An International Security Assistance Force SOF soldier hands a notepad and pen to an Afghan boy while a road maintenance team checkpoint is built in Tagab, Afghanistan, on 26 November 2010. Photo by U.S. Air Force Staff Sergeant Joseph Swafford

Koven and Lindquist address the main problems with Special Operations Forces (SOF) counterterrorism (CT) effectiveness: lack of grand strategy, overemphasis on disruption-focused CT, limitations to existing inter-agency processes, and barriers to effective international CT cooperation. The authors demonstrate this in two case studies of the Philippines and Colombia. Using the simple formula of Terrorism = Motivation + Operational Capability, the authors posit that terrorism and CT at their core are political phenomenons. Targeting capabilities without addressing motivation is insufficient, and counterproductive. The monograph wraps up by providing suggestions for areas for improvement that SOF could implement to improve CT effectiveness.

United States Special Operations Command
ATTN: JSOU Press
7701 Tampa Point Boulevard
MacDill AFB, FL 33621-5323

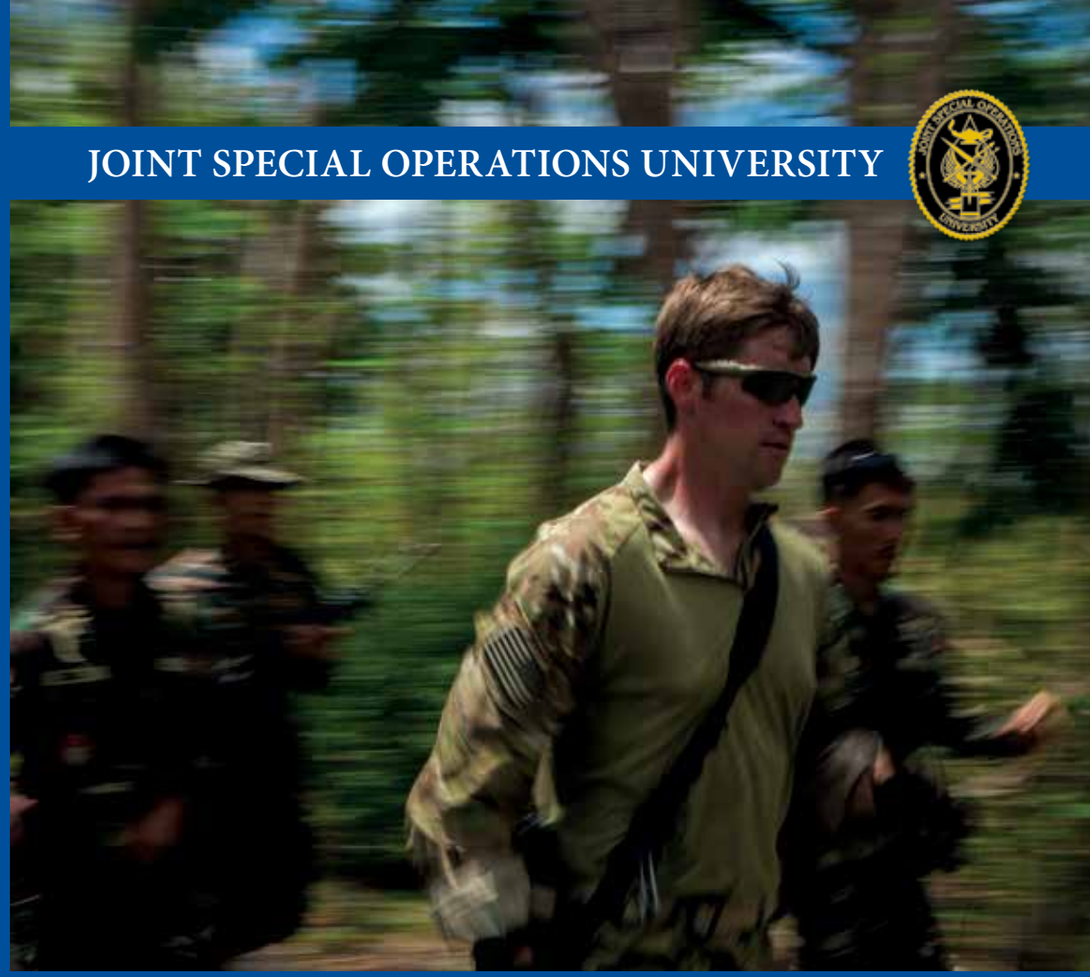
https://jsou.libguides.com/jsoupublications

Comments?

JOINT SPECIAL OPERATIONS JSOU UNIVERSITY PRESS

ISBN 978-1-941715-59-8

JSOU Report 21-7 Barriers to Special Operations Forces-Led Counterterrorism Effectiveness Koven/Lindquist JSOU



JOINT SPECIAL OPERATIONS UNIVERSITY

Barriers to Special Operations Forces-Led Counterterrorism Effectiveness

Dr. Barnett S. Koven and Dr. Katy Lindquist

JSOU Report 21-7

Joint Special Operations University

The Joint Special Operations University (JSOU) generates, incubates, and propagates (delivers and communicates) ideas, education, and training for expanding and advancing the body of knowledge on joint and combined special operations. JSOU is a 'hybrid organization' that performs a hybrid mission—we are a 'corporate university:' an academic institution serving a professional service enterprise, 'by, with, and through,' the United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM). As such, we are both a direct reporting unit to the Commander, USSOCOM, on all Combined Joint Special Operations Forces (CJSOF) education and leader development matters, as well as the educational and leader development component of the Command.

The JSOU Mission is to prepare Special Operations Forces (SOF) professionals to address strategic and operational challenges, arming them with the ability to think through problems with knowledge and insight. **Our Vision** is to constantly strive to be(come) USSOCOM's "think-do tank," world-class leader in "All Things" CJSOF strategic and operational education, training, and leader development, and the advancement of knowledge on the utility of CJSOF, for the Nation. We pursue this mission and vision through our best-practice teaching & learning, research & analysis (R&A), and engagement & service-outreach operations, activities, and initiatives. We achieve these outcomes-based goals by providing specialized joint professional military education, developing SOF-specific and unique undergraduate, graduate, and post-graduate-level equivalent curriculum, and by fostering special operations-focused R&A and outreach, in support of USSOCOM objectives and United States national and global strategic goals.

JSOU's R&A efforts are guided and informed by the U.S. National Security, Defense, and Military Strategies, as well as the **USSOCOM Mission:** *USSOCOM develops and employs fully capable Special Operations Forces to conduct global special operations and activities as part of the Joint Force to support persistent, networked, and distributed global Combatant Commands operations and campaigns against state and non-state actors, to protect and advance U.S. policies and objectives.*

Joint Special Operations University

JSOU Press publications are available for download at
https://jsou.libguides.com/jsoupublications.

Print copies available upon request by writing
jsou_research@socom.mil.

Sharpening the Edge of SOF's Advantage: The All-Domain SOF Leader-Professional

Barriers to Special Operations Forces-Led Counterterrorism Effectiveness

Barnett S. Koven and Katy Lindquist

JSOU Report 21-7
The JSOU Press
MacDill Air Force Base, Florida
2021

Recent Publications of the JSOU Press

Muqtada al Sadr and Neo-Iraqi Nationalism: Implications and Opportunities, JSOU Report 21-6, Carole O'Leary and Nicholas Heras

On Competition: Adapting to the Contemporary Strategic Environment, JSOU Report 21-5, Edited by Aaron Bazin

Cross Domain IW Threats to SOF Maritime Missions: Implications for U.S. SOF, JSOU Report 21-4, Gary Kessler and Diane Zorri

Cyber Supply Chain Risk Management: Implications for the SOF Future Operating Environment, JSOU Report 21-3, J. Philip Craiger, Laurie Lindamood-Craiger, and Diane Zorri

Mazar-e Sharif: The First Victory of the 21st Century Against Terrorism, JSOU Report 21-2, William Knarr, Mark Nutsch, and Robert Pennington

The Blurred Battlefield: The Perplexing Conflation of Humanitarian and Criminal Law in Contemporary Conflicts, JSOU Report 21-1, Patrick Paterson

On the cover. Philippine and U.S. Special Operations Forces (SOF) participate in the 3rd Annual SOF Challenge on Fort Magsaysay, Philippines, on 3 May 2014. Philippine, Australia, and U.S. SOF train together for three weeks during the annual bilateral exercise, Balikatan 2014. Photo by U.S. Marine Corps Staff Sergeant Pete Thibodeau

Back cover. An International Security Assistance Force SOF soldier hands out notepads and pens to an Afghan boy while a road maintenance team checkpoint is being built in Tagab, Afghanistan, on 26 November 2010. Photo by U.S. Air Force Staff Sergeant Joseph Swafford

October 2021.

ISBN 978-1-941715-59-8

The views expressed in this publication are entirely those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views, policy, or position of the United States Government, Department of Defense, United States Special Operations Command, or the Joint Special Operations University.

****

JSOU is currently accepting written works relevant to special operations for potential publication. For more information, please email jsou_research@socom.mil. Thank you for your interest in the JSOU Press.

****

Contents

Foreword

The American people recently experienced the ironic and disturbing conjunction of both the 20 year anniversary of the terrorist attacks on 9/11 and the chaotic and tragic events surrounding the withdrawal of the United States and the International Coalition from Afghanistan. While the formulation of this important work began long before this convergence, what unfolded makes its contents both more poignant and more important.

In this monograph, Dr. Barnett Koven and Dr. Katy Lindquist point to still existing gaps, problems, and inadequacies that—if we are honest with ourselves—those who have struggled against terrorism for the past 20 years know we have never completely or satisfactorily addressed. It also correctly points out that we have often suffered from still unresolved elements such as inadequate strategy, interagency challenges, and sometimes disappointing efforts at building partner capacity.

My own view, formulated from constant counterterrorism (CT) deployments along with years of participation in CT-related strategy and policy formulation in Washington D.C., is that our efforts also suffer from at least three misguided—and increasingly related—assumptions about the nature of terrorism. These have resulted in flawed expectations that we have held for too long about how to best contest and reduce this dangerous phenomenon.

The first assumption is that "kinetic" capabilities (the use of primarily military or law enforcement power to capture or kill terrorists) are the most important solutions to be resourced, developed, prioritized, and applied.

These "kinetic" capabilities of any government, which include both military special operations and conventional forces, as well as law enforcement, are indeed important and useful, but only for two related purposes; saving lives (by disrupting threats, rescuing hostages, safeguarding innocent people, etc.) or bringing terrorists to justice (whether by killing them or apprehending them for a judicial process). These activities can disrupt plots, thwart ongoing attacks, rescue hostages, and bring some degree of real and perceived justice to those who suffer from terrorism.

However, what we are habitually reluctant to admit, or even acknowledge, is that after the past 20 years of primarily kinetic CT, its application has proven to be completely incapable of durably reducing the size, scope, or danger of

terrorism globally. Virtually every index of private or public accounting of the scale of terrorism and terrorist violence since 9/11 has shown continued growth in both the number of terrorists, and the volume of terrorist violence globally. One can make the argument that the world's application of increasingly powerful kinetic capabilities has saved many lives and delivered large amounts of justice, but it cannot be credibly argued that it typically delivers a satisfactory reduction of, or end to, terrorism.

The second assumption is that the United States and international community adequately understand why people become terrorists, and can therefore effectively apply non-kinetic solutions to reduce the growth and spread of terrorism. The most common formulation is that terrorism emerges from an individual's or group's exposure to a dangerous and violent ideology, and therefore, the most important non-kinetic work should be oriented on contesting that ideology.

Yet, any serious study of the existing body of empirical research on violent extremism reveals that ideology alone is woefully inadequate to explain the reasons someone takes the path to terrorist violence. Certainly, a dangerous ideology often plays a role, but the limited research available also indicates that ideology is only one of many different factors that might contribute to this phenomenon, and often not the most important. Among these other drivers are elements such as mental illness, a personal or group history of physical or emotional trauma and abuse, a history of personal or group grievance against some form of authority, etc. Accordingly, I have concluded that our tendency to focus primarily on counter-ideology and counter-radicalization efforts are only addressing a very narrow portion of the spectrum of reasons anyone seeks to become a terrorist.

Fundamentally, unless and until the United States and the international community pursues a far more serious, long-term, and extensive scientific examination of the causes of violent extremism beyond just a toxic ideology, our ability to apply any kind of strategic solution, whether kinetic or non-kinetic, will likely remain both tactically and strategically disappointing in stemming the growth and spread of terrorism.

The third assumption is that, particularly in an era where the United States feels increasingly challenged by near-peer competitors (e.g., China, Russia, Iran, and North Korea), it is wise or necessary for the U.S. to do less about terrorism so that we can do more about these nation-state competitors. This is a simple, convenient, and—particularly for those weary of counterterrorism after 20 years of struggle—highly attractive formulation. Unfortunately, it is both misguided and quite dangerous for several reasons.

First, terrorists will not let the United States ignore them. In the past 20 years, several U.S. administrations have attempted to pivot away from terrorism, only to be compelled to reverse course after terrorists remind us they still matter. One example was the U.S. withdrawal from Iraq in 2011 because of the mistaken belief that al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) had been so strategically damaged that it could never rise again. Unfortunately, only three years later, the remnants of AQI spawned the far larger and more dangerous terrorist group, the Islamic State, and the U.S. had to once again lead a massive coalition CT effort in the Middle East. Another example was the original pivot to Asia under a previous U.S. administration, based on the assumption that U.S. capabilities could be harvested from both Africa and the Middle East to address rising Chinese challenges in the Asia/Pacific region. Unfortunately, events such as the tragic terrorist attack on the U.S. consulate in Benghazi, Libya brought a halt and complete reversal to that pivot.

Second, and perhaps most importantly, there is now ample evidence that what many U.S. policymakers describe as great power competition and the terrorism phenomenon are now converging in several places around the world; thereby making the desirable and convenient policy distinction that seeks to rebalance our efforts against terrorism versus near-peer adversaries increasingly misleading and dangerous.

Several examples are obvious today. The north Yemen tribal group, the Houthis, are a non-state actor pursuing political goals through violence (meeting the classic definition of terrorism) yet are capable of surface-to-surface ballistic missile strikes, autonomous swarm drone attacks, and anti-ship cruise missile attacks. Obviously, they have become a proxy of Iran as it wages its prolonged regional war against the Arab Gulf States, but this is also an example of the merging of terrorism with a nation-state's ambitions.

Another example of this convergence is the violence caused by Russian ethnic separatists in Ukraine and elsewhere (often integrated with paramilitary companies like the Wagner Group). Again, these are non-state actors employing violence for political ends, yet they are also being armed and equipped by a nation state and near-peer adversary; Russia.

We must realize that, as the barriers to entry continue to fall for any non-state actor (including terrorists) to acquire, weaponize, and employ dazzling high technologies that are increasingly defining the world's security landscape, violent extremists are becoming increasingly capable of employing developed world military capability and capacity. Accordingly, more and more nation states, including adversaries of the United States, will find these terrorist proxies to

be increasingly irresistible as proxies and surrogates to enable their pursuit of strategic goals including near-peer adversary goals against the United States and its allies.

Against all these elements I have described, the contents of this work can help any reader understand more fully how Special Operations Forces can be best prepared for, be employed against, and ultimately find pathways to strategic success in a world where our challenges with terrorism and violent extremism will not only remain a priority, but probably become more complex, more dangerous, and more widespread.

Lieutenant General (Retired) Mike Nagata, U.S. Army
Former Director of Strategy, the National Counterterrorism Center
Former Commander, Special Operations Command Central

About the Authors

Dr. Barnett S. Koven is an adjunct faculty member at Joint Special Operations University (JSOU) and completed this monograph in support of the JSOU mission. He is the near-peer competition lead researcher, counterterrorism lead researcher, and training director at the University of Maryland's National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START)—a U.S. Department of Homeland Security Emeritus Center of Excellence. Additionally, he is the founder and chief executive officer of BSK Consulting LLC, a boutique consultancy specializing in practitioner education and mixed-methods (quantitative and qualitative) research in support of national security practitioners and policymakers. He received his PhD, a master's degree of philosophy, a master of arts degree in political science, and a bachelor's degree in international affairs and Latin American and hemispheric studies from George Washington University. Dr. Koven holds a certificate in conflict analysis from the United States Institute of Peace and a certificate in advanced security in the field from the United Nations System Staff College.

Dr. Katy Lindquist is a START senior researcher specializing in the study of violent non-state actors and the intersection between violent non-state actors, states, and ideology in shaping strategies of violence. Her work focuses on issues of political instability, preventing and countering violent extremism, and gray zone conflict. Prior to joining START, Dr. Lindquist was an analyst for EMC Research, a public-opinion research firm. She graduated from the University of Chicago in 2017 with a PhD in political science, where her research focused on high-intensity state sponsorship of violent non-state actors, and she received her bachelor of arts degree in government from Dartmouth College. Dr. Lindquist is a mixed-methods researcher specializing in comparative historical analysis, statistical modeling, and survey methodologies.

Acknowledgements

This monograph would not have been possible without the extensive support afforded the authors by both JSOU and START. In particular, we are grateful for the expert assistance of JSOU's Pete McCabe. He helped shepherd this monograph from its inception and organized various meetings, interviews, and presentations with JSOU faculty and United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) personnel. Relatedly, the input from diverse JSOU and USSOCOM faculty and staff massively improved the quality of this monograph. We are also especially appreciative of the numerous other experts and practitioners who took the time to speak with us. Their candid insights added immense value. Finally, special thanks is due to the talented editorial staff of JSOU Press, who greatly improved the flow of this monograph. That said, all errors are our own.

Introduction

The United States Government (USG) is heavily reliant on Special Operations Forces (SOF) in the fight against terrorism and with good reason. United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) was born in part due to the failure of Operation Eagle Claw—the attempted rescue of American hostages being held by terrorists at the U.S. Embassy Tehran in 1980. As the Cold War came to an end, American interests and security needs became increasingly complex. SOF were tasked with 11 core mission areas deemed necessary for addressing complex national security challenges. Counterterrorism (CT) is just one of these core missions.[1] That said, virtually every SOF core mission—from foreign internal defense (FID) to information operations to civil affairs (CA)—has a vital role to play in CT. In short, no other Department of Defense (DOD) entity is better positioned, trained, or equipped to deliver CT outcomes that enhance U.S. national security.

Terrorism is not subsiding. It will also remain the domain of SOF. Yet, national security focus is shifting away from CT. The National Defense Strategy of 2018 is clear that "inter-state strategic competition, not terrorism, is now the primary concern in U.S. national security."[2] This means that even as the global terrorist threat grows more complex, the U.S. must also prepare to meet the national security challenges posed by great power competition with China and Russia, as well as the regional security threats arising from Iran and North Korea.

Paradoxically, the change in national security focus makes it more important than ever to understand how SOF can effectively and efficiently perform CT as the country tries to do more CT with less—less attention, less political will, and less resourcing. CT of the future will necessitate a light footprint. It will need to be efficient in dismantling not just terrorist cells but entire networks. Denying terrorist organizations support from the population in the areas they operate will also be crucial. CT will require SOF to work with the interagency and by, with, and through foreign partners.

To that end, it is necessary to recognize that although SOF remains the best military tool for countering terrorism, USSOCOM's track record on CT is not uniformly strong. At the tactical level, the advances in CT are undeniable. It is not clear, however, that tactical and operational CT outcomes

translate to strategic success. Similarly, SOF has had its share of successes at interagency and international coordination, but examples of failures in these domains also abound.

The goal of this text is to help practitioners, policymakers, and scholars internalize fundamental truths about terrorism and CT, gain insight into the ways the U.S. and SOF have conducted CT efforts, understand the barriers to effectiveness that have made good CT outcomes difficult to achieve, and offer recommendations as well as better measurement and assessment tools for future SOF CT efforts.

Myriad factors have hindered SOF CT effectiveness. This book will focus on arguably the two most consequential. First, SOF has resounding tactical and operational successes that have not paid sufficient strategic dividends; disruption-centric approaches to CT are not strategically sound. Second, interagency and international coordination of CT activities, at best, leave room for improvement. A better understanding of the nature of these challenges and the ways in which they can be met and addressed will meaningfully contribute to SOF CT effectiveness against the background of a changing and uncertain strategic global threat landscape.

Grand Strategy: The Missing Link in Counterterrorism

Although this monograph will emphasize the ways in which SOF CT effectiveness has been stymied and will discuss more specifically how the DOD or USSOCOM might feasibly improve the efficacy of SOF CT efforts, the fundamental aspect of SOF CT effectiveness remains beyond the purview of the DOD alone: grand strategy. In the nearly two decades following the 9/11 attacks, the U.S. special operations enterprise has developed incredible tactical CT proficiency. In worldwide engagements, SOF have demonstrated expertise in all manner of intelligence, planning, and kinetic CT strikes. They have been responsible for eliminating top terrorist leaders—including Osama bin Laden and Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi—and the deadliest nests of terrorist operatives. Despite this reality, both worldwide terrorist attacks and those targeting the U.S. homeland have trended upwards.[3] Simultaneously, transregional violent extremist organizations (VEOs) like al-Qaeda and the Islamic State have expanded their geographic reach.[4]

This seemingly paradoxical reality is a product of the absence of a sound, grand strategy for CT. Richard K. Betts sagely explained the importance

of strategy, observing that "without strategy, there is no rationale for how force will achieve purposes worth the price in blood and treasure."[5] More specifically, Steven Metz elaborated on the importance of strategy in his seminal, 1989 *Military Review* article. His explanation is worth quoting at length to understand the implications of not having a fully articulated CT strategy. Metz wrote:

> Since all military missions flow from strategy, vagueness and inconsistency in the national strategy hampers the efficient performance of military tasks from the platoon level to the Pentagon. Skill in tactics or the operational art is useful only as a reflection of strategy; thus, the coherence or incoherence of national strategy reverberates throughout the military.[6]

The absence of sound strategy precludes the translation of the myriad tactical and operational successes of SOF into political ends. While the White House routinely publishes its *National Strategy for Counterterrorism of the United States of America*, the latest iteration (October 2018) falls into two of Metz' traps[7]—those of vagueness and inconsistency. Regarding vagueness, the document states the U.S. will continue to pursue kill/capture missions while simultaneously targeting terrorist networks; CT expert Dan Byman notes that the document is alarmingly devoid of details as to how this will be achieved.[8] Regarding inconsistencies, the document simultaneously expounds an "America first" approach to CT and emphasizes the importance of international partners.[9] As another example, in some sections the document bounds the scope of U.S. CT, aiming to target those groups that pose the largest threat to the U.S. homeland; in other sections the strategy document suggests the U.S. will "prevail against terrorism." Full stop.[10] Consequently, the continued profusion of VEOs and terrorist violence is not surprising.

