crime. "Shining Path." Accessed July 12, 2024. https://insightcrime.org/peru-organized-crime-news/shining-path-profile/.

Inter-American Development Bank. "Citizen Security in Latin America and the Caribbean." Inter-American Development Bank. Accessed August 5, 2024. https://www.iadb.org/en/news/citizen-security-latin-america-and-caribbean.

International Crisis Group. "Bottleneck of the Americas: Crime and Migration on the Darien Gap." November 3, 2023. https://www.crisisgroup.org/latin-america-caribbean/andes/colombia-central-america/102-bottleneck-americas-crime-and-migration.

INTERPOL. "INTERPOL builds presence in strategic Tri-Border region." 2019. https://www.interpol.int/News-and-Events/News/2019/INTERPOL-builds-presence-in-strategic-Tri-Border-region.

Isacson, Adam. "A Long Way to Go: Implementing Colombia's Peace Accord after Five Years." WOLA, November 23, 2021. https://www.wola.org/analysis/a-long-way-to-go-implementing-colombias-peace-accord-after-five-years/.

Jenkins, Brian. "The Five Stages of Urban Guerrilla Warfare: Challenge of the 1970s." 1971. https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/papers/2008/P4670.pdf.

Kalyanaraman, S. "Conceptualisation of Guerrilla Warfare." Strategic Analysis: A Monthly Journal of the IDSA. 2003, Vol. XXVII, No. 2. https://ciaotest.cc.columbia.edu/olj/sa/sa_apr03/sa_apr03kas01.html.

Kay, Cristóbal. "Conflict and Violence in Rural Latin America." Working Paper Series No. 312. The Hague: Institute of Social Studies. 2000. https://repub.eur.nl/pub/19057/wp312.pdf.

Kazmi, Humza. "Counterinsurgency and the Rule of Law." University of Pennsylvania Journal of International Law 33, no. 3, 2012: 871. https://www.law.upenn.edu/live/files/972-kazmi33upajintll8712012pdf.

King, Merle. "Cuba: A Case Study of a Successful Attempt to Seize Political Power by the Application of Unconventional Warfare." The American Academy of Political and Social Science 341, no. 1 (May 1962): 42-52. https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/000271626234100106.

Krebs, Shiri. "Above the Law: Drones, Aerial Vision and the Law of Armed Conflict – A Socio-Technical Approach." International Review of the Red Cross 924, December 2023. https://international-review.icrc.org/articles/above-the-law-drones-aerial-vision-and-the-law-of-armed-conflict-924.

Laqueur, Walter. Guerrilla Warfare: A Historical and Critical Study. Routledge. 2022. https://www.google.co.ve/books/edition/Guerrilla_Warfare/6psuDwAAQBAJ?hl=es&gbpv=1&dq=guerrilla+warfare&printsec=frontcover.

Lizcano Villalba, Javier and Raquel Ballestin. "How Organized Crime Profits from Migrant Flow Across Colombia's Darién Gap." InSight Crime. November 24, 2022. https://insightcrime.org/news/organized-crime-profits-migrants-darien-gap/.

Malta, Roberto. "Guerrilla Warfare in Latin America." Rise to Peace, December 11, 2018. https://www.risetopeace.org/2018/12/11/guerrilla-warfare-in-latin-america/rmalta/.

Mark, Harrison W. "Peninsular War." World History Encyclopedia. August 2023, https://www.worldhistory.org/Peninsular_War/.

NATO. "Counterinsurgency: A Generic Reference Curriculum." Accessed July 18, 2024. https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2017_09/20170904_1709-counterinsurgency-rc.pdf.

Neves, Yuri. "Counterinsurgency as an Approach to Organized Crime in Latin America." Georgetown Security Studies Review, May 24, 2019. https://georgetownsecuritystudiesreview.org/2019/05/24/counterinsurgency-as-an-approach-to-organized-crime-in-latin-america/.

Norwegian Refugee Council. "'The Jungle May Swallow You': Surviving the Darien Gap." Accessed August 8, 2024. https://www.nrc.no/feature/2023/the-jungle-may-swallow-you-surviving-the-darien-gap/.

ODIN - OE Data Integration Network. "Chapter 3: Guerrillas." Accessed August 12, 2024. https://odin.tradoc.army.mil/TC/Chapter_3:_Guerrillas.

Pechenkina, Anna O. and D. Scott Bennettb, "Violent and Non-Violent Strategies of Counterinsurgency." Journal of Artificial Societies and Social Simulation 20, no. 4, 2017: 11, https://www.jasss.org/20/4/11.html.

