Defence Against Terrorism Review

E-DATR

Economic Intelligence against Terrorism
Clementine WARD

Terrorism and Violent Non-state Actors:
The Republic of Chile 1973 – 2023, a case study
P.h.D. Garth den HEYE
B.A. Manuel Abdullah Carranza VÁZQUEZ

Beyond Borders: NATO, Human Security and Minors
as a Pivot for Stability in the Sahel
Cecilia POLIZZI

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CONTENT

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Editor's Note

Dear Defence Against Terrorism Review (DATR) Readers,

Comprised of representatives from 7 nations, the Centre of Excellence-Defence Against Terrorism (COE-DAT) aims to supply key decision-makers with realistic solutions to terrorism and Counter-Terrorism (CT) challenges. COE-DAT promotes the exchange of knowledge, information, and effective strategies in combating terrorism, for NATO allies and partner countries. As a crucial component of these efforts, The Centre of Excellence-Defence Against Terrorism (COE-DAT) proudly presents the 18th Volume of DATR, which includes three articles discussing different facets of terrorism.

In the article "Economic Intelligence against Terrorism", Clementine Ward approaches counterterrorism from a different angle; the angle of economic intelligence. This article's primary concern is economic intelligence's role in fighting organized crime and tax fraud, and its potential to support counterterrorism initiatives. In this sense, Ward's article centers on identifying and breaking down financial systems backing terrorism using economic intelligence methods, specifically by scrutinizing business fronts. Through comparative research and case studies, the article highlights economic intelligence can be employed to uncover and disrupt terrorist financing networks that exploit cultural heritage, contributing to NATO's counterterrorism strategies.

In "Terrorism and Violent Non-state Actors: The Republic of Chile 1973 – 2023, A Case Study" written by Garth den Heyer and Manuel Abdullah Carranza Vázquez, the authors discuss the noticeable increase in political violence and the acceptance of extremist ideologies since the decline of the military dictatorship in the late 20th century in Chile. The article draws attention to the possible serious national security challenges stemming from the violent acts of non-state actors in Chile and their threatening effects on the country's sovereignty and the rule of law. Taking the case of Chile, the article discusses the security landscape, which is complex and multifaceted and proposes comprehensive strategies like incorporating intelligence gathering to counter the activities of hostile actors while creating sustainable answers through cooperation with other countries and international bodies.

"Beyond Borders: NATO, Human Security and Minors as a Pivot for Stability in the Sahel" discusses the deteriorating safety environment in the Sahel region, which poses some concerns to NATO allies regarding collective security. Written by Cecilia Polizzi, the article investigates NATO's Human Security methods to prompt a discussion on their workability, implementation, and ability to help stabilize the Sahel region. In the article, Polizzi proposes that NATO could demonstrate its added value by considering the aspirations and specific needs of the Sahelian countries through Human Security. Taking the case of the Sahel,

the article calls attention to the involvement of children in terrorist organizations, which is illustrated as a factor in the implementation of irregular warfare strategies involving military and non-military methods. Thus, the article is significant in terms of examining how NATO's dedication to safeguarding children can complement its broader security aims and counterterrorism campaigns by utilizing NATO's comprehensive political framework on Children and Armed Conflict (CAAC).

The DATR team is grateful to all authors and referees for their contributions to this publication and encourages readers to share their thoughts and suggestions with us. DATR always appreciates and invites contributions from experts, civil and military officers, as well as academics to share their comments, ideas, and valuable research on defence against terrorism.

Sincerely yours,
Uğur Güngör
Editor-in-Chief

Economic Intelligence Against Terrorism

Clementine Ward *

Abstract

This article examines how economic intelligence is used to fight organised crime and tax fraud and its potential to aid counterterrorism. The aim is to demonstrate the vital role that economic intelligence plays in counterterrorism operations. This study focuses on locating and dismantling financial networks that support terrorism through economic intelligence techniques, namely the examination of commercial front organisations. It also evaluates the effectiveness of economic intelligence tactics employed against tax fraud and organised crime and their relevance to counterterrorism through comparative research and case studies.

Recent regulatory developments aimed at limiting the funding of terrorism through cultural artefacts highlight the importance of this research for NATO. By detecting and disrupting terrorist networks that take advantage of cultural heritage, economic intelligence could improve NATO's counterterrorism efforts. It looks at front organisations' more significant effects on aiding terrorist acts, including information about their funding and operational techniques. Findings imply that economic intelligence offers essential instruments for anticipating shifts, controlling risks, and creating effective counterterrorism plans. To handle the changing picture of terrorist financing, this article highlights the need for sophisticated analytical approaches and suggests expanding the role of economic

intelligence within counterterrorism frameworks. To effectively attack the financial underpinnings of terrorist actions, the report concludes by advocating for an integrated approach to counterterrorism that combines economic intelligence and encourages policymakers and law enforcement agencies to adopt and enhance these tactics. This study lays the groundwork for future efforts to impede terrorist organisations' financial activities while supporting NATO's objectives of safeguarding cultural heritage and enhancing global security.

Keywords: *Terrorism, Economic intelligence, Front organisations, Organised crime, Tax fraud, Counterterrorism*

1 Introduction

This paper aims to illustrate the importance of economic intelligence (EI) in counter-terrorism efforts. By looking at how EI is used to fight tax fraud and organised crime (OC) and analysing whether these tools can be applied to assist counterterrorism efforts. It also aims to show how EI can give insights, predict changes, discover opportunities, manage risks, and develop successful strategies for achieving goals in counter-terrorism efforts.[1] The importance of this research is evident as NATO advances in safeguarding cultural policies against terrorism. As NATO implements new regulations intended to stop the funding of terrorists via cultural artefacts, it becomes imperative to strengthen their capacity in the field of counter-terrorism.[2] Research on the creation and use of EI supports NATO's counterterrorism operations by learning how EI can be used to identify and disrupt terrorist financing networks that take advantage of cultural heritage. This research supports NATO's overarching goals of preserving cultural heritage and advancing international security. The NATO Science for Peace and Security series recognised the threat to cultural property through the illegal trade in antiquities and the risk of terrorist activity through providing funding for terrorist organisations.[3]

This research utilised various research methodologies. Scholarly materials and case studies will illustrate the workings and detection methods for front organisations (FO) and terrorism. All aspects of illicit activities will be methodically examined

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[1]   Evan Harold Potter, 1998 p.10
[2]   NATO hosts conference on Cultural Property Protection, 2023
[3]   NATO Science for Peace and Security Series, 2021

through a comparative analysis, emphasising organisational structure and detection methods. Academic databases, official reports, and foreign publications have been used for data collection. Qualitative analysis focused on the content and thematic analysis of case studies and scholarly literature. To provide valuable insights into EI and counterterrorism efforts, structured methods, processes, and tools are used to understand commercial FO role in criminal activity and terrorism, providing strategies for their detection and disruption.

2 Comparative Analysis of Commercial Front Organisations (FO)

FOs are fraudulent groups that disguise their operators' genuine activities or goals, such as tax fraud and OC are used to mask funds' illegitimate origins or offer a plausible façade for criminal operations.[4] Analysing the function of FO in illegal operations can give valuable insights into the mechanisms and networks that contribute to terrorism. This research paper focuses on commercial FO, essential in EI against terrorism. Non-commercial entities, such as political parties, are not relevant in this context; however, NGOs will be discussed to some extent. By researching the methods and patterns criminal groups employ to use FO for unlawful activity, we may better understand how such companies could be used to promote terrorist acts.

This paper aims to identify trends and weaknesses to assist counterterrorism by digging into terrorist groups' operational methods and their use of FO. By comparing similar businesses in the same sector and seeing if there are significant disparities in revenue, checking the assets of the owner of the company to determine if they have enough wealth to afford their purchases, and finally, analysing the front organisations property returns or the wealth of the owner over time to see if there are any sudden increases in suspicious activity, investigators can help to track suspicious behaviour.[5]

2.1 The Role of Front Organisations in Facilitating Illicit Activities and Terrorism.

When examining the role of FO in illegal activities such as tax fraud and OC, they can serve as a link in facilitating illicit activities. Businesses may be used as fronts for drug trafficking or smuggling, using the appearance of ordinary commercial activity to mask the movement of illicit items.[6] By analysing the techniques used by criminal organisations through FO, law enforcement authorities can uncover

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[4] Dixon 2024
[5] Winston, 2021
[6] Dixon, 2024

common strategies and weaknesses that can be exploited to disrupt illegal networks and dismantle criminal businesses.[7] Furthermore, investigating FO in the context of terrorism highlights their importance in facilitating extremist actions. FO may be used to raise cash for terrorist activities, with revenues from illegal ventures channelled into terrorist operations. FO may provide logistical assistance to terrorist groups, allowing them to obtain firearms, explosives, and other resources required to carry out activities.[8] Policymakers and law enforcement agencies can create tactics to detect and disrupt the financial networks that fund extremist groups by investigating the role of FO in terrorism.

2.2 Trends and Developments in The Use of Commercial Fronts

Tracking commercial FO is essential to preventing OC and tax fraud, fulfilling several crucial roles for criminal organisations. Firstly, these misrepresent the genuine nature of illicit activities such as smuggling, drug trafficking, human trafficking, and money laundering, concealing the sources and destinations of illegal funds and items and evading taxes through fraudulent practices.[9] They can reduce their tax obligations while seeming legitimate by opening offshore accounts in tax havens and utilising intricate financial strategies. Additionally, front companies aid in financial crime by acting as middlemen for corporate fraud, Ponzi schemes, and investment scams, luring investors in with false claims of significant returns or dishonest business methods. Transporting dirty money through numerous accounts and transactions to hide its criminal origins is essential to the layering and integration stages of money laundering. Additionally, criminal networks can legitimise their activities by making a name for themselves across various fields and businesses and obtaining access to authorised markets and resources, impeding law enforcement initiatives.[10] FO significantly impact politics and the economy, stifling fair competition and distorting markets. In terms of politics, they affect governance, provide funding to campaigns, and present security threats. Via these organisations, criminals take advantage of legal frameworks, impeding attempts to fight financial crime and maintain global financial integrity.[11]

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[7]   Toledano, 2023 §1.2
[8]   Winston, 2021
[9]   National Security Council, 2018
[10] European Financial and Economic Crime Threat Assessment 2023, p.9
11 Understanding Front Companies: Risks, Detection, and Prevention, n.d.

2.3 Evolution of Organised Crime Networks and Their Structure

OC networks have evolved significantly as they have adjusted to several socioeconomic and technical shifts. They were once hierarchically organised, much like military groups, but over time have developed into intricate, cross-border networks that take advantage of variations in legal systems and collaboration between foreign law enforcement agencies.[12] These days, organised criminal groups are highly specialised and diverse, participating in a broad range of illicit operations. These networks have decentralised, functioning as loosely connected cells rather than fixed hierarchies, to avoid discovery and reduce dangers. They heavily use technology, such as the dark web, cryptocurrency, and encrypted communication methods, to further their illegal endeavours.[13] Corruption and infiltration of corporations, law enforcement, and government institutions facilitate their operations and protect them from legal action. These criminal networks are persistent and constantly changing tactics, thus needing a concerted multinational effort to combat them efficiently.

2.4 Exploration of Potential Future Use of Commercial Front Organisations in Terrorism

Analysing terrorist groups indicates a move towards flexible networks, best represented by organisations such as al-Qaeda. These networks provide difficulties for conventional counterterrorism strategies since they are skilled at evading countermeasures. These fronts increasingly act as conduits for terrorist agendas as technology reshapes the global economy, underscoring the dynamic character of terrorism and the requirement for flexible defences.[14] Furthermore, terrorists now have more ways to exploit holes in supply chains and financial systems due to the growth of online markets and digital platforms. FOs are in an excellent position to take advantage of these trends and possibly increase the threat of terrorism because of their capacity to operate clandestinely and obtain resources. To combat this threat, more regulatory monitoring, better intelligence-sharing procedures, and the creation of cutting-edge technological solutions to identify and stop illegal activity are all necessary.

The growth of FO in terrorism has the potential to worsen security concerns globally if proactive steps are not taken to mitigate these hazards. It is anticipated

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[12]   Bastrup-Birk et al., 2023, p.6
[13]   Elsayed 2023, p.8
[14]   Männik 2009, p.163

that in the future, legal business fronts will continue to develop in sophistication. Money laundering syndicates primarily use front or shell companies, cash-intensive companies are frequently targeted since they offer chances to combine legal and illegal earnings.[15] The banking sector's digitalisation and globalisation have made money laundering essential for all criminal operations. As of 2023, it was found that about 30% of criminal networks that operate in the EU interact with professional money laundering networks and underground banking systems. In contrast, nearly 70% of criminal networks use simple money laundering techniques.[16] Furthermore, the growing use of cryptocurrencies and blockchain technology may open up new channels for terrorist organisations to establish anonymous shell corporations, making it extremely difficult for law enforcement to track.[17] There will probably be changes to the non-profit landscape, which has historically been used as a money laundering front by criminal organisations. The emergence of digital payment methods and online crowdfunding platforms may allow terrorist groups to raise money under the pretence of supporting charitable causes by taking advantage of the anonymity and accessibility provided by the internet.[18] As a result, it can become more complicated to tell the difference between reputable charity initiatives and illegal funding sources.

Terrorist groups are predicted to continue using legal and regulatory loopholes as a primary tactic in concert with these advancements. To narrow the legal loopholes, the European Council approved a directive in 2017 on controlling the acquisition and possession of weapons.[19] Countries with weak enforcement or opaque financial and legal systems might keep acting as safe havens for illegal economic activity, making it extremely difficult for international efforts to stop the funding of terrorists, despite the European Council in 2015 and 2020 enhancing counterterrorism efforts outside the EU. Cooperation with essential partners will be bolstered, assisting capacity building and increasing efforts to combat radicalisation and violent extremism.[20] Disrupting terrorist networks and preserving global security require enhancing technical developments and regulatory changes.