While a fully developed CT strategy would undoubtedly help SOF bring the military instrument of national power to bear against this threat more effectively, it would likely prove insufficient to defeat terrorism on its own. This is the case because terrorism is a complex political phenomenon, as this monograph will demonstrate. Tackling terrorism almost certainly requires the application of multiple instruments of national power. As such, a CT grand strategy is required.

Whereas Betts defined strategy as the linkage between the military instrument of national power and political aims, Colin Gray conceives grand strategy as the connection between multiple instruments of national power and political ends.[11] Grand strategy, however, is more than simply the sum of the contributions of different instruments of national power toward a political end state. Grand strategy also arrays instruments of national power synergistically so that, for example, the effect of the application of military means is amplified by the impact of diplomatic measures.[12]

The synergistic nature of grand strategy is especially important to countering terrorism today in a resource constrained environment. Devising grand strategy is, at its core, about managing tradeoffs.[13] Short of increasing means (which is not likely in the face of resource constraints for CT) or decreasing commitments (which is not advisable given the continued saliency of the terrorism threat), crafting a novel grand strategy that maximizes the multiplicative effects of synergies across multiple instruments of national power is the only option for achieving CT success.[14]

Articulating the grand strategic vision of the USG for CT is beyond the scope of this monograph. As noted above, the emphasis is on enhancing understanding of extant barriers to SOF CT efficacy with an eye towards proffering recommendations that may be feasible for the DOD to implement. Having a true strategy would in and of itself massively contribute to CT effectiveness across the board. The insights in this work are designed to be applicable to nearly any sound CT grand strategy, should one be promulgated. The monograph is written with the three core requirements of sound grand strategy in mind: feasibility, acceptability, and suitability.[15]

Plan for the Monograph

This monograph is divided into three parts. Part I lays out the necessary theoretical and practical considerations for conducting effective CT with an emphasis on the barriers that are faced by the DOD in general and particularity SOF. Part II provides an in-depth examination of two different SOF CT efforts in the past two decades: in the Philippines and in Colombia. Part III offers insights and recommendations for enhancing effectiveness and improving measurement of future SOF CT efforts.

Part I proceeds in four chapters. Chapter 1 focuses on understanding terrorism and CT. It unpacks the myriad definitions of terrorism and

underscores—despite the diversity of definitions—the consensus that terrorism is, at its core, a political phenomenon. Chapter 1 also provides an overview of the wide range of activities that can fall under the label of counterterrorism and argues that, because terrorism is inherently political, effective CT requires a whole-of-government approach that recognizes and responds to the political nature of the threat. Finally, the chapter reviews the CT policies of several recent U.S. administrations. This review finds that the USG has historically lacked a well-defined CT strategy. Moreover, it is evident that following the events of 9/11, USG CT efforts have been overly reliant on kinetic, military efforts.

Chapter 2 offers a detailed assessment of the suitability of the current DOD-led approach to CT. Assessing suitability requires a detailed understanding of the problem. This chapter finds the current, disruption-heavy, approach to CT unsuitable to the problem at hand. Whereas terrorism is a function of both motivation and capabilities, disruption-centric approaches only target capabilities.[16] In doing so, this approach often increases—and at a minimum, fails to decrease—terrorist motivations, thereby driving capability regeneration. The chapter proceeds to outline additional options beyond mere disruption that can be adopted by SOF to help to enhance suitability, a theme which is further explored in Part III of this volume.

Chapters 3 and 4 speak to feasibility. These chapters explore the efficacy and limitations evident in efforts at interagency and international collaboration, respectively, to counterterrorism. As previously noted, in a resource constrained environment where violent extremism remains a potent threat yet a secondary focus, effective CT will require synergistic applications of resources across the interagency and internationally.

Part II consists of a series of two case studies on SOF CT efforts. The first case study, presented in chapter 5, focuses on efforts in the Philippines during the 2000s and 2010s. Both Operation Enduring Freedom-Philippines (OEF-P) and its successor, Operation Pacific Eagle-Philippines (OPE-P), were lauded as examples of light footprint approaches; the expenditure of American blood and treasure were substantially reduced by working by, with, and through the partner nation. The case highlights effective efforts by U.S. and Filipino SOF to reduce terrorist capacity using a smart combination of population-centric CT, strategic planning and assessments, highly effective interagency coordination, and FID/partner capacity building. Unfortunately, SOF efforts in the Philippines were only successful in the short term. Without structural

changes within the partner force and better interagency coordination among the various ministries and agencies of the partner government, the Filipino government and SOF proved unable to continue along the successful trajectory that OEF-P and OPE-P set them on. Rather, in the face of a serious threat by myriad Islamic State-linked groups, the partner force reverted to enemy-centric operations, losing their hard-won popular support in the process.

The second case study, presented in chapter 6, focuses on Colombia during approximately the same period. Like the Philippines, the Colombian case is often cited as a success story for U.S. efforts at building partnership capacity (BPC) for CT. Extensive training offered by U.S. SOF, coupled with the provision of much needed military equipment (e.g., rotary-winged aviation assets) helped to transform the Colombian military and police. From a force with limited reach that was routinely bested by subversives, they became a formidable opponent that could take the fight to terrorists and insurgents anywhere in the country at a moment's notice. While certainly an important driver of tactical and operational successes, achieving the desired strategic effects required more than just USG support. The Colombian government's adoption of a sound theory of victory that emphasized the population as the critical center of gravity, coupled with extensive reforms to both the Colombian security forces and the interagency to enable the government to effectively execute on its new approach to CT, was far more critical. U.S. support was consequential in realizing these changes; ultimately, they occurred due to the initiative of the partner government. Despite extensive USG investment and sweeping Colombian reforms, political considerations forestalled the Colombian and U.S. governments from converting their battlefield gains into a stable and sustainable peace. Chapter 6 concludes by highlighting critical components to successful future BPC for CT efforts based on both case studies offered in Part II.

Part III concludes the monograph. Chapter 7 offers a dual focus. It first provides practical recommendations for SOF and the DOD to improve CT effectiveness. It is based on the findings from both Part I and Part II. The framing and the recommendations offered in this section are written with this work's primary audience—U.S. SOF—in mind. That said, many recommendations are equally relevant to CT practitioners across the interagency and internationally. These recommendations are not intended as an effective substitute for CT grand strategy. They should, nevertheless, prove useful in improving SOF CT efforts absent a clearly articulated grand strategy. Should

such grand strategic guidance be forthcoming, these recommendations will aid in leveraging military and nonmilitary instruments of national power to achieve the political ends called for in grand strategic guidance. Next, the chapter turns to suggestions for improving measurement. Accurate measurement is crucial as it informs our understanding of the threat and influences planning efforts to counter the threat across the tactical, operational, and strategic levels of war. Following a CT intervention, measurement enables the systematic evaluation of the success or failure of USG CT efforts. Consequently, the choice of metrics matters. It impacts how USSOCOM, the DOD, USG, and even the broader American public evaluate and make sense of CT efforts. Seemingly inconsequential measurement decisions can make it appear that a failed policy is working or cause leadership to abandon an effective one. The more holistic approach to CT advocated by this monograph compounds the difficulty of accurately measuring the effect of CT efforts. Chapter 7, therefore, offers suggestions for improving metrics for evaluating CT efforts.

Part I. Considerations for Conducting Effective Counterterrorism

Chapter 1. Terrorism and Counterterrorism: In Theory and (U.S.) Practice

To have any chance of countering terrorism effectively, those tasked with CT must have some understanding of the threat they are fighting against. Unfortunately, defining terrorism is not straightforward. Myriad definitions exist. Extant definitions are trying to capture something real about the threat, about why and how terrorism impacts countries and populations so profoundly, who is considered a victim, what causes the terror of an incident, and the kinds of perpetrators who carry out this violence.

Amidst the many definitions, academics and the USG do seem to agree that there are a few key features that define terrorism. Of particular importance in the context of understanding SOF CT effectiveness is this: terrorism is a political phenomenon. More specifically, terrorist activity occurs as part of an attempt at achieving political outcomes. This reality entails myriad implications for how to counter the threat. There are, after all, many potential ways to reduce the number of terrorist attacks or to mitigate the harm from them. Improving emergency medical responses to limit fatalities, performing random searches at international airports, and executing overseas strikes by unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) could plausibly counter terrorism. This monograph contends that effective CT takes seriously the political nature of terrorism and employs a whole-of-government approach to countering it. This contention is largely consistent with the academic literature and insights from U.S. CT policymakers and practitioners.

This chapter contextualizes modern U.S. CT efforts by first examining the definitions of *terrorism* in both academic literature and within different government entities. As will quickly become evident, there are both meaningful variations and overlapping core conceptual elements across these various definitions. Chief among the overlap is a recognition of terrorism's political nature. The chapter then turns to examining what counterterrorism is, making the case that a whole-of-government approach is warranted by the nature of terrorism itself. The discussion then turns to reviewing CT policy and strategic objectives of recent U.S. administrations with an

emphasis on the period following 9/11. This chapter demonstrates that there has been, regrettably, little coherent CT strategic thinking in recent U.S. history; CT efforts have yielded minimal natural security benefits. Further, while definitions of terrorism focus on it being a political phenomenon and both academic and official understandings of counterterrorism emphasize a whole-of-government approach in practice, U.S. CT policy has relied heavily on the armed forces for kinetic solutions. This realization is also a core topic discussed in chapter 2.

The main objectives of this chapter include:

- gaining insight into what terrorism is
- understanding why a definition of terrorism is important and what implications that has for how governments respond to terrorism
- internalizing the fact that terrorism is political
- articulating the importance of reducing motivation and capabilities when countering terrorism
- learning about the history of U.S. CT strategies
- identifying the primary shortcomings of CT strategies following 9/11

What is Terrorism?

Counterterrorism starts with terrorism. Practitioners, researchers, and policymakers must first have a clear understanding of the nature and defining features of terrorism itself to effectively counter the phenomenon. The answer to the question of what terrorism is ultimately dictates the content and scope of the CT mission. However, as this section demonstrates, there are a wide variety of definitions and understandings of *terrorism* and *terrorists*. Academics disagree on key aspects of the definition; different governments and even agencies within the USG have different takes on the concept. If that were not confusing and difficult enough, not all differences in definitions of terrorism are attributable to genuine intellectual disagreements about the nature of the phenomenon. Terrorism and terrorist are loaded terms. Governments, including the USG, may see value in defining these terms in such a way as to include certain types of actors—for instance, agents of foreign governments—as "terrorists," while also avoiding the potential inclusion of USG partners under the same banner.

Moreover, in the wake of 9/11, there were budgetary incentives for different USG agencies and departments to strategically define terrorism in such a

way that ensured their missions and activities constituted CT. Governments throughout the world also have an incentive to label anti-government violence as terrorism; it gives them political and sometimes legal protection to deal harshly and swiftly with dissidents. Furthermore, it may also encourage the USG or others invested in CT to provide funding, training, and equipment that they would not otherwise have access to—and which they may or may not use to further USG CT goals.

Violent organizations also have stakes in the labeling game. On the one hand, many strive to avoid the terrorist label, which comes with legal ramifications and can negatively impact their recruitment and fundraising. For example, both The Kurdistan Worker's Party and the Tamil Tigers tried to portray themselves as separatist movements fighting against an unjust government; they actively challenged their official designation as terrorists in U.S. and international courts.[17] This is due to the fact that there are a number of legal ramifications for inclusion on lists like the U.S. Department of State (DOS) foreign terrorist organization (FTO) list. Consequentially, providing material support to designated FTOs—those organizations appearing on the FTO list—is a felony under U.S. law. This makes it far more difficult for groups to recruit and fundraise among expatriate or other sympathetic communities in the United States.

Inversely, groups may also actively seek the label of terrorist and even materially benefit from it. Discussions in 2012 over whether the DOS should designate Boko Haram an FTO led the Nigerian Ambassador to pen a strident op-ed against the effort. Numerous reasons were given, chief among which was the Ambassador's concern that "recognition through FTO designation by a sovereign the size and stature of the U.S. would give Boko Haram the title they seek and status they desire."[18] Official terrorist designation may be a badge of honor and may even mean more international attention and monetary support from established transregional terrorist groups like al-Qaeda or the Islamic State.

Consider, then, the challenge that this poses in countering the global threat of terrorist violence. If we were to substitute *nuclear weapons* for *terrorism*, the problem becomes even more apparent. If the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), DOD, the International Atomic Energy Agency, and technical experts in the field of nuclear physics did not all share an understanding of terms like *fissile material*, *fission bomb*, and *ballistic missile*, what would a U.S. or global counter proliferation policy

look like? What if we did not agree on the definition of *megaton*, which would cause us to be unsure about the size of a nuclear warhead? Even though different agencies and organizations have different mandates within the counter-proliferation space, what is being countered—proliferation of nuclear weapons—is easily identified and understood by all involved. This is, importantly, the case among individuals who do not think nonproliferation is a desirable policy. This agreement makes it possible for policymakers to write laws, for the U.S. to sign treaties, for technicians to inspect and evaluate facilities, and for observers to determine compliance with international agreements. If we cannot agree what terrorism is to start with, it should come as no surprise that efforts to counter that *thing* will necessarily struggle to be effective across the board. Under these conditions, conceiving a coherent strategy—not to mention an effective one—is extraordinarily challenging.

Given this landscape, it may be difficult to imagine what the term terrorism means for U.S. military forces tasked with countering it. However, as this section will demonstrate, there are a few common threads between terrorism definitions—not just in academic literature, but across the USG as well. While these do not necessarily solve once and for all the question of what terrorism is, they do provide the basis for a shared understanding of the threat as well as important guidance for how SOF can more effectively counter it.

Academic Literature

Scholars in a variety of different social science disciplines—including political science, psychology, sociology, and criminology—have produced reams of academic literature not just about terrorism itself but specifically about how to define it. Numerous parts of the definition are contested, and therefore, numerous definitions have been created and used. The quest for a universally acceptable conception of terrorism is particularly important for, among other things, coordinating international efforts against powerful groups that operate transregionally. Unfortunately, the political nature of terrorism itself has made this a serious challenge.

The quest for a universally acceptable conception of terrorism is particularly important for, among other things, coordinating international efforts against powerful groups that operate transregionally.

Academics correctly warn that without a well-thought-out, thorough definition, terrorism risks

becoming little more than a negative label to be assigned to "violence of which we do not approve,"[19] or more colloquially, "terrorism is what bad guys do."[20] Even more ethically dangerous, the word *terrorist* can be used to describe anyone who opposes a sitting government.[21] In the U.S., where due process protects individual rights, this can be bad enough; in countries where regimes are highly repressive, one of the easiest ways to justify imprisoning or murdering political opponents is to label them terrorists. Legal and academic scholars, among others, are concerned about the real power of politically charged terms like terrorism and terrorist, which is one of the reasons so much ink and effort has been spent in trying to pin them down.

However, there is still little consensus as to the complete and appropriate definition of the term. In 1984, one of the leading academics in the field identified over 100 different definitions of terrorism.[22] In a 2011 textbook on terrorism studies, the author compiled over 250 definitions in an appendix—including definitions from international organizations, state governments, USG agencies and departments, and those from academic literatures.[23] Rather than retread the work of these researchers, it is helpful to look at the key features and components of terrorism definitions and see what common threads may be found that will have practical implications for understanding and ultimately conducting effective CT.

Components and Defining Features of Terrorism

What is it that defines terrorism? There are several features that academics and others have pointed out as being key elements of terrorism. It is important, for instance, that a definition is able to draw a bright-line between criminal violence and terrorism. While many terrorist attacks are crimes, it is clearly not the case that all criminal violence—say, homicides—are terrorist attacks. Knowing how to effectively counter terrorism requires that we can readily distinguish between homicide and terrorism. In either instance, the loss of life is tragic. Yet, the problem of criminal homicide and the problem of terrorism call for very different countermeasures.

As a starting point, it is important to explicitly state that terrorism entails physical violence, or the threat thereof. This is a fairly straightforward line that academics draw uniformly; no serious scholar on the subject says that nonviolent activities constitute terrorism. Speech, unless it is explicitly threatening violence, is not terrorism—nor are any form of nonviolent protest or rallies and political gatherings.[24]

Academic definitions concur that terrorism is considered political, almost without exception. Definitions of political are broad, but terrorism is most often classified as a form of political violence. Throughout history, terrorism has been used to promote a variety of political ideologies (e.g., right, left, anarchy, fascism) to fight for independence or autonomy from a central government, as part of religious struggles, and to protest or punish particular national or colonial government actions and policies. This is a key distinction between ordinary criminality and terrorism: those who perpetrate terrorist attacks are motivated by a political cause or are seeking a political end. In short, the goals or motivations for violence are political in nature.

Another feature that stands out across myriad academic definitions is the notion of terror itself—the psychological impact of this form of political violence on a target group. Terrorist attacks tend to leave those who identify with the immediate victim in some way—such as coethnics, citizens of the same country, Westerners in general—thinking that they could have been that victim. This leaves them, or us, wondering, "Am I next?"[25] This fear and uncertainty among a wide swatch of potential victims in the wake of an attack is one of the reasons terrorism is so impactful and also why it seems to demand some kind of policy response despite the reality that terrorism is far less deadly than more mundane phenomena like car accidents and heart disease.[26]

In short, the goals or motivations for violence are political in nature.

Related to this is the fact that terrorism is designed to influence an audience beyond the immediate victims of the violence.[27] After all, those who suffer and die in a terrorist attack cannot save themselves by changing their mind and coming around to the terrorists' point of view. Violence is directed at immediate victims to send a message to the target audience, often a government.[28] Academics have thought of this in different ways—some talk about terrorism being an act of communication, the "sending a message" concept just noted. Others think about terrorism as symbolic violence. When terrorists destroy mosques or churches, attack airports, or bomb cafes frequented by foreigners or politicians, the goal is not to eliminate that particular structure or even those particular people. Rather, the focus is on targeting what those places and people represent and what their fear, pain, and death might mean to the broader target of terrorists.

It is also worth noting that many scholars also focus on the victims of violence. For some, violence that targets civilians is synonymous with terrorism.

This is a somewhat controversial element of the definitions of terrorism. Such a definition suggests there is no such thing as terrorist violence perpetrated against armed forces—or, arguably, police forces. If accurate, how should one classify the 1983 attack on the U.S. Marine barracks in Beirut, Lebanon? What about the 2000 bombing of the USS *Cole*? Many definitions have incorporated the idea that violent acts can indeed be terrorism if they target off-duty armed forces or occur outside declared theaters of armed conflict. Certainly, it seems consistent with our intuitions about terrorism that it is violence that targets people in an unfair, illegal, or otherwise illegitimate way. There are, of course, proscribed rules of warfare which limit legitimate military targets.[29] Fairness, legitimacy, and even legality (e.g., what law is to be used—international, U.S. federal, or local and tribal) are difficult concepts to pin down, which is why the exact type of victim remains controversial. For the purpose of this monograph, attacks against military targets are considered terrorism—provided that all of the other aforementioned conditions are met. Perhaps most importantly, the intent must be to influence a broader audience versus achieving a battlefield military victory. The 1983 Marine barracks bombing, for example, clearly qualifies as terrorism. This attack, as well as the near-simultaneous attack against French paratroopers, was not intended as the opening salvo in a military campaign to defeat the multinational peacekeeping force in Lebanon on the battlefield; it was designed to signal the cost for U.S. and French involvement in Lebanon and to persuade policymakers in both countries to reconsider their engagement there.

Finally, who can commit terrorist violence is the subject of much debate. *Perpetrated by non-state actors* is a component of many definitions but is perhaps even more controversial than who can be a victim of terrorism.[30] Are governments just as capable of committing terrorism as al-Qaeda or the Naxalites (a virulent Maoist subversive group in India)? Indeed, early use of the term *terror* in a political setting tended to refer almost exclusively to governments, particularly ones that are extreme or revolutionary. Consider, for example, Robespierre's "Reign of Terror" during the French Revolution.[31] Theoretically, this question demands further exploration; for the purposes of this work, it is helpful to accept this qualification. USG definitions are not likely to change in this regard, and SOF CT efforts are likely to continue to focus on countering non-state actors—including those benefiting from state sponsorships—and radicalized individuals, not governments, for the foreseeable future.[32]

Selected, Complete Definitions

Having explored crucial components of many definitions of terrorism in the abstract, it is instructive to turn to a review of some of the leading definitions of terrorism that policymakers, practitioners, and academics are likely to come across.

Bruce Hoffman is one of the leading scholars of terrorism. A long-time RAND Corporation scholar, Hoffman's definition of terrorism is often employed in research and by journalists and even government officials when called upon to define the term. His short version states that terrorism is "the deliberate creation and exploitation of fear through violence or the threat of violence in the pursuit of political change."[33] Even in its truncated form, this hits on several key aspects of terrorism, including its political character, its violent nature, and the central role that fear plays.