Perdomo, Catalina, and Catalina Uribe Burcher. Deterring the Influence of Organized Crime on Local Democracy. Stockholm: IDEA, 2016. https://www.idea.int/sites/default/files/publications/protecting-politics-deterring-the-influence-of-organized-crime-on-local-democracy.pdf.

Pérez Esparza, David, Carlos A. Pérez Ricart, and Eugenio Weigend Vargas, eds. "Gun Trafficking and Violence: From The Global Network to The Local Security." Cham: Springer. 2019. https://www.google.co.ve/books/edition/Gun_Trafficking_and_Violence/B_cqEAAAQBAJ?hl=es&gbpv=1&dq=gun+trafficking+latin+america&printsec=frontcover.

Pionero Philanthropy. "Peace & Conflict In Guatemala: An Overview." Accessed July 9, 2024. https://www.pionerophilanthropy.org/peace-and-conflict-in-guatemala/.

Polack, Peter. Guerrilla Warfare: Kings of Revolution. Casemate Publishers. 2015. https://www.google.co.ve/books/edition/Guerrilla_Warfare/osnXDwAAQBAJ?hl=es&gbpv=1&dq=guerrilla+warfare&printsec=frontcover.

Polit, Gabriela and Maria Rueda. "Meanings of Violence in Contemporary Latin America." 2011. https://books.google.co.ve/books?hl=es&lr=&id=CpfWCwAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PA37&dq=guerrillas+territorial+and+border+control&ots=qN-1mZ2OCQ&sig=AsazN8FsoTuyhGj-wJa2sOHeCl0.

Quiñones Marriaga, Orlando. "Transnational Consequences of the Colombia – FARC Peace Process." Centro de Estudios Estratégicos del Ejército del Perú. July 11, 2024. https://ceeep.mil.pe/2024/07/11/consecuencias-transnacionales-del-proceso-de-paz-colombia-farc/?lang=en.

RAF. "The Guerilla, the Resistance, and the Anti-Imperialist Front." May 1982. https://socialhistoryportal.org/sites/default/files/raf/en/0019820500%20EN.pdf.

Ranade, Jayadeva. "Surveillance in Counter-Terrorism, Counter-Insurgency and Warfare." 2010. https://archive.claws.in/images/journals_doc/1397563019Jayadeva%20Ranade%20%20CJ%20Winter%202010.pdf.

Rettberg, Angelika and Juan Felipe Ortiz-Riomalo. "Golden Opportunity, or a New Twist on the Resource–Conflict Relationship: Links Between the Drug Trade and Illegal Gold Mining in Colombia." 2016. https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0305750X16303382.

Reyes Godelmann, Iker. "The Zapatista Movement: The Fight for Indigenous Rights in Mexico." Australian Institute of International Affairs. July 30, 2014. https://www.internationalaffairs.org.au/news-item/the-zapatista-movement-the-fight-for-indigenous-rights-in-mexico/.

Rojas, Rafael. "Sandino, the Assassinated Victor." Confidencial. February 22, 2024. https://confidencial.digital/english/sandino-the-assassinated-victor/.

Roman, Caterina. "Successes and Challenges in Recruiting and Retaining Gang Members in Longitudinal Research:

Lessons Learned From a Multisite Social Network Study." ResearchGate. Accessed August 5, 2024. https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Caterina-Roman/publication/305364238_Successes_and_Challenges_in_Recruiting_and_Retaining_Gang_Members_in_Longitudinal_Research_Lessons_Learned_From_a_Multisite_Social_Network_Study/links/5b080137a6fdcc8c252d4beb/Successes-and-Challenges-in-Recruiting-and-Retaining-Gang-Members-in-Longitudinal-Research-Lessons-Learned-From-a-Multisite-Social-Network-Study.pdf.

Roy, Diana and Sabine Baumgartner. "Crossing the Darién Gap: Migrants Risk Death on the Journey to the U.S." Council on Foreign Relations. July 22, 2024. https://www.cfr.org/article/crossing-darien-gap-migrants-risk-death-journey-us.

Roy, Diana. "Mexico's Long War: Drugs, Crime, and the Cartels." Council on Foreign Relations (CFR), October 10, 2024. https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/mexicos-long-war-drugs-crime-and-cartels/.

Scott Moore, R. "The Basics of Counterinsurgency." Accessed July 19, 2024. https://smallwarsjournal.com/documents/moorecoinpaper.pdf.