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[15]   Europol European Financial and Economic Crime Threat Assessment 2023, p. 9 f
[16]   Europol, European Financial and Economic Crime Threat Assessment 2023, p.11
[17]   Terrorism, Inc.: How Shell Companies Aid Terrorism, Crime, and Corruption, n.d.
[18]   FATF Crowdfunding for Terrorism Financing 2023, p.3
[19]   EU Strengthens Control of the Acquisition and Possession of Firearms, n.d
[20]   Preventing and Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism: Council Adopts Conclusions on EU External Action, n.d

2.5. The Convergence of Organised Crime and Terrorism: Case Studies and Implications

Terrorism and OC are typically seen as two distinct categories of criminal activity. The primary motivations of OC are economic gain and gaining as large an unlawful market share as possible. In contrast, the primary motivations of terrorists are political change and ideological goals. Mutual benefits, shared interests, and shared resources define the complex and diverse relationship between OC and terrorism. Both types of organisations depend on significant financial support to continue operating and frequently turn to illegal ways of making money.[21] Terrorist organisations can support their activities by leveraging OC networks' established infrastructure and logistical networks, such as safe houses and smuggling routes. Despite their motives, both entities utilise common operational strategies and may operate in the same geographical areas, cooperating or vying for control. Because of this interconnection, security and law enforcement face issues that need all-encompassing solutions to address the root causes. Several similarities between OC and terrorism were explored; both are robust, creative, and adaptive, and act primarily rationally. They also make use of people's fear of retaliation and extreme violence, such as extortion, killings, and kidnappings. They disobey laws and government authority, operating mainly discreetly within advantageous zones, though occasionally in a visible manner. Leaving either group is rare and often fatal; both keep leaders for their infantry and reserves.[22]

Case studies help illustrate the connection between OC and terrorism. The D company is known to use their wealth to fund its terrorist operations. Dawood Ibrahim, an Indian mafia lord, drug dealer, and wanted terrorist, formed and oversees the D-company, an organised criminal syndicate and terrorist organisation operating in Bombay.[23] Research has emphasised their role in the 1993 Mumbai bombings, initially thought to be an instance of "crime-terror convergence." By backing the bombings, state actors altered the narrative from one of simple crime-terror convergence to one of state-sponsored terrorism, using criminal networks as proxies. This calculated use of OC by state actors to carry out acts of terrorism suggests a high degree of geopolitical impact on OC and terrorism, as opposed to ideological or criminal goals.[24] However, the D Company aided Al Qaeda with

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[21] Winston, 2021
[22] United Nations, 2005 A/CONF.203/18
[23] Ghosh, 2023.
[24] Mahadevan 2021, p.80

their smuggling networks to bring fighters to Afghanistan after the US intervened in 2001, providing financial support to other terrorist organisations, specifically in the 2000s.[25] This illustrates the growing connection between OC and terrorism.

The Haqqani Network, on the other hand, is the product of a wealthy family that owned land on both sides of the Afghanistan/Pakistan border and had been profiting out of smuggling since before World War II. It is a group involved in OC, such as kidnapping for ransom, trafficking, and smuggling. These actions financially support their operations, illustrating the combined use of terrorism and crime for political and commercial objectives. Similar to terrorist organisations, the Haqqani Network utilises violence as a tactic to seize territory that is essential to their illegal operations.This overlap hampers policy responses and makes it difficult to define and classify these groupings. The Haqqani Network case highlights the need for an integrated strategy to address the interconnectedness of OC and terrorism in the EU due to the threat it poses to public safety. It emphasises how crucial it is to develop context-specific and regional strategies to bolster border security, advance regional cooperation, and establish the rule of law to effectively combat the hybrid threat posed by organisations such as the Haqqani Network.[26]

3. Economic Intelligence in Uncovering Organised Crime and Tax Fraud

EI is a field with a lot of room to expand and innovate. By analysing its use in the fight against tax fraud and OC, we can learn more about EI's broader uses and capabilities in other crucial domains, such as counterterrorism operations. EI can offer vital insights and predictive capabilities that improve the detection and prevention of unlawful behaviours through the use of advanced data analytics, machine learning, and real-time monitoring. This investigation highlights the revolutionary potential of EI in relation to international security policies and law enforcement, ultimately fostering a more secure and resilient community.

3.1 Definition and Scope of Economic Intelligence

Some of the primary purposes of EI are to control scientific and technological understanding in a specific activity domain; secondly to identify risks and opportunities in both domestic and foreign markets, thirdly formulate more successful individual or coordinated group strategies, and finally, assist in developing "influencing" strategies that will bolster actions.[27] There is no agreed-

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[25] Winston, 2021
[26] Reitano, Clarke, and Adal 2017, p.3.
[27] Clerk, 1998.

upon definition for EI; this research's analysis will draw various definitions. Henri Martre defined it as "all of the information processing, research, and dissemination that is useful to economic actors." This depicts the depth of EI, including data gathering, analysis, and dissemination to pertinent parties.[28] Besson and Possin defined it as "the ability to obtain answers to questions by discovering intelligences between two or more pieces of information previously memorised," emphasising the significance of combining and integrating unrelated pieces of data to gain new insights.[29] According to Revelli, it is "the process of collection, processing, and dissemination of information which aims to reduce the share of uncertainty in making any strategic decision."[30] This concept emphasises the main goal of EI, which is to reduce uncertainty and give decision-makers useful information to successfully navigate challenging corporate situations.[31]

EI encompasses the methodical gathering, evaluation, and sharing of data from several sources, such as competitor and market studies, technical advancements, and geopolitical aspects. Organisations and governments may boost competitiveness, improve strategic decision-making, and adjust to changing market conditions by utilising the insights gained from this approach. In the context of this paper, EI will focus on the systematic collection, analysis, and interpretation of economic data and information to aid decision-making processes inside enterprises, governments, and other organisations in the fight against terrorism.

3.2 Definition of Organised Crime and Tax Fraud

OC groups are "self-perpetuating associations of individuals who operate, wholly or in part, by illegal means and irrespective of geography". Unlike terrorist groups, they are motivated by economic factors, often involving extortion, money laundering, and cybercrime.[32] Tax fraud is defined as falsifying a tax return to avoid paying the full amount owed. Examples of tax fraud can include claiming fraudulent deductions, misrepresenting personal spending expenses, and failing to disclose income.[33] The complex connections between OC, tax fraud, and the funding of terrorist activities may be used in the future when using FO for terrorist purposes. To launder money and hide the source of illicit cash, criminal organisations now

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[28] Martre, Levet, et al., 1994
[29] Besson & Possin, 1996.
[30] Revelli, 1998.
[31] Mountassir, 2020, p.6
[32] Centre for Homeland Defense and Security, 2017
[33] What Is Tax Fraud? Definition, Criteria, vs. Tax Avoidance, n.d

use a variety of tactics, such as shell businesses, investing in critical industries, creating legitimate corporate fronts, and establishing non-profits.[34] The public's general opinion of OC has been influenced by films with stereotypes, such as The Godfather, depicting local mafias by highlighting their city or area. However, OC has undergone radical transformation since the 1970s, with an even greater acceleration since the 1990s. Domestic OC groups that were primarily regional in scope and had a hierarchical structure gave way to transnational, global organisations that are more networked with other criminal gangs and frequently have a flatter structure.[35]

3.3 Current Usage of Economic Intelligence in Detecting Organised Crime and Tax Fraud

EI is used to detect, prevent and analyse OC and tax fraud. Law enforcement and regulatory agencies need to use artificial intelligence algorithms and advanced data analytics tools to analyse large volumes of financial data properly. These technologies aid in the identification of suspicious transactions and abnormalities that may point to OC or tax fraud. Maintaining a solid analytical capacity is crucial to tracking criminal techniques as financial systems change with the advent of virtual assets and other new technologies.[36] Strong transaction monitoring systems are put in place by financial institutions to instantly identify possible fraud or illegal activity, which is then looked into further by compliance teams or regulatory bodies. To exchange information and work together to find and prosecute financial criminals worldwide, law enforcement agencies and financial intelligence units (FIU) must cooperate internationally. This is made possible by groups like the Financial Action Task Force.[37] Programmes for whistle-blowers encourage people with insider information about financial crimes to come forward, giving EI teams important leads to pursue. Furthermore, a risk-based strategy is frequently used, concentrating resources on high-risk industries, companies, or persons to devote investigation efforts more efficiently. EI teams examine the results to spot trends that may point to fraudulent conduct.[38] These well-established procedures highlight how crucial EI is to the fight against tax fraud and OC, as well as to the defence of financial systems and public interests.

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[34] Eurojust report on money laundering § 4.1 misuse of legal business structures, p.11
[35] Picarelli, 2011, p.6
[36] FATF Crowdfunding for Terrorism Financing 2023, p.12,27
[37] Financial Action Task Force, 2023
[38] Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2015, p.16

3.4 Proposals for Expanding the Role of Economic Intelligence

Multiple proposals have been made to increase the use of EI in detecting OC and tax fraud, focusing on strengthening regulatory frameworks, enhancing data analysis skills, and fostering agency collaboration.[39] OECD's report on Improving Co-operation between Tax and Anti-Money Laundering Authorities emphasises how important it is to get over operational and legislative obstacles to provide tax authorities with access to Suspicious Transaction Reports. Adopting a legal structure and operational protocols that facilitate the exchange of data and suspicious behaviours will greatly improve the efficiency of agency cooperation in the fight against terrorism.[40] EI systems' ability to identify patterns and dubious financial transactions can be greatly enhanced by utilising artificial intelligence (AI) and sophisticated analytics technologies, such as data mining and predictive modelling. These technologies enable EI systems to process massive amounts of data quickly. AI integration improves these systems' accuracy and efficacy in identifying possible risks in addition to speeding up data analysis. EI is a vital tool in the protection of financial institutions and public interests because of this strategy, which significantly improves EI's capacity to identify and respond to dangers associated with terrorism proactively.[41]

Recommendations support the use of risk-based strategies to rank interventions according to the perceived degree of risk connected to particular organisations or industries.[42] It is imperative to strengthen international collaboration and information-sharing procedures, which calls for involvement in global initiatives such as the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) along with bilateral and multilateral agreements. Proposals highlight the necessity of improving legal frameworks about beneficial ownership disclosure, financial transparency, and anti-money laundering measures.[43] This can entail creating penalties for non-compliance as well as tightening reporting regulations for financial firms. Encouraging public-private collaborations is crucial for utilising the resources and experience of the corporate sector to bolster initiatives against OC and tax fraud.[44] By putting these ideas into practice, governments will be able to identify, look into, and stop illegal financial activity, protecting financial institutions and the interests of taxpayers.

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[39]   Lahneman, 2010.

[40]   Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2015, p.27-28

[41]   FATF Opportunities and Challenges of New Technologies for AML/CFT 2021, p.19-27

[42]   FATF International Standards on Combating Money Laundering and the Financing of Terrorism & Proliferation 2023, No.1 p.10

[43]   FATF International Standards on Combating Money Laundering and the Financing of Terrorism & Proliferation 2023, No.24 p.22

[44]   Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2018, p.29-31

3.5 Potential for Wider Scope

The potential expansion of EI beyond its traditional business and public administration applications offers promising avenues for improving counterterrorism efforts. The core principles in EI have the potential to be used by authorities to substantially enhance their capabilities in combatting terrorist activities, namely when looking at financial tracking and disruption of funding networks.[45] To disrupt networks that finance terrorism, information collection in the context of counterterrorism entails obtaining data from both internal and external sources. A UNODC report states that security organisations monitor terrorist activity by using personnel knowledge, databases, and surveillance technologies. Externally, vital information on dubious financial activity connected to terrorism is provided through collaboration with financial institutions, international organisations, and private sector businesses. Integrating these external and internal data sources improves law enforcement's capacity to combat terrorist threats.[46]

UNSC Resolution 2462 emphasises how important it is to deploy cutting-edge analytical methods to combat the financing of terrorism. Authorities can identify patterns that point to illegal financial behaviour by applying advanced techniques like data mining, statistical analysis, and machine learning algorithms. Utilising the analytical power in conjunction with a thorough comprehension of the topic, law enforcement authorities and other pertinent organisations can improve their ability to identify and disrupt terrorist financing networks effectively. The UNSC has welcomed this integrated strategy, highlighting the critical role that data analysis plays in preserving global peace and security and emphasises the significance of data analysis.[47] Furthermore, intelligence obtained from EI analysis is critical for educating decision-makers and important stakeholders involved in counter-terrorism activities. Timely release of actionable intelligence ensures that relevant parties have the insights required to develop proactive plans and carry out targeted operations against terrorist funding activities. Broadening the use of EI in counterterrorism activities has enormous potential for increasing the success of attempts to disrupt terrorist financing networks. Authorities can improve the ability to detect, follow, and disrupt financial mechanisms that fuel terrorist operations. This integrated approach emphasises the need to use intelligence-driven measures to protect national security interests and lessen the danger of terrorism.[48]

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[45]   CETISME, 2002, p. 43
[46]   United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the use of the Internet for terrorist purposes, 2023.
[47]   United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the use of the Internet for terrorist purposes, 2023.
[48]   CETISME, 2002, p. 50.

4. Traditional Approaches to Uncovering Terrorism

NATO defined Counter Terrorism as "All preventive, defensive and offensive measures taken to reduce the vulnerability of forces, individuals, and property against terrorist threats and/or acts, to respond to terrorist acts." In the context of the NATO Comprehensive Approach, this can be paired with measures that facilitate recovery from terrorist attacks, an essential aspect of counter-terrorism. This paper highlights where EI against terrorism stands today and its potential for growth in the fight against terrorism. Analysing traditional counter-terrorism techniques and EI tools will show how techniques can potentially work in different fields, namely the fight against terrorism. Terrorism is defined as "The unlawful use or threatened use of force or violence, instilling fear, and terror, against individuals or property in an attempt to coerce or intimidate governments or societies, or to gain control over a population, to achieve political, religious, or ideological objectives." [49] The scope of terrorism discussed in this paper will focus exclusively on group terrorism rather than lone-actor attacks, such as vehicle-as-a-weapon terrorism. Group terrorism requires coordinated efforts from organised factions, making it more traceable and predictable.