More thoroughly, Hoffman lays out what he deems the most essential elements to a definition of terrorism. In this regard, he is worth quoting at length. Terrorism is:

- ineluctably political in aims and motives
- violent—or equally important, threatens violence
- designed to have far-reaching psychological repercussions beyond the immediate victim or target
- conduced either by an organization with an identified chain of command or conspiratorial cell structure (whose members wear no uniform or identifying insignia) or by individuals or a small collection of individuals influenced, motivated, or inspired by the ideological aims or example of some existent terrorist movement or its leaders or both
- perpetrated by a subnational group or nonstate entity[34]

It is worth pointing out that the fourth element of this definition has been adjusted by Hoffman to contend with the more recent spate of inspired or lone actor attacks.

Brian Jenkins, a counterterrorism expert with a background in both the academic and policy worlds, describes RAND's definition of terrorism for its chronicle of terrorism events. It, too, has many familiar components.

> All [terrorist acts] involve violence or the threat of violence, often coupled with specific demands. The violence is directed mainly against civilian targets. The motives are political. The actions

> generally are carried out to in a way that will achieve maximum publicity. The perpetrators are usually members of an organized group, and unlike other criminals, they often claim credit for the act. And finally the act is intended to produce effects beyond the immediate physical damage.[35]

It is worth noting the element of demands in Jenkin's definition. Definitions of terrorism can change and morph over time—in the late 1970s, high-profile kidnappings and hijackings were a common terrorist tactic.[36] These events were indeed usually coupled with specific demands from terrorist groups, who would then kill or threaten to kill hostages if demands were not met. Thus, while Jenkins and RAND circa 1980 were focused on key themes common in more current definitions of terrorism—political in nature, producing impact beyond the immediate victims of the violence, directed against civilians—they also include elements that are specific to a particular moment in history. The fact that terrorism changes and manifests in different ways across time and space makes it much more difficult to pin down a single, clear definition of the phenomenon.

Boaz Ganor's *The Counterterrorism Puzzle: A Guide for Decision Makers* defines terrorism as "a form of violent struggle in which violence is deliberately used against civilians in order to achieve political goals (nationalistic, socioeconomic, ideological, religious, etc.)"[37] This definition considers a range of goals as political and takes a strong stance on the "Who is a victim?" question. For Ganor, civilians must be the victims of the violence for an act to be terrorism. Less central to his definition are issues of the psychological impact of terrorism and its use for influencing an audience.

Another foundational voice in the field of terrorism studies, David Rapaport considers the norms governing the use of violence as well as the possibility of the state as a perpetrator of terrorist acts. This definition does not help observers to identify terror as much as it helps academics to think about this type of political violence and better study it. He states that:

> 'Terror' is violence with distinctive properties used for political purposes by both private parties and states. That violence is unregulated by publicly accepted norms to contain violence, the rules of war, and the rules of punishment. Private groups using terror most often disregard the rules of war, while state terror generally disregards rules of punishment, i.e., those enabling us to distinguish guilt

> from innocence. But both states and non-state groups can ignore either set of rules.[38]

Unlike Ganor, who clearly bounds the scope of terrorism to civilian victims, Rapaport's definition leaves ample room for terrorism perpetrated against military targets.

Martha Crenshaw, a well-known contemporary scholar of terrorism, elaborates:

> If we focus on terrorism directed against governments for purposes of political change, we are considering the premeditated use or threat of symbolic, low-level violence by conspiratorial organizations. Terrorist violence communicates a political message; its ends go beyond damaging an enemy's material resources. The victims or objects of terrorist attack have little intrinsic value to the terrorist group but represent a larger human audience whose reaction the terrorists seek.[39]

Crenshaw's definition leaves space for the categorization of government actions as terrorism. In the case of non-state actor terrorism, the focus of this text, symbolic violence, political aspirations, and terrorism as a communication strategy feature heavily in the definition. It is again noted that, for terrorists, the actual damage to their victims is incidental as there is "little intrinsic value" to the violent act, a key distinction between terrorist violence and other kinds of violence, such as assassinations or insurgency.

Finally, in some very important ways, terrorism is what we measure terrorism to be, and some definitions of terrorism have an outsized impact on the way scholars think about and study terrorism. The Global Terrorism Database (GTD) maintained by the authors' home institution, the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START) at the University of Maryland, is the world's largest open-source database cataloguing global terrorist attacks from 1970 through 2019. The GTD has been used as the basis for several hundred unique empirical analyses of terrorism. It is also used by numerous government agencies to inform assessments and policymaking. Consequently, what events are included or not included in this database matters a great deal for our ability to understand both terrorism and CT effectiveness. This means it is worth knowing what the scholars who maintain this database consider "terrorist attacks."

The short version of the definition of a terrorist attack in the GTD is "the threatened or actual use of illegal force and violence by a non-state actor to attain a political, economic, religious, or social goal through fear, coercion, or intimidation." However, this is more of a summary definition, and the GTD researchers have a somewhat complex set of inclusion criteria which can be found in figure 1. Interestingly, they also allow researchers and practitioners to select and filter events based on these criteria. In doing so, they facilitate the study of terrorism according to the preferred definition of an individual or institution.

Global Terrorism Database: Definition and Inclusion Criteria		
Definition: the threatened or actual use of illegal force and violence by a non-state actor to attain a political, economic, religious, or social goal through fear, coercion, or intimidation.		
In order to consider an incident for inclusion in the GTD, ***all three*** of the following attributes must be present:		
The incident must be intentional—the result of a conscious calculation on the part of a perpetrator.	***The incident must entail some level of violence or immediate threat of violence***—including property violence, as well as violence against people.	***The perpetrators of the incidents must be sub-national actors.*** The database does not include acts of state terrorism.
In addition, ***at least two of the following three*** criteria must be present for an incident to be included in the GTD:		
Criterion 1: The act must be aimed at attaining a political, economic, religious, or social goal. In terms of economic goals, the exclusive pursuit of profit does not satisfy this criterion. It must involve the pursuit of more profound, systemic economic change.	Criterion 2: There must be evidence of an intention to coerce, intimidate, or convey some other message to a larger audience (or audiences) than the immediate victims. It is the act taken as a totality that is considered, irrespective of if every individual involved in carrying out the act was aware of this intention. As long as any of the planners or decision makers behind the attack intended to coerce, intimidate, or publicize, the intentionality criterion is met.	Criterion 3: The action must be outside the context of legitimate warfare activities. That is, the act must be outside the parameters permitted by international humanitarian law, insofar as it targets non-combatants.

Figure 1. Anatomy of a Definition. Source: Adapted by authors/National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism

There is, however, a meaningful difference between there being no unified understanding and there being no agreement about the definition of terrorism. Though there remains real disagreement about the nature of terrorism, there is also a great deal of overlap across scholarly definitions. Terrorism is political in nature. It entails violence, or the threat thereof, to impact a larger audience beyond the immediate victims through coercion. It is aimed at achieving political goals. Remaining discrepancies tend to focus on how attacks targeting military personnel and those perpetrated by state actors can constitute terrorism. As explained above, this monograph contends that attacks against military targets can constitute terrorism. Weighing in on the debate about state terrorism is not necessary for the purpose of the arguments and recommendations advanced by this text.

On the one hand, it may still be unclear whether, for example, a group that detonates explosives and destroys a house in an ordinary civilian neighborhood has committed a terrorist act. On the other hand, it is much clearer what questions we should ask to find out, since the act already checks the civilian victim and violence boxes: Was the perpetrator seeking a political goal with the act? Was the house the real target, or was it intended to warn or scare others in the neighborhood? If the answers to these questions are yes, it is quite plausibly a terrorist act. If the answers are no, this is not terrorism and thus requires a different policy response.

U.S. Government Agencies and International Organizations

For those charged with executing the CT directives of the USG, these academic definitions are useful in understanding the nature of terrorism, but it is also important to know how various USG entities and key international partner organizations conceptualize terrorism. Fortunately, while there is not a uniform definition of terrorism across the interagency, and the United Nations (UN) has not even settled on a definition, the USG does have a somewhat shared understanding of the nature of terrorism. Moreover, the USG's understanding of the threat is largely consistent with that of the academic community.

Title 22. Title 22 of the U.S. Code, Section 2656f(d)(2) provides the basis for the definition of terrorism used by many USG agencies and departments. The definition is quite short and states that terrorism means "premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against noncombatant targets by

subnational groups or clandestine agents, usually intended to influence an audience."[40] Incidentally, the code also defines *international terrorism* and *terrorist group*, the latter of which is explicitly linked to international terrorism only. This short definition is embraced by most of the main CT players in the USG, including the: National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC), Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and other members of the intelligence community (IC), and DOS.

The Title 22 definition, though brief, highlights several key aspects of terrorism also evident in the academic literature. The USG defines terrorism as "politically-motivated violence." It is also violence that is intended, or at least usually intended, to influence an audience. This gets at the distinction between victims of terrorist violence and the broader audience with which terrorists are ultimately trying to communicate.

Box 1. Definitional Flexibility and The Department of State's Foreign Terrorist Organizations List[41]

The DOS plays a sizable role when it comes to defining terrorism and, in particular, defining groups as terrorist organizations. The FTO list described in the introduction to this chapter is a powerful tool. Yet, despite the de facto authority to define terrorism through this mandate, the Department prefers to avoid tying themselves to a particular definition. A lengthy footnote to the 2017 *Country Reports on Terrorism*—a congressionally mandated DOS annual publication—is illustrative here.

> It should be noted that 22 USC 2656f(d) is one of many U.S. statutes and international legal instruments that concern terrorism and acts of violence, many of which use definitions for terrorism and related terms that are different from those used in this report. The interpretation and application of defined and related terms concerning terrorism in this report is therefore specific to the statutory and other requirements of the report, and is not intended to express the views of the U.S. government on how these terms should be interpreted or applied for any other purpose.[42]

This attitude towards defining terrorism suggests that the USG is working to maintain some flexibility in labeling (or not labeling) certain groups and their activities as terrorists or terrorism, respectively. It is not surprising that the USG—or indeed any government—would want continued discretion over the use of such a politicized term. This, however, offers an interesting demonstration of how the definitional debates extend beyond the ivory tower and manifest in real, policy-relevant ways.

Additionally, some agencies charged with national security and law enforcement have developed their own definitions of terrorism:

DOD The unlawful use of violence or threat of violence, often motivated by religious, political, or other ideological beliefs, to instill fear and coerce governments or societies in pursuit of goals that are usually political.[43]

DHS An act that is dangerous to human life or potentially destructive of critical infrastructure or key resources; and ... appears to be intended (i) to intimidate or coerce a civilian population; (ii) to influence the policy of a government by intimidation or coercion; or (iii) to affect the conduct of a government by mass destruction, assassination, or kidnapping.[44]

FBI The unlawful use of force or violence against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social objectives.[45]

It is striking that these definitions are quite similar to one another and yet also recognizably distinct. Once more, political goals or the changing of policy is understood to be the aim of terrorists, and violence is central. Yet Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) both explicitly include damage to property, and DHS—the USG department tasked with critical infrastructure protection—emphasizes the terrorist threat to infrastructure. The implications for these differences will be addressed at greater length in chapter 3; for present purposes, it will suffice to say that these definitions are closely tied to budgetary incentives and bureaucratic politics and not for a deeper or clearer insight into the nature of the terrorist threat.

International Organizations. Finally, it is worth noting that the terrorism definition problem is an international one; various countries and international institutions have their own preferred takes on terrorism. As the USG

and SOF increasingly work by, with, and through partner forces for CT (see chapter 4), it is worthwhile to note that the difficulties presented by multiple definitions across the interagency become more pronounced when international partners and their preferred definitions are also factored in.

Box 2. The United Nations Struggle to Define Terrorism

Tellingly, the UN has never adopted a definition of terrorism that achieved universal support from member states, despite multiple efforts to do so.[46] Two issues in particular are salient to the ongoing disagreement—another instance of academic concerns being reflected in the real world. The first is whether states can be perpetrators of terrorism or not. The second issue is about the overlaps between terrorism and insurgency. In the wake of 9/11, the UN made a serious effort to agree upon a definition of terrorism, but members of the Organization of the Islamic Conference wanted to ensure that "national liberation movements fighting foreign occupation" would not be considered terrorists.[47] They were unsatisfied with the compromise solutions presented and in the end, there was no agreement on the definition. Many have suggested that the lack-luster results in the global struggle against terrorist violence can be partially attributed to the absence of a shared definition of terrorism and the resultant lack of international coordination in what is, after all, an international problem.[48]

Two key takeaways emerge from this discussion. First, like their academic counterparts, USG definitions entail key, common threads. Second, and nevertheless, there are disagreements about what constitutes terrorism across the interagency. As such, the USG lacks a unified vision of what precisely it is trying to counter through CT. Considering the viewpoints of international partners only serves to magnify this issue.

Politics at the Heart of Terrorism

While there is a great deal of divergence across definitions, it is crucial to note that the definitions within the USG actually do share several important features, both with each other and with academic conceptions of terrorism. One of these is of particular importance when thinking about CT: terrorism

is a political phenomenon. Despite this recognition, current USG approaches to CT largely ignore the political nature, to their detriment. This theme is the focus of chapter 2.

What is Counterterrorism?

What, then, are the implications of this knowledge about terrorism for conducting counterterrorism? Most importantly, because terrorism is a complex political phenomenon, a broad approach that takes seriously the political, economic, and social context of terrorism is necessary to counter it properly. Expert Boaz Ganor describes CT in terms of addressing the motivation and capability of violent actors. He posits that terrorist attacks happen when potential terrorists have both the motivation and the capability to commit them. More succinctly, he calls this the terrorism equation: terrorism equals motivation plus operational capability.[49] If the sum of the capability and the motivation is high enough, terrorist attacks can be expected. Countering terrorism, then, is simply a matter of reducing the sum of those two factors below a critical threshold.[50]

Because countering terrorism requires attacking both motivation and capability, there are many potential levers that CT forces can pull. Ganor notes that "military means together with state-political-social-economic measures" are necessary to address the motivation of terrorism and influence terrorist supporters.[51] He is not the only one who thinks of CT in these terms. In *The Routledge Handbook of Terrorism Research*, CT is defined as "a proactive effort to prevent, deter and combat politically-motivated violence directed at civilian and non-combatant targets by the use of a broad spectrum of response measures—law enforcement, political, psychological, social, economic, and (para)military."[52] Another authoritative academic source, Cynthia Lum, et al., suggests that CT measures are those that "reduce the likelihood of, or damage from, terrorism events or discourage individuals from acquiring motivation to carry out this type of violence."[53] These approaches to CT all take both capabilities and motivations into account.

Similarly, the UN *Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy* takes a wide view of the issue; its "Plan of Action for CT" is summarized in the types of measures advocated in its four pillars:

1. addressing the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism
2. preventing and combatting terrorism

3. building states' capacity and strengthening the role of the UN system in this regard

4. ensuring human rights and the rule of law[54]

The second pillar encompasses "denying terrorists access to the means to carry out their attacks, to their targets, and to the desired impacts of their attacks."[55] This formulation, too, suggests ways to reduce terrorist motivations such as improving human rights and addressing certain other political conditions. It also states that denying terrorist "access to the means," for example targeting capabilities, is an important feature of CT.[56]

The aforementioned definitions are seemingly at odds with the DOD definition of CT. The DOD defines CT more narrowly as "activities and operations taken to neutralize terrorists and their organizations and networks in order to render them incapable of using violence to instill fear and coerce governments or societies to achieve their goals."[57] The focus is constrained to terrorist capabilities versus motivations. Focusing on only half of the equation misses key opportunities for CT—and overlooks the fact that actions undertaken to limit terrorist capabilities can send their motivation to commit attacks skyrocketing.[58] Chapter 2 explores this theme in more detail.

Strategic Counterterrorism and a Whole-of-Government Approach

If the aim of CT is to reduce the motivations or capabilities of terrorists, including reducing their access to targets and the damage that they can inflict, it becomes clear that many different activities could count as CT (see figure 2). For instance, going after terrorist financial networks or physically eliminating training camps would clearly reduce terrorist capabilities. Fortified embassy buildings and enhanced airport security screenings can also make it more difficult for terrorists to access targets or weapons for inducing terror without directly targeting terrorist capabilities. Moreover, efforts aimed at reducing popular grievances that terrorists leverage to recruit through development assistance can prevent terrorism by targeting motivations. Securing the rule of law can also advance CT goals by reducing grievances. Governance reform and human rights protections are also part of CT practitioners' toolkits; if the end goals of a terrorist group are achievable through normal political channels like free speech, voting, and political representation, then their motivation to use violence and terrorism in their pursuit will be diminished. Even if motivation is not diminished,

Example List of Possible Counterterrorism Measures		
airport screening	emergency preparedness	multilateral agreements
anti-terrorism home products	foreign aid	prison building/imprisonment
arrest	fortification of embassies	psychological counseling
assassination	gas mask distribution	punishment and sentencing
bilateral agreements	harsher punishment	religious interventions
blast-resistant luggage	hostage negotiation	seal/tamper-proof devices
building security	investigation strategies	situational crime prevention
CCTV	legislation (e.g., USA PATRIOT Act)	UN conventions
community and nongovernmental organization (NGO) efforts	medical antidotes	UN resolutions
weapon detection devices	media efforts/spinning	vaccinations
diplomatic efforts	metal detectors	war
educational programs	military interventions	

Figure 2. Illustrative List of Potential CT Measures. Source: *Journal of Experimental Criminology*

these alternative pathways make terrorism—a high-risk endeavor—much less attractive to the population from which terrorist organizations seek to recruit and mobilize support.

In his 2005 congressional testimony, Bruce Hoffman stated that an effective approach to CT:

> would necessitate building bridges and creating incentives to more effectively blend diplomacy, justice, development, finance, intelligence, law enforcement, and military capabilities along with untangling lines of authority, de-conflicting overlapping responsibilities and improving the ability to prioritize and synchronize interagency operations in a timely and efficient manner.[59]

Comprehensive CT, then, is a whole-of-government affair. Foreign aid, homeland security, foreign and domestic intelligence, law enforcement—all of these things can contribute to countering terrorism. This is hardly a new argument. After 9/11, lawmakers recognized the need to facilitate greater coordination of CT efforts, particularly in the intelligence sharing realm.

The NCTC mission statement is explicitly to enable whole-of-government approaches to CT efforts:

> We lead and integrate the national counterterrorism (CT) effort by fusing foreign and domestic CT information, providing terrorism analysis, sharing information with partners across the CT enterprise, and driving whole-of-government action to secure our national CT objectives.

Academics and the USG tend to agree on the core nature of CT: it is multi-dimensional and is not the sole purview of a single USG department or agency.

This overarching sense that CT must be a whole-of-government affair is a direct and logical result of the fact that terrorism is a political phenomenon. If terrorism were only a criminal activity, law enforcement would always play a central role in our shared understanding of CT. Likewise, if it were purely a security threat, military and kinetic forces would always be core to conceptions of CT. Yet, consider again the list of possible CT measures from figure 2; on a practical level, no single government agency or department—nor a single country—has the authority and capability to engage in more than a handful of those activities unilaterally. And on a theoretical level, as a form of political violence, terrorism can only be countered by a more holistic approach, one that takes seriously the complexity of terrorist motivations and capabilities and what it means to truly reduce both of those components of the terrorist equation.

U.S. Counterterrorism Efforts and Recent Policies

What, then, is the best way to combine capability- and motivation-reducing measures to drive down terrorism? What is the set of tasks that will help the USG now, and well into the future, to enhance its national security vis-à-vis terrorist threats?

With so many CT tools and policies available in theory, the practice of CT must ultimately come down to effectively using limited resources to achieve the best national security outcomes possible. Similarly, given the political nature of terrorism and the attendant theoretical demand for a whole-of-government approach to CT, it falls to elected officials that have authority over the various executive agencies and departments to guide and organize

the actual effort. This is where returning to the notion of counterterrorism strategy first addressed in the introduction is helpful. The USG has been extensively involved in CT; but unfortunately, it has little experience with devising coherent—let alone successful or effective—whole-of-government CT strategies. While there is general agreement that CT is a whole-of-government affair, the U.S. military has played a massively outsized role in CT efforts throughout recent history.

This section offers a broad outline of the CT efforts and policies of presidential administrations from former President Ronald Reagan to former President Donald Trump. Focus is directed towards highlighting important features of an administration's response to terrorist threats, including both their stated policies, what passed as CT strategy in the administrations following 9/11, and CT in practice. In the interest of brevity, this section endeavors to limit the scope of discussion to the highest possible level and with specific emphasis on two key themes of U.S. CT since 1980:

1. The U.S. does not have and has not articulated a true CT strategy. Concomitantly, it has not implemented a coherent approach to CT.
2. The military—including both SOF and conventional forces (CF)—has played an enormous and outsized role in U.S. CT efforts abroad following 9/11.

While other chapters in this volume focus on SOF CT efforts specifically, the high-level nature of the discussion in this section makes it difficult to differentiate between SOF and CF.