Seybolt, Taylor B. "1. Major Armed Conflicts." In SIPRI Yearbook 2002: Armaments, Disarmament and International Security. Stockholm International Peace Research Institute. 2002. https://www.sipri.org/yearbook/2002/01.

Shiraz, Zakia. "Diplomats Under Siege: The M-19 and the Dominican Embassy Takeover of 1980." figshare. Accessed July 13, 2024. https://figshare.le.ac.uk/articles/journal_contribution/Diplomats_Under_Siege_The_M-19_and_the_Dominican_Embassy_Takeover_of_1980/11638023.

Sieder, Rachel and Richard Wilson. "Negotiating Rights: The Guatemalan Peace Process." 1997. https://rc-services-assets.s3.eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/02_Guatemala.pdf.

Stanley, John. "History for the IB Diploma: The Cold War and the Americas 1945–1981." Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 2015. 164-166. https://assets.cambridge.org/97811076/98901/excerpt/9781107698901_excerpt2.pdf.

Stop Fossil Fuels. "The Art of Guerilla Warfare: General Principles | Stop Fossil Fuels." Accessed July 16, 2024. https://stopfossilfuels.org/strategy-principles/art-guerrilla-warfare-gubbins/full-text/.

TacticalGear.com. "Basics of Guerilla Warfare | Tactical Experts | TacticalGear.com." Accessed July 12, 2024. https://tacticalgear.com/experts/basics-of-guerilla-warfare.

Torrado, Santiago. "Proceso de paz con el ELN: fin del cese al fuego, secuestro y participación de la sociedad civil y crisis de los diálogos con el gobierno de Gustavo Petro." El País. August 24, 2024. https://elpais.com/america-colombia/2024-08-22/proceso-de-paz-con-el-eln-fin-del-cese-al-fuego-secuestro-participacion-de-la-sociedad-civil-y-crisis-de-los-dialogos-con-el-gobierno-de-gustavo-petro.html.

Trinkunas, Harold. "The Network Effect: Trafficking in Illicit Drugs, Money, and People in Latin America." Brookings, December 3, 2015. https://www.brookings.edu/articles/the-network-effect-trafficking-in-illicit-drugs-money-and-people-in-latin-america/.

U.S. Department of State. "Counterinsurgency Guide." Accessed July 9, 2024. https://2009-2017.state.gov/documents/organization/119629.pdf.

Ucko, David H., and Thomas A. Marks. "Organized Crime as Irregular Warfare: Strategic Lessons for Assessment and Response." National Defense University Press, September 7, 2023.

United Nations Meetings Coverage and Press Releases."Sobering Impact of Conventional Weapons Deserves 'No Less Attention' Than Weapons of Mass Destruction, First Committee Told." October 23, 2023. https://press.un.org/en/2023/gadis3724.doc.htm.

United Nations. "Implementation of Colombia Peace Accord Gaining Traction, Special Representative Tells Security Council, as It Prepares to Discuss Expanding Verification Mission | Meetings Coverage and Press Releases." United Nations, July 12, 2023. https://press.un.org/en/2023/sc15353.doc.htm.

Vargas, Ricardo. "The Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and the Illicit Drug Trade." Transnational Institute, June 7, 1999. https://www.tni.org/en/publication/the-revolutionary-armed-forces-of-colombia-farc-and-the-illicit-drug-trade.

Vázquez del Mercado, Guillermo. "Arms Trafficking and Organized Crime: Global Trade, Local Impacts." Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime. August 2022. https://globalinitiative.net/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/GI-TOC-policy-brief_Arms-trafficking-web-1.pdf.

Vélez-Torres, Irene. "Slow violence in mining and crude oil extractive frontiers: The overlooked resource curse in the Colombian internal armed conflict." 2022. https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S2214790X2100188X.

Villegas, Harry. "Guerrilla Warfare: Authoritative, Revised, New Edition." New York: Seven Stories Press, 2020. https://www.google.co.ve/books/edition/Guerrilla_Warfare/uNAuEAAAQBAJ?hl=es&gbpv=1&dq=guerrilla+operations&printsec=frontcover.

VOA News. "US, Panama Partnering to Address Darien Gap Migration." July 1, 2024. https://www.voanews.com/a/us-panama-partnering-to-address-darien-gap-migration/7681748.html.

Wilson, Mark. "FARC During the Peace Process." William J. Perry Center, 2020. https://wjpcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/FARC-During-the-Peace-Process-.pdf.