4.1 Examination of Current Methods for Detecting Terrorism

Detecting terrorism requires a multifaceted strategy including many techniques and tactics designed to recognise and neutralise possible threats. Law enforcement authorities use electronic and physical surveillance tactics to track individuals and groups suspected of engaging in terrorist activities. Red flags often indicate a need for additional research, such as holding secret meetings, obtaining dubious materials, or displaying extreme beliefs. A FATF report examined virtual assets as potential red flags. This can involve buying weapons through the darknet, funding terrorists abroad, and organising fundraisers for alleged terrorist activity. Red flags can include suspicious high-value transactions, transferring money through several Virtual Asset Service Providers in countries with lax regulations, utilising freshly opened or reactivated accounts to avoid detection, and withdrawing virtual assets to private wallets to lessen traceability. When considered as a whole on each transaction, these signs aid in locating possible virtual asset-based terrorist financing.[50]

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49 North Atlantic Treaty Organization MC 0472/1. PO (2015)0733-AS1
50 FATF Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing Red Flag Indicators 2020, p.5

UN Resolution A/RES/60/288 emphasises the vital role that pattern recognition and data analysis play in identifying and countering terrorism. This resolution called for increased international collaboration and information sharing, highlighting the significance of tracing financial transactions, travel habits, and internet usage. Comprehending and interpreting diverse data sources is crucial for locating connections to terrorist organisations and stopping possible terrorist operations by emphasising advanced data analysis techniques. This strategy affirms the necessity of a worldwide, concerted effort in counterterrorism tactics that uphold the rule of law and human rights.[51] Terrorist involvement may be indicated by anomalies or trends that deviate from the usual, such as abrupt financial activity changes or travel to conflict areas. Governments categorise terrorist organisations according to the threat they are thought to pose to national security, considering several aspects such as the group's base of operations and its intended targets' locations, both domestic and foreign. Both the degree of a group's threat to the stability of a regime and its overarching objectives play a role in the designation process. Governments keep track of people and organisations that are considered security concerns by keeping terrorist watchlists. These choices are influenced by foreign and domestic politics, with governments frequently identifying groups funded by hostile states and aligning their classifications with allies. This facilitates worldwide collaboration in counterterrorism while managing internal security.[52] It leads to police departments providing advanced training, specifically in high-risk regions, with officers trained to recognise critical behavioural indicators, including agitation and attempts to conceal weapons. This involves real-world situations through gamified training, which enhances their capacity to recognise and respond, including subtle indications of terrorism financing. There is increased protection and alertness in certain areas when they are deemed high-risk targets for terrorist attacks, such as busy arenas or significant landmarks.[53] By assisting in the detection of people trying to hide or assume fraudulent identities, these technologies improve security protocols at border crossings, airports, and other vital locations.

Effective terrorism identification and prevention requires cooperation and information sharing between law enforcement organisations, intelligence services, and other stakeholders. Community involvement efforts foster trust and cooperation among community members, enabling them to report suspicious activity and furnish

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51 United Nations General Assembly A/RES/60/288 2006.
52 Lee & Tominaga, 2024 p.3
53 Charlaff, 2007

authorities with important intelligence with many countries having emergency lines to report suspicious behaviour.[54] To prioritise resources for preventative and protection activities, risk assessment and vulnerability analysis are useful tools in identifying prospective targets of terrorist attacks. Governments and security agencies carry out thorough evaluations. This encourages proactive steps to reduce risks and strengthen defences against attacks. Infiltration of terrorist networks aims to stop terrorist activity from within, obtain crucial intelligence, and expedite the capture of those engaged in terrorist recruitment and plotting; law enforcement agencies train informants and send out undercover agents.[55]

4.2 Intelligence Gathering

In the battle against terrorism, many different types of intelligence methodologies are deployed, playing a pivotal role in constructing a holistic strategy to combat this global threat. Financial intelligence has always been favoured for early detection of terrorist financing activities.[56] Techniques such as transaction analysis and pattern recognition serve as invaluable tools in this endeavour, allowing financial intelligence agencies to pinpoint the clandestine sources of illicit funding and systematically dismantle the intricate financial infrastructure that sustains terrorist activities, FIU have become a popular initiative amongst many countries to combat these issues further.[57] Financial intelligence empowers authorities to wield sanctions, freeze assets, and prosecute individuals or entities complicit in terrorist financing, thereby choking off the financial lifelines upon which terrorist organisations rely to execute their nefarious agendas.[58] A European Commission release underscored the critical role of financial intelligence in combating terrorism and highlighted several measures already in place at the EU level to tackle terrorist financing effectively. The Fourth Anti-Money Laundering Package aims to strengthen FIU cooperation and improve awareness of money laundering and terrorist financing risks, aligning with international standards set by the FATF, including provisions for full traceability of fund transfers within and to/from the EU.[59] Financial intelligence makes it possible to take preventative action, ultimately improving security and protecting societies from the threat of terrorism.

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[54]   Government of the United Kingdom, nd
[55]   Hoffman, 2006, p.197-228
[56]   Gowhor, 2022, p.683
[57]   Council of Europe, n.d
[58]   European Parliament New EU measures against money laundering and terrorist financing, 2023.
[59]   European Commission: Action plan to strengthen the fight against terrorist financing, 2016.

HUMINT (human intelligence) is derived from human sources, such as informants, covert agents, and defectors implanted within terrorist organisations.[60] This provides insights into the complex operations of terrorist organisations, their strategies, plans, identities and locations of operatives.[61] HUMINT is frequently used as a preventive tool, allowing authorities to stop recruiting and radicalisation schemes, stop plots in their infancy, and make it easier to apprehend suspects. HUMINT helps law enforcement gather intelligence and possibly find double agents to enter terrorist groups and sabotage them from within. Through cultivating connections with individuals who hold significant knowledge or sway within terrorist networks, HUMINT facilitates a more profound understanding of the fluid character of terrorist threats. With this knowledge, authorities can create preventative measures to lessen these dangers and safeguard interests related to national security. Even with the intrinsic weaknesses in counterintelligence operations, intelligence agencies nevertheless rely heavily on the strategic application of HUMINT to protect themselves from constantly changing security threats.[62]

Signals intelligence (SIGINT) is also utilised in counter-terrorism. This entails listening in on and examining the electronic communications that terrorist groups and their agents use. SIGINT allows law enforcement to obtain critical information about terrorist activities, such as attack plans, individuals' identities, and the intricate networks supporting their operations, by monitoring communication networks, including phone calls, emails, internet chats, and radio transmissions.[63] Intelligence agencies use cutting-edge technologies and complex algorithms to comb through enormous amounts of data, spot trends, and uncover possible threats hidden in the digital ether. SIGINT helps to identify and locate high-value targets like terrorist leaders and bomb makers, which makes it easier to conduct focused counterterrorism operations.[64] As a critical early warning system, SIGINT informs authorities of possible terrorist attacks promptly, enabling them to take preventative action. SIGINT plays a critical role in improving both domestic and global security, as demonstrated by its capacity to alert authorities and facilitate their efforts to foil terrorist plots.[65] SIGINT provides priceless real-time insights that greatly increase the efficacy and precision of terrorism when paired with financial and human information.[66]

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[60]   Naval War College, 2024.
[61]   Jones, 2010, p.103.
[62]   Margolis, 2013, p.46.
[63]   National Security Agency/Central Security Service > Signals Intelligence > Overview, n.d.
[64]   Intelligence Functions: Signals Intelligence (SIGINT), n.d
[65]   Aid 2003, p.85-86
[66]   Aid 2003, p.89-90

Concentrating on the distinct actions and capacities of terrorist organisations, operational intelligence collection is essential to the fight against terrorism. This intelligence involves covert operations, surveillance activities, and direct interaction with terrorist cells.[67] Monitoring suspected terrorists' whereabouts, communications, and actions allows investigators to compile information about their activities. Comprehensive, first-hand knowledge of the inner workings of terrorist groups, including their strategies, organisational structures, and logistical processes, can be obtained through undercover operations and direct interaction with terrorist cells.[68] Operational intelligence assists in tracking agents and weapons and improving the overall efficacy and precision of counterterrorism operations when paired with financial, human, and signals intelligence, guaranteeing a thorough strategy to neutralise threats.[69]

4.3 Identification of Non-Commercial Front Organisations

Non-commercial FO appear to be less critical to EI efforts; however, law enforcement and intelligence agencies nonetheless worry about them because of their involvement in supporting terrorist actions, predominantly non-governmental organisations (NGO). Non-profit organisations generally engage in less lucrative enterprises than commercial firms but are still frequently used as fronts for funding terrorist activities. Numerous organisations, including the FATF, Europol, Eurojust, Moneyval, EU Court of Auditors, and national authorities, have brought attention to this issue.[70] These organisations recognise NGOs' roles in disguising illicit actions under the pretence of lawful operations, highlighting the necessity of increased regulatory control and inspection in these sectors.[71] These organisations rarely produce large cash flows, meaning fewer economic analysis and monitoring opportunities exist. Non-commercial fronts continue to jeopardise national security despite their lesser economic impact. These organisations are crucial targets for security measures because they can encourage and promote terrorist acts via social and intellectual media. This emphasises the need for EI projects to modify and improve their techniques to track and lessen hazards efficiently.[72]

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[67] Lopes, 2023
[68] NATO Countering terrorism, 2023
[69] Federation of American Scientists 1996, April Section 2; Intelligence Collection Activities and Disciplines
[70] Financial Action Task Force Recommendations No.8
[71] European Parliament 2021, Rule 138 February 10
[72] Institute for NGO Research 2023, p.3-7

4.4 Limitations of Traditional Methods in Detecting Modern Forms of Terrorism

Restrictions on traditional methods of terrorism detection have resulted from terrorist organisations' continuously changing strategies and techniques, especially with the development of technology. Conventional methods such as surveillance and behavioural analysis, find it difficult to keep up with how quickly terrorists adapt. Contemporary terrorism frequently transcends national boundaries and involves intricate international networks spanning several countries.[73] Furthermore, terrorist organisations use technology and cyberspace much more for fundraising, recruitment, and communication. Over time, resources must be made available. Like a water tap, intelligence cannot be turned on when needed, and throwing money at an issue will not make up for wasted time.[74] Furthermore, it might prove challenging for conventional approaches to distinguish between legal and illegal transactions because modern terrorist organisations frequently employ front companies, charities, and non-profit organisations to conceal their illicit activities within legitimate corporations.[75] Notwithstanding these drawbacks, EI presents definite benefits when it comes to identifying the financial systems and exchanges that underpin contemporary terrorist operations.

5. Integration of Findings

5.1 Analysis of Current and Potential Commercial Front Organisations in Terrorism.

The integration of findings demonstrates a complicated interaction between lawful businesses and their misuse for terrorist actions through an analysis of current and potential commercial FO in terrorism. Commercial FO play several vital roles in the operations of both terrorism and OC. These organisations frequently pose as respectable companies while aiding in illegal undertakings like smuggling, money laundering, and financing terrorist groups. FO give the appearance of legitimacy, this making it harder for authorities to detect and intervene. EI is especially effective because it capitalizes on this perceived legitimacy to operate more covertly and efficiently. The use of FO not only funds terrorist activities but stabilises their financial operations by providing a continual supply of resources.[76]

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[73] Elliott 1977 page 5
[74] Wagner, 2007 page 50
[75] European Parliament. (2021, Rule 138 February 10).
[76] Dixon 2024

The dual purpose of running what look like legitimate businesses and using a portion of those funds for financing terrorism activities make them significant assets in the terrorist infrastructure.

By comprehending FO, law enforcement and intelligence services can successfully break money networks that fund terrorism. Increasing surveillance, fostering better international cooperation, and utilising new technologies for data analysis are some potential strategies. By focusing on the integration stage of money laundering, these actions aim to disrupt terrorist organisations' operations and cut off their funding. This strategy discourages future financial support and upsets the company's financial system.[77] Furthermore, as technology advances and the complexity of the world's financial institutions increases, there is a good chance that business fronts for terrorism may become more and more complicated in the future. Terrorist organisations will use digital platforms as they become more widely used for fundraising and money transfers. This underscores the need for robust financial intelligence capabilities that can adapt to new challenges and effectively counter the financing of terrorism.[78] This research offers the foundation for continuous attempts to undermine the economic underpinnings of terrorist networks, ultimately strengthening national and global security.

5.2 Role of Economic Intelligence in Uncovering these Organisations

By examining financial networks and money transfers connected to illicit activity, EI is essential to the identification of terrorist organisations and their activities. This information sheds light on the sources and routes of finance used to sustain terrorist groups. Financial Intelligence Units (FIUs), identify and thwart terrorist financing by closely examining questionable transactions and disclosing the financial strategies and networks employed by terrorists. The capacity to track and stop terrorist financial transfers is crucial as it provides vital intelligence for taking preventative action.[79] With the use of techniques such as transaction analysis, pattern recognition, and financial profiling, authorities can identify questionable financial activity that may be connected to terrorist groups. Financial institutions must carry out due diligence and report suspicious transactions by the strict anti-money laundering and counter-terrorist financing legislation of the European Union, as outlined by the European Council. By following money through banks, unauthorised transfer

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[77]   United Nations Meetings Coverage, Security Council, 8569th meeting (AM), SC/13875. 2019
[78]   Wagner 2007 page 49
[79]   Directorate-General for Internal Policies, 2012 p.45-46

providers, and other middlemen, these efforts assist in identifying connections between organisations that appear legitimate on the surface and networks that finance terrorism.[80]

Additionally, FIUs are essential to enabling information sharing and collaboration between national and foreign law enforcement organisations. FIUs can identify new trends, typologies, and patterns that point to the financing of terrorism by analysing suspicious transaction reports (STRs) and other financial data.[81] Targeting the commercial and non-commercial fronts that fund terrorists requires EI. Governments can efficiently track down and disrupt the financial networks supporting terrorist organisations by strengthening the capacities of financial oversight agencies and encouraging inter-institutional cooperation. This method contributes considerably to the overall campaign against terrorism financing by extending beyond commercial enterprises to include non-commercial organisations.[82] The ability of law enforcement to fight terrorist organisations is improved through the integration of economic information with SIGINT and HUMINT. By analysing financial networks, agencies can target important facilitators, disrupt financial flows, and uncover funding sources. By using an integrated approach, threats can be avoided, operational capabilities can be hampered, and support networks can be dismantled. All things considered, EI supports continued counterterrorism efforts and bolsters national security initiatives.[83]

In conclusion, when concentrating on the financial facets of terrorist organisations' operations, EI is essential in identifying them. Authorities can discover, analyse, and destroy the financial networks that support terrorism by utilising EI in conjunction with other intelligence disciplines, FIU coordination, and modern analytical tools. In the end, EI supports larger initiatives to fight terrorism and protect national security interests by focusing on the financial foundations of terrorist groups.