The Counterterrorism Policies and Activities of U.S. Administrations

The Reagan Administration (1981–1989). Though the Global War on Terror would begin two decades after Ronald Reagan took office, his was the first administration to wage a "war on terror." His predecessor, President Jimmy Carter, was largely seen to have failed in his response to a major terrorist event—the Iranian hostage crisis. During the course of the 1979 Iranian revolution, U.S. Embassy Tehran was seized by a group of radicals with 90 hostages trapped inside. The Carter administration was unsuccessful in securing their release through diplomatic and military means, and it is widely believed that the administration's botched and ineffective methods contributed to Reagan's victory in the 1980 election.[60]

The Reagan administration, then, had a strong incentive to respond to terrorism effectively. International terrorism was to "take the place of human rights" as the central focus of Reagan's foreign policy.[61] The administration laid out a two-pillar policy on terrorism: "1) when the terrorists involved in an attack against Americans could be identified, they would pay a very high price for their actions, and 2) the administration would grant no concessions to terrorists."[62]

The administration's policy was straightforward. Execution, however, was another story. As one contemporary reporter, David Ignatius, put it in 1985, "Ronald Reagan, for all his tough talk, has failed to develop a coherent anti-terrorism policy."[63] Even when terrorists involved in attacks on Americans could be identified, the administration rarely extracted the promised "high price." Indeed, the White House acquiesced to terrorist demands more often than it used military force, and, most often, the U.S. did not respond at all.[64] Last but not least, the Iran-Contra affair was ostensibly an "arms for hostages" deal with Lebanese terrorists to achieve the release of U.S. hostages. Though this ended up being little more than a front for illegal arms deals with the Iranian government, it further muddied the waters on the "no concessions to terrorists" pillar of Reagan's CT stance.

Interestingly, some of this incoherence can be attributed to the fact that various members of the President's cabinet did not agree on a definition of terrorism. While some thought of it as an act of war against the U.S., others believed that terrorism was a criminal affair better left to law enforcement, a definitional debate that had real implications for how the U.S. handled terrorism.[65] Furthermore, disagreement over U.S. grand strategy in the Middle East influenced responses to individual attacks, meaning that the scale and nature of the attack played little role in determining how or if the U.S. would retaliate. In short, while the Reagan administration gave us the notion of the war on terror, it rarely used the military to pursue CT. Moreover, despite having a clearly articulated policy, it struggled with coherent responses to terrorism due to a lack of clarity on the nature of the threat and U.S. grand strategy.

Box 3. Nicaragua's Contras: "Terrorists" or "Freedom Fighters?"

The Reagan Administration was hardly the first to label groups "terrorists" or "freedom fighters" in politically expedient ways, but the Administration certainly garnered attention with its tendency to use the term in ways that were somewhat obviously more aligned with its own interests than the nature of the groups themselves. A particularly stark example is the way the U.S. backed the Nicaraguan Contras throughout the 1980s.

The group was responsible for a wide variety of attacks that meet the definition of terrorism as described in this text. It engaged in "indiscriminate attacks against civilians" and "widespread kidnapping of civilians," including "a significant number of … children."[66] However, the Contras were fighting against the Nicaraguan regime, which was seen by many in the Reagan Administration as totalitarian, Soviet-backed, and Communist. As such, Reagan and members of his cabinet were dedicated to toppling the regime.[67] As a result, the Contras received U.S. government backing in the form of arms, training, and money, and were never designated as an FTO despite ongoing, credible, contemporaneous reporting of their severe human rights abuses and involvement in terrorist activity. Instead, they were frequently referred to by the Reagan Administration as valiant "freedom fighters" struggling to take their country back from the Communists.

The George H. W. Bush Administration (1989–1993). The whirlwind of events from 1989–1991 that constituted the end of the Cold War made CT a very low priority for the President George H. W. Bush administration. Interestingly, Bush himself led a taskforce on combating terrorism in 1985, yielding a report that stated "the U.S. government is opposed to domestic and international terrorism and is prepared to act in concert with other nations or unilaterally when necessary to prevent or respond to terrorist attacks."[68] However, Bush did not elect to use a military option in any of his responses to terrorist acts, though a very high-profile event—the Lockerbie Bombing—took place just weeks before he began his term in office. Rather, he tended

to let domestic and international law enforcement agencies take the lead. It is worth noting that many senior Pentagon officials were content with this policy; top military leadership at the time "did not include abstractions such as 'justice' or 'teaching terrorists a lesson' as part of America's vital national interests warranting the deployment of military force."[69] Ultimately, though, the administration had little opportunity to demonstrate its approach to CT.

The Bill Clinton Administration (1993–2001). The Clinton administration, on the other hand, was faced with a series of terrorist threats and attacks. In response, the Clinton administration did not pursue a "war" on terrorism as the Reagan administration did, though it was more willing to use the U.S. armed forces abroad to counter terrorism. It is worth noting, too, that it was under President Clinton that terrorism itself began to shift away from state-sponsored attacks to attacks by globally networked terrorist organizations. Although sponsored attacks—or perhaps more accurately, attacks by groups that were sponsored and sheltered by states—were still directed at the U.S., the late 1990s saw major terrorist incidents perpetrated by al-Qaeda and other international terrorist organizations. Using force to respond to such groups was made more difficult by what was termed the "return address" problem; it was not always clear to the Clinton administration where exactly to strike back.[70]

Officially, the administration had a four-point CT policy. It involved:

1. providing no concessions to terrorists
2. using the legal system to convict terrorists and their supporters
3. attempting to change the behavior of terrorists or isolate them
4. engaging with other countries in coordinated CT efforts[71]

The administration also increased federal funding for CT efforts.

Though generally preferring not to use the military in response to terrorist attacks, there were a few instances in which the administration responded with military force. Two specific incidents notably warranted a military response: a 1993 attempt on the life of George H. W. Bush[72] and the 1998 bombings of U.S. Embassies Nairobi and Dar es Salaam. These plots were met with U.S. strikes on targets abroad in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Sudan. Clinton acknowledged these deviations from his stated policy by declaring that there are "times when law enforcement and diplomatic tools are simply not

enough, when our very national security is challenged, and when we must take extraordinary steps to protect the safety of our citizens."[73] This hardly drew a bright line as to where and when the U.S. would respond to terrorist attacks using military force. It is also hard to assess the effectiveness of the administration's CT policy; given that the 9/11 attacks took place less than a year after Clinton left office, it is easy to wonder what impact a different approach to CT might have had during the late 1990s. The 9/11 Commission Report notes that the embassy bombings mentioned constituted a turning point for al-Qaeda and 9/11 mastermind Khalid Sheikh Mohammed; the bombings served to convince Khalid Sheikh Mohammed of Osama bin Laden's commitment to attacking the U.S., and shortly thereafter bin Laden authorized preparations for the 9/11 attacks.[74]

The George W. Bush Administration (2001–2009). After a presidential campaign in which foreign affairs and terrorism played little role, President George W. Bush was confronted with the reality of terrorism on 9/11. The administration's response to these attacks outlined a forceful approach to CT—one that relied on eliminating the distinction between terrorists and the states that harbor them;[75] that focused on preemptively attacking terrorists that threatened U.S. security;[76] and that situated the U.S. in a war against terrorism, both rhetorically and literally. Less than a month after 9/11, the U.S. and a coalition of foreign partners were involved in a ground war in Afghanistan, where the architects of the attacks had been afforded safe haven by the Taliban government. The Global War on Terror had begun.

Its aims and strategy—or perhaps merely its aims—were first articulated in the 2002 National Security Strategy (NSS). "The war against terrorists of global reach is a global enterprise of uncertain duration," the document states, and "the enemy is terrorism—premeditated, politically motivated violence against innocents."[77] The administration further underscored in 2003 that "combatting terrorism and securing the U.S. homeland from future attacks are our top priorities."[78] In its National Strategy for Combating Terrorism, the Bush Administration articulated a "strategic intent" to:

1. **D**efeat terrorist organizations
2. **D**eny them further sponsorship, support and sanctuary
3. **D**iminish the underlying conditions that terrorist exploit

4. **D**efend the U.S. at home and abroad[79]

The "Four Ds"—and the administration's policies, more generally—lack strategic direction. As one historian argues, "the strategy could not be said to be a coherent document, given the breathtakingly broad set of U.S. objectives that it sought to achieve."[80] Instead of a clear CT strategy, it provided an overview of "the general direction of U.S. defense and foreign policies in the post-9/11 era."[81] In other words, the Bush administration failed to lay out a coherent and actionable strategy. Though the administration did learn and adapt over time, in particular when it came to adopting a "hearts and minds" approach to combating the insurgency in Iraq, it's actual approach to CT remained broad and offered little guidance as to how the U.S. should use its limited resources to achieve expansive and idealistic ends.

Additionally, the Bush administration, like others before it, had other priorities in addition to CT. The so-called "Bush doctrine" sought to achieve a wide area of foreign policy goals, whose key elements are well summarized by Robert Singh as "preventive war, confronting the nexus of weapons of mass destruction and catastrophic terrorism, regime change for rogue regimes, and democracy promotion."[82] At times, the aforementioned priorities conflicted and proved inconsistent with effective CT. Some have argued that the focus on regime change and democracy promotion in Iraq, for example, undercut the regional CT efforts of the USG.[83]

Beyond U.S. military interventions in Iraq and Afghanistan, the Bush administration's effort to counter terrorism also resulted in the formation of the DHS and the Office of the Directorate of National Intelligence (ODNI). These domestic reforms were driven by the recognition that the USG was not well positioned to detect, prevent, or respond to the 9/11 attacks.[84] The administration also undertook engagement in pursuit of more multilateral efforts against terrorism to "strengthen alliances to defeat global terrorism and work to prevent attacks against us and our friends"[85] in places like Indonesia and the Philippines, the latter of which will be discussed in detail in chapter 5 of this volume. Additionally, UAS strikes and high-value target (HVT) raids, particularly in Syria and Pakistan, were sometimes used to target terrorist leaders or to neutralize important sources of support for subversives fighting U.S. forces in neighboring Iraq and Afghanistan.[86] These diverse efforts clearly suggest an increased breadth of CT activities under

the Bush administration but also demonstrate the newly ascendant role of the military in countering terrorism.

The Barack Obama Administration (2009–2017). The Obama administration made a number of foreign policy choices that impacted the world terrorism landscape: pulling out of Iraq in 2011, a mini surge in Afghanistan from 2009 to 2011, a troop drawdown beginning in 2011 in Afghanistan, a differentiated response to the Arab Spring uprisings across countries, and limiting U.S. involvement in the escalating Syrian conflict. These decisions undoubtedly contributed to the current CT landscape, but it is beyond the scope of this work to discuss them all. Rather, focus is limited to the key features of the Obama administration's stated and practiced CT policy.

Released in September 2010, the Obama administration's NSS articulated several key points about CT. First, it deprioritized CT overall, stating that "Terrorism is one of many threats."[87] Second, it narrowed the scope of the Bush administration's Global War on Terror. While stating that the U.S. will always be opposed to terrorism, the administration makes clear that "this is not a global war against a tactic—terrorism—or a religion—Islam. We are at war with a specific network, al-Qa'ida, and its terrorist affiliates."[88] Though it was willing to target them anywhere on the globe, al-Qaeda and its affiliates—rather than "terrorism" writ large—were the enemy. The approach also called for training local partner forces to track, apprehend, prosecute, and incarcerate terrorists.

In what is now known as the benchmark address of his CT policy delivered at the National Defense University in May 2013, President Obama argued that his administration's CT strategy had been:

> a series of persistent, targeted efforts to dismantle specific networks of violent extremists that threaten our country. The way to accomplish this objective was through the use of partnerships to pursue and prosecute terrorists, employing drone strikes effectively, and when capture was not feasible, targeted killing was acceptable against militants who posed a continuing and imminent threat to the USA.[89]

Notably, the administration blended the direct application of U.S. military force—applied especially to "imminent" threats—with long-term efforts to build international partnerships as its stated CT policy.

In practice, CT during the Obama administration did indeed focus on al-Qaeda. President Obama pulled out of Iraq in 2011 and shifted the U.S. CT focus first to Pakistan and Afghanistan and then from Afghanistan to Yemen, Somalia, Mali, North Africa, and the greater Pan-Sahel region, which had become a hotbed for al-Qaeda activity. It also relied heavily on the use of UAS strikes as an alternative to deploying ground forces.[90] Also, in keeping with attempting to increase reliance on partners and changing the image of an America that was at war with Islam, the administration closed the detention facility at Guantanamo Bay, advocated for due process for suspected terrorists, and renounced the use of torture.

Characterized by many as "flexible pragmatism," President Obama's approach to CT also lacked a focus or unifying vision.[91] The administration's early responses to an escalating crisis in Syria have been characterized as, at best, ad hoc in nature.[92] Furthermore, Leonard Cutler expounded on the administration's approach to foreign partnerships, noting that it frequently struggled to "maintain an ever-growing patchwork of strained alliances composed of unappealing allies in several different theaters of military confrontation."[93] Though a more manageable policy than the Global War on Terror, it is unclear that the Obama administration's CT strategy was more coherent or more effective than the Bush administration's approach.

The Donald J. Trump Administration (2017–2021). President Trump articulated his administration's approach to CT in October 2018, roughly two years after his election. Though framed as "a new approach to combatting and preventing terrorism," many aspects are similar to Obama- and Bush-era policies, such as disrupting financial support for terrorist networks and reducing the physical capacity of terrorists to conduct attacks.[94] The administration also announced that it was willing to use "all available tools at our disposal to combat terrorist groups," including working with foreign partners and endeavoring to prevent radicalization.[95] In this respect, it reads as though it is calling for something closer to a whole-of-government approach to CT.

As articulated in some parts of the Trump administration's *National Strategy for Counterterrorism of the United States of America*, the aims appear to be less limited in scope versus those of the Obama administration and more similar to early policies under the George W. Bush White House. For example, the first page of the document declares, "We will achieve the following end states to safeguard our homeland, way of life, and shared interests:

The terrorist threat to the United States is eliminated."[96] Indeed, the CT policy quotes the President directly when it notes "vanquish[ing] the forces of terrorism" as "the one goal that transcends every other consideration."[97] In other areas of the same document, the aims appear much more limited. Specifically, the policy guidance notes that it is not the responsibility of the USG to counter terrorism everywhere, but rather focus ought to be limited to direct threats to U.S. national security. [98]

In practice, CT efforts have been fairly unfocused and are unlikely to bring about the lofty end states articulated by the administration. Though CT programs like UAS strikes have continued—as has working through partner forces and proxies—there have also been a number of breaks with the past that appear inconsistent with effective CT. Foreign policy decisions to withdraw troops near the Turkish border have led to an erosion of trust between the U.S. and its Kurdish partner forces in Syria and Iraq. This likely makes it also difficult to build trust with potential local CT partners in the future. Furthermore, numerous terrorism experts have raised concerns that vitriolic rhetoric and policies, such as Executive Order 13769 titled "Protecting the Nation from Foreign Terrorist Entry into the United States"—colloquially, the "travel ban"—are perceived by foreign audiences as xenophobic and are more likely to radicalize and alienate than improve U.S. national security.[99] Indeed, terrorist groups including the Islamic State and al Shabaab have already leveraged the administration's rhetoric in propaganda efforts aimed at mobilizing popular support and resources throughout the Muslim world.[100] The Trump administration's CT efforts have, at best, similarly lacked strategic coherence and, at worst, some policies have had adverse effects.

Analysis of U.S. Counterterrorism from President Reagan to President Trump

From U.S. CT policies and efforts to date, a couple of common themes emerge.

The U.S. does not have and has not had a coherent CT strategy and certainly has not implemented a coherent approach to CT. Only a few years after the invasion of Iraq, leading terrorism expert, Bruce Hoffman, offered Congressional testimony in which he stridently called for a better approach to CT across the board. He closed with the following remarks:

> Finally, as previously argued, the U.S. must enunciate a clear policy for countering terrorism and from that policy develop a comprehensive strategy. In the confrontation with communism following World War II, the U.S. did not only declare a "war on communism." Rather, we also articulated the policy of containment and within that intellectual framework developed a clever, comprehensive, multi-faceted strategy—that did not rely exclusively on the military option—to serve that policy.[101]

Understanding this insight and developing such a strategy for CT has eluded all administrations. Whether it was the Reagan administration promising force but rarely delivering punishment to terrorists or the Clinton White House authorizing limited strikes against a handful of terrorist targets when an attack seemed "bad enough," the U.S. response to terrorist provocation and its efforts to counter future terrorist attacks has been inconsistent. Domestic political considerations—for instance, the desire to "look tough on terrorism"—as well as competing foreign policy goals clearly influenced, and will continue to influence, the way the U.S. conducts CT.

Following the tragic events of 9/11, subsequent administrations have devoted far greater attention to CT. Yet strategy and strategically informed CT practice remain lacking. A war on terrorism is not, in and of itself, a strategy. The George W. Bush administration tried to conduct a global war on terrorism and ended up confusing wider ideological goals with CT efforts. The Obama administration sought to undo what it perceived as the damages of its predecessor; its narrower approach to CT may have been more sustainable, but it still failed to articulate a true strategy and, in the face of myriad developments in the Middle East, did not address the complete CT landscape. The Trump administration continued in the tradition of its predecessors and did not articulate a clear approach to CT that rose to the level of true strategy.

The military, including both SOF and CF, has played an enormous and outsized role in U.S. CT following 9/11. Finally, the U.S. military has also played a central role in CT efforts following 9/11. Different administrations have used the military in a variety of ways: individual strikes at terrorist camps in Sudan under President Clinton; the outright invasion of Afghanistan to root out al-Qaeda during the George W. Bush administration; the UAS strikes to reduce terrorist numbers in Yemen, and the HVT raids

targeting terrorist leaders—including Osama bin Laden and al-Baghdadi—under Presidents Obama and Trump, respectively.

Yet, as this chapter has explained in some depth, terrorism is a political phenomenon, and CT requires a whole-of-government approach. This is not to say that administrations that eschewed the use of the military instrument of national power got it right; it should now be evident that CT requires a wide variety of measures to include the application of the military instrument. It is important to note, however, that CT efforts following 9/11 have featured the military instrument very prominently but not necessarily as part of a coherent strategy and rarely as part of a whole-of-government effort to reduce the threat of terrorism.

Conclusion

It is worth noting that one reason for the military's outsized role is that the DOD has often been the only USG entity with the capability to quickly conduct CT. The DOD, and in particular, SOF—with its heightened state of readiness and unique, rapid, organic acquisitions function—are seen by policymakers as an "easy button" for CT.[102] The rest of the interagency is necessarily slower to act. Put differently, the White House faces some of the same frustrations with the interagency as the DOD. If something needs to get done quickly, it is usually a simple and fast decision to send the armed forces, even if the DOD is not best suited to the task at hand. This has, unsurprisingly, led to a militarized approach to CT with the DOD at the helm of most efforts.

Unfortunately, this overreliance on military might is not consistent with the current understanding of terrorism as a political phenomenon. As chapter 2 will describe in detail, using the military as a primary means to counter terrorism regularly results in perverse outcomes and contributes greatly to the mismatch between tactical successes and strategic stagnation. As will become clear, the lack of an overarching strategy, combined with an ever-increasing focus on military responses, has moved the U.S. further away from achieving broad national security goals in the CT arena. Returning to a clear understanding of the nature of terrorism—and accepting the fact that the logical counter to terrorism is a whole-of-government response that both reduces the motivation and capabilities of terrorist organizations—is necessary to crafting a suitable response.

Key Takeaways

- Terrorism is a contested and politicized concept. There is no universally accepted definition of it.
- There are commonalities across the myriad definitions of terrorism in academic literature and within the USG. Most importantly, it is generally accepted to be a form of political violence.
- Common components within the varying definitions of terrorism include the psychological impact of terror and the communicative purpose, which is to influence an audience beyond the immediate victims of terrorist violence.
- Most definitions address the target type and the perpetrator. Debate remains in these two regards. Some argue that terrorism necessarily entails targeting of civilians. Others offer more inclusive definitions that can include attacks on security forces. Similarly, most definitions stipulate that terrorism is the exclusive domain of non-state actors—to include those benefiting from state sponsorship. However, some definitions leave room for the inclusion of states as perpetrators of terrorism.
- Defining terrorism is important because it has implications for how governments can best conduct CT.
- Because terrorism is a political phenomenon, a whole-of-government approach that accounts for the political nature of the threat offers the most effective framework for CT. This enables governments to reduce both the motivation and capability of terrorist groups.
- The USG has struggled with CT for decades. It rarely has a coherent CT strategy and has relied heavily on the military instrument of national power in the fight against terrorism, especially after 9/11.

Chapter 2. Thinking Strategically About Counterterrorism

The USG has relied on the DOD, law enforcement, and the IC to disrupt terrorist activities in order to prevent terrorist attacks.[103] This approach has not proven successful. Suitable approaches to countering a problem must be devised with a detailed understanding of the problem at hand in mind. Regrettably, disruption-centric approaches are not strategically effective. While successful terrorist organizations recognize the population as a critical center of gravity, disruption-focused CT efforts are inherently enemy-centric. Targeting terrorists in order to attrite their human capital resources—without efforts to address root causes—can have the unintended consequence of helping to drive terrorist resource mobilization. In short, disruption-centric CT is not suitable to the nature of the problem at hand.

While U.S. population-centric counterinsurgency (COIN) doctrine is certainly not without its problems, it is likely a better starting point for thinking strategically about CT. COIN doctrine is undergirded by a recognition that insurgency—like terrorism—is at its core a political phenomenon; effective efforts to counter the threat need to place political considerations front and center. This is not to say that disruption has no place in COIN or CT but simply that disruption alone is insufficient.

This chapter proceeds in four sections. The first explicates the current approach to CT, including extensive discussion directed at understanding how the failure of disruption-based approaches to consider the political nature of terrorism is inhibiting CT success. The subsequent section leverages population-centric COIN doctrine as a starting point for thinking about CT in a strategically suitable manner. The penultimate section turns from exploring the utility of COIN doctrine to thinking about CT; it then addresses substantial barriers for doing so. The final section concludes.