Wright, Anthony. "An Evaluation of the FARC, MLN-T, FMLN :The Impact of Guerrilla Warfare on Democratic Stability in Latin America." bachelor's thesis Union College. 2017. https://digitalworks.union.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1260&context=theses.

Young Sr, Aaron M. and Gray David H. "Insurgency, Guerilla Warfare and Terrorism: Conflict and its Application for the Future." Global Security Studies 2, no. 4, 65-76. 2011. https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Aaron-Young-3/publication/268381757_Insurgency_Guerilla_Warfare_and_Terrorism_Conflict_and_its_Application_for_the_Future/links/5802828f08ae1c5148cf34e8/Insurgency-Guerilla-Warfare-and-Terrorism-Conflict-and-its-Application-for-the-Future.pdf.

Young, Robert. "The Guerrilla and the Peninsular War." The Saber and Scroll Journal, Volume 10, no. 2 (2021): 67-79. https://saberandscroll.scholasticahq.com/api/v1/articles/31282-the-guerrilla-and-the-peninsular-war.pdf.

Topic B

UN Sources:

Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict. "Child Recruitment and Use." Accessed July 15, 2024. https://childrenandarmedconflict.un.org/six-grave-violations/child-soldiers/.

United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund. "Children Recruited by Armed Forces or Armed Groups." Accessed July 15, 2024. https://www.unicef.org/protection/children-recruited-by-armed-forces#:~:text=Thousands%20of%20

children%20are%20recruited,believed%20to%20be%20much%20higher.

United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism. "Border Security and Management." Accessed July 16, 2024. https://www.un.org/counterterrorism/border-security-management.

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. "Conventional Terrorist Weapons." Accessed July 10, 2024. https://www.unodc.org/images/odccp/terrorism_weapons_conventional.html#:~:text=Terrorists%20use%20both%20explosive%20bombings,sniping%2C%20armed%20attacks%20and%20massacres.

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. "Cyberterrorism." June 2019. https://www.unodc.org/e4j/en/cybercrime/module-14/key-issues/cyberterrorism.html.

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. "Handbook on Children Recruited and Exploited by Terrorist and Violent Extremist Groups: The Role of the Justice System." Accessed July 15, 2024. https://www.unodc.org/documents/justice-and-prison-reform/Child-Victims/Handbook_on_Children_Recruited_and_Exploited_by_Terrorist_and_Violent_Extremist_Groups_the_Role_of_the_Justice_System.E.pdf.

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. "Links between Terrorism, Crime and Trafficking in Cultural Property / Antiquities." Accessed July 20, 2024. https://sherloc.unodc.org/cld/en/education/tertiary/organized-crime/module-16/key-issues/links-between-terrorism--crime-and-trafficking-in-cultural-property---antiquities.html.

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. "Money Laundering." Accessed July 8, 2024. https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/money-laundering/overview.html.

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. "Terrorism and Trafficking in Weapons." Accessed July 10, 2024. https://sherloc.unodc.org/cld/en/education/tertiary/organized-crime/module-16/key-issues/terrorism-and-trafficking-in-weapons.html.

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. "Terrorist Groups." April 2020. https://www.unodc.org/e4j/en/firearms/module-7/key-issues/terrorist-groups.html.

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. "Trafficking in Persons and Terrorism." Accessed July 15, 2024. https://sherloc.unodc.org/cld/en/education/tertiary/organized-crime/module-16/key-issues/trafficking-in-persons-and-terrorism.html.

United Nations Security Council - Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate. "Identifying and exploring the nexus between human trafficking, terrorism, and terrorism financing." 2019. https://www.un.org/securitycouncil/ctc/sites/www.un.org.securitycouncil.ctc/files/files/documents/2021/Jan/ht-terrorism-nexus-cted-report.pdf.

United Nations Security Council. "Report of the Secretary-General on conflict-related sexual violence." April 16, 2018. https://www.un.org/sexualviolenceinconflict/wp-content/uploads/report/s-2018-250/SG-REPORT-2017-CRSV-SPREAD.pdf.

United Nations Security Council, Report 419, Letter dated 25 May 2022 from the Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1988 (2011) addressed to the President of the Security Council, S/2022/419, 3-5 (May 26, 2022), https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/n22/333/77/pdf/n2233377.pdf.

Non-UN Sources:

Abdessadok, Zineb. "Libya Today: From Arab Spring to failed state." *Al Jazeera*. May 30, 2017. https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2017/5/30/libya-today-from-arab-spring-to-failed-state.