5.3 Indicators and Red Flags for Detecting Commercial Fronts

The identification of multiple critical indicators is essential for the discovery of front companies, especially those involved in illegal activities such as financing terrorism. These include unexpected financial transactions that contradict the company's declared operations, little company presence, which suggests the

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[80]   European Union, 2024
[81]   FATF 2023 Recommendations, pg.10
[82]   Government of Chile: Economic intelligence against crime 2023
[83]   Federation of American Scientists 1996, April Section 2; Intelligence Collection Activities And Disciplines

organisation operates primarily on paper, and opaque ownership structures that mask the true controllers of the enterprise. Other warning signs include contradictory documentation, such as differences between bank records and business licences, and the quick creation and dissolution of businesses, which could be signs of an attempt to elude law enforcement. Relationships with well-known shell corporations or enterprises operating in high-risk areas are serious red flags pointing to illicit activity. Authorities and compliance officers can identify and act against these entities with the use of these indicators.[84]

Companies with complicated corporate arrangements or opaque ownership structures may be suspicious because they can hide their links to terrorist groups. It is essential to watch for potential abuses of high-risk economic sectors, such as import-export or money services, by money laundering or trade-based financing organisations.[85] There are numerous ways to tell if a company is acting more as a conduit for illegal cash than as a legitimate business: Comparing similar businesses in the area and seeing if there is a significant disparity in revenue, checking the assets of the owner to determine if they have enough wealth to reasonably afford the properties and analysing the property returns or the wealth of the property owner over time to see if there is a sudden increase.[86] Authorities can increase their efforts to identify and disrupt the financial networks that support terrorist activities by recognising these indicators and red flags, thereby lessening the threat that terrorism poses.

5.4 Case Studies

Boko Haram is a militant religiously motivated extremist organisation based in northeastern Nigeria. The group was established in 2002 and is against Western education and influence while attempting to enforce its view of Islamic law. Due to its deadly insurgency that includes suicide bombings, kidnappings, and attacks on people, government buildings, and security personnel, Boko Haram has become well-known worldwide.[87] The Boko Haram case serves as an example of how EI may be a useful tool in the detection of FO for counterterrorism objectives. There is increased interest in incorporating economic research into counterterrorism strategies due to the recognition of its potential influence. Front groups have been used by Boko Haram for several objectives, such as recruiting, propaganda, and financial support. These front groups are hard to spot and dismantle because they

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84   Tookitaki 2024
85   FasterCapital 2022
86   Winston, 2023
87   Freedom Conuora, 2023

frequently pose as respectable companies, charitable organisations, or places of worship. It has been documented that Boko Haram poses as a religious school or as a humanitarian organisation to hide its operations and take advantage of weaker communities in need of financial or recruiting support.[88]

EI plays a critical role in countering the financing of terrorism by analysing financial transactions to identify anomalous activity associated with gangs or their front firms. This involves following the supply chains for goods and services to find the sources of money for illegal activities like smuggling or extortion. In addition, asset tracking assists in disrupting terrorist networks and dismantling funding networks by keeping an eye on the assets and financial holdings of individuals suspected of supporting terrorism.[89] Targeting the financial networks that support extremist organisations requires the use of EI. The intelligence method focuses on these financial systems to proactively address important facets of terrorism. For example, when financial resources are compromised, organisations such as Boko Haram find it more difficult to enlist new members, get weapons, and conduct operations. Thus, effective EI can sever vital support, making it harder for these organisations to grow and retain their operational capacities.[90] This unprecedented capacity to locate and interfere with finance networks could seriously hinder and discourage Boko Haram's operations.

With its roots in Indonesia, Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) is a violent religiously motivated organisation mainly based in Southeast Asia. JI was founded in the 1990s to create a so-called Islamic state that would include parts of the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore. Numerous terrorist attacks, like the Bali bombings in 2002, have been linked to this group.[91] Like Boko Haram, JI has funded its operations through front groups. These front groups can pose as religious associations, charities, or educational establishments to help JI collect money, enlist supporters, and spread its extreme ideology all while staying beneath the notice of the authorities.[92] To effectively battle JI, which has similarities to Al Qaeda's organisational structure, counterterrorism must integrate EI. Al Qaeda is a well-established, formal organisation with a hierarchical structure and intricate financial operations that are essential to its long-term viability. This is relevant to JI because its capabilities can be greatly weakened by interfering with its financial operations

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[88]   Caulderwood, K. 2014
[89]   CETISME 2002, p.17-18
[90]   Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, 2024.
[91]   Sim, 2023.
[92]   Satria, 2023.

and logistical networks, which need large sums of money. Comprehending and addressing the economic foundations that bolster these networks underscores the significance of EI in dismantling the framework of terrorist groups such as JI, which depend on analogous methods for funding and perpetuating their activities.[93] As a whole, the integration of EI into counterterrorism initiatives is a potentially revolutionary field that might transform the way that terrorist threats such as Boko Haram and Jemaah Islamiyah are addressed. Authority figures can improve their capacity to detect and destroy front groups by utilising intelligence and financial analysis, which will ultimately lead to increased security and stability in areas where terrorism has occurred.

5.5 Potential Advantages of Economic Intelligence over Traditional Methods

Improving counterterrorism tactics requires the application of EI. The IMF stresses how critical it is to use cutting-edge analytical methods to closely examine cross-border financial activities and identify any irregularities that might point to the funding of terrorism. The IMF advises using a proactive approach that uses technology to analyse large datasets of financial transactions. This will help identify and destroy possible terrorist finance networks before they have a chance to carry out their plans. These actions demonstrate the effectiveness of EI in bolstering international counterterrorism efforts, aligning with the IMF's strategic guidelines to protect the international financial system against illegal flows and related security risks.[94]

EI explores the origins, movement, and distribution of money to provide a comprehensive understanding of the financial foundations of terrorist activities. This thorough financial comprehension is crucial for deciphering the intricate webs that terrorists utilise to finance their operations, as shown in greater detail in the research's Sections 2 and 3. Through targeted financial measures including asset freezes, sanctions, and legal actions against persons and businesses engaged in the funding of terrorism, EI facilitates the disruption of terrorist operations by tracking down and analysing these financial networks.[95] In an increasingly globalised world where legal and economic inequalities are amplified, cooperation and international money surveillance mechanisms are essential in the fight against terrorist financing. Controlling and dismantling the financial networks of terrorist groups depends heavily on regulatory structures that regulate international financial

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[93] Gunaratna, R., & Oreg, A. 2010 p.1043-1044
[94] International Monetary Fund, 2023
[95] European Commission Fight against financing of terrorism 2024.

transactions and enforce penalties. Furthermore, international cooperation is necessary to improve EI, which is crucial for identifying and disrupting terrorist financing networks. To ensure that terrorist organisations are unable to readily exploit international financial systems to fund their operations, these concerted worldwide measures are essential to addressing the threats they pose.

The strategic response to terrorism is much improved when EI is integrated with other intelligence disciplines, such as SIGINT and HUMINT, to form a multifaceted intelligence apparatus. Creating operational plans and comprehensive counterterrorism programmes requires the use of this integrated intelligence architecture. As mentioned in Section 4.2 of the report, the European Commission's Fourth Anti-Money Laundering package and the NATO Science for Peace and Security series, for example, highlight the critical role that financial intelligence plays in anticipating and countering terrorist threats.[96] EI is adaptive to technical developments, which is critical given the growing use of contemporary technology by terrorist organisations. This flexibility guarantees that EI will continue to be a useful instrument when countering terrorist techniques that are constantly changing and intended to elude detection and monitoring technologies.[97]

In conclusion, EI gives a proactive, thorough, and flexible method for locating and dismantling terrorist financing networks, which is a vital advantage in the worldwide war against terrorism. Authorities may improve their capacity to identify, comprehend, and neutralise threats by utilising the potential of financial analysis and fusing it with other intelligence modalities. This will have a significant positive impact on global security and stability. In addition to directly assisting with counterterrorism initiatives, this integration contributes to the development of regulatory frameworks that protect the international financial system from being abused by terrorists.

5.6 Implications for Counter-Terrorism Efforts and Recommendations

A stronger emphasis on financial analytic techniques is recommended to improve counterterrorism efforts, as effective tracking requires sophisticated tracing between terrorist cells and OC. Proposals for increased intelligence sharing amongst EU member states to counter these linkages, particularly financial activities, highlight the importance of improved financial monitoring. The integration of sophisticated financial analytic instruments into counterterrorism tactics is consistent with the verified data and suggestions presented in the paper, guaranteeing a thorough

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[96]   European Commission, Action Plan to strengthen the fight against terrorist financing, 2016.
[97]   Rustichini 2015, p.33

and all-encompassing method of identifying and uprooting financial networks that facilitate terrorism.[98] Putting precautions into place, terrorists are prevented from using familiar funding sources provided through collaboration with OC, and the global financial system will be better equipped to react quickly to threats. Secondly, regulatory changes should be implemented, emphasising financial transactions and corporate ownership transparency, which ought to be put out and approved to strengthen the battle against terrorist financing. The EU approved new regulations to combat money laundering; tightening rules for beneficial ownership disclosure is one practical strategy as it lessens the likelihood that terrorists will use shell companies and front companies to launder money.[99] The Fifth Anti-Money Laundering Directive of the European Union requires companies to provide clients with current and accurate information regarding their beneficial ownership to enhance transparency.[100] The FATF, an international organisation that establishes guidelines and encourages the efficient application of legislative, regulatory, and operational measures to counter money laundering, the funding of terrorism, and other associated dangers, is one example of this. The FATF encourages nations to enhance internal cooperation and coordination amongst authorities, for example, by creating procedures for information exchange between domestic and foreign counterparts.[101]

Finally, investigative and analytical skills are strategically enhanced through the strengthening of appropriate organisations within NATO members and those heavily affected by terrorism to address sophisticated financial crimes related to terrorism. This is accomplished by many strategies, including technical assistance, best practice sharing, and training programmes. The NCI Agency contributes by giving hundreds of participants vital technical and operational training, demonstrating a dedication to improving the abilities required to manage such intricate security concerns. Maintaining NATO's technological superiority and ensuring that all member states have the necessary tools to manage and reduce the risks connected with financial crimes linked to terrorism depend heavily on these efforts. A more unified and uniformly skilled professional network is formed within the alliance thanks to the extensive range of training and support offered, which eventually strengthens and fortifies the NATO infrastructure.[102] In addition to

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[98] Directorate-General for Internal Policies 2012 p.21 & 43
[99] Plenary Session New EU rules to combat money-laundering adopted, 202.
[100] Directive (EU) 2018/843 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 May 2018 U
[101] FATF 2023, Recommendations No.12
[102] NCI Agency Annual Report 2022 p.6-12

targeting the specific actions of terrorist financing, these recommendations target the broader systemic and infrastructural vulnerabilities that terrorists exploit to maximise the efficacy of EI as a tool in the worldwide war on terrorism.

5. Conclusion

This article emphasises how crucial the implementation of economic information is to improving counterterrorism efforts. The paper highlights the potential of EI to provide essential insights, predict changes, and develop successful strategies aimed at thwarting terrorist activities by examining the use of EI in combating tax fraud and OC and evaluating its applicability to counterterrorism. The analogy illustrates how counterterrorism operations might profit from the same economic instruments that are used to identify and disrupt financial networks in criminal activity. NATO will find great value in this research, especially in light of the latest developments in counterterrorism measures to safeguard cultural policies. With NATO enacting new rules aimed at stopping the financing of terrorists via cultural artefacts, it is imperative to use advanced EI techniques. This study demonstrates how EI may be used to detect and destroy terrorist financing networks that take advantage of cultural heritage, which helps NATO's counterterrorism efforts. In closing, this study makes the case for a review and improvement of present EI procedures to address and mitigate the threats posed by terrorism from a financial perspective more successfully. It advocates that to establish comprehensive security policies that keep up with terrorists' ever-evolving methods, it is not only necessary but imperative to integrate economic information into counterterrorism measures.

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Terrorism and Violent Non-state Actors: The Republic of Chile 1973 – 2023, a case study

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Abstract

In recent years, Chile has been grappling with a significant increase in insecurity caused by violent non-state actors. These actors, who hold extremist ideologies, employ violence as a means of achieving their political objectives throughout Chile. The trend of political violence and the justification of extremist ideologies has been on the rise since the fall of the military dictatorship towards the end of the 20th century. This alarming trend significantly threatens the country's sovereignty and the rule of law. It is crucial to acknowledge that if this issue is not adequately addressed, it could become one of Chile's most significant national security challenges. The government and law enforcement agencies must take proactive measures to counter these violent non-state actors and prevent any further escalation of political violence in the country.

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Introduction

Similar to its neighboring countries, the Republic of Chile has experienced various phenomena that have impacted its society. Despite its efforts to maintain stability and peace, instances of violence have occurred throughout the country's history. These violent acts have been carried out by a diverse range of actors who have sought to achieve their objectives through such means. The impact of these incidents on the country's political, social, and economic landscape has been significant, and they continue to shape the current state of affairs in Chile.

As a response, The Chilean National Defense Policy 2020 (PDN) discusses the role of hybrid threats, such as terrorism, insurgencies, or organized crime, as "hostile activities of internal or external origin that combine conventional and unconventional methods and capabilities (disinformation campaigns, cyberattacks, terrorism, sabotage, insurgency, etc.), coordinated or executed both by State agents such as other non-State groups or organizations, generally remaining below the threshold of aggression that entails a conventional military response by the affected States."[3]

From an academic standpoint, we will be referring to political violence as a phenomenon ranging from street riots or sabotage to conventional or irregular warfare.[4] Further, radicalization processes reflect common patterns regardless of ideology, and even "some of them are firmly embedded in our societies disguised as being part of democratic processes or social justice initiatives."[5] As such, it has been defined as the "intimidation or coercion of populations or governments through threat or violence… which may result in death, serious injury or hostage-taking." [6]

During the Cold War, Latin America saw a surge in counterterrorism efforts. One of the most turbulent times in this regard was the dictatorship of General Augusto Pinochet (1973-1990)[7] which led to Law number 18,314 in Chile. After Salvador Allende's deposition under the Coup d'etat, this legislation defined the crime of terrorism and the corresponding punishments. From the start, it was designed as

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[3]   Ministerio de Defensa Nacional, "Política de Defensa Nacional de Chile 2020¨, April 26, 2021.
[4]   Paul Wilkinson, "Terrorism Versus Democracy: The Liberal State Response (Political Violence)," Routledge, 3rd Edición, 2011.
[5]   Josep Baqués Quesada, "El discurso de la radicalización en la obra de los teóricos de la revolución". Revista de Estudios Políticos, 185, 13-43. September 27, 2019,
[6]   Oficina del Alto Comisionado de las Naciones Unidas para los Derechos Humanos," ACNUDH. Terrorismo y extremismo violento", n.d.
[7]   Alexander Crowther, Carlos Solar, y Javier Urbina, "Chilean Military Culture" Florida International University, 2020,

a tool for political persecution. Its broad definition of terrorism allowed the military regime to strengthen its power. However, when the dictatorship fell, it was later used to prosecute antidemocratic demonstrations that would have gone unpunished otherwise, thereby serving as a tool for promoting democratic governance.[8]

According to the Global Terrorism Database, there is a strong correlation between the vast majority of terrorist attacks that have occurred historically in the country and those undertaken during the military dictatorship era. However, following the fall of the military regime in 1990, there was not a significant decrease in the number of recorded terrorism incidents until much later. Between January 1, 1990, and May 31, 1992, there were 1,482 terrorist events attributed to the extreme left and 11 terrorist actions linked to groups from the extreme right in Chile. These attacks included assassinations of senior military and political officials, bank robberies, and violent acts linked to extremist organizations.[9]

Following the 9/11 attack in the United States, the Chilean security and defense community started paying more attention to the implementation of counterterrorism and intelligence measures. This incident served as a wake-up call, prompting authorities to implement a more robust and comprehensive approach to protecting the country's citizens and interests.[10] Despite the best efforts of law enforcement agencies, it is still possible to identify a disturbingly wide range of hostile actors operating within the country. These may include far-right and far-left extremist groups, anarchist collectives, insurgent organizations with an indigenous focus, and even Religiously motivated financial operators.[11] A recent nationwide threat assessment of violent non-state actors with a focus on biological risks found that there are few concerns regarding the use of weapons of mass destruction on Chilean soil.[12]

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[8]   Myrna Díaz Villegas, "Análisis Político Criminal De La Aplicación Del Concepto De Terrorismo En Chile a La Luz De La Ley 18.314." Repositorio Académico - Universidad De Chile, 2019.