The main objectives of this chapter include:

- underscoring that DOD-led CT efforts have been kinetic and focused on disruption
- understanding the ways in which disruption-only approaches have failed to achieve desirable CT outcomes

- learning about the unintended consequences of enemy-centric, kinetic CT on terrorist recruiting and resource mobilization efforts
- internalizing the overlaps between effective CT and effective COIN
- understanding the challenges and limitations in tasking DOD with some of the activities called for by a COIN-based approach to CT

The Current U.S. Government Approach to Counterterrorism

Disruption-Focused Counterterrorism

As previously mentioned, the USG has prioritized disruption through military and intelligence operations targeting terrorists overseas and law enforcement and intelligence efforts at home. This reality is reflected in the distribution of federal CT spending across the interagency. A clear prioritization of the military for overseas CT and federal law enforcement for domestic CT is evident. Specifically, between 2002 and 2017, more than four-fifths of the USG CT budget went to the DOD, DHS, and the Department of Justice (DOJ).[104] Narrowing the scope to overseas CT, the emphasis falls even more squarely on the DOD and the disruption approach versus the rest of the interagency and alternative approaches.[105] Moreover, this accounting systematically undercounts the emphasis on agencies involved in disruption; the percentage of the approximately $75 billion in classified annual spending by the IC devoted to CT is excluded from these calculations.[106]

With respect to the DOD specifically, CT efforts have largely emphasized bringing kinetic means to bear against terrorist organizations. Indeed, as discussed in chapter 1, the DOD defines CT as directing the joint force to "[conduct] lethal and non-lethal operations against terrorists and their networks to deter, disrupt, and defeat terrorists and their enablers, such as recruiters, financiers, facilitators, and propagandists. The focus...in CT is to capture or kill terrorists in order to permanently remove them from a position of damaging influence in the populace."[107] This definition focuses exclusively on kinetic actions for countering terrorism. While there is reference to non-lethal operations, these still target terrorists and their enablers—e.g., through activities such as intelligence collection or capturing HVTs—versus addressing broader, enabling factors, like grievances. Even when the DOD leverages nonmilitary instruments of national power, it tends to do so in order to enable kinetic operations.

Evaluating Disruption-Focused Counterterrorism. While it is evident that the USG and specifically the DOD have prioritized disruption, the efficacy of this approach in terms of long-term CT outcomes has not been rigorously assessed. A review of over 20,000 studies on terrorism identified just seven publications, which authors Lum, Kennedy, and Sherley characterized as "moderately rigorous evaluations of counterterrorism programs."[108] This begs the question: Has disruption proven effective?

There is no doubt that the disruption efforts of CT practitioners have prevented specific attacks, one of which—a bomb plot involving air cargo—is discussed in detail in box 4. While this likely suggests that continued disruption efforts are warranted—a contention of this monograph—it does not provide clear evidence that an approach to CT that primarily emphasizes disruption is appropriate. To evaluate the merits of a disruption-centric CT policy, it is necessary to instead consider if prioritizing disruption decreased the overall risk of terrorism.

In this regard, the answer is clear. Disruption has failed. Figure 3 depicts USG CT spending and terrorist attacks. The figure demonstrates that despite spending hundreds of billions of dollars per annum, terrorist attacks have risen from a low of just 1,166 attacks in 2004 to a high of 16,908 attacks in 2014.[109] While the number of attacks have decreased slightly in the last few years—driven largely by changing dynamics in just a couple of countries—at 10,980 attacks in 2017, they remained nearly an order of magnitude higher than in 2004.

Critics may argue that the principal concern of the USG with respect to both domestic and overseas CT efforts is preventing attacks against the U.S. homeland versus all attacks worldwide. This perspective is very clearly emphasized in the October 2018 *National Strategy for Counterterrorism of the United States of America*. Specifically, the section on "prioritization and resourcing" begins with a quote from President Donald Trump, stating that "our first priority is always the safety and security of our citizens." The report therefore emphasizes that attempting to simultaneously counter terrorism everywhere spreads CT resources too thin. Instead, it notes the USG will emphasize countering direct threats to the homeland.[110] Indeed, this primary emphasis on protecting the homeland can also be found across all seven prior versions of the *National Strategy for Counterterrorism of the United States of America* released during the administrations of George W. Bush and Barack

Obama.[111] Unfortunately, figure 3 similarly illustrates that domestic attacks have trended upward. Attacks rose 11-fold, from a low of just six attacks in 2006 to a high of 67 in 2016; they rose again in 2018, which is not shown in the figure.[112]

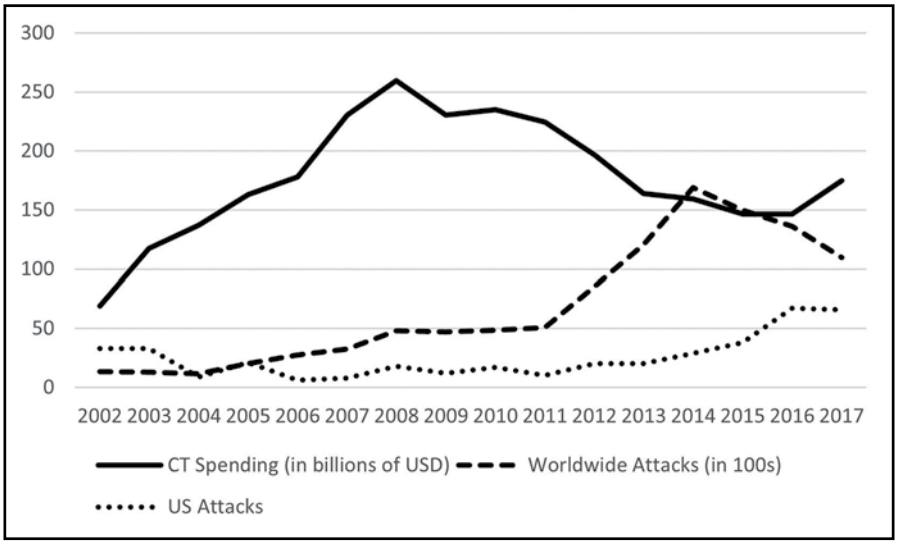


Figure 3. USG CT Spending and Terrorist Attacks, 2002–2017. Source: Global Terrorism Database, *National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism* and The Stimson Center

Even if the American public is willing to tolerate the occasional, albeit increasingly frequent successful attack on the U.S. homeland, disruption-focused approaches to CT still ought to be carefully reconsidered. This is the case because even failed plots may constitute victories for groups that employ terrorism. This is true for at least two reasons. First, as chapter 1 articulated, terrorism is not about the immediate victims of an attack but rather harnesses the coercive potential of the psychological impacts to the broader society. While failed attacks may not produce victims, they can still generate fear. Second, failed attacks may still impose asymmetric costs on governments. This later point is explicated through the example of Operation Hemorrhage in box 4.

Box 4. Operation Hemorrhage: The Cost Imposing Paradox of Failed Terrorist Attacks

Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula sought to exploit the asymmetric costs that even a failed attack can impose on target governments in its Operation Hemorrhage, wherein two printer cartridge bombs were built and shipped via UPS and FedEx to the United States. Careful intelligence work led to both devices being interdicted and disarmed, but the 2010 plot highlighted a critical vulnerability. While ample investment had been made in securing passenger aviation following 9/11, similar efforts for cargo aviation lagged considerably. Even though both devices were safely diffused, al-Qaeda's English language *Inspire Magazine* claimed success. The cover was emblazoned with the text "$4,200" in the foreground and a UPS cargo plane in the background.[113] The publication explained that the entire plot cost just $4,200, and even though the devices did not detonate, their discovery will substantially increase security costs in the United States. Al-Qaeda's pronouncement was spot on. Indeed, one estimate produced by the Congressional Budget Office suggested that achieving congressionally mandated 100 percent air cargo screening in 2010 would cost $250 million for the remainder of that year and an additional $650 million for each full year thereafter.[114]

With respect to defense of the homeland, all the aforementioned U.S. national strategy documents emphasized degrading transregional Salafi jihadist groups, specifically al-Qaeda and its affiliates in the initial documents and more recently the Islamic State and its affiliated movements.[115] Perhaps disruption has been successful in this regard? Unfortunately, this does not appear to be the case. Over time, the number of affiliates of both groups has continued to expand. The 2018 release of the GTD includes 52 al-Qaeda and 44 Islamic State affiliates. Moreover, the number of countries in which they have perpetrated attacks has trended upwards. Figure 4 charts the geographic expansion of both movements. It shows that in 2018, al-Qaeda, its affiliates, and those it inspired operated in a dozen countries. The Islamic State benefited from a geographic reach nearly triple that size. This reality is especially concerning. Al-Qaeda managed to fight two superpowers and

nevertheless is over 30 years old. It managed to do so precisely because it benefits from extensive strategic depth. Defeating the organization in Yemen, for example, would at best minimally degrade the overall movement. Instead, defeating al-Qaeda requires simultaneously defeating the movement everywhere it operates to ensure it cannot regenerate elsewhere. While the Islamic State can no longer claim a physical caliphate, it has adopted the al-Qaeda model—at least with respect to strategic depth. Importantly, while al-Qaeda took decades to expand geographically, the Islamic State was able surpass the geographic reach of al-Qaeda by the end of 2015, less than two years from when al-Qaeda and the Islamic State publicly severed ties.[116] This substantially improves the movement's odds of long-term survival.

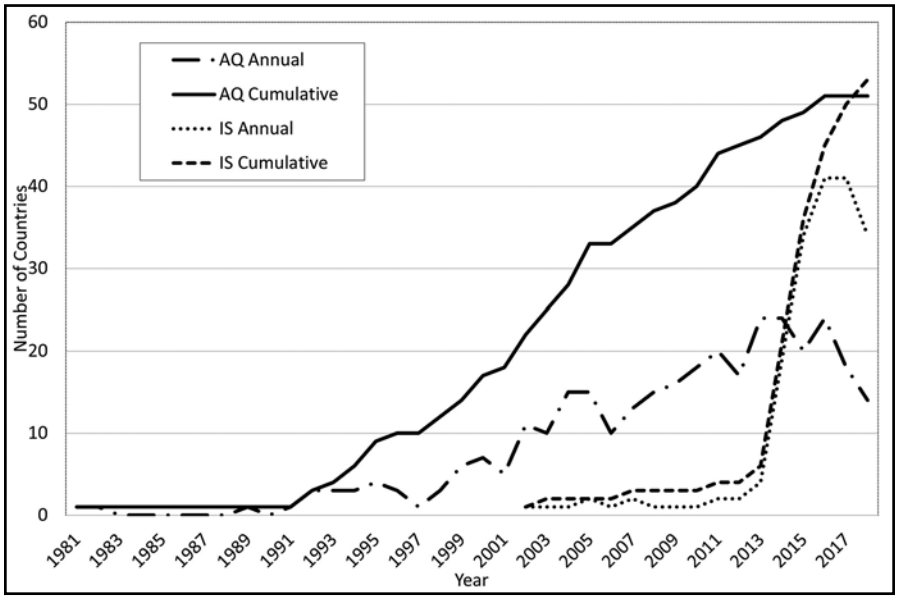


Figure 4. Geographic Reach of al-Qaeda and Islamic State Attacks, 1981–2018. The data includes predecessors, "core," affiliates, and inspired attacks. Source: Global Terrorism Database

Still, others may argue that U.S. CT efforts were effective in preventing another attack like 9/11, which resulted in the loss of thousands of American lives. However, this often-cited benchmark is not particularly helpful. For one, it is impossible to know if another 9/11 would have occurred absent U.S.

CT efforts. But more importantly, while the 9/11 attacks have become the frame of reference for the average American thinking about terrorism, these attacks were anomalous. The GTD demonstrates that the average terrorist attack does not cause any fatalities. Moreover, in the 191,464 attacks recorded worldwide between 1970 and 2018, just two other attacks—occurring in 1994 during the Rwandan genocide and in 2014 during the Islamic State's attack on Camp Speicher—killed 1,000 or more people. Attacks resulting in more than 100 fatalities are exceedingly rare at just 199 attacks. This equates to 0.1 percent of all attacks, or one in every 1,000 attacks.[117]

Former counselor of the U.S. Department of State, Tim Wirth, likened USG CT efforts to whack-a-mole in congressional testimony following the 1993 World Trade Center bombing.[118] The analogy remains popular with policymakers and warfighters today as it captures the limitation of current approaches to CT.[119] While disruption has almost certainly succeeded at preventing specific plots and neutralizing individual terrorists, it has not neutralized the threat. Indeed, both worldwide terrorist attacks and those targeting the homeland have trended upwards over time. Similarly concerning is the fact that the two largest transregional VEOs identified by name as major threats to U.S. national security in iteration after iteration of national CT strategy documents remain potent threats and have been able to amass considerable geographic reach in recent years.

The Disruption Self-Licking Ice Cream Cone. As discussed at length in the previous chapter, there is a general consensus—which is reflected in both official and academic definitions of terrorism—that terrorism is an inherently political phenomena.[120] As such, it should be no surprise that a kinetic approach to CT that does not address the political dimensions of the threat has not been successful. Not only is terrorism political in aims, but terrorist organizations are only effective when they are adept at leveraging local grievances to drive support for their cause from the population. Absent popular support, terrorist organizations cannot survive. They cannot effectively blend into a hostile local population, thereby denying CT forces the ability to bring their typically superior martial capabilities to bear against the terrorist organization. Nor can they effectively extract the men, women, money, and materiel required to continue the fight. While effective terrorist organizations recognize the local population as a crucial center of gravity, U.S. CT efforts have not.

It is worth revisiting the terrorism equation devised by Israeli terrorism expert Boaz Ganor. This simple formula sheds light on this issue. Ganor observed that terrorist attacks occur when violent extremists possess both the motivation and operational capability to perpetrate violence.[121]

Terrorism = Motivation + Operational Capability

Disruption focuses on attriting capabilities but largely ignores motivation. On its face, this may not seem problematic. A terrorist group with ample motive but no means to perpetrate violence would in fact cease to be a threat. Unfortunately, as long as the motivation remains, recruiting new members and mobilizing additional resources to backfill the capabilities void created by disruption efforts will likely be possible.

Moreover, one negative externality of disruption efforts is that they can help to drive resource mobilization for terrorism. Virtually all successful terrorist organizations—irrespective of ideology and aims—are able to tap into a sense of collective victimization among the communities they target for recruitment and support.[122] Regrettably, the capturing or killing of violent extremists can be leveraged by propagandists to help drive recruitment efforts. This reality is explicated through a brief discussion of al-Qaeda's recruiting efforts following the death of Osama bin Laden in box 5.

Box 5. The Missing Link: Operation Neptune Spear and al-Qaeda Recruitment

Following Operation NEPTUNE SPEAR, the 2011 raid that resulted in the death of Osama bin Laden, then President Obama explained his rational for declining to release photos of the body with this potentiality in mind. He noted, "it's important for us to make sure that very graphic photos of somebody who was shot in the head are not floating around as incitement to additional violence or as a propaganda tool."[123] When al-Qaeda finally issued an announcement acknowledging Osama bin Laden's death, they referred to him as a martyr and urged Pakistani Muslims to join the fight, stating,

> We call upon our Muslim people in Pakistan, on whose land Sheikh Osama was killed, to rise up and revolt to cleanse this shame that has been attached to them by a clique of traitors and thieves ... and

> in general to cleanse their country from the filth of the Americans who spread corruption in it.[124]

In some cases, groups may intentionally provoke CT forces into kinetic responses in order to drive resource mobilization. Andrew H. Kydd and Barbara F. Walter explain that when kinetic CT forces harm civilians—even when the harm is inadvertent—it provides evidence of the VEOs contention that, whereas CT forces are harmful to the population, support for their organization is warranted.[125] Consequently, provoking a kinetic response can help a VEO recruit new members or generate additional resources. In discussing provocation, Graig R. Klein opined that "terrorism is a form of 'political jujitsu' to replenish a group's stockpile of human capital."[126]

In short, disruption attrites capabilities but in doing so, risks increasing motivations, thereby driving capability regeneration. Under these conditions, the only way a disruption-focused approach to CT can succeed is if CT practitioners can be counted on to get it right every time and do so in perpetuity. Of course, even the most tactically proficient CT forces cannot succeed every time. As Carl von Clausewitz observed, warfare entails an element of chance and probability.[127] CT is no different. Clausewitz also noted that while an element of chance can never be completely removed, various factors can condition the probability of success.[128] Unfortunately, the perpetual nature of disruption-based approaches only serves to increase the probability of CT mission failure. Specifically, sustained high operation tempos coupled with decreased resourcing for CT—as focus shifts to great power competitors—will inhibit the efficacy of SOF-led disruptive CT efforts. Indeed, some research suggests the recent spate of scandals emerging from the Naval Special Warfare community are at least, in part, a symptom of this problem.[129]

To Counter Terrorism, Think Counterinsurgency

Whereas the previous section highlighted that disruption-oriented approaches to CT have proven ineffective, this section posits that the missing link is a focus on remediating the root causes of terrorism. The section explores the utility of COIN doctrine for thinking about CT. While not without its problems, COIN, unlike disruption-focused CT, recognizes that the population is an important center of gravity. In doing so, it is suitable for

addressing the problem at hand as it is strategically consistent in a way that extant approaches to CT have not been. Moreover, COIN is also relevant to CT because, in practice, a clear distinction between terrorist and insurgent groups does not exist. Groups like the Islamic State rely heavily on both terrorism and insurgency.

A Basis for Suitable, Strategically Consistent Counterterrorism

Both terrorism and insurgency are inherently political phenomena. Whereas disruption-focused CT adopts an enemy-centric approach that ignores the root causes, COIN focuses on both degrading subversive groups and remediating the root causes of the insurgency. The *DOD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms* defines COIN as "comprehensive civilian and military efforts designed to simultaneously defeat and contain insurgency and address its root causes."[130]

An approach to CT informed by COIN would involve more than just kinetic military operations aimed at disruption. U.S. Army General Stanley McChrystal famously proffered the idea of "COIN mathematics." General McChrystal opined that "intelligence will normally tell us how many insurgents are operating in an area. Let us say that there are 10 in a certain area. Following a military operation, two are killed. How many insurgents are left?"[131] The simplest answer, of course, would be eight. However, as General McChrystal observed, it is possible that the death of the two insurgents convinces some portion of the remaining eight to demobilize in the face of increased risk. It is also plausible—and General McChrystal correctly suggested, much more likely—that the death of those two insurgents will cause their family and friends to mobilize. As General McChrystal observed, "Suddenly, then, there may be 20."[132] The same calculus applies equally well to terrorism and CT. As Betts noted, strategy is about understanding how the application of military force will achieve a purpose that is worth its potentially steep cost in terms of blood and treasure.[133] If placing SOF in harm's way and expending taxpayer dollars to kill or capture terrorists is likely to create more terrorists than were removed by the CT intervention, then it is likely that many CT disruptions are not strategically sound.

COIN doctrine advocates focusing instead on winning over the population. In discussing the population as the center of gravity for COIN, Bernard B. Fall observed that "a government that is losing to an insurgency isn't being out-fought, it's being out-governed."[134] To this end, U.S. COIN doctrine

emphasizes governance reform and development assistance as a means of winning the hearts and minds of the civilian population.[135] This focus is logical, as ample evidence points to economic grievances (e.g., inequality) and political grievances (e.g., governmental corruption or failure to provide basic services) feeding terrorist recruitment and resource mobilization.[136] While development aid and governance reform are not panaceas, when combined with success in other areas (e.g., providing at least a minimum level of security) and executed well (e.g., where development aid distributions are done in a manner that is not particularly susceptible to corruption), they have been shown to be successful in reducing support for and violence by subversives.[137]

COIN doctrine emphasizes the utility of these types of interventions in winning over the population. However, they can also be used effectively against members of the opposition force. Indeed, David Kilcullen suggested doing precisely that. He noted that "the aim is not to arrest or kill adversaries, but to convert them—not to destroy the enemy, but to win him over."[138] Numerous U.S. Army officers in Iraq successfully employed Commanders Emergency Response Program (CERP) funds in this manner and succeeded in reducing support for and violence by al-Qaeda in Iraq and various other groups.[139] U.S. Army Brigadier General Andy Rohling explained that "if they [young Iraqi men] could get more money in a week building a school than building an IED [improvised explosive devise] then they'd build a school."[140] Illustrating the same point, albeit in a more direct manner, U.S. Army Brigadier General John Richardson indicated that he saw CERP-funded trash collection projects as substituting "an AK [assault rifle] and IED" for a "broom and bucket," and U.S. Army Colonel Rob Salome viewed CERP job creation initiatives as paying young men "to not be al-Qaeda."[141]

Moreover, its emphasis on employing development assistance and governance reform—with kinetic military operations playing a supporting role—makes it a more holistic approach. This is the case insofar as it seeks to integrate military and nonmilitary instruments of national power synergistically in order to achieve strategic success.[142]

The Terror-Insurgency Nexus

A COIN-inspired approach to CT is also warranted because, in practice, the distinction between insurgent and terrorist organizations is rarely clear cut. In theory, insurgency and terrorism are both weapons of the weak against the strong. Moreover, both embrace asymmetric approaches to prosecuting

A COIN-inspired approach to CT is also warranted because, in practice, the distinction between insurgent and terrorist organizations is rarely clear cut.

conflict. Whereas insurgents directly target opposing military forces seeking to achieve their aims through battlefield military victories, terrorism entails off-battlefield engagements designed to impose psychological costs that coerce the target population to bend to their aims. In short, terrorism, unlike insurgency, adopts an indirect approach to achieving the subversive groups' desired aims. In practice, however, virtually every VEO that engages in terrorism also engages in insurgency.