ACAMS Today. "Why Terrorist Organizations Use Human Trafficking." January 25, 2023. https://www.acamstoday.org/why-terrorist-organizations-use-human-trafficking/.

"A Century On: Why Arabs Resent Sykes-Picot." Al Jazeera. Accessed September 12, 2024. https://interactive.aljazeera.com/aje/2016/sykes-picot-100-years-middle-east-map/index.html.

Anti-Money Laundering and Counter Financing of Terrorism. "What Is Terrorism Financing?" Accessed July 8, 2024. https://

amlcft.bnm.gov.my/what-is-terrorism-financing.

Arms Control Association. "An Unrealized Nexus? WMD-Related Trafficking, Terrorism, and Organized Crime in the Former Soviet Union." Accessed July 10, 2024. https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2007-07/features/unrealized-nexus-wmd-related-trafficking-terrorism-and-organized-crime-former#:~:text=General%20Trends%20of%20Post%2D2001%20WMD%20Trafficking&text=Most%20known%20trafficking%20incidents%20involve,percent%20of%20the%20trafficking%20transactions.

Awati, Rahul, Robert Sheldon, and Katie Terrell Hanna. "Cyberterrorism." TechTarget, February 9, 2024. https://www.techtarget.com/searchsecurity/definition/cyberterrorism#:~:text=Cyberterrorism%20is%20usually%20defined%20as,violence%20or%20results%20in%20violence.

Bardwell, Harrison and Iqbal, Mohib. "The Economic Impact of Terrorism from 2000 to 2018" *Peace Economics, Peace Science and Public Policy* 27, no. 2 (2021): 227-261. https://doi.org/10.1515/peps-2020-0031.

BBC News. "Hamas Hostages: Stories of the People Taken from Israel." July 1, 2024. https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-67053011.

BBC News. "What Is Hamas and Why Is It Fighting with Israel in Gaza?" April 5, 2024. https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-67039975.

BBC News. "Who Are the Taliban?" August 12, 2022. https://www.bbc.com/news/world-south-asia-11451718.

Bigio, Jamille. "Human Trafficking Helps Terrorists Earn Money and Strategic Advantage." Foreign Policy. January 31, 2020. https://foreignpolicy.com/2020/01/31/human-trafficking-helps-terrorists-earn-money-and-strategic-advantage/.

Bloom, Mia. "Child Soldiers in Armed Conflict." The International Institute for Strategic Studies. Accessed July 15, 2024. https://www.iiss.org/publications/armed-conflict-survey/2018/armed-conflict-survey-2018/acs2018-03-essay-3/.

Bloom, Mia. "How ISIS Is Using Marriage as a Trap." HuffPost. May 2, 2015. https://www.huffpost.com/entry/isis-marriage-trap_b_6773576.

Bonn International Center for Conversion. "Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW)." Accessed July 10, 2024. https://warpp.info/en/m5/articles/small-arms-and-light-weapons-salw.

Brady. "Ghost Guns." Accessed July 10, 2024. https://www.bradyunited.org/resources/issues/what-are-ghost-guns.

Choi, Seung-Whan and Idean Salehyan. "No Good Deed Goes Unpunished: Refugees, Humanitarian Aid, and Terrorism." Conflict Management and Peace Science. February 1, 2013. https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0738894212456951.

Clemson News. "How Moscow Terror Attack Fits Isis-K Strategy to Widen Agenda, Take Fight to Its Perceived Enemies." March 25, 2024. https://news.clemson.edu/how-moscow-terror-attack-fits-isis-k-strategy-to-widen-agenda-take-fight-to-its-perceived-enemies/.

Deeb, Sarah El. "What Is Hamas? The Group That Rules the Gaza Strip Has Fought Several Rounds of War with Israel." AP News. October 15, 2023. https://apnews.com/article/hamas-gaza-palestinian-authority-israel-war-ed7018dbaae09b81513daf3bda38109a.

Deignan, Simon and Thomas Wuchte. "Securing Borders Collaboratively to Prevent the Movement of Foreign Terrorist Fighters." RSIS and KAS. June 10, 2018. https://www.kas.de/documents/288143/288192/Terrorism_Deignan_Wuchte.pdf/c06432f9-8c82-8cbf-4e76-c7e188c2b456.

Encyclopedia Britannica. "Al-Qaeda." July 2, 2024. https://www.britannica.com/topic/al-Qaeda.

Encyclopedia Britannica. "Pashtun." Accessed July 20, 2024. https://www.britannica.com/topic/Pashtun.