[9]   Eduardo López Regonesi, "Reflexiones Acerca De La Seguridad Ciudadana En Chile: Visiones Y Propuestas Para El Diseño De Una Política". Comisión Económica para América Latina (CEPAL). División de Desarrollo Social, Naciones Unidas, November 2000.

[10]   Cristian Chateau Magalhaes, "Los Atentados Terroristas a Estados Unidos de N.A. del 11 De Septiembre De 2001: Efectos Desde Una Perspectiva Geopolítica y Estratégica", Academia Nacional de Estudios Políticos y Estratégicos, September 24, 2021.

[11]   "Chile: Extremism and Terrorism", Counter Extremism Project.

[12]   Binder, Markus K., Alexandra M. Williams, and Steve S. Sin. "Biosecurity Threat Assessment: Republic of Chile". Washington, D.C.: UNSCR 1540 Implementation Program of the Inter-American Committee against Terrorism, Organization of American States, 2023.
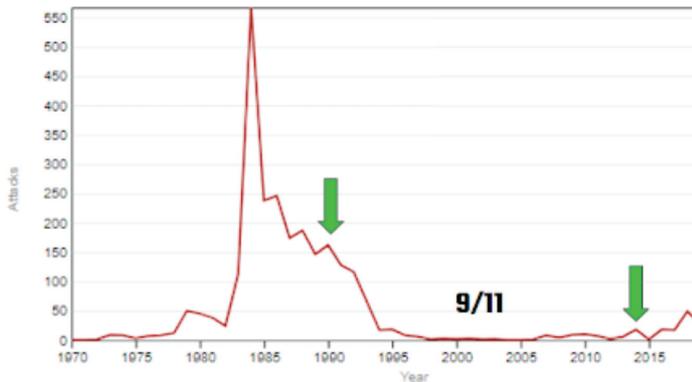
The number of reported terrorist attacks on Chilean soil from 1970 to 2020. The graph was modified to show inflection points with political or legislative changes.

Contemporary political violence in Santiago´s metropolitan region

Santiago de Chile, home to the institutions that maintain the constitutional foundations of the unitarian state and the presidential system, is where budgetary and resource allocation flows to the country's periphery. Although from a functional and territorial perspective, the government operates from a decentralized or deconcentrated framework, most law enforcement policies and, to a great extent, critical local governance directives are drafted in Santiago.

As a result of this structure, in recent decades, we can observe the return of political violence and the justification of extremist ideologies in the nation's capital. Groups thought to be eradicated, such as anarchist groups, have returned and have undertaken attacks against the military and government institutions. Anti-government elements, in particular, consolidated their ranks, making a gradual but steady comeback. Between 2005 and 2014, there were several bomb attacks by anarchist groups. In total, there were approximately 200 Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) used to attempt attacks on places such as religious centers, police stations, and subway facilities. Of the 200 IEDs, 133 were successfully detonated.[14]

Somewhat related, since 2011, there has been a noticeable surge in the number of protests that take place across the country. A significant level of aggression

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[13]   National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism.
[14]   RANE, "Chile Undertakes Reform to Fight Anarchism." Stratfor Worldview Assessments, September 29, 2014.

often marks these demonstrations and has been reported to destroy state-owned properties.[15] Despite efforts to curb the incidence of violent protests, they continue to pose a significant challenge to law enforcement agencies and government officials.

In 2019, there was a significant turning point in Chile when the discontent with social inequality and several policy demands led to violence, arson, and massive looting. In addition, some groups demanded substantive devolution of confiscated land to indigenous populations. These protests have severely destabilized, requiring planning, coordination, and execution by highly trained hostile actors. This event was a significant failure by the Chilean intelligence agencies and highlighted the government's lack of response capabilities to deal with such incidents.[16] The recent cyber-attack and subsequent leak of emails belonging to the Chilean Joint Chiefs of Staff have revealed that several internal and external stakeholders are actively supporting protests against the government.

The leaked documents indicate that the Marxist insurgents and Cuban operatives have a particular interest in these protests and are actively seeking to advance their agenda. This revelation has raised concerns regarding the potential involvement of foreign entities in Chile's domestic affairs and the possible implications of such interference.[17] In response to public demands, the government has attempted to address the issue by drafting a new Magna Carta. The proposed constitution aims to address the people's concerns and ensure their rights and freedoms are protected. However, despite the government's best efforts, the proposed constitution has yet to receive majority approval. The government is continuing to work towards a resolution that will satisfy the needs of the people while also ensuring the stability and prosperity of the nation.

Amidst the current levels of discontent in the country, there are several noteworthy instances to consider. During the 2021 elections, Gabriel Boric, who ran for the presidency and is now in office, used the ongoing protests as a political platform. However, he faced criticism for his connections to extremist groups. These connections included his attempts to join the far-left group Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria (MIR) when he was younger, as well as his support for the actions

15 Centro de Estudios de Conflicto y Cohesión Social, "Informe Anual - Observatorio de Conflictos 2020," COES, October 2020.

16 Alejandro Salas Maturana, "Terrorismo Anarquista y Guerra Híbrida en Chile," Academia Nacional de Estudios Políticos y Estratégicos, November 20, 2019.

17 Nicolás Sepúlveda, "Hackeo masivo al Estado Mayor Conjunto expuso miles de documentos de áreas sensibles de la defensa," CIPER Chile, September 22, 2022.

of the radical group Frente Patriotico Manuel Rodriguez (FPMR). Additionally, his appointment of Maya Fernández Allende as Defence Minister was highly controversial. Fernández Allende is Salvador Allende's granddaughter and Luis Fernandez de Oña's daughter (Fidel Castro's most prominent Intelligence officer in Chile then). While this appointment honored Salvador Allende's achievements, many viewed it as a continuation of ideological partisanship. Allende's proximity to the Cuban intelligence enterprise is well documented, and his use of Cuban operatives to suppress opposition is still a matter that remains unresolved.[18]

On the other hand, pro-fascist "anarcho-capitalist" groups have been resurgent in recent times.[19] This can be seen following a significant event that occurred in 2020 when Judge Ximena Chong received death threats after presiding over the trial of a police officer who was accused of unjustified use of force against a protester in 2019. The Investigative Police of Chile (PDI) responded to the incident and, during their investigation, found military equipment and large-caliber weapons along with the emblem of the extremist group, Frente Nacionalista Patria y Libertad(⬡). This group had collaborated in destabilizing the country to establish the Pinochet dictatorship. Although there have been reports of specific individuals who claim to be associated with the group engaging in acts of vandalism, it is not widely known whether these acts can be directly linked to the group.

Given the potential threat posed by such groups, it is imperative that monitoring them is made a national priority. However, this task is made difficult because the National Intelligence Agency (ANI) was established during Pinochet's dictatorship, and as a result, all information related to the agency, including its annual budget, is classified. This lack of transparency makes it difficult to assess the current state of affairs thoroughly. Nonetheless, it is crucial to remain vigilant and keep a close eye on any potential threats that may arise from these groups.

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[18] Cristián Pérez I., «Salvador Allende, apuntes sobre su dispositivo de seguridad: El Grupo de Amigos Personales (GAP)," Estudios Públicos. 79, June, 2000.

[19] Observatorio del Ascenso de la Extrema Derecha en Chile (OAEC) and Dirección De Investigación ICEI, "Ascenso De La Extrema Derecha En Chile: Balance, Desafíos y Perspectivas, Universidad De Chile.
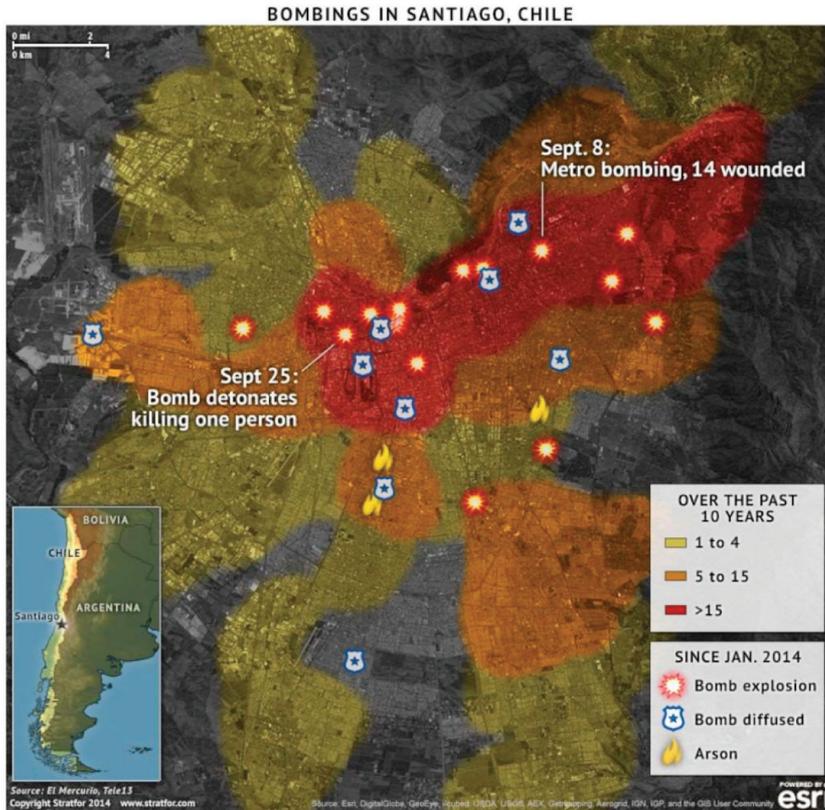
Figure 2. Bomb attacks in the metropolitan region of Santiago de Chile in 2014. By Courtesy of RANE. [20]

Indigenist insurgencies in Southern regions

When looking at the southern regions, Chile has become a part of a very worrisome trend. Since the insurrection of the Zapatista Army of National Liberation (EZLN) in Mexico in 1994, there have been several uprisings in the region, where Marxist-oriented aboriginal populations have demanded greater political autonomy. Some notable examples include Ecuador in 2000, Bolivia in 2005, and Peru in 2021.[21]

While the Republic of Chile has maintained positive relationships with its indigenous populations, some tensions remain. One such issue is the complaint made by the Council of Elders and the Rapa Nui Parliament against the Chilean

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[20]   RANE, "Chile Undertakes Reform to Fight Anarchism." Stratfor Worldview Assessments, September 29, 2014.

[21]   Federico Aznar Fernández-Montesinos, ''Del indigenismo al indianismo. Los movimientos étnicos en América Latina,'' Instituto Español de Estudios Estratégicos, June 9, 2022.

government to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights. The complaint seeks recognition of the Rapa Nui People as the rightful owners of their land and natural resources and the right to self-governance.[22] Others, such as the Aymará, have been in conflicts with the State and private companies since 1980. As happened with other indigenous communities, they have politicized their territories and resources to integrate them into their ethno-territorial projects.**[23]**

However, the conflict promoted by radical groups that claim to represent the Mapuche people on issues of tensions of territorial autonomy are the only ones that, for now, could have regional repercussions. These groups have collaborated with other extremist groups within the country to carry out their activities, such as raids, arson, kidnappings, assassinations, and bomb attacks. Their targets include police, multinational companies, farmers, truckers, and churches.[24] They have adherents throughout the national territory, international mobility, and potential connections with terrorist groups outside its borders, such as Euskadi Ta Askatasuna (ETA) in Spain and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) in the Colombia-Venezuela border.**[25]** Diego Andrés Frías also highlights these groups' international components and affiliations, including the Venezuelan dictator Nicolas Maduro and the Sao Paulo Forum,[26] a Marxist-oriented platform for far-left politicians, no stranger to Iranian, Chinese, and Russian interests. Further, he assesses that the conflict between the Chilean government and various Mapuche groups went through five cycles between 1990 and the present day:

1. The first cycle was from 1990-1997, shortly after the Pinochet dictatorship ended. During this time, Mapuche groups focused primarily on social protests and occupying non-Mapuche land.

2. From 1998 to 2002, the second cycle saw social protests become political violence. The Chilean government responded by using the Anti-Terrorism Law against the Mapuche groups. The Arauco Malleco Coordinator group (CAM) first appeared during this cycle.

[22] Raimundo Alberto Zegers Quiroga, "El conflicto entre el pueblo Rapa Nui y el Estado de Chile: la denuncia del Consejo de Ancianos y el Parlamento Rapa Nui ante la Comisión Interamericana de Derechos Humanos, Universidad De Chile, 2020.

[23]   Astrid Ulloa, "Agua y disputas territoriales en Chile y Colombia," Universidad Nacional de Colombia, (2018): pp. 1-542.

[24]   Diego Solís, "The Mapuches: Chile's Overlooked Security Problem", Stratfor Worldview Assessments, September 29, 2014.

[25] Luis Jorge Rasic, "La Seguridad Regional y Los Conflictos de Sendero Luminoso (Perú) y Los Mapuches (Chile)", Escuela Superior de Guerra Tte Grl Luis María Campos, September 21, 2011.