Assaf Moghadam, Ronit Berger, and Polina Beliakova observed in their study that every group—with the sole exception of the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola, listed in the GTD from 2002 to 2012[143]—engaged in both civilian targeting designed to achieve the groups aims through coercive, psychological impacts, as well as the use of asymmetric tactics to target security forces.[144] The latter type of approach entails more direct aims: degrading or defeating military and police forces.

While their study ends in 2012, it remains evident that terrorist groups today continue to also seek direct battlefield victories against security forces. Consider, for example:

- The Islamic State successfully routed Iraqi military forces in the 2014 battle for Mosul, capturing Iraq's second largest city in just three days before pushing forward to within less than 100 miles of Baghdad; they decimated four Iraqi Army divisions and captured or killed thousands of Iraqi military personnel in the process.[145]
- In January 2015, a complex, coordinated attack involving a vehicle-borne IED and approximately 300 Somali al Shabaab fighters overran the El Adde military base. Fighting was sustained for nearly an entire day, leaving 141 Kenyan soldiers dead; Kenya leads the African Union mission in Somalia. El Adde was the worst military defeat in the history of the Kenyan armed forces.[146]
- A breakaway faction of Nigeria's Boko Haram, affiliated with the Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP), inflicted as many as 100 fatalities on the Nigerian military during a November 2018 attack on an army base.[147] Just a few months later, in February 2019, ISWAP

overran three Nigerian military posts in Borneo state, destroying a military helicopter in the process.[148]

- In August 2019, al-Qaeda forces successfully attacked a Yemeni military camp in Abyan province. Sustained fighting resulted in the death of at least 20 Yemeni troops and the destruction of their outpost.[149]

Given the continued nexus between terrorism and insurgency, heeding Moghadam, Berger, and Beliakova's advice is warranted: consideration for only the terrorist activities of VEOs risks "counterproductive policy choices."[150] Defeating terrorism necessarily entails defeating groups that perpetrate insurgency. The authors therefore implore policymakers to shift away from enemy-centric approaches to countering terrorism.[151]

Reconsidering the Limitations of Counterinsurgency Doctrine. As already mentioned, population-centric COIN doctrine is not without its detractors. While exploring every criticism of this approach to COIN is beyond the scope of this monograph, this section addresses criticisms of COIN with particular reference to the implications for a COIN-inspired approach to CT. Three broad categories of criticism receive detailed consideration. First, COIN discounts kinetic military operations. Second and relatedly, the military is not well-suited to the dictates of COIN doctrine. Third, a COIN-inspired approach to CT is not politically feasible. Importantly, this section is devoted to laying out substantial barriers. While it also alludes to areas where opportunities for improvement may exist, there are no panaceas. Chapter 7 will return to these issues. The focus in the final portion of this monograph is on offering practical recommendations that SOF and the DOD can feasibly implement to attempt to address these concerns and those that will be raised in subsequent chapters.

Disruption Under a Counterinsurgency-Inspired Counterterrorism Paradigm

The U.S. Army and Marine Corps 2006 *Counterinsurgency Field Manual* certainly places overwhelming emphasis on development aid and governance reform.[152] Some have criticized the manual for its lack of attention to kinetic, military operations. However, the authors of Field Manual (FM) 3-24 were responding to previous disruption-focused approaches to COIN. The degree to which current population-centric COIN doctrine de-emphasizes kinetic operations needs to be viewed within the context of this dialectic.[153] This

monograph contends that an approach to CT informed by COIN would still entail kinetic military engagements targeting terrorists. Disruption remains necessary for at least three reasons.

First, not all violent extremists can be won over. The diversity of motivations undergirding participation in the Afghan Taliban—discussed in box 6—illustrates this point.

Box 6. Winning Over VEOs? The "Paycheck," "Mercenary," and "Ideological" Taliban

One Afghani expert on the Taliban broke the group up into three categories. The largest segment of the group are individuals he termed "Paycheck Taliban." The Paycheck Taliban were largely underemployed agriculturalists. They were happy to accept a paycheck from the Taliban for joining the fight during the agricultural offseason. But they were equally happy accepting comparable pay from the International Security Assistance Force for working road construction. The second largest, albeit much smaller group are the "Mercenary Taliban." These are local elites—often engaged in illicit activities for self-enrichment. They are motivated by their own political and economic power. Many happily assisted U.S. SOF in the early days of the Afghan conflict in exchange for the USG turning a blind eye to their illicit activities, and often in exchange for large cash payments. While winning this group over was certainly possible, the costs were higher and doing so entailed ethical considerations. The final segment of the group, he termed "Ideological Taliban." These individuals were motivated by ideology and, in his assessment, could not be won over.[154]

Second, development assistance and governance reform projects are hard to realize in a war zone. For example, a minimum level of security is required in order to successfully construct a school. More importantly, said school is unlikely to remediate grievances among the local population, absent at least a minimal level of security.

Third, development assistance and governance reform can succeed at winning hearts and minds over the medium- to long-term. They cannot prevent imminent attacks. Disruption can. By coupling the two approaches,

however, it may be possible to minimize the resultant terrorist resource mobilization following disruption efforts. This synergistic approach offers a means of doing disruption that does not entail trading long-term security for short-term attack prevention.

While a COIN-inspired CT approach necessitates continued disruption efforts, increased discretion on when to use kinetic military force is also warranted. Disruption should only be used where alternative approaches are not effective and in concert with approaches designed to minimize negative externalities stemming from disruption efforts.

The Military's Role in Counterinsurgency-Inspired Counterterrorism

A COIN-inspired approach to CT requires considerably more than kinetic engagements, but it also raises three concerns about the military's role in CT. First, large institutions experience core mission bias. In other words, institutions do not like to spend time and resources on things that are not a part of their core mission. Such efforts do not advance their interests or enhance their prestige—points we will return to in chapter 3. The DOD is by no means exempt from this phenomenon. The armed forces see some form of combat mission as being at the heart of their organization, and individual services tend to see their own essences in a similar way. The Air Force's *raison d'être* is to "fly combat missions," and for the Army, "ground combat capability" is key.[155] Training, doctrine, and resourcing all reflect the perceived core mission of an institution. Taken to the extreme, core mission bias may result in divesting from approaches that appear to be paying dividends in favor of those that are not but which are at least consistent with the organization's perception of its core mission. The demise of the U.S. Marine Corps' combined action platoon (CAP) in Vietnam—discussed in box 7—highlights precisely this point.

Box 7. Combined Action Platoon: A Casualty of Core Mission Bias

Deborah D. Avant observed that during the Vietnam Conflict, the Marine Corps light footprint COIN teams—CAPs—proved to be extremely capable at securing the villages they operated in, stymieing the activities of North Vietnamese Army regulars and Viet Cong guerrillas, and at gathering human intelligence (HUMINT).

> Nonetheless, they were scrapped in favor of far less effective, conventional approaches that were consistent with the Army's view of its core mission.[156]

The perceived core mission of the DOD has virtually revolved around conventional war fighting. Following the Second World War, the U.S. military prepared to fight and win in massive conventional engagements in the European theater.[157] The collapse of the Soviet Union ushered in a period when U.S. military supremacy was unquestioned; its ability to wage war was superior to any other potential adversary across virtually all aspects and measures of military power.[158] Not surprisingly, the U.S. almost exclusively saw itself involved in myriad military operations other than war during this period.[159] Nevertheless, the focus of the DOD remained on large, conventional engagements. Then Secretary of Defense Les Aspin explained the core mission of the U.S., noting that a two major theater war strategy required the U.S. military to maintain capabilities for "fighting and winning two major regional conflicts that occur nearly simultaneously."[160] While the DOD remains focused on large scale conventional conflict, SOF have been lavishly resourced for CT due to the perception of terrorism as an existential threat to the U.S. following 9/11. This perception is changing. More importantly, SOF have their own core mission bias and have focused on kinetic operations such as CT disruptions. A COIN-inspired approach to CT requires the DOD—and SOF, in particular—to engage in numerous tasks outside of its perceived core competency. One USSOCOM assessor explained, "SOF does military things, and not whole-of-government things."[161]

Second, an approach to CT of this sort requires the devolution of very complex decision making to junior officers and noncommissioned officers (NCOs). Tactical blunders can reverberate with strategic impacts. Given this reality, former Commandant of the Marine Corps Charles C. Krulak recognized the need for what he called "strategic corporals."[162] Lynda Liddy clarified that the strategic corporal is "a soldier that possesses technical mastery in the skill of arms while being aware that his judgment, decision making, and action can all have strategic and political consequences that can affect the outcome of a given mission and the reputation of his country."[163] Put differently, a COIN-inspired approach to CT requires junior officers and NCOs to possess a wide range of proficiencies, one of which is near-flawless

judgement as to which proficiency—war making, law enforcement, peacekeeping, state-building, etc.—is required at any given moment to achieve the overall strategic objectives.

These concerns are real but not insurmountable. The DOD and SOF already possess diverse non-kinetic skills. Special Forces Operational Detachment-Alphas (SFODAs) are often referred to as the Army's "warrior-diplomats," and military information support professionals are experts at information operations (IO). Part III will offer recommendations on how these capabilities can be further developed and better leveraged. Similarly, the interagency—the focus of the subsequent chapter—possesses many of the needed skill sets.

Politically Infeasible

The term COIN conjures up images of massive, extended troop deployments and the expenditures of vast amounts of American blood and treasure. This reaction, with Iraq and Afghanistan as recent frames of reference, is not terribly surprising. That said, a COIN-inspired approach to CT does not necessarily entail hundreds of thousands of U.S. combat troops or spending trillions of taxpayer dollars. Sir Basil H. Liddell Hart's first maxim of strategy, "adjust your end to your means," is worth considering.[164] Fundamentally reforming society—e.g., through democracy promotion—need not be the goal of COIN-inspired CT.

Rather, tools like development assistance and governance reform can be used at a microscale to provide a base level of stabilization. This does not entail completely solving every grievance; it only needs to demonstrate that CT forces are endeavoring to improve conditions on the ground. This can succeed in undercutting narratives about collective victimization, which are the clarion call of VEO resource mobilization efforts.[165] In addition, this approach to CT should not be thought of as adding activities like development assistance and governance reform to existing disruption efforts. Instead, it stems from a realization that the combination of approaches is synergistic, requiring less total input to achieve the desired ends. The example of a recent USG-funded effort in Benin illustrates this point well. It is discussed in box 8.

Box 8. Exploiting Synergies: Low-Cost, High-Impact Counterterrorism Efforts in Benin

Recent USG support to the government of Benin, a small West African nation under increasing pressure from local al-Qaeda and Islamic State affiliates along its northern borders and from Boko Haram along its eastern border, provides an excellent example of this. Small contingents of U.S. Marines have provided training to an approximately 275-man Special Border Surveillance Unit (Unité Speciale de Surveillance des Frontierès [USSF]). The force is responsible for interdicting terrorists and organized criminals; Boko Haram leverages organized smuggling operations on the Benin-Nigeria border to help finance their activities in Nigeria. The trainings—which consisted of tactical instruction on such skills as marksmanship, long-range patrolling, and vehicle control point operations—culminated in an exercise wherein the decision was made to ensure that the capstone exercise was conducted in Jesu Jro. Jesu Jro, a remote border village, was one of multiple suitable locations if the aim of the exercise was simply to demonstrate the USSF's new tactical proficiencies. However, it was carefully selected as a means of demonstrating to the local population, in an area accustomed to minimal government presence or support, that the government takes their security seriously.[166]

Despite the tactical training the USSF has been provided—with just 275 men and no technical intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance capabilities—the force is unlikely to be able to be in the right place at the right time to interdict VEOs and transnational criminal organizations operating along Benin's over 1,300 miles of border. Consequently, the USG is also funding an effort to provide instruction to the entire USSF on community-oriented policing. The instruction includes a tabletop exercise that requires USSF personnel and local citizens to work together and build rapport to succeed. By helping the USSF build relations with segments of the population such as nomadic herders (who, as a matter of survival, have excellent situational awareness about the areas where they have just been, where they are now, and where they are going), the force is afforded access to HUMINT sources that enable it to be in the right place at the right time more

frequently. Moreover, by improving local views of the USSF—and by extension, the government—this program also serves to inoculate critical local populations along the border against the favored recruitment narratives of West African VEOs relating to corruption and abuses by government security forces.[167] Despite their impact, these interventions required minimal staffing for short durations—all at a very low cost to the DOD and the DOS, who were involved.[168]

Measurement

A related problem is that of measurement. Measuring the number of insurgents or terrorists killed or captured as a result of an HVT raid is relatively straight forward, albeit not all that meaningful. Measuring the impact of the types of activities called for by this approach is not. Measurement is

Figure 14. Author Barnett S. Koven (second from left) attends the graduation of the first cohort of USSF officers to receive training on community-oriented policing, held in Cotonou, Benin, in June 2019. Photo by Barnett Koven/used with permission

crucial to success in asymmetric conflict. Accurate measurement can help SOF plan more efficient interventions and then evaluate their efficacy. Measurement also helps with political feasibility. Absent the ability to quantifiably demonstrate success, elected officials may have a hard time making the case to the general public that investing resources in a particular approach to CT is warranted. As will become clear, measurement is also important for interagency and international collaboration. Unfortunately, accurately measuring complex political phenomena is difficult. Chapter 7 is devoted, in part, to exploring the importance of and novel approaches to measurement for SOF CT efforts.

Conclusion

This chapter explicated why the preferred approach of the USG to CT, which emphasized disruption, has failed to reduce the risk of terrorism in general, terrorism targeting the homeland, and terrorism perpetrated by transregional Salafi jihadist organizations like al-Qaeda and the Islamic State. In doing so, it is evident that strategically sound approaches to CT must recognize that because terrorism is an inherently political phenomenon, so too must be CT. More specifically, it is necessary to couple direct action (DA) targeting terrorist capabilities with much broader efforts to remediate the root causes that motivate terrorist violence. COIN doctrine, while not without its limitations, provides valuable insights for crafting a more holistic and strategically sound approach to CT.

Key Takeaways

- U.S. CT has been kinetic and focused on disruption with little attention paid to either motivations or the role populations play in terrorist conflicts.
- Disruption-centric approaches have failed to achieve desirable CT outcomes; terrorist attacks have not decreased despite decades of USG efforts to eliminate terrorists.
- Enemy-centric approaches may decrease the capabilities of groups who employ terrorism, but they also have unintended consequences and may fuel future violence.
- Population-centric COIN doctrine can help inform more effective approaches to CT. This is the case as it recognizes the population as

an important center of gravity for CT. Moreover, most VEOs engaging in terrorism also engage in insurgency.

- The DOD may struggle to successfully implement an approach to CT inspired by COIN. Doing so requires junior officers and NCOs to be highly proficient in a diverse array of military and nonmilitary tasks. It also requires extensive engagement in activities outside the core mission areas of the DOD.

Chapter 3. Special Operations Forces Counterterrorism and the Interagency Process

The 2018 *National Strategy for Counterterrorism of the United States of America* calls on the interagency to leverage skills and resources from a variety of departments and agencies in order to "ensure that the federal government is able to deploy our full range of expertise and authorities."[169] Chapter 1 observed that because terrorism is a kind of political violence, it is best countered by a whole-of-government approach. Relatedly, the previous chapter demonstrated how enemy-centric approaches that focus primarily on disruption are only part of the CT picture and may even have perverse impacts on terrorism outcomes when employed in isolation. These two arguments are deeply intertwined: employing a whole-of-government approach enables the USG to counter terrorism with a wider variety of tools—in addition to disruption—that can reduce both the motivation and capabilities of VEOs to conduct terrorist attacks. It thereby provides the toolkit for implementing strategically sound approaches to CT while also increasing efficiency by bringing in those with the right expertise and organizational missions to design and execute certain tasks. This reality is not lost on policymakers and practitioners. Nevertheless, in practice, interagency processes and coordination are often suboptimal. Thus, gaining an understanding of what hinders effective cooperation across the interagency is necessary for SOF and interagency partners—not only for CT activities but also for advancing U.S. national security more broadly.

This chapter first explores the benefits of interagency processes for effective SOF CT. For example, both the DOS and USAID are actively engaged in efforts to stabilize conflict-affected areas. When SOF find themselves operating in these environments and activities like development assistance or governance reform are called for, coordination can lead to more efficient outcomes for all parties. Through coordination, SOF may be able to leverage existing USG programming to help avoid negative externalities arising from CT disruptions; the DOS or the USAID are then able to mitigate any harm resulting from SOF disruption efforts to their programs.

There are very real barriers to navigating the interagency and coordinating whole-of-government CT. Fortunately, understanding theoretical issues and historical background behind the current state of interagency collaboration can help SOF navigate what may otherwise appear to be an irrational collection of turf wars and puzzling sensitivities. In section two, organizational theory illuminates how USG agencies and departments have powerful organizational incentives to focus on advancing their own priorities, which may well come at the expense of well-integrated interagency efforts and strategically sound CT. These bureaucratic politics in the absence of an overarching CT grand strategy predispose the interagency to inefficient and poorly coordinated CT engagements even among competent and well-intentioned actors. Further, the unique historical and institutional foundation of the modern interagency process for CT stems from the tragic events of 9/11 and a policy response that shifted the national security apparatus' attention and resources to terrorism without empowering any single organization to coordinate whole-of-government CT efforts. Instead, agencies were left to conceive of and design a response to the terrorist threat in a competitive rather than cooperative and synergistic interagency environment.

The result, explored in section three, is that diverse USG entities had incentives to become involved in the fight against terrorism but ultimately came to shape their own understandings of CT in ways that emphasized their unique organizational strengths, missions, and roles. These distinct framings of the terrorist problem created a patchwork approach to a complex national security threat. Though policymakers and practitioners understand that CT must be a whole-of-government affair, they nonetheless fight terrorism piecemeal. The different, individual agency-centric conceptions of terrorism and CT that are housed within organizations that ostensibly have the same goal—protect the U.S. from terrorist threats—illuminate how and why coordination is often lacking.

There are also other barriers to effective interagency processes that DOD personnel, including SOF, are likely to encounter in their CT work; many barriers stem from the same basic issues of bureaucratic politics. They include, among others, "authorities" fights, differences in organizational culture and language, and limited professional incentives undergirding interagency liaison roles. These are the focus of section four. Gaining a better understanding of how and why interagency processes break down can help

SOF improve coordination with the other USG entities they encounter in the execution of whole-of-government CT.

The main objectives of this chapter include:

- internalizing the importance of SOF coordination with the interagency for CT
- understanding what is meant by "bureaucratic politics" theories and how they impact agencies' incentives for cooperation
- learning about the impact of 9/11 on the development of modern interagency processes
- recognizing how the lack of a unifying CT authority fostered competition between USG entities in the face of new financial and other incentives to engage in CT
- identifying the agency-centric framing of CT across different USG entities
- understanding other common barriers to interagency processes to better enable SOF to communicate with USG partners

Special Operations Forces and the Interagency for Counterterrorism

Interagency cooperation and coordination are now routinely—though not uniformly or always to the greatest effect—employed by SOF to accomplish CT objectives. USSOCOM, with its diverse missions and skillsets, has long understood the importance of working with other agencies to achieve its objectives. USSOCOM's special operations support team (SOST) program embeds officers in other agencies to better "facilitate the exchange of information, the development of courses of action, the preparation of recommendations, and the efficient execution of executive orders."[170] Indeed, Joint Special Operations University (JSOU) is one of only a few government institutions to offer formal training on the subject of interagency coordination, and it has developed a reference guide—the *Special Operations Forces Interagency Reference Guide*—to help special operators and others navigate the interagency. In addition to providing an overall view of the ways in which USSOCOM works closely with non-DOD entities, this resource offers the following articulation of the basic principles and justifications that underlie interagency work for CT:

- No single department, agency, or organization of the USG can, by itself, effectively locate and defeat terrorist networks, groups, and individuals and prevent their return.
- Beyond the USG interagency process, it is not possible for individual countries and coalitions to "go it alone" against the extensive and every-changing threats posed by terrorists and their networks.
- Interagency and relationship-based operations are designed to create and sustain stability by addressing those conditions that give rise to terrorism in the first place, defeat terrorist threats where and when they emerge, and prevent the recurrence of terrorist activity once it's defeated.[171]

There are many USG agencies and departments with a CT-relevant mission—almost too many to count. The 2020 edition of the aforementioned JSOU reference guide devotes 25 pages to lists and descriptions of the centers, programs, offices, teams, and task forces that are common and essential SOF partners in CT efforts.[172] Indeed, its 2013 publication *Special Operations Forces Interagency Counterterrorism Reference Manual* was explicitly about CT, further underscoring the notion that global CT efforts demand an interagency approach.[173] Recalling again the lengthy and diverse list of possible CT measures described in chapter 1 makes it clear why this would be the case. These entities are all a part of the CT fight; they have different capabilities and authorities that are particularly well-suited to specific aspects of CT. Serial partnerships include those with the IC, DOS, USAID, federal law enforcement, and numerous other entities. These partnerships enable SOF to perform strategically sound and synergistic CT.