Encyclopedia Britannica. "Taliban." July 1, 2024. https://www.britannica.com/topic/Taliban.

Encyclopedia Britannica. "Weapon of Mass Destruction." Accessed July 10, 2024. https://www.britannica.com/technology/weapon-of-mass-destruction.

Encyclopedia Britannica. "Yazīdī." July 10, 2024. https://www.britannica.com/topic/Yazidi.

European Council of Foreign Relations. "The Islamic State in the Great Sahara." Accessed September 7, 2024. https://ecfr.eu/special/sahel_mapping/isgs.

Fairleigh Dickinson University. "Cybersecurity and Cyber Terrorism." Accessed July 17, 2024. https://online.fdu.edu/program-resources/cybersecurity-and-cyber-terrorism/.

Federal Bureau of Investigation. "Al-Qaeda International." Accessed July 3, 2024. https://archives.fbi.gov/archives/news/testimony/al-qaeda-international.

Federal Bureau of Investigation. "Human Trafficking." Accessed July 15, 2024. https://www.fbi.gov/investigate/violent-crime/human-trafficking.

Felbab-Brown, Vanda, Mara Karlin, Tom Wheeler, and Zia Qureshi Brahima Sangafowa Coulibaly. "Wildlife and Drug Trafficking, Terrorism, and Human Security." Brookings. March 9, 2022. https://www.brookings.edu/articles/wildlife-and-drug-trafficking-terrorism-and-human-security/.

Fitzgerald, Mary, Tanya Mehra, Méryl Demuynck, Colin P. Clarke, Nils Duquet, Cameron Lumley, Matthew Wentworth, and Reinier Bergema. "Small Arms Light Weapons (SALW)." International Centre for Counter-Terrorism. July 28, 2021. https://www.icct.nl/project/small-arms-light-weapons-salw.

Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security. "Human Trafficking and ISIS." March 26, 2018. https://giwps.georgetown.edu/resource/a-new-frontier/.

Ginsburg, Susan. "Countering Terrorist Mobility: Shaping an Operational Strategy." Migration Policy Institute. Accessed July 16, 2024. https://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/countering-terrorist-mobility-shaping-operational-strategy.

Giustozzi, Antonio. *Decoding the New Taliban: Insights from the Afghan Field.* London: Hurst, 2009. pp. 281-284.

Gohel, Sajjan M. "Prevention of Cross-Border Movements of Terrorists: Operational, Political, Institutional and Strategic Challenges for National and Regional Border Controls." International Centre for Counter-Terrorism. Accessed July 16, 2024. https://www.icct.nl/sites/default/files/2023-01/Chapter-15-Handbook.pdf.

Gordon, Anna. "Yemen's Houthi Rebels: Who Are They and What Is Their Goal?" Time. January 12, 2024. https://time.com/6554861/yemen-houthi-rebels-history-cause-israel-hamas-war/.

Goulet, Nathalie. "Counterfeiting: An ABC of Terrorist Funding." Vision of Humanity. October 17, 2023. https://www.visionofhumanity.org/counterfeiting-an-abc-of-terrorist-financing/.

Human Rights Watch. "Children and Armed Conflict." June 20, 2024. https://www.hrw.org/topic/childrens-rights/children-and-armed-conflict.

Hussaini, S and T Morris. "The Taliban's Information War: The Tactical Use of Frames." *Journal of Information Warfare* 19, no. 4 (2020): 89–109. https://www.jstor.org/stable/27033647.

Illicit Trade Group. "Counterfeit and Pirated Goods." Accessed July 9, 2024. https://illicittrade.org/counterfeit-and-pirated-goods.

Illicit Trade Group. "Cybercrime." Accessed July 9, 2024. https://illicittrade.org/cybercrime.

Illicit Trade Group. "Human Trafficking." Accessed July 9, 2024. https://illicittrade.org/humantrafficking.

Illicit Trade Group. "Illegal Arms Trafficking." Accessed July 9, 2024. https://illicittrade.org/illegal-arms-trafficking.

Illicit Trade Group. "Illegal Wildlife Trade." Accessed July 9, 2024. https://illicittrade.org/illegal-wildlife-trade.

Illicit Trade Group. "Illicit Financial Flows." Accessed July 9, 2024. https://illicittrade.org/illicit-financial-flows.

Illicit Trade Group. "Illicit Trade." Accessed July 8, 2024. https://illicittrade.org/research-overview.

Illicit Trade Group. "Illicit Trade in Natural Resources." Accessed July 9, 2024. https://illicittrade.org/natural-resourcesrelated-trade.