[26] Diego Andrés Frías, "El Conflicto Mapuche: Terrorismo en la Araucanía Chilena." Instituto Español de Estudios Estratégicos, January 27, 2020.

3. The third cycle, 2003-2007, saw decreased violent events due to state pressure. However, terrorist attacks became a more consolidated strategy, and the Mapuche, groups became more fragmented.

4. The fourth cycle, from 2008-2010, saw activity peak again, with terrorist attacks remaining the preferred strategy.

5. The fifth and current cycle, from 2011 to the present day, has seen a radicalization of the conflict and an increased use of firearms. It was during this cycle that the Weichan Aukamapu group first appeared.

Conviction rates remain low despite increased violence by these groups in the last three years.[27] The situation can be described as including a variety of threats, including organized crime, subversion, and terrorism.[28] The region continues to be subject to a temporary state of emergency decrees that allow violence to be contained during the decrees. As soon as the decree expires, violence resumes. Some experts see the necessity of a more proactive strategy on the part of the armed forces to achieve definitive results.[29] Even though the Chilean government was unwilling to allow its forces to intervene fully, they requested intelligence support from the United States in 2008. [30]

Further, concerns regarding the strategic interactions between terrorist organizations and organized crime are highly troubling, particularly in non-renewable extractive   sectors such as wood.[31] As the multi-million Chilean wood industry is unable to operate because of the violence, there is a high risk that landlords become part of criminal groups or collaborate with them to access resources. Such recurrence is not unheard of in rural areas affected by violent non-state actors. Gilman's plutonic insurgencies are a model that considers how insurgents demand territorial concessions and might become proxy forces for private individuals or economic elites in exchange for agreements or relationships.[32]

[27]   Observatorio Judicial y Multigremial De La Araucanía, "Violencia en la Macrozona Sur Informe I: homicidios, lesiones y amenazas", Observatorio Judicial, July, 2021.

[28]   Jorge Gatica Bórquez, "Cuando Los Árboles No Dejan Ver El Bosque: Una Mirada a La Araucanía, Desde Una Perspectiva Comparada," *Academia Nacional de Estudios Políticos y Estratégicos*, March 5, 2021.

[29]   Óscar Aranda Mora, "Operaciones COIN En La Araucanía: Del Ajedrez Al Go," Revista de Marina, September 3, 2020.

[30]   Christian Leal, "WikiLeaks: Chile pidió ayuda de espionaje a EEUU por conflicto mapuche," Biobio Chile, December 13, 2010.

[31]   Pilar Lizana, La Economía Ilegal De La Madera El Círculo Perverso Del Delito en El Sur De Chile, Athenlab October, 2022.

[32]   Hilary Matfess, and Michael Miklaucic, "Beyond Convergence: World Without Order," National Defence University, February 25, (2020): pp. 47-61.

Such a situation in Chile would be very challenging, as it would eliminate the divide between two traditional Cold War fronts. In the past, right-wing politicians supported the landed elites to the detriment of oppressed farmers or Indigenous groups, while politicians with Marxist orientations supported the latter. However, if the Chilean state faces plutonic insurgencies, it would be an incredibly hostile environment with few chances of finding a local partner to confront the threat. Some authors suggest that criminal interests are currently taking precedence over ideological ones.[33] Chile is now one of the two countries with the most terrorism in the region and among the 20 countries with the most terrorism in the world.[34]

Figure 3 . Territorial differences between the land claims demanded by Indigenous extremists (blue) and the current Mapuche population concentration (dotted line). [35]

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[33]   Pablo. M. Urquízar, "Radiografía de la violencia y el terrorismo en la Macrozona Sur: Problemas y desafíos actuales", Ediciones Universidad San Sebastián, 2023.
[34]   "Global Terrorism Index 2022", Institute for Economics & Peace, May 10, 2022.
[35]   Berria, CC BY-SA 4.0 <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0>, via Wikimedia Commons

Compounding effects of criminal threats countrywide

The debilitating effect of organized crime on national governance has been evident in some African nations. Still, the connections to the killing of the president from Haiti and the country's collapse in the year 2021 remind us that the Western Hemisphere is not immune to this kind of occurrence.[36] As the overall security in Chile deteriorates, it is critical to look for options.

In 2014 Lieutenant Colonel Osvaldo Vallejos already warned us of the possibility that illicit drug trafficking in the country required permanent observation so as not to escalate into a multidimensional conflict.[37] In the same year, a study from the National Academy of Political and Strategic Studies (formerly Chilean Defence Academy) reported concerns about the activity of Central American criminal groups:

"The presence of gangs in the region poses a serious threat to national security, as has been witnessed in Central America. These criminal organizations often act as accomplices to drug trafficking cartels, as well as being involved in robberies, murders, human trafficking, weapon smuggling, extortion, and even terrorist attacks. Unfortunately, such groups have already made their presence felt in Peru, Bolivia, Uruguay, and Argentina." [38]

During the 2020 COVID pandemic, where the lack of opportunity and mistrust in government institutions were constant, the expansion and strengthening of criminal networks in Chile was observed, making it possible to be closer to such multidimensional conflicts. The national prosecutor, Jorge Abbott, in 2021 presented the national report on drug trafficking, which revealed that Mexican cartels were attempting to establish a foothold in the country. Along with a Colombian organization that operates through third parties, at least four cartels were believed to be operating within the country.

Abbott emphasized that the problem of drug violence had spread across the entire country, affecting numerous populations and causing destruction in public spaces that had never been impacted before; [39] while according to recent surveys, for Chileans, ~~drug trafficking~~ represents the crucial or determining threat to national security.[40]

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[36]   Juan Pablo Toro, El poder de la insurgencia criminal, la señal de Haití, AthenaLab, 13 de march 2024.
[37]   Osvaldo Vallejos, "Fourth Generation Warfare in Chile: Illicit Drug Trafficking Threats," Army War College Strategic Studies Institute, March 11, 2011.
[38]   Ricardo Rodríguez Arriagada, "Las Maras: Una Amenaza para la Seguridad Nacional," Academia Nacional de Estudios Políticos y Estratégicos, November 2017.
[39]   Ana María, "Tres carteles internacionales de droga ya llegaron a Chile," Radio Pauta, September 8, 2021.
[40]   "Tercera Encuesta de percepciones sobre Política Exterior y Seguridad AthenaLab-IPSOS," AthenaLab and IPSOS, May, 2022.

This context has prompted a severe reflection on the necessary measures to achieve adequate development of law enforcement policies in the country, which was evident in December 2022, with the National Policy against Organized Crime 2022-2027 launch, but at the same time, violence continues to increase.

Discussions about the role of the armed forces and intelligence services in internal defense and their association with brutal military regimes have been considered taboo, which has hindered the proper development of these topics in public and private educational institutions and the transfer of knowledge. Although there have been significant advancements, other closely related and relevant subjects, such as organized crime, have only been explored through reports from organizations and institutions or anecdotal accounts.[41] It is alarming to observe that Chile has not made any significant efforts to address the potential threats it may face. There is a lack of transparency and accountability when it comes to sharing information about the measures in place to prevent extremist violence in schools and prisons. The absence of a clear plan of action or an annual report to the public is concerning, as it indicates a lack of commitment to address these issues. It is worrying that there are no discussions taking place on how to tackle these problems on a permanent basis.

Furthermore, the Joint Action Doctrine of the Armed Forces (DCN) has not been updated to confront these challenges systematically. This is particularly worrying, as the DCN outlines the strategies and protocols to be followed by the military in case of an internal security threat. Without an updated DCN, the country may not be adequately prepared to respond to such threats. Therefore, it is imperative that the Chilean government takes proactive measures and devises concrete programs to prevent extremist violence.

Lastly, the most recent instance of Chilean forces testing their skills on the battlefield, other than their participation in peacekeeping operations, was during the Iraq War (2003-2011)[42] when the private security contractor Triple Canopy recruited and deployed former Chilean soldiers as mercenaries. While Chile has a rightfully restrictive defense policy, it has limited opportunities to test military capabilities and personnel in sustained and prolonged campaigns with all the risks

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[41]   Hugo Frühling, "Crimen organizado en Chile. Un desafío para el Estado y la academia," Universidad de Chile, June 4, 2019.

[42]   Andrew Chernin, "Chilenos, mercenarios y en Irak," La Tercera, October 9, 2011.

and responsibilities this entails. As a result, applying limited real-world experience might prove challenging, even if they can accumulate enough political capital to confront threats directly.

Conclusions

The security landscape of Chile has been experiencing a significant rise in the threat posed by violent non-state actors, including terrorist groups and insurgents. Hostile nation-state operatives, along with drug cartels and transnational criminal organizations, have further exacerbated the gravity of the situation. To address this challenge effectively, it is crucial to acknowledge the reality of the situation and devise a comprehensive strategy that considers the multifaceted nature of the problem.

In summary, the security landscape of Chile is facing a complex and multifaceted challenge that requires a comprehensive strategy that incorporates intelligence gathering, community involvement, and targeted counter-terrorism operations. The situation is further complicated by the activities of hostile nation-state operatives and powerful transnational criminal organizations, which require a collaborative and sustained effort to counter them effectively.

Such a strategy must incorporate several key elements, including intelligence gathering to identify and track these dangerous actors and their activities, community involvement to ensure that citizens know the risks and can actively promote public safety, and targeted counter-terrorism operations to neutralize threats. As such, it is essential to prioritize their isolation and neutralization while working collaboratively with other countries and international organizations to devise sustainable solutions.

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Beyond Borders: NATO, Human Security and Minors as a Pivot for Stability in the Sahel

Cecilia Polizzi*

Abstract

Notwithstanding considerable local and global efforts aimed at stabilizing the expansive Sahel region, spanning from Mauritania to Sudan and accommodating a populace of 150 million, the security milieu is deteriorating. At the June 2021 NATO Summit, Allies expressed explicit concerns regarding an increasingly complex Sahelian crisis as a matter of NATO´s collective security. It is recognized that, in this scenario, purely military responses are likely to fall short and run the risk of perpetuating a detrimental cycle of instability and violent action. This Article initiates an inquiry into NATO Human Security approaches and aims at stimulating a discourse on its viability, application, and potential to stabilize the Sahel region. It contends that Human Security may represent an opportunity for the Alliance to demonstrate its added value while considering the Sahelian countries' aspirations and specific needs. It departs from an in-depth analysis of the dynamics fueling the crisis in the Sahel and problematizes the interplay between youth bulges and insecurity, leading to compounding radicalization and terrorism threats. It demonstrates how the involvement of children in terrorist organizations plays a role in the conduct of irregular warfare through military and non-military means. By leveraging NATO's integrated political framework on Children and Armed Conflict (CAAC), it proceeds to identify how NATO's commitments to child protection can

synergize with broader security objectives and counterterrorism efforts.

Keywords: *Human Security, Counterterrorism, Child Protection, Sahel*

Introduction

Since the collapse of the Libyan regime in 2011, the Sahel has gradually gained significance within the NATO environment.[1] The region's rapid population growth and its associated effects on migration flows, weak governmental institutions, and the growing presence and influence of foreign powers are just some of the factors with the potential to influence the political, economic and security status quo of Europe and the NATO Alliance as a whole.

Despite significant local and international efforts to stabilize the Sahel, the security situation in the region is deteriorating. Violent Extremist Organizations (VEOs) have expanded their footprint from the North of Mali to the Central Sahel region, the Lake Chad Basin and the Horn of Africa. Since 2018, Sahelian religious extremist groups have also started to expand southward to the Gulf of Guinea through Burkina Faso. Jama'at Nasr al Islam wal Muslimin (JNIM) and the Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (ISGS), as well as the Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) and Boko Haram in the Lake Chad Basin, have long exploited inter-community tensions, socio-economic deprivations, youth vulnerabilities to radicalization, and long-standing grievances to deepen their presence in the region. Irregular warfare and mounting acts of terrorism endanger the civilian population, compounding existing challenges, and further threatening stability.

As calls for new solutions become more pressing and the Alliance seeks to identify opportunities to complement and strengthen existing efforts in the region, this Article undertakes an examination of the NATO's Human Security approach, inviting consideration of its potential in fostering stability within the Sahel region. Drawing upon this framework, the Article drives analytical venues in two areas: the protection of children in armed conflict and counter-terrorism efforts. It presents issues of socio-political and economic nature as inherent to the perpetuity and aggravation of the Sahelian crisis while also indicating their impact on the region's youth populations, radicalization and proliferating terrorism threats. Through such synthesis, the Article proceeds to offer an in-depth analysis of NATO's Human

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[1]   Berger, Chloé. "NDC Policy Brief No. 22 - December 2021: What Role for NATO in the Sahel?" Research Division – NATO Defense College.

Security approach, with reference to the protection of children in armed conflict as a cross-cutting focus area. With consideration of the necessity for effective strategies to transcend exclusivism for traditional security considerations and the ways in which systemic deprivation fuels conflict and instability, the Article argues that an approach that places the individual at the center of security planning not only directly benefits children and complements the child protection agenda but also works towards achieving broader security objectives. The Article also assumes the challenge of dissecting the pillars of NATO´s Policy on Children and Armed Conflict (CAAC) and indicates several lines of effort that both directly and indirectly, contribute to preventing child recruitment into terrorist ranks, supporting the disengagement, rehabilitation, and reintegration of former child soldiers, and mitigating radicalization issues. The Article offers unexplored linkages between the protection of children in armed conflict and counter-terrorism efforts, informing sophisticated approaches to contemporary security challenges.

This Article is divided into eight components. Section I lays the foundation for strategic foresight analysis by offering a detailed examination of the complex interplay of factors and variables affecting the security environment in the Sahel region. Section II identifies the interlinkages between local and regional dynamics and the influence wielded by Sahelian religious extremist factions. By positing that underlying socioeconomic and political grievances often eclipse ideological underpinnings as primary drivers of terrorist activity, it challenges prevailing notions that categorize these actors solely as appendages of a broader global neo-religious extremist movement. Section III problematizes the interplay between substantial youth population growth and deprivations and elucidates how this convergence intensifies the risks of radicalization. Section IV traces the adherence of the modalities of child exploitation in terrorism with the tenets of irregular warfare and illustrates the ways in which it contributes, through military and non-military means to its exercise. Section V examines the evolution of security concepts and the emergence of Human Security within the post-Cold War geopolitical context. It defines Human Security as an approach that extends beyond national defense and law enforcement, encompassing political, economic, and social issues that impact the security of individuals. Section VI introduces NATO´s Human Security approach and its cross-cutting topics. Section VII addresses two major critiques of the Human Security approach including perceived over leniency and operationalization complexities. It proceeds to evaluate the protection of children in

armed conflict in NATO-led operations and missions and activities and dissects its singular pillars as provided for by the NATO Policy on Children and Armed Conflict. It examines this as a coherent, consistent and integrated political framework for the Alliance´s efforts in preventing, monitoring, reporting and responding to grave violations against children, guided by international standards and principles of victim-centered, rule of law-compliant, and trauma-informed approaches. Section VIII, while acknowledging the moral and legal imperative of protecting children in armed conflict as a self-standing pillar, proceeds to harness NATO's integrated CAAC framework to illustrate how existing commitments to child protection align and complement overarching security objectives and counterterrorism efforts.