One of the most obvious and well-developed interagency partnerships is between SOF and the IC. This relationship is not without its complications, but close cooperation can have a massive impact on CT effectiveness. Indeed, when first faced with a more virulent, adaptive, and deadly al-Qaeda in Iraq, it was a joint interagency task force—not SOF alone—that made strides in countering the terrorist organization. Task Force 714 was created to help coordinate the activities of numerous agencies in countering al-Qaeda in Iraq. While there were some challenges as both the original task force and the CIA had a "culture of secrecy, autonomy, and exclusiveness," trust was established in the face of operational demands—leading to a significantly more effective CT effort.[174]

In some part, the post-9/11 era cooperation between SOF and the IC is due to the different authorities for military operations and intelligence activities housed in U.S. code, demonstrating another kind of synergy for SOF with non-DOD entities. Authorities can dictate whether, legally speaking, a given entity—for instance, a SOF element operating outside of a declared theater of armed conflict—can conduct certain types of activities like lethal operations. Indeed, technically speaking, it was a CIA-led paramilitary activity in which SOF played a foundational role that kicked off the war in Afghanistan, using a mix of assets and personnel from both entities at various stages of the operation. A 2009 Congressional report noted that "in Afghanistan, SOF did not have the authority to pay and equip local forces and instead relied on the CIA to 'write checks' for needed arms, ammunition, and supplies."[175] As another example, Operation NEPTUNE SPEAR was conducted under a chain of command that subordinated USSOCOM to the CIA. These partnerships can be particularly useful for SOF because, while there is functional overlap between IC and DOD activities, each entity possesses distinct authorities.[176] IC leadership and involvement may also help manage host country sensitivities; for example, local leaders may be afforded more freedom of maneuver to deny that U.S. military operations, per se, were conducted on a nation's soil.[177]

When it comes to executing a COIN-inspired approach to CT (as was advocated in chapter 2) or building partner capacity (the focus of chapter 4), the DOS and USAID are particularly important. The U.S. embassy team plays a central role in a number of overseas interagency CT efforts, and according to JSOU's interagency reference manual, "the country team serves as the multi-functional face of the USG interagency process overseas."[178] The U.S. ambassador is the chief of mission with "full responsibility for the direction, coordination, and supervision of all Government executive branch employees in that country (except for employees under the commands of a United States area military commander.)"[179] From the perspective of SOF, being aware of the myriad CT activities happening in-country and identifying or engaging in activities where the unique talents and training of SOF can contribute is an essential part of operating effectively.

The country team is crucial for coordinating activities—including activities that SOF is likely to be involved in—with partner forces participating in CT capacity building efforts and CT operations. The country team, with its established local relationships, can provide access to host nation political

and military leaders. These relationships can yield the necessary cooperation to enable or improve SOF activities in the country; alternatively, failure to obtain buy-in from host nation officials will, at minimum, make SOF efforts more difficult. Additionally, SOF can help the country team to plan and adapt for changing circumstances in-country—whether they be, for example, due to the progress of SOF-led training programs or a shifting VEO threat. The country team typically possesses extensive local knowledge and expertise, which SOF may lack due to being deployed in-country for limited durations. This knowledge is especially crucial when SOF is called upon to adopt a more holistic, population-centric approach to CT or to work with local forces.

It is also worth mentioning that the country team in which USAID often plays a senior role is key to the development programming that is at the heart of COIN-like CT efforts. USAID and USSOCOM have been partnering in-country for stabilization and related work as there are often fundamental synergies between SOF CT and USAID-funded projects.[180] In describing efforts to retake and, importantly, rebuild Raqqa, one USSOCOM official observed, "the operating environment could be completely different for coalition forces if humanitarian and stabilization assistance was sparse or non-existent."[181] SOF, USAID, and other relevant interagency partners working collaboratively can improve the conditions on the ground and thereby reduce popular support for VEOs, as well as build trust for the USG and local officials. In short, a stable population that trusts the USG and local officials is more likely to assist—or at minimum will not hinder—efforts to eliminate local terrorist networks.

Finally, it is worth noting one often overlooked benefit of interagency cooperation on CT: deconfliction. Multiple agencies will continue to operate simultaneously in many of the environments where SOF is tasked with CT. Deconfliction is necessary to ensure that different agencies are not inadvertently undermining each other's activities. Whether it is by avoiding sending contradictory messages to partners or simply being aware of exactly which USAID-funded NGOs are operating in what villages, interagency situational awareness may go a long way to boosting SOF CT effectiveness.[182]

Multiple agencies will continue to operate simultaneously in many of the environments where SOF is tasked with CT.

The Interagency for Counterterrorism: In Theory and History

As has been the case with other key insights in this volume, none of these facts about the benefits and necessity of interagency coordination are new. Unfortunately, interagency processes are beset with difficulties, not the least of which is the tendency of individual agencies and departments to advance their own interest as an organization. This in turn means that the interagency process can just as often interfere with effectiveness as it can enhance it.[183] This behavior is driven by a number of rational and understandable factors, including a tendency toward bureaucratic politics in large organizations and a series of historically contingent events that laid the groundwork for the modern interagency environment. These theoretical and historical factors tend to have the inadvertent effect of undermining aggregate CT outcomes. As JSOU's interagency CT reference manual perspicaciously notes:

> Just as many countries display maps that portray themselves as the center of their region or of the entire world, many participants regard the USG interagency process with themselves as the central point of focus. Thus, the question for them becomes, how does the interagency process support my department, agency, or organization?[184]

To the extent that agencies and departments continue to ask this question, they are necessarily failing to retain focus on the larger strategic picture. Agency- or department-centric approaches hinder interagency processes in the CT arena, and thus negatively impact SOF CT effectiveness through missed opportunities to leverage the full set of CT tools, and in misspent time and national security resources. Indeed, even when positive results emerge, they may be just as much a product of accidental synergies than of a genuine effort to combine various instruments of national power to counter terrorism.

This monograph argues that these barriers to interagency coordination on CT are a result of two issues. The first is normal bureaucratic politics. Agencies and departments have their missions and interests, not the least of which is maximizing their share of the federal budget—and these can lead to parochial decision making. Further, agencies and departments often jealously guard their own roles and venerate their core mission; this makes it difficult to coordinate a whole-of-government approach as individual entities look at their own interests in addition to, or instead of, those of the broader

USG. It is worth noting that these same dynamics can also manifest across different offices within a single agency or department or across the different uniformed services that comprise the DOD.

The second closely related issue is the way in which the USG responded to the 9/11 attacks. Efforts to counteract stove-piping with a reorganization of multiple national security-relevant agencies and departments did not fundamentally change the structure of the interagency or the incentives of individual entities to behave parochially. Absent an overarching structure or authority to coordinate CT across the interagency, these competitive tendencies were, in fact, exacerbated by the flood of funding, attention, and other resources that became available for CT. As CT became the primary national security objective, every USG entity had reason to lookout for their own roles in the CT fight—and their own slice of the CT budget.

Bureaucratic Politics in the U.S. Government

A lack of altruistic, mission-focused coordination between the interagency would come as no surprise to those who study organizational behavior and bureaucracy. Government agencies and departments, like all organizations, have their own sets of interests. These include "maintaining influence, fulfilling its mission, and securing the necessary capabilities," for which "maintaining or expanding roles and missions, and maintaining or increasing budgets" are both important aims.[185] Thus, organizations in the public sector "must be seen as political actors with dynamic relations to political leadership and to actors in the society they are a part of."[186] This means that agencies have incentives to expand their mission and to frame key political issues of the day in ways that bring the most influence and funding to their doorstep. Put differently, the whole-of-government CT mission is highly multifaceted, and when it comes to each agency or department's view of priorities and the best means of addressing them, "where you stand depends on where you sit."[187]

Organizations also often establish boundaries about who is inside and who is outside their organization; they get to decide who their members are and—just as importantly—who they are not. Anthony Downs, a foundational thinker on how bureaucracies function, has articulated what he calls the "Law of Self-Serving Loyalty." He posits that "all officials exhibit relatively strong loyalty to the organization controlling their job security and promotion."[188] This leads to the development of organizational cultures—a

discussion of which, to follow—and also creates incentives for those who are aiming to rise and succeed in their own agencies and departments to follow norms and examples set by their own leadership. It is worth noting that in organizations as large as USG agencies and departments, there are often competing elements within themselves—with their own incentives, cultures, etc. One clear example is the interservice rivalries that exist within the DOD.[189] Ultimately, organizations of all kinds—including components of government bureaucracies—have a tendency toward "us versus them" thinking when it comes to everything from securing budget appropriations to determining which leaders and sources of authority are worth listening to.

The aforementioned dynamic also applies to shaping an organization's mission. Through careful framing, agency or departmental leadership can exert substantial influence on what activities are considered inside or outside that organization's mission. Insofar as the interagency competes for influence over the crafting and execution of policy, this can contribute to a kind of territorial mentality.[190] It is here that the concept of "turf" emerges. Furthermore, the previous chapter observed that organizations can have a core mission bias, where most of the organization perceives a particular activity as their essential purpose or function or even "essence."[191] Sharing competencies with another organization—especially in an area that one agency or department considers part of its core mission—risks decreasing the relevance of one's own organization and therefore jeopardizes funding and influence. Boxes 9 and 10 provide concrete examples of precisely this phenomenon. Interestingly, developing capabilities and moving into a new policy area—for instance, CT—can have multiple, countervailing effects. On the one hand, it may increase an agency or department's importance and thereby its resource allocation; it may also create competencies that are outside of the organization's perceived core mission and lead to increased fractionalization or other internal challenges.

Box 9. Countering Terrorist Financing: A Casualty of Interagency Turf Wars

Current USG approaches to countering transnational and transregional threats—such as terrorism, transnational organized crime, and narcotrafficking—tend to focus on countering threat networks,

including financial networks. While the National Security Council (NSC) recognized the importance of countering terrorism financing as early as 1985, efforts to do so prior to 9/11 were inhibited by "conflicting organizational cultures and jealousies." The issue received renewed attention following al-Qaeda's bombings of the U.S. Embassies Nairobi and Dar es Salaam. This culminated in the creation of the Foreign Terrorist Asset Tracking Center within the Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control in March 2000. The center was tasked with leading the interagency on countering terrorist financing. Unfortunately, the decision to house the center at the Department of the Treasury—and not the CIA—led to infighting between the two entities. Consequently, the Foreign Terrorist Asset Tracking Center was not immediately staffed; it was hastily staffed 18 months later, on 14 September 2001. Had it not been for the 9/11 attacks, it is unclear if the center would have remained stillborn.[192]

Box 10. Human Intelligence Collection and the CIA-Defense Intelligence Agency Turf War

One of the more familiar issues of agency turf appears with respect to the CIA and HUMINT. Since its early days as an organization, HUMINT has been a key part of the CIA's core mission. Its expertise in that arena ensures that the CIA retains a sustainable slice of the budget—not to mention operational freedom and prestige. Thus, the development of HUMINT capabilities under the Pentagon in the post-9/11 era has been a source of major controversy for many CIA partisans.[193] From the point of view of the CIA, a sizeable HUMINT function within the DOD may have real implications for the civilian CIA's long-term interests. The DOD already receives an enormous portion of intelligence funding.[194] Further, some established federal intelligence programs focus not on funding particular agencies but rather on funding specific types of intelligence disciplines like HUMINT.[195] Thus, if the Pentagon is too heavily involved in HUMINT collection, the sheer size of the DOD could result in their HUMINT collection efforts dwarfing those of the CIA and lead to serious conflicts between

both organizations' efforts.[196] Over time, the CIA's relevance may shrink and its unique functions—functions that are not replicated by defense intelligence—may atrophy or disappear as a result of the loss of institutional expertise and talent. These bureaucratic politics concerns can help a SOF operator make sense of the CIA's sensitivity around anything to do with HUMINT and their sources and methods, as well as an insistence on distinctions between battlefield or tactical intelligence, which can feel wholly artificial in a fight against a distributed threat like global terrorism.

Key aspects of bureaucratic politics—competition for budget and influence, a tendency to identify with and be loyal to others within one's own agency or department, and a desire to both gain additional influence and protect one's own core competency—constitute real barriers to cooperation and interagency coordination. This is the case, even when a mission like CT is the ostensible goal of multiple actors. For instance, the clandestine nature of some intelligence work means that the IC tends to see leaks as a serious concern—and that preventing them may be a higher priority than sharing information. As one DOJ official noted, if the IC believes that sharing information with another agency or department is going to lead to leaks, they are less likely to be willing to share intelligence.[197] This can only serve to undermine the effectiveness of whole-of-government efforts to CT. When missions overlap across the interagency, cooperation is needed, yet turf wars are likely; each organization attempts to defend its prestige, resources, and influence.[198]

9/11 and the Organizational Foundations of Modern Interagency Processes for Counterterrorism

The U.S. has viscerally understood that interagency processes would need to play a role in effective CT since 9/11. However, the response of the USG to those events, while advancing interagency coordination as a norm, had only a minor structural impact in terms of facilitating effective interagency processes and breaking down existing bureaucratic politics hurdles to effective CT. The new agencies and departments that emerged in response to strident calls for more and better interagency cooperation and information sharing were steps in the right direction; they nevertheless lacked the appropriate

design, or authorities, or both to effectively and broadly institutionalize whole-of-government CT. Further, the turn toward terrorism as the primary national security focal point—with all the legislative attention and budgetary largess this shift entailed—incentivized agencies and departments to participate in the CT fight in any way they could without necessarily coordinating or optimizing their roles or contributions.

Roughly three years after the 9/11 attacks, the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the U.S. (the 9/11 Commission, for short) released its final report on 22 July 2004.[199] It concluded that an intelligence failure, caused largely by a lack of interagency cooperation, allowed terrorists to execute the attacks and cause so much death and destruction. Different members of the IC—especially the FBI and the CIA—failed to piece together relevant intelligence from disparate sources.[200] As a former CIA supervisor put it, "no one looked at the bigger picture; no analytic framework foresaw the lightning that could connect the thundercloud to the ground."[201] Importantly, the U.S. did not lack the essential institutions tasked with safeguarding the nation. Rather, the existing intelligence, civil aviation, and national security apparatuses a) failed to recognize the escalation of the threat to U.S. domestic and foreign interests leading up to the attacks, and b) did not have adequate mechanisms in place to respond to the crisis at hand.

Addressing these organizational shortcomings were key priorities in the wake of 9/11. One response was the standing up of a new department in 2002: the DHS.[202] This department brought together almost two dozen government offices and agencies under a single umbrella. From its conception, however, the DHS suffered from the multiple cultures and visions of its constituent entities, confusion about its mission, and a lack of strategic focus. As Fran Townsend, the former Deputy National Security Advisor to President George W. Bush, put it, the DHS "struggle[d] with its own identity with the intelligence capability … It just didn't know what it wanted to be."[203] Interestingly, the DHS was like a microcosm of the interagency itself, struggling internally with the same problems of overlapping missions and clashing cultures that plague the broader interagency.

In an effort to address the failure to coordinate the IC head-on, Congress enacted the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004, leading to the creation of the NCTC and the ODNI.[204] The ODNI was intended to coordinate work and information sharing among 16 independent domestic and foreign intelligence agencies. Yet, unlike DHS, the ODNI did not bring

these intelligence services together under the authority of a new cabinet secretary. Rather, the Director of National Intelligence was to "have access to all national intelligence and intelligence related to the national security which is collected by any Federal department, agency, or other entity" but very little by way of influence over or even oversight of activities conducted by members of the IC.[205] Ultimately, the ODNI today does not hold authority over any specific element of the IC, and there are no personnel under its direction except for its own office staff.[206] While the ODNI has the authority to compel information sharing should it see fit, this has not yielded better day-to-day information sharing within the IC; members remain siloed. In short, the new institution was an important gesture toward a more integrated national security effort, but in practice, it merely created a series of new organizational entities that had their own interests, personnel, and leadership.

Though the 9/11 Commission report clearly recommended a whole-of-government approach to CT, the post-9/11 reforms did not unify the distinct bureaucratic siloes and ultimately failed to yield the level of integration required for effective, whole-of-government approaches to CT. Indeed, JSOU's *Interagency Reference Guide* notes that the interagency is perhaps best understood as "a loose and frequently undefined process of multiple, ad hoc relationships and structures that are often personally and situationally dependent for their success." This is in part due to the friction in standing up a modern bureaucratic apparatus for conducting CT, and it is this reality that SOF must navigate to effectively carry out their CT mission.

There is also an important financial thread to the story of the modern interagency. Because USG bureaucracies strive to maximize their share of budgetary resources, the massive increase in USG CT spending following 9/11 created a host of incentives for agencies and departments to position themselves as relevant to CT. Prior to these attacks, the U.S. was spending an estimated $16 billion annually on CT.[207] In 2002, the figure more than quadrupled, rising to $68.9 billion. By its peak in 2008, annual CT expenditures climbed to more than 16 times their pre-9/11 amount, or $260 billion.[208] It is certainly the case that a significant chunk of the budgetary increase is attributable to overseas contingency operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. However, between 2002 and 2017—the last year for which adequate budgetary data was available—the USG spent an estimated $978 billion on "government-wide homeland security."[209]

For non-DOD entities, how to get in on the CT fight became, literally, a trillion-dollar question. This is not necessarily to suggest that agencies or departments were cynical—though perhaps certain individuals and programs within them could be characterized that way. Rather, organizations naturally pursued their own interest and established an understanding of terrorism and CT that was oriented toward their strengths and needs as an organization—and, importantly, not oriented toward developing a consistent, strategically sound vision of CT that would advance shared national security goals. In the absence of a unified USG definition of terrorism and lacking a coherent grand strategic vision for CT, each agency and department has shaped its own definition and mission and thus its role in CT according to its internal priorities and capabilities.

In the absence of a unified USG definition of terrorism and lacking a coherent grand strategic vision for CT, each agency and department has shaped its own definition and mission and thus its role in CT according to its internal priorities and capabilities.

This means that even as the whole-of-government approach became the theoretical cornerstone of the U.S. CT agenda, divergent framing of the threat and responses emerged across the interagency, which proved to be an impediment for effective coordination. Without a mechanism with the authority and capacity to foster a synergistic interagency process, agencies and departments quite rationally found themselves in competition for resources and incentivized to shape their own CT missions.

Counterterrorism Missions across the Interagency

It is worth exploring more carefully the very real implications of the disconnects in conceptions of and priorities for CT across the interagency. Indeed, in the decades since 9/11, agency- and department-specific frameworks have become institutionalized and shape how organizations are prepared to and desire to fight terrorism.[210] Thanks to a parochial view in which multiple agencies and departments have placed themselves in the center of the CT map, collaboration and information sharing are inhibited by the fact that, as one intelligence official put it, organizations "can't agree on priorities."[211] What follows is a look at the CT missions of a handful of the major interagency players in the CT space. Whereas chapter 1 emphasized similarities

across definitions of terrorism, here focus is on the divergences in different conceptions of terrorism and CT.

It is important to note that these definitions emerged absent a unifying principle or authority to direct USG CT efforts. This has led to a natural and quite rational tendency for organizations to define CT around their own strengths and priorities. The way that the DOD thinks about CT clearly reflects this: it frames CT in highly kinetic terms, and its primary CT objective is to capture or kill terrorists. This is not surprising given the culture, core mission, and strengths of the DOD. However, it does lead to a conception that does not necessarily facilitate effective interagency processes where SOF must work with other USG entities, each of which view the problem—and the solution—in different and typically self-referential terms.

DOS. Given the frequency with which SOF coordinate with the DOS, it is worth examining the view of the DOS closely. The DOS Bureau of Counterterrorism leads the DOS CT effort; specifically, the Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism, housed at the DOS, has as its "principal duty" the "overall supervision (including policy oversight of resources) of international counterterrorism activities."[212] Additionally, "The Bureau of Counterterrorism's mission is to promote U.S. national security by taking a leading role in developing coordinated strategies and approaches to defeat terrorism abroad and securing the counterterrorism cooperation of international partners."[213] As previously noted, U.S. ambassadors already lead the interagency country teams and are typically the lead executive branch representative in foreign countries. Moreover, the DOS has broad geographic reach with over 300 diplomatic missions spread across nearly 200 countries.[214] Given the relative size of the staff and budget of the DOS—which is to say, much smaller than those of the DOD—it is consistent with their capacity that they would establish themselves as leaders in the development of "coordinated strategies and approaches," rather than as an implementer for a broad range of CT tasks.[215]

Yet, there is also a clear disconnect between the emphasis on the civilian programs and initiatives of the DOS and the "deter, disrupt, and defeat" language of the CT mission of the DOD, which reflects not a whole-of-government vision but the more parochial view that scholars of bureaucratic politics would expect. The DOS prioritizes government partnerships, civilian capacity, and information sharing as integral parts of CT and is particularly interested in building judicial and law enforcement capabilities through

their programs. This becomes problematic, though, when the Bureau of Counterterrorism needs to integrate into the efforts of multiple agencies and departments. For instance, the DOS description of the Counterterrorism Partnerships Fund (CTPF) strongly emphasizes the nonmilitary program components of this joint initiative with the DOD, noting that "[the CTPF] seeks to use State's funding to build the capacity of criminal justice sector actors who can respond to, arrest, investigate, prosecute, and incarcerate terrorist suspects, recruiters, and financiers in accordance with due process and the rule of law."[216] From this description of the CTPF, it might appear that it is primarily a civilian program. However, in fiscal year 2017, DOS funding for the program was around $59 million, while the DOD budget requested $1 billion for CTPF activities that same year.[217] Rather than placing the wide range of CT activities conducted by the USG in a larger, composite, whole-of-government image, the Bureau of Counterterrorism articulates its activities—just as other agencies and departments do—in ways that highlight components of CT that are most in line with the overall strengths and priorities of the DOS. Even programs meant to be integrative across agencies and departments are ultimately defined and stove piped by individualized, agency- or department-centric conceptions of strengths and missions.