Illicit Trade Group. "Narcotics." Accessed July 9, 2024. https://illicittrade.org/narcotics.

Illicit Trade Group. "Smuggling of Goods." Accessed July 9, 2024. https://illicittrade.org/smuggling-of-goods.

International Criminal Police Organization. "Project Sharaka." Accessed July 16, 2024. https://www.interpol.int/en/Crimes/Terrorism/Counter-terrorism-projects/Project-Sharaka.

International Crisis Group. "Türkiye's PKK Conflict: A Visual Explainer." June 11, 2024. https://www.crisisgroup.org/content/turkiyes-pkk-conflict-visual-explainer.

International Monetary Fund. "Anti-Money Laundering and Combating the Financing of Terrorism." March 22, 2023. https://www.imf.org/en/Topics/Financial-Integrity/amlcft#:~:text=Terrorism%20Financing%20involves%20the%20raising,to%20supply%20terrorists%20with%20resources.

Jackson, Ashley. "What Is ISIS-K, The Terror Group Allegedly Responsible for the Moscow Concert Hall Attack?" POLITICO. March 26, 2024. https://www.politico.eu/article/islamic-isis-khorasan-concert-hall-attack-russia-terrorist/.

James. "9 Recent Cyber Attacks on the Water and Wastewater Sector." Wisdiam. May 5, 2024. https://wisdiam.com/publications/recent-cyber-attacks-water-wastewater/.

Klobucista, Claire, Jonathan Masters, and Mohammed Aly Sergie. "Al-Shabaab." Council on Foreign Relations. December 6, 2022. https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/al-shabaab.

Le Roux, Pauline. "Exploiting Borders in the Sahel: The Islamic State in the Greater Sahara." African Center for Strategic Studies. June 10, 2019. https://africacenter.org/spotlight/exploiting-borders-sahel-islamic-state-in-the-greater-sahara-isgs/.

Litwak, Robert S. "Deterring Nuclear Terrorism." Wilson Center. Accessed July 10, 2024. https://www.wilsoncenter.org/publication/deterring-nuclear-terrorism.

Lohrmann, Dan. "Cyber Attacks: Is the 'Big One' Coming Soon?" Government Technology. March 12, 2021. https://www.govtech.com/blogs/lohrmann-on-cybersecurity/cyber-attacks-is-the-big-one-coming-soon.html.

Malik, Nikita. "Trafficking Terror, How Modern Slavery and Sexual Violence Fund Terrorism." The Henry Jackson Society. 2017. https://henryjacksonsociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/HJS-Trafficking-Terror-Report-web.pdf.

Mansoor, Peter. "Improvised Explosive Device." Encyclopedia Britannica. June 28, 2024. https://www.britannica.com/technology/improvised-explosive-device.

Maryville University. "Cyber Terrorism: What It Is and How It's Evolved." January 20, 2022. https://online.maryville.edu/blog/cyber-terrorism/.

Metropoulos, Emil. "Global Cyber Terrorism Incidents on the Rise." Marsh McLennan. Accessed July 17, 2024. https://www.marshmclennan.com/insights/publications/2018/nov/global-cyber-terrorism-incidents-on-the-rise.html.

Moore, John. "The Evolution of Islamic Terrorism: An Overview." PBS. Accessed September 11, 2024. https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/target/etc/modern.html.

Montgomery, Katarina. "ISIS Recruits Brides to Solve Middle East 'Marriage Crisis.'" The New Humanitarian. April 22, 2016. https://deeply.thenewhumanitarian.org/syria/articles/2015/05/08/isis-recruits-brides-to-solve-middle-east-marriage-crisis.

National Counterterrorism Center. "Afghan Taliban." Accessed July 3, 2024. https://www.dni.gov/nctc/groups/afghan_taliban.html.

National Counterterrorism Center. "Al-Shabaab." Accessed July 3, 2024. https://www.dni.gov/nctc/groups/al_shabaab.html.

National Counterterrorism Center. "Islamic State of Iraq and Ash-Sham (ISIS)." September 2022. https://www.dni.gov/nctc/ftos/isis_fto.html.

National Counterterrorism Center. "Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam Wal-Muslimin (JNIM)." October 2022. https://www.dni.gov/nctc/ftos/jnim_fto.html.

National Counterterrorism Center. "Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK)." Accessed July 4, 2024. https://www.dni.gov/nctc/ftos/pkk_fto.html.