A PERFECT STORM: UNDERSTANDING THE SAHEL´S CRISIS

A vast semi-desertic region of 5 million square kilometers that stretches from the Atlantic coast to the Red Sea, the Sahel is also one of the world's most impoverished regions. To varying degrees, states in the Sahel are frail and occupy the lower end of international indexes ranking stability and development. 40% of the population lives below the poverty line and Sahelian countries remain highly dependent on foreign aid and financial assistance.[2]

Sahelian countries suffer from structural governance issues, inherited partially from the post-colonial period. In rural areas, where 57 percent of Malian and more than 80 percent of Nigerien population reside, the supply of basic services is limited or non-existent.[3] Corruption is a significant issue, leading to a decline in public trust and fostering discontent towards political leaders. In combination with the frailty of state institutions, it further diminishes the government's legitimacy, fuels power struggles among both foreign and non-state actors and exacerbates instability.[4]

Irregular migration from the Sahel is a key concern in Europe and beyond. Irregular migration routes through Mali, Niger, Algeria, and Libya are unsafe and expose migrants to several risks, including falling victim to criminal organizations. Illicit trade in the region is also prolific. Arms trafficking directly threatens regional security while drug revenues have disrupted local economies, poisoned inter-

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[2]   Poverty affects around 50 percent of the population in Mauritania, and up to 90 per cent in Niger.; https://fundforpeace.org/2018/05/03/stability-in-the-sahel-region-will-require-more-than-just-counter-terrorism/

[3]   The World Bank's governance indicators rank all five countries of the Western Sahel among the world's lower third for government effectiveness.

[4]   Cooke, Jennifer G., Thomas M. Sanderson, J. Caleb Johnson, and Benjamin Hubner. "The Context: Corruption, Fragility, and Hardship in the Sahel and Lake Chad Basin." Militancy and the Arc of Instability: Violent Extremism in the Sahel. Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), 2016. http://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep23364.5.

community relations and called into question old hierarchies and respect for traditional authority.[5]

The overwhelming majority of people living in Mali, Niger, and Burkina Faso subsist through agriculture and pastoralism. The impact of climate change has led to water scarcity, limited employment in the rural areas, and undermined pastoral and farming economies. Competition for access to water and land has also long fueled tensions between vulnerable communities in the region.

The conflation of these factors results in compounding effects that create a conducive environment for the proliferation of terrorism. While religious extremist implantation in the Sahel can be traced back to the end of the Algerian Civil War, the region has now become a global epicenter of terrorism. The Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (ISGS) has been active since 2015 in Niger. The prevailing political and security chaos currently besetting the region affords it opportunity to extend influence and control over territory.[6] The group has been able to fortify its hold upon an expansive corridor that stretches from the eastern reaches of the Tahoua region in Niger to the western expanse of the Liptako-Gourma region at the tri-border area between Niger, Burkina Faso, and Mali. Jama'at Nasr al Islam wal Muslimin (JNIM) the umbrella coalition of Al-Qaeda have significantly increased the rate and severity of attacks in northern Mali since early July 2023 as part of a broader effort to establish control over major population centres and supply lines.[7] The group presently seeks to exploit the void left by withdrawing UN forces and engaged in hostilities over the control of UN bases.

2. WHAT FUELS THE THREAT?

Sahelian religious extremist groups exhibit a notable degree of fluidity, and rapidly change their names, base of operations, structures, and alliances.[8] It would be erroneous to characterize them simply as part of a global extremist movement orchestrated from external sources that exploits "The concept of Jihad."[9] Rather, local and regional dynamics offer a more coherent understanding of the genesis of these groups, which have since long capitalized on the vulnerabilities of the population.

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[5] LTMT SFA. "Strategic Foresight Analysis Regional Perspectives Report on North Africa and the Sahel."

[6] Soto-Mayor, Guillaume, and Boubacar Ba. "Generational Warfare in the Sahel: The Khilafa Cubs and the Dynamics of Violent Insurgency within the Islamic State Province." November 2023. CRTG Working Group.

[7] UNDP. "Dynamics of Violent Extremism in Africa: Conflict Ecosystems, Political Ecology and the Spread of the Proto-State." Research Paper, 2022.

[8] Ahmet Berat Çonkar, "Development and Security Challenges in the Sahel Region," Report, NATO Parliamentary Assembly, 042 GSM 20 E rev.2 fin, Original: English, December 2020.

[9] Ibid.

Violent propaganda throughout the Sahel plays on a diffused sense of desperation. In rural areas, people have limited access to justice and are afforded little or no protection. A deep-seated crisis of confidence has therefore emerged between the local population and defense and security forces, which often are not positioned to provide security to the public.[10] These conditions, increase vulnerabilities to violent propaganda, and prompt disaffected individuals to form self-defense militia, frequently organized along ethnic lines.

The gap between the complex needs of vulnerable population segments and states unable to fulfill prospects for the future has facilitated the infiltration of violent extremist actors into the fabric of Sahelian societies.[11] In areas characterized by weakened governmental institutions and increasing frailties, violent extremist groups fuel social and political tensions, while establishing control and alternative forms of social order. Poverty further exacerbates this scenario as these actors frequently offer lucrative wages to attract individuals to engage in violent activities.

Hence, rather than serving as proxies for the so-called "global jihad", the rise of violent extremism in the Sahel can be attributed to local and regional dynamics. The threat landscape in the region, is non-homogeneous and characterized as a series of fragmented insurgencies that largely, albeit not exclusively, constitute a response to concerning socio-economic and political conditions that have become increasingly pronounced in recent years. Contrary to traditional assumptions, ideological appeal is far less relevant in fueling these movements compared to poverty, law enforcement and military repression, lack of access to resources, and the pursuit for genuine political representation.[12]

3. CHILDREN AND YOUTH: THE KEY TO THE HUMAN ENVIRONMENT?

In the Sahel region, the populations of Mauritania, Mali, Burkina Faso, and Chad are projected to grow from 135 million in 2015 to 330 million by the year 2050. Fertility rates are also among the highest globally, with a median age of 16 years old.[13]

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[10]   Çonkar, Ahmet Berat. (2020)

[11]   Ibid.

[12]   International Alert. "If Victims Become Perpetrators: Factors Contributing to Vulnerability and Resilience to Violent Extremism in the Central Sahel." 2018.

[13]   La situation demographique du Sahel: deux fois plus d'habitants en l'an 2015 [The demographic situation in the Sahel: two times more inhabitants in the year 2015]. Pop Sahel. 1992 Jul;(Spec No):8-10. French. PMID: 12344772.

While the youth constitute the most substantial demographic cohort across all Sahel nations, their societal and political standing, along with their access to education and economic prospects, remain constrained. Conflict, precarious living conditions, marginalization and lack of socioeconomic opportunities are not only fundamentally destabilizing but create a complex system of insecurities that violent extremist actors exploit to attract pools of young recruits into the orbit of religious extremism and advance their agenda.

The incidence of minors recruited by armed groups in Burkina Faso increased at least five-fold in 2021. The repercussions of the conflict on children have become so alarming that in 2023 for the first time, Burkina Faso was included in the UN SRSG report on Children and Armed Conflict.[14] In Mali, at least 900 children, aged between 4 and 17 years, were recruited and used in hostilities in 2022 alone. Child recruitment and use represented the most prominent violation of child rights, documented by the UN country task force.[15]

The impact of terrorism on children is pervasive and multifaceted. It exposes children to severe violations of their rights, mass abductions, threats and intimidation techniques, various forms of sexual and gender-based violence including forced impregnation and institutionalized sexual slavery. Children´s association with terrorist actors oftentimes results in early death or inflicts extensive physical and psychological harm to the child, impairing personal, intellectual and social development. However, children are not only victims but also agents in the perpetuation of violence. Children serve the military pursuits of violent extremist organizations because they are versatile fighters, apt for deployment in a multitude of combat and non-combat auxiliary roles. However, in the development of terrorism throughout the 20th and 21st centuries, actors within the neo-extremist movement came to recognize a value in children that extends beyond purposes of territorial expansionism and short military gains and exploited it in unprecedented ways.[16]

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[14] Children and armed conflict, Report of the Secretary-General, General Assembly Security Council, Seventy-seventh session, Seventy-eighth year, Agenda item 64(a), Promotion and protection of the rights of children, A/77/895-S/2023/363, (New York: United Nations, 5 June 2023).

[15] Office of the Special Representative for Children in Armed Conflict. "Mali: Children bearing brunt of escalating violence, political instability, upsurge in grave violations." December 21, 2022. Accessed January 27, 2024. https://childrenandarmedconflict.un.org/2022/12/mali-children-bearing-brunt-of-escalating-violence-political-instability-upsurge-in-grave-violations/.

[16] Polizzi, Cecilia "Inside Salafi-jihadism: The Rationale Driving the Recruitment and Use of Children," lecture presented at the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START), University of Maryland, College Park, July 2021, video recording, YouTube, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y7H8dsUZ1lo&t=1797s.

4. THE USE OF MINORS ACROSS THE DIMENSIONS OF IRREGULAR WARFARE

Since the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, antagonists of ´proper wars´ evolved faster due to the recognition and consequent exploitation of opportunities afforded by social, political, cultural changes and challenged conventional armies adopting a combination of lethal and non-lethal tactics.[17] Terrorist organizations demonstrated flexibility and adaptation emphasizing no sophisticated warfare infrastructure but exploiting advantages available to irregular fighters and preying on the weaknesses of contemporary society.[18]

In this respect, the use of children in hostilities has been increasingly regarded as instrumental. While Al-Qaeda and other terrorist organizations have been defined by some as a ´mosquito´ compared to conventional armies, the exponential demographic growth in developing countries, left child categories to constitute an enormous pool for exploitation into terrorist ranks, providing opportunities to strengthen military and operational capacity and establish an otherwise absent ground presence.[19]

The involvement of children in terrorism also emerged as a strategic change of tactics. As oppressive counter-terrorism measures lowered the probability of terrorist acts operational success, secrecy and undetectability assumed a critical dimension. Equally to women, children are commonly associated with innocence and presumed to be inherently non-violent. These assumptions, marked a paradigm shift in the modus operandi of religious extremist groups and led to a dramatic increase in the use children in terrorist activities, including suicide bombing operations.

In waging irregular warfare, religious extremist groups have proven adept in disseminating propaganda to alter domestic and international opinion, in the form of psychological operations. Depictions of children as victims of Western-aided violence or as co-participants in the perpetration of violent acts are disseminated with the intent to elicit anger and frustration in the hope of shifting towards an increase of both passive and active supporters, trigger a deep psychological response on audiences, destroy and create symbols.

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[17] Polizzi, Cecilia. "Fourth Generation Warfare: An Analysis of Child Recruitment and use as a Salafi-Jihadi Doctrine of War." *Small Wars Journal*, April 2022.
[18] Ibid.
[19] Polizzi, Cecilia. (2022).

As the war against international terrorism has also been defined by some as the "clash of civilizations" or otherwise as if between the Islamic and Western worlds, ideology acquires a higher degree of preponderance as an element of warfare. It is in fact not only a justification for undertaking violent action and attaining legitimacy but also offers chances to achieve political success in the long term. The ambition to create and impose new socio-political orders depends on the concretization of any terrorist group perspective of longevity. Modern warfare is a war of ideas and survival, or otherwise the minimum goal of any terrorist organization, is also ideological survival. Actors within the neo-extremist movement understand child radicalization as a means to propagate dogma through future generations and sustain insurgency in the long term by leading wars of exhaustion and attrition.

5. THE ANATOMY OF HUMAN SECURITY

The international community began to place an emphasis on security matters in relation to development issues during the early 1990s.[20] A consensus was reached on the need to broaden and deepen the concept of security, taking account of the political context at the end of the Cold War.[21] Stronger collaboration also became possible between development, foreign policy and defense institutions within governments, helping to provide a new basis for North/South relations on these issues.[22]

The human security approach considers that threats and challenges to security transcend national defense, and law and order to encompass all political, economic and social issues that guarantee a life free from risk and fear.[23] It expands the focus from the security of the State to the security of people; and recognizes the interlinkages between peace, stability, development and human rights, and the ways in which deprivations – or the lack of it thereof – may either support or hamper security.

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[20] Hussein, Karim, Gnisci, Donata, and Wanjiru, Julia. Security and Human Security: An Overview of Concepts and Initiatives - What Implications for West Africa? SAH/D(2004)547 December 2004 Or. Eng. Sahel and West Africa Club.

[21] Ntui, Daniel Okorn. "The Nigerian Red Cross Society, The Nigerian Youth, and Security Consciousness: 1999-2022." Humanus Discourse 3, no. 1 (2023): ISSN 2787-0308 (Online). Published by INEC, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

[22] Ibid.

[23] Sahel and West Africa Club/OECD. Human Security in West Africa: Challenges, Synergies and Action for a Regional Agenda. Vol. 1, Summary Report. Workshop organized by Sahel and West Africa Club/OECD, Lome (Togo), 26 to 28 March 2006. SAH/D(2006)561, October 2006.

However, these dimensions are not mutually exclusive. Security can be thought of as a "public good", responding to the strategic need to support sustainable human development, and at the same time, promote national, regional and global peace and stability.[24] The human security approach has also made it clear that any attempt to address security-related matters needs to be based on consultation and collaboration with different sets of actors which frequently have different interests, such as civilian/military; governmental/non-governmental; local/national/regional/international.[25]

6. NATO POLICY SHIFT

The genesis of the NATO Human Security approach can be attributed to the dynamic transformation in the nature of warfare. In the past few decades, the conventional paradigm of large-scale wars between states has become obsolete, supplanted by contemporary conflicts wherein a proliferation of armed actors, both state and non-state, seeks to gain advantages against competitors and limit the potential for escalation to conventional conflict and/or major power intervention. Employing methods that extend beyond military means, these conflicts involve all dimensions – political, economic, social, and military – of human activity. Contemporary wars, often termed 'forever wars,' directly violate International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights Law as violence is directed against civilians rather than the adversary, and their safety and security is being leveraged to serve military objectives.[26]

NATO Human Security is conceptualized as an approach to security that identifies and addresses cross-cutting challenges to the survival, livelihood, and dignity of people.[27] By embracing a human security approach, the Alliance undertakes a commitment to embed considerations for the safety and security of populations at all levels of its operations, missions and activities, and identifies five areas of focus: Protection of Civilians (POC); Preventing and Responding to

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[24] Akpan, Nse Etim, PhD, John Enesi Edeki, PhD, and Imere Lordmizer Nwokah. "The Challenges of Human Security in Sub-Saharan Africa: The Way Forward." International Journal of English Literature and Social Sciences (IJELS) Vol-3, Issue-6 (Nov - Dec 2018): 35. https://dx.doi.org/10.22161/ijels.3.6.35. ISSN: 2456-7620.

[25] Ibid.

[26] Mary Kaldor, NATO and Human Security, NDC Policy Brief No. 01 - January 2022 (NATO Defense College).

[27] Human Security in NATO," NATO's Strategic Warfare Development Command, April 13, 2023, https://www.act.nato.int/article/human-security-in-nato/.

Conflict-Related Sexual Violence (CRSV); Combating Trafficking in Human Beings (HT); Protection of Children in Armed Conflict (CAAC); Cultural Property Protection (CPP).[28]

7. ESCORTING KIDS TO KINDERGARTEN

Condoleezza Rice, shortly before assuming the role of National Security Advisor, succinctly shared her thinking about security when, interviewed by the NY times, she said: "Carrying out civil administration and police functions is simply going to degrade the American capability to do the things America has to do. We do not need to have the 82nd Airborne escorting kids to kindergarten."[29]

These viewpoints arise and coalesce with notable criticisms directed towards the concept of human security. The initial critique contends that the approach is overly lenient and lacks substantial enforcement mechanisms, with a disproportionate preference for military intervention. The second one emanates from field practitioners responsible for complex theaters, who express reservations regarding the operationalization of the human security approach.[30] Yet, does the notion of escorting children to kindergarten genuinely encapsulate NATO's vision of child protection in armed conflict?

NATO's approach to protecting children in armed conflict is based on legal, moral and political imperatives and contributes to the operational success, credibility and legitimacy of its missions, operations and activities. It emerges from the recognition that severe acts of violence against children not only amount to serious violations of the rule of law and critically threaten children´s well-being and development opportunities, but also that in the current security environment children are increasingly a target by state and non-state actors, including terrorist actors, and their security and safety is being leveraged to serve military objectives.

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28   NATO. "NATO Policy for the Protection of Civilians." Endorsed by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Warsaw, 8-9 July 2016. Available at https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_133945.htm.; NATO. "NATO Policy on Preventing and Responding to Conflict-Related Sexual Violence." 31 May 2021. Available at https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_184570.htm.; NATO. "NATO Policy on Combatting Trafficking in Human Beings." 12 July 2023. Available at https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_71856.htm.; NATO. "NATO Policy on Children and Armed Conflict." 12 July 2023. Available at https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_217691.htm.; NATO. "NATO Cultural Property Protection (CPP)." 12 July 2023. Available at https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_217691.htm.

29   Mary Kaldor and Shannon D. Beebe, The Ultimate Weapon is No Weapon: Human Security and the New Rules of War and Peace (Public Affairs, 2010).

30   Mary Kaldor. "Human Security in Complex Operations." PRISM 2, no. 2 (Features).

NATO's Policy on Children and Armed Conflict has the aim of providing a coherent, consistent and integrated political framework for the Alliance´s efforts in preventing, monitoring, reporting and responding to grave violations against children.[31] It departs from a recognition of the necessity of identifying threats to children's security and increasing awareness and preparedness. Rooted in a commitment to uphold international standards, it emphasizes the status of children as primarily victims of violations under international law and ensures that detention and transfer protocols are informed and guided by rule of law-compliant, gender-responsive, age-sensitive, victim-centered, and trauma-informed approaches.

8. INFLUENCING SECURITY OBJECTIVES: NATO HUMAN SECURITY APPROACH TO CHILD PROTECTION AND COUNTER-TERRORISM

An examination of NATO's stance on child protection dismisses initial criticisms of human security as being too permissive. It does not advocate, in essence, for the replacement of conventional force; instead, it advocates for integration, acknowledging the military alliance's role, or otherwise, Military Contributions to Human Security (MC2HS) - in addressing crises.

The protection of children in armed conflict is a moral and legal obligation, and the commitment to it shall be interpreted as a self-standing pillar. However, adopting a human security approach is advantageous for both security recipients, in this case children, and security providers.

In 2021, the NATO Strategic South-Hub identified a series of optimal strategies for countering terrorism threats in the Sahel. Two pivotal components are emphasized as integral to effective counterterrorism efforts.[32] Firstly, there is an acknowledgment that counterterrorism strategy should extend beyond security operations and stabilization initiatives. It should encompass enduring solutions addressing socio-economic and political root causes. This entails a focus not only on national security but also on human security, incorporating a regional perspective. Secondly, there is a recognition of the imperative to urgently address youth radicalization. Dealing with the conditions fostering terrorism involves addressing socio-economic and other structural factors that are beyond NATO's direct

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[31] NATO Policy on Children and Armed Conflict," NATO, July 12, 2023, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_217691.htm?selectedLocale=en#:~:text=This%20Policy%20aims%20to%20provide,NATO%20missions%2C%20operations%20and%20activities.

[32] "Counter-Terrorism: Best Practices in North Africa and the Sahel." NSD-S HUB, 2021.; Istituto Affari Internazionali (IAI). "Geopolitical Disruptions in the Sahel." In Transatlantic Security from the Sahel to the Horn of Africa. Istituto Affari Internazionali (IAI), 2014. http://www.jstor.com/stable/resrep09866.10.

influence.[33] The Alliance is, however, well positioned to underline the importance of maintaining a holistic approach to policy development and implementation, the necessity for foreign assistance to Sahelian countries, and the promotion of crucial regional cooperation.[34] However, by promoting and implementing a human security approach that prioritizes children in security planning, NATO contributes to preventing child recruitment into terrorist ranks, supports the disengagement, rehabilitation, and reintegration of former child soldiers, and mitigates radicalization issues. Therefore, working towards achieving counter-terrorism objectives. NATO's CAAC Policy's pillars can be further dissected to provide additional insight.

a. PREVENTION

Prevention capacity is directly linked to the level of understanding of complex scenarios. Therefore, efforts to Understand the Human Environment (UHE) concerning children - whether through systematic collection, analysis and sharing of information or CAAC Risk Assessment - can not only aid in comprehending and mitigating harm to children through preventive actions but also highlight conditions conducive to terrorism. This, in turn, can inform the design of context-specific counter-terrorism strategies tailored to the local context, facilitate and support the sharing of best practices, and strengthen multilateral cooperation.

Human security also promotes the design of early warning mechanisms that help to mitigate the impact of current threats to children and, whenever feasible, avert future risks. This is relevant to meeting NATO's commitment to respecting, promoting, and fulfilling the Safe School Declaration. In Mali, approximately, 1,700 schools remain closed today due to conflict and insecurity. Over the past two years, the country has been among the three African countries whose schools are most attacked, along with Nigeria and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, according to the Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack.

b. MONITORING, REPORTING AND RESPONSE CAPACITY

Terrorism, by its very nature, is an anathema to human rights. The nature of terrorist acts undermines fundamental freedoms and the international human rights framework. In addition, counter-terrorism efforts can also lead to an erosion of children's rights.

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[33]   Ibid.
[34]   NSD-S HUB, (2021).

Too broad and ambiguous definitions of terrorism allow for the criminalization of membership in terrorist organizations, which bypasses considerations of the actual degree of a child's involvement in criminal activities.[35] Consequently, regardless of the role performed by the child during association with a violent extremist group, children are labeled and treated as perpetrators of crimes.

The broadening of counterterrorism legislation and the expansion of acts constituting terrorism and/or related offenses has exposed children to torture, ill-treatment, violations of fair trial rights and due process, and unlawful and/or arbitrary detention on national security-related charges for their actual or alleged association with these groups. Ultimately, children are subjected to punitive responses that do not account for the requirements of international children´s rights, juvenile justice standards, rehabilitation and reintegration.

It follows that human rights standards ought to be the uppermost in any counterterrorism policy. In this context, NATO's recognition of the status of children associated with violent actors, including designated terrorist organizations as primarily victims, its effort towards monitoring and reporting grave violations of children's rights, as well as efforts to ensure that human rights standards and child-sensitive protocols are upheld at all levels, including transfer and handover processes, does not only purport effective counter-terrorism, but also contributes to preventing drivers of violent extremism emerging from abuses by security forces and human rights violations.

c. TRAINING

Efforts to withstand security threats in the Sahel have been prolific to the point of creating a "security patchwork", otherwise defined by some as a "security traffic jam".[36] The hardening of the situation and the regionalization of violent dynamics have made manifest the limitations of foreign counter-terrorism operations such as Serval and Barkhane. Other initiatives, whether internationally or regionally led, have also had limited success in containing the spread of violent extremism across the region. In addition, Sahelian armies lack combat experience and face disparities amongst their capabilities, with combat performance also hampered by scarce and heterogeneous resources, whether personnel, equipment or adequate training.

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[35]   Polizzi, Cecilia. "The Crime of Terrorism: An Analysis of Criminal Justice Processes and Accountability of Minors Recruited by the Islamic State of Iraq and Al-Sham." U.C. Davis Journal of International Law & Policy 24, no. 1 (2018).

[36]   Berger, Chloé. (2021).

In this context, NATO´s training of defense and security sector actors is critical in that it not only promotes and reinforces a human rights-based, individual-centric perspective of security, prevents and mitigates threats, but also enhances preparedness and performance. It also informs and advises in support of meaningful, sustainable, effective, and lawful solutions to confront child soldiers' threats in an Anti/Counter-terrorism context. These efforts can be further integrated with other capacity building initiatives aimed at disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of former child combatants as a part of broader Security Sector Reform (SSR).

CONCLUSIONS

Terrorism persists as one of the key factors necessitating international engagement, alongside robust local and regional initiatives within the Sahel. Solely relying on kinetic responses has proven ineffective in delivering sustainable, long-term solutions, and has, in fact, contributed to reshaping and exacerbating the present scenario.

The restoration of peace and stability is contingent upon re-establishing security. However, persisting along the same path threatens to further plunge the region into a vicious cycle, imposing heavy costs on local populations and driving even more youth into the hands of violent extremist groups. Similarly, the normalization of children in irregular warfare effectively challenges opportunities to prevent and counter terrorist threats and signals that it cannot be overcome through age-old techniques. It requires a growing awareness of the complexities, means and ends utilized by Sahelian religious extremists as well as the underlying causes of insurrection. The factors propelling radicalization, at the core of the instability crisis in the Sahel region, synergize with socio-economic deprivation, marginalization, demographic growth, and complex insecurity.

The emergence of the Human Security concept has enabled a refocusing of the security debate to encompass not only state security but also the obligation to provide for the security of each individual, including children, and the protection of their rights. The dimensions of children's security are highly interdependent. Systemic deprivations, particularly in conflict and near conflict zones, not only undermine child safety and wellbeing but also contribute to conflict and instability. Development, security and respect for human rights on the contrary, support and even encourage positive decision-making options and reduce the opportunities for

spoilers to profit, whether this takes place through exploitation into terrorist ranks, labor for the illegal economy, contemporary forms of slavery, human trafficking or other forms of organized crime.

The Human Security concept and related policies are relatively novel, with the NATO Policy on Children and Armed Conflict being established only in 2023. The Alliance is presently engaged in redefining the parameters of the human security approach through an overarching MC2HS framework as a means to proceed towards operationalization. Notwithstanding a series of common patterns across Sahelian countries, which may be derived from the phenomenology discussed in this Article, the complexity and interrelation of the dynamics highlighted may challenge the development of appropriate policies and strategies to counter negative trends or combat threats that emanate from the region. It follows that sustainable solutions on how to prevent and mitigate vulnerabilities will have to be informed by a holistic and detailed understanding of the nature of each Sahelian country´s complex environment. The enhancement of NATO's anticipation capacities through systematic engagement with research centers and subject matter experts with relevant regional and thematic knowledge is therefore critical in offering practical guidance on the ways in which existing competencies may support operationalization. Beyond military operations, NATO sits in a unique position to advance coordination and cooperation with other international and regional actors, improve stabilization and crisis management approaches to better align security agendas with the expectations of local populations, and devise avenues to support regional partners in a manner that promotes ownership as security providers.[37]

As security in Africa increasingly demonstrates to be less about kinetic threats and more about human conditions and root causes of violence, human security will find a greater test and perhaps make greater accomplishments in the continent.

Individuals who commit terrorist acts aren´t born; they are created through years of deprivation, disenfranchisement, and desperation.

In a pivotal juncture where the Alliance further delineates its role in its South Flank, there lies significant promise in adopting an approach that centralizes the individual within security planning, grounded firmly in the principles of human rights and the inherent dignity of all individuals.

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[37]   NATO Public Diplomacy Division. "NATO Looks South: Priorities, Strategies, and Instruments." Vol. 279, September 2022, p. 6.

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Keywords

Xxxz, yyyy , ssss, dddd

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In this section, the purpose of the research should be specified, then the methods, processes and tools used should be detailed.

The articles should be numbered, including the entry. Subtitles should be numbered hierarchically. The first letter of each word should be capitalized in the titles and subheadings.

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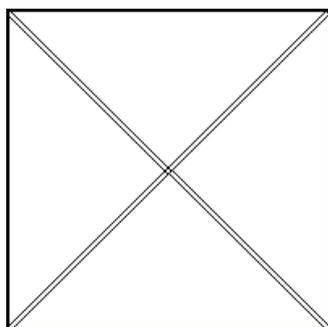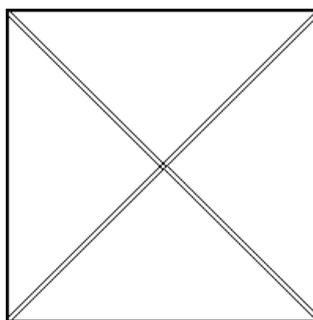
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