O'Brien, Jamison. "How Illicit Economies Fund Terrorism." Vision of Humanity. March 19, 2024. https://www.visionofhumanity.

org/how-illicit-economies-fund-terrorism/.

O'Donnell, Lynne. "Al Qaeda Is Back—and Thriving—in Afghanistan." *Foreign Policy*. March 28, 2024. https://foreignpolicy.com/2024/03/22/al-qaeda-taliban-afghanistan-gold-mining/.

Office of Justice Programs. "Narco-Terrorism." Accessed July 20, 2024. https://www.ojp.gov/ncjrs/virtual-library/abstracts/narco-terrorism.

Osman, Borhan and Fazal Muzhary. "Jihadi Commuters: How the Taleban cross the Durand Line." Afghanistan Analyst Network. October 17, 2017. https://www.afghanistan-analysts.org/jihadi-commuters-how-the-taleban-cross-the-durand-line/.

Ould Khettab, Djamila. "The 'Black Decade' still weighs heavily on Algeria." *Al Jazeera*. November 3, 2015 https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2015/11/3/the-black-decade-still-weighs-heavily-on-algeria.

Pena, Joanner. "Rubio, Graham, Colleagues Warn Against Terrorist Infiltration of Southern Border." Senator Rubio. August 5, 2022. https://www.rubio.senate.gov/rubio-graham-colleagues-warn-against-terrorist-infiltration-of-southern-border/.

Preesman, Anne. "Female Suicide Bombers: An Uncomfortable Truth." King's College London. March 16, 2021. https://www.kcl.ac.uk/female-suicide-bombers-an-uncomfortable-truth.

ProQuest. "The Conceptual Taxonomy of Power-vacuums." 2014. https://www.proquest.com/docview/1652449440?sourcetype=Scholarly%20Journals.

RAND. "The Islamic State (Terrorist Organization)." Accessed July 2, 2024. https://www.rand.org/topics/the-islamic-state-terrorist-organization.html.

Robinson, Kali. "What Is Hamas?" Council on Foreign Relations. April 18, 2024. https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/what-hamas.

Robinson, Kali. "What Is Hezbollah?" Council on Foreign Relations. July 2, 2024. https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/what-hezbollah.

Security Council Report. "Peace and Security in Africa: Financing of Armed Groups and Terrorists through Illicit Trafficking of Natural Resources." Accessed July 20, 2024. https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/whatsinblue/2022/10/peace-and-security-in-africa-financing-of-armed-groups-and-terrorists-through-illicit-trafficking-of-natural-resources.php.

Tehran Times. "Iranian Border Guards Thwart Terrorist Infiltration Attempt." March 9, 2024. https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/495955/Iranian-border-guards-thwart-terrorist-infiltration-attempt.

Tomáš Zdechovský. "Illicit Trade Funding Terrorism and Wars." May 26, 2022. https://www.zdechovsky.eu/en/news/illicit-trade-funding-terrorism-and-wars.

U.S. Department of Homeland Security. "Weapons Trafficking: Homeland Security." Accessed July 9, 2024. https://www.dhs.gov/hsi/investigate/weapons-trafficking.

Vision of Humanity. "The Deadliest Terror Groups in 2024." March 14, 2024. https://www.visionofhumanity.org/deadliest-terror-groups-in-2024/.

Vittori, Jodi. "Security Dimensions of Illicit Financial Flows." Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. October 11, 2018. https://carnegieendowment.org/2018/10/11/security-dimensions-of-illicit-financial-flows-pub-77481.

Wigan Council. "Cyber Terrorism." Accessed July 17, 2024. https://www.wigan.gov.uk/Resident/Crime-Emergencies/Counter-terrorism/Cyber-terrorism.aspx.

Williams, Mollie, Lisa Armstrong, and Daniel C. Sizemore. "Biologic, Chemical, and Radiation Terrorism Review." National Center for Biotechnology Information. August 14, 2023. https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK493217/.

Zeidan, Adam. "Houthi Movement." Encyclopedia Britannica. June 28, 2024. https://www.britannica.com/topic/Houthi-movement.

The National High School Model United Nations Conference (NHSMUN) is a project of IMUNA, a non-profit organization formally associated with the United Nations Department of Global Communications (UNDGC). IMUNA is dedicated to promoting global issues education through simulation.

Written by Mathias Carstens, Kellie Fernandez, Arturo Tirado, and Nastasja Vásquez

Edited by Jordan Baker, Ximena Faz, Kellie Fernandez, Ana Margarita Gil, Christian Hernandez, Therese Salomone, and Terry Wang.