USAID. Like the DOS, the USAID is a frequent and important partner for SOF engaged in CT. The agency's development work comports with population-centric approaches to CT and offers potential synergies with SOF CT efforts. Unlike the DOS, the agency does not have a CT bureau or office. Instead, recognizing that the agency is not positioned to target individual terrorists or to attack threat networks—like the DOD—it defines the problem in societal terms and articulates its "developmental response to violent extremism," an approach which frames the problem and solution according to the core mission of the USAID.[218] A 2011 policy document for the USAID, aptly titled "The Development Response to Violent Extremism and Insurgency," does include a section on "interagency integration and coordination."[219] While this section acknowledges that "a development response is only one component of broader USG efforts to counter violent extremism and insurgency," this is the sparsest section of the policy.[220] It offers little more than an indication

Like the DOS, the USAID is a frequent and important partner for SOF engaged in CT

that interagency coordination is occurring and provides a short box titled, "Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs): Interagency Field Integration," as evidence.[221] Though frequently mentioned in discussions of interagency cooperation involving the DOD, DOS, and USAID, PRTs were, upon most analyses, fraught with interagency conflict and, at least in Iraq and Afghanistan, criticized for being too DOD-heavy in composition, management, and execution.[222]

For USAID, there is the additional challenge of defining its role in violent spaces where human security is more immediately threatened by militants than famine. Indeed, a former USAID administrator noted that "clarifying USAID's role in the context of violent extremism and insurgency does not come without controversy. Some hold strong views on whether development agencies generally—and USAID in particular—should engage on these issues."[223] This articulation captures the tension between the international development-related core mission and identity of USAID on the one hand; on the other, the desire is to adapt and fill a meaningful role when the attention and funding of the USG were flowing so freely to terrorism and CT.

DHS. Other agencies and departments have also conceived of meaningful roles to play in CT that demonstrate similar tendencies toward defining terrorism and CT with their own strengths, core mission, and authorities in mind. As noted in chapter 1, the definition of terrorism used by the DHS brings infrastructure to the forefront of the discussion. Once again, an organization's own strengths and mandates—critical infrastructure protection—are used to define the terrorist threat and appropriate responses thereto. The department's articulation of its mission states that "one of the Department's top priorities is to resolutely protect Americans from terrorism and other homeland security threats by preventing nation-states and their proxies, transnational criminal organizations, and groups or individuals from engaging in terrorist or criminal acts that threaten the Homeland."[224] While this mission emphasizes threats to the homeland, it takes care to position itself as having international relevance by noting that homeland security threats emerge from foreign nations and transnational criminal and terrorist organizations. In doing so, the DHS lays claim to additional turf.

FBI. The FBI's mission is "to protect the American people and uphold the Constitution of the United States," and listed at the top of its priorities is to "protect the United States from terrorist attack."[225] However, digging deeper

shows that the FBI frames the terrorist threat—and the changing threat landscape—in a way that plays to its own strengths and legal authorities. The FBI's key activities with respect to CT are articulated as follows: "The Bureau works closely with its partners to neutralize terrorist cells and operatives here in the United States, to help dismantle extremist networks worldwide, and to cut off financing and other forms of support provided to foreign terrorist organizations."[226] The FBI also notes that "lone offenders" and "the Internet and social media" are important factors in both the domestic and international terrorism arena.[227] Lone actor terrorism and especially lone actor domestic terrorists are often viewed as falling squarely within the domain of U.S. domestic law enforcement. Additionally, by emphasizing domestic CT missions, the FBI may be roping off its own territory—as the DOD, for instance, does not generally have authorization to operate within the U.S.—while also being careful to not preclude itself from international CT activities. The FBI emphasizes the importance of partners throughout, but its framing and focus are in clear harmony with the organization's strengths and core mission.

A particularly interesting case study in parochial definition-building, the conflict between agency and departmental self-interest and whole-of-government CT is the Department of the Treasury. The Department of the Treasury has a narrow but important role when it comes to CT: tracking and disrupting terrorist financing. The Treasury's official role in CT efforts is specifically to "safeguard the financial system against illicit use and combatting … terrorist facilitators."[228] Figure 5 expands on the Treasury's mission and its definition of terrorism.

The primary program and mechanism for accomplishing this mission in practice is the Terrorist Finance Tracking Program (TFTP). The Department of the Treasury can, as part of a terror finance investigation, subpoena information about financial transactions from a European Union (EU)-based worldwide financial tracking system. Since financial data is usually well secured and is considered private, being able to access these records is crucial to the Treasury's CT mission.

However, in order to have the authority and ability to subpoena financial data, the USG and the EU need to agree on what—for the purposes of investigations of financial transactions—constitutes terrorism. Further, the Department of the Treasury works with a number of other nations on CT and on other priorities that may be more central to the Treasury's core mission;

Department of the Treasury	
Definition	**Mission**
Terrorism, as defined by the EU-U.S. TFTP: "Acts of a person or entity that involve violence, or are otherwise dangerous to human life or create a risk of damage to property or infrastructure. And which, given their nature and context, are reasonably believed to be committed with the aim of: i) intimidating or coercing a population; ii) intimidating, compelling, or coercing a government or international organization to act or abstain from acting; or iii) seriously destabilizing or destroying the fundamental political, constitutional, economic, or social structure of a country or an international organization."	"The Office of Terrorism and Financial Intelligence marshals the department's intelligence and enforcement functions with the twin aims of safeguarding the financial system against illicit use and combating rogue nations, terrorist facilitators, weapons of mass destruction proliferators, money launderers, drug kingpins, and other national security threats."

Figure 5. The Department of Treasury's Role in Countering and Framing of Terrorism. Source: Department of the Treasury

as such, the Treasury makes it clear that terrorism can be flexibly defined, noting that "when examining individuals or organizations for potential designation, the U.S. works in conjunction with authorities from several other nations, and with international organizations, such as the European Union and the United Nations."[229] If the Department of the Treasury were to take a hard line on the definition of terrorism, it may well deviate from the language in its agreement with the EU; other international entities may be unwilling to provide them with support and information. This would seriously jeopardize the ability to practicably carry out the Treasury's primary CT mission of tracking and freezing terrorist finances via the TFTP—which also means that the Treasury would no longer be able to justify their slice of the CT budget.

This is also a clear demonstration of the way an individual organization's interests and whole-of-government CT efforts can clash without departments or agencies acting in bad faith. In this example, if the Treasury chooses to take a firm and unambiguous stance on definitional issues, it could mean forfeiting access to international financial information—thereby hindering CT effectiveness. However, if the Treasury sticks to EU guidelines, it could

mean that it could not investigate certain actors or organizations that the broader interagency considers a terrorist threat, because the EU does not.

Without an overarching strategic framework or an organization with the authority to direct the wide variety of CT-related tasks for the USG as a whole, individual agencies and departments will pursue aspects of the CT mission according to their own definitions, strengths, and prerogatives. From a SOF perspective, this creates significant challenges for coordinating CT activities through interagency processes, even when all actors have a genuine commitment to achieving national security goals related to CT.

Other Barriers to Interagency Counterterrorism Collaboration

Distinct missions and competition over turf and budget can be a significant challenge to an effective interagency process. It is not, however, the only barrier that SOF will encounter. Though related to questions of core mission and budget competition, several other obstacles routinely present themselves to DOD personnel when navigating interagency processes and relationships. Authorities issues—a reference to political or policy questions of bureaucratic turf—can enter discussions about turf and core missions, muddying already turbulent waters with concerns about legality and congressional oversight. SOF must also recognize that they are part of an enormous organization, the DOD, which can appear monolithic and even threatening to interagency partners. Organizational culture also presents another barrier, as does the use of language. The different agencies and departments have unique organizational cultures, and this promotes within them worldviews and lexicons that can make it difficult to communicate effectively with other entities.[230] Relatedly, there are limited professional incentives for individuals in almost any USG entity to devote the time and energy required to effectively navigate interagency processes. Finally, though not always a barrier, the effectiveness of interagency processes can be impacted—both positively and negatively—by individual personalities at both the highest levels and further down the chain of command, in part because of the lack of standardization regarding interagency matters and even less formal training for these individuals about navigating them.[231]

Distinct missions and competition over turf and budget can be a significant challenge to an effective interagency process.

Authorities: Turf, Budgets, and Domestic Law. Coordination and cooperation between agencies and departments for CT often comes packaged in the language of authorities—a reference to the different titles in U.S. code that authorize various kinds of government activities like warfighting, intelligence collection, and conducting diplomatic missions overseas. As previously mentioned, different authorities can be one of the benefits of partnering with other agencies or departments; sometimes, however, authorities issues refer more to political or policy questions of bureaucratic turf and specifically issues of what agency or department leads in interagency programs, who in Congress or the executive branch has oversight of activities, and what pot of money the funding for the program is drawn from. For the strictly legal issues, government lawyers and legal scholars are essential for ensuring that SOF conducts CT operations appropriately. For the other questions, however, improved understanding of the more cultural, political, and budget-related concerns that are associated with authorities problems can help SOF navigate the sensitivities that title debates present.

The Title 10 versus Title 50 authorities debate presents an informative example. Title 10 is shorthand for the domestic legal authority to carry out "quintessentially military activity;" similarly, Title 50 is often used to refer to intelligence activities.[232] Title numbers are also sometimes used to simply denote a given entity—e.g., DOD versus the CIA. It should first be noted that this distinction is neither accurate nor precise. In fact, "the use of Title 50 to refer solely to activities conducted by the CIA is, at best, inaccurate."[233] Rather, "Title 10 and Title 50 are mutually supporting authorities that can be exercised by the same person or agency."[234]

Title authorities having come into particular focus as the use of force for CT has accelerated a convergence of CIA and DOD activities—often involving SOF. This has meant that concerns about the overlap between SOF and the IC in the CT realm have come to the fore. Debates that reflect these concerns are less about the legal authority to conduct certain operations at particular times and places with specific personnel or assets and more about the rightful role of military organizations on the one hand and intelligence agencies—namely the CIA—on the other.[235] Some officials are concerned about the DOD "going over to the dark side," and being involved in covert, "black SOF" operations.[236] There are even questions about whether involvement in covert work would undermine core SOF competencies.[237] Some

argue that expanding covert military operations under the DOD could have far-reaching reputational impacts on the U.S. military as a whole, reducing partner trust in the U.S. military in places where existing relationships are strong, and making it even more difficult to forge new ties with reluctant host governments. It could also mean that forces engaged in these operations lose the protection of the Geneva Conventions.[238] While these questions are discussed as Title 10 versus Title 50 issues, it is clear from official references to core competencies and other agency culture and identity considerations that it is insufficient to use a strictly legal lens to bring this debate into focus.[239] These questions and the different perceptions of the proper role of different organizations can add additional uncertainty and inefficiency to SOF-interagency CT operations, regardless of whether SOF has the legal authority to engage in particular activities.

The 800-Pound Gorilla Problem. Another barrier to the effectiveness of any interagency process that involves DOD is its relative size in comparison to other agencies and departments. In 2017, the DOS had just 10,000 employees.[240] That same year, the U.S. Army aimed to bring in 76,500 new recruits yet expressed disappointment when it fell short by less than 10 percent—6,500 new recruits, or two-thirds of the entire DOS.[241] Much like the HUMINT discussion previously highlighted in the intelligence realm, interagency partners working with the DOD on CT may be particularly defensive of their turf when the DOD becomes involved in activities that they see as central to their own mission. This is the case as they recognize that they cannot compete effectively with the DOD given massive disparities in resourcing.

Real-life budget constraints and zero-sum thinking can make it appear that any gain in capacity and influence by the DOD is necessarily a loss to other organizations, and there is some validity to the concern that the DOD has steadily increased in size and scope of work for decades. As one scholar of the interagency and former practitioner put it, "we do not yet realize the atrophying effect of the exponential growth of the DOD over the past 50 years on the rest of the interagency, and we certainly do not know what to do about it."[242] Understanding these dynamics may help SOF to diffuse these types of tensions and thereby interact more productively with counterparts and representatives from other agencies and departments.

Culture and Language. Agencies like the DOD have high cultural barriers to entry, posing a real challenge to the interagency officials tasked with liaison and coordination roles. The culture of an organization influences not only how individuals act but how they approach problems and even how they perceive, feel about, and think through problems.[243] One piece of this is that the DOD has a clear hierarchy and set of objectives; this is often not the case in other departments and agencies and is all but completely absent from the interagency process itself. The JSOU *Special Operations Forces Interagency Reference Guide* observes: "In the absence of the familiar unity of command, the special operations warrior must learn to work within an interagency process guided by lead agencies pursuing a unity of effort or, in some cases, the even softer unity of purpose."[244] The DOS—and, incidentally, the NSC more broadly—tends to favor "ambiguity and flexibility" in their missions, goals, and directives, a contrast to the DOD tendency to prize clear orders that lead to measurable end-state objectives.[245] For DOD personnel collaborating with the interagency, adjusting to this less structured organizational environment can prove challenging; for interagency representatives at the DOD, adapting to the unique organizational culture of the DOD may be equally daunting.

Agencies like the DOD have high cultural barriers to entry, posing a real challenge to the interagency officials tasked with liaison and coordination roles.

Another element of organizational culture is the speed with which departments and agencies operate. The DOD is relatively unique in its ability to quickly execute missions in the face of rapidly changing dynamics on the ground. The rest of the interagency tends to focus on gradual implementation of programming and longer-term results. Whereas SOF personnel are accustomed to providing regular updates—perhaps even reporting on the status and position of operators in the field on a minute-by-minute basis, one SOST liaison officer observed that in the interagency, a SOST is "not going to have daily updates on 'the relationship'" to report to his or her commander.[246] The interagency process simply does not move at the same pace. Paradoxically, program funding and planning timelines tend to be longer at the DOD, where five-year plans are the norm. The DOS and USAID tend to have one- to two-year initiatives.

There is also a very real sense that different agencies and departments speak different languages. All government organizations have a dizzying array of acronyms, but the DOD likely leads when it comes to the sheer volume of jargon and lingo. While nearly 500 pages, the *DOD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms* does not cover the everyday phrasing and in-group referents that special operators use.[247] For example, the author Koven uses the term "gun-armor race" when teaching practitioners about the relative cost and efficiency of VEO online efforts and the countermeasures employed by social media firms. He selected this term in order to provide a recognizable parallel for military personnel to latch on to but frequently finds himself explaining the concept when partners from the interagency are also in the classroom. "Gun-armor race" does not appear in the *DOD Dictionary*. Similarly, terms like "freedom of maneuver" and "for your situational awareness (FYSA)" are often employed in military circles but are similarly not defined. The issue extends to the canons that practitioners look to. Author Koven recalls lecturing at a JSOU course comprised principally of uniformed military personnel, during which he made references to "Clausewitz." About 20 minutes into the discussion, one of the two interagency personnel in the course sheepishly asked, "What's Clausewitz?" While the author recognizes his error in not making the lecture as accessible as possible to interagency personnel by clearly explicating key terms and canonical texts, the expressions on some of the faces of the military officers in the room clearly suggested a level of shock and perhaps a resultant loss of confidence in their interagency colleagues, who did not know that Carl von Clausewitz—undoubtedly one of the most important military thinkers of all time—was a "who" and not a "what."

Another instance of language barriers to CT effectiveness appears in the interagency effort to coordinate and synchronize information and influence operations. There is widespread use of the term "strategic communication" when referring to USG and partner nation efforts to communicate with local populations regarding terrorism and CT. Though the USG interagency, the UN, and NATO all use this term, DOD dropped "strategic communication" from its official lexicon in 2012 while continuing to engage in vital communication activities in this area that would benefit from synchronization and coordination across the interagency—and with international partners.[248]

Additionally, sometimes using the wrong language during an interagency engagement can upset the sensitivities of other departments or agencies. In

one instance the authors learned of while conducting interviews for this monograph, a special operator we spoke with jokingly titled the main forum of an interagency conference "The War Room," and it upset leaders from another department to such an extent that it nearly jeopardized the entire conference.[249] Many who work in organizations other than the DOD are wary of the "militarization" of their efforts in civilian arenas like criminal justice reform or development assistance—often with good reason.[250] Whether militarization of an activity is appropriate or not to the task at hand in practice, it typically entails the marginalization of non-DOD entities. These sensitivities may appear excessive, but language use is essential to communication; without effective communication between different agencies and departments, interagency coordination becomes impossible rather than merely challenging.[251]

Professional Incentives. It is also worth mentioning the lack of professional incentives for interagency engagement. Participating in interagency efforts is rarely incentivized when it comes to career advancement, and managers typically prefer to keep their top performing subordinates in house. One U.S. Army special forces (SF) colonel—himself an accomplished SOST who swore by the program—recognized this reality and jokingly referred to the SOST program as the "no colonel left behind" program, a program where USSOCOM's field grade officers who were passed over for command go to finish out their military careers.[252] Given this perception, it is not surprising that SOST billets go unfilled with some frequency or are filled with officers who are not ideally suited to the agencies or departments they embed with.[253] Consequently, the efficacy of the program, and more generally SOF-interagency coordination, is impaired.

The same is true for interagency representatives or liaisons from other agencies. For some entities—including some with which SOF personnel will likely find themselves working closely—CT activities are not a core function of the organization. In such circumstances, individuals have little professional incentive to overcome the barriers to effective interagency processes. USAID, for example, prioritizes development and overseas fieldwork; consequently, an overseas assignment directing assistance efforts in a recipient country is far more consequential for career advancement within the agency than an assignment as a liaison at headquarters (HQ) USSOCOM working CT. Indeed, there may even be a fear that spending too much time

on engagements with military-heavy activities risks personnel becoming indoctrinated to a DOD way of thinking.[254] Professional incentives within the agency to limit the duration of one's engagement with SOF are especially consequential given the substantial investment that agency officials must make to learn DOD culture and its unique lexicon in order to collaborate effectively with SOF. The lack of professional incentives for interagency work throughout the USG means that even though the DOD and USSOCOM offer courses and programs to facilitate better interagency coordination, many career civil servants from organizations other than the DOD have little reason to participate in them.

Personalities. Finally, individual personalities can serve as either a catalyst or an obstacle to interagency CT cooperation. The JSOU *Special Operations Forces Interagency Reference Guide* warns that SOF must often navigate engagements where success is "personality and situationally dependent."[255] The influence of personalities can certainly be felt from individuals at higher levels of seniority.[256] Ambassadors can make or break a country team and has substantial implications for how well interagency activities are coordinated in country. Similarly, military commanders that provide leadership and supportive guidance can set the stage for success; it is worth revisiting the example of Task Force 714, where interagency collaboration proved effective. U.S. Army Lieutenant General Michael Flynn recognized the CIA's sensitivities around sharing HUMINT outside the agency and consequently set clear expectations for DOD personnel, telling them that the CIA was granting them "access to some of their most sensitive human intelligence data and you're going to use it appropriately."[257] On the other hand, the Director of the Office for Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance—U.S. Army Lieutenant General Jay Garner—chose to make little use of DOS resources or personnel during the post-invasion transition to civilian governance in Iraq circa 2003; not only did he opt not to deploy many well-prepared DOS officials, he neglected to review or incorporate the department's 13-volume Future of Iraq Project, on the grounds that it was not "a valid planning document" by his department's standards.[258] If senior leadership signals that they do not consider the interagency a priority, subordinates

Finally, individual personalities can serve as either a catalyst or an obstacle to interagency CT cooperation.

are disincentivized from investing the time and effort necessary to facilitate effective coordination.

The personalities and skills of individuals at all levels, not just senior leadership, drive interagency outcomes. As one intelligence officer put it, big personalities are important in making the interagency work, but it is just as much about issues of culture and sensitivity.[259] Having the right people embedded in other agencies or departments to conduct the day-to-day work of interagency coordination is essential. One former SOST described how there were some people who really "got it" when it came to the importance of the interagency mission for SOF, and these were the individuals who were most able to build trust, open channels of communication, and truly help SOF realize the potential of whole-of-government CT.[260]

Conclusion

Interagency coordination on CT is fraught with many challenges. When attempting to collaborate with other agencies and departments, SOF personnel are often caught at the nexus of the definitions and priorities of other organizations, turf wars, authorities issues, and their own incentives and biases. Yet, when it comes to conducting CT, interagency is not just a buzz word. A whole-of-government approach is vital for the ability of SOF to effectively advance national security objectives in the CT realm. While the previous chapter argued that the current SOF approach to CT is not strategically sound, CT effectiveness is also hampered by limitations when it comes to coordination with the interagency. Recognizing that effective approaches to CT require the USG to leverage considerably more than the military instrument of national power, this reality becomes all the more troubling. A better understanding of the underlying nature and the roots of interagency conflicts, the way other agencies and departments view CT, and common barriers to interagency processes are all necessary for special operators hoping to achieve meaningful CT outcomes.

Key Takeaways

- The interagency provides competencies and authorities that can be synergetic to SOF CT efforts. Working with the interagency—especially the IC and the country team—is a key component of SOF effectiveness.

- Individual agencies and departments tend to pursue their own interests, such as maintaining influence, accomplishing their core mission, and securing an adequate share of the budget. These bureaucratic politics impact an organization's willingness to engage in cooperation.
- The 9/11 terrorist attacks were a failure of interagency coordination, especially in the intelligence arena. In the wake of those attacks, the USG established new institutions that advanced the idea of whole-of-government CT but did not institutionalize a new interagency process for CT.
- Sizable budgetary incentives for a wide variety of USG entities to become involved in CT resulted following 9/11.
- Different agencies and departments frame terrorism and CT differently and consider distinct activities to be key priorities. These views are often based on the organization's own strengths, core mission, and worldview.
- Other factors—like differences in organizational cultures and personalities, as well as career incentives—can negatively impact SOF-interagency coordination and decrease overall CT effectiveness.

Chapter 4. U.S. Special Operations Forces and Overseas Counterterrorism Partnerships

Having examined barriers to SOF CT effectiveness emanating from a disruption-centric approach in chapter 2 and interagency coordination in chapter 3, this chapter endeavors to address the promise and challenge of the role of SOF in developing lasting relationships and capable CT partners worldwide. This chapter draws on comparative politics and broader political and military science literatures to highlight the necessity of partnerships for strategically sound CT and to identify and explain the fundamental challenges that SOF face when engaging in CT abroad with partners. While there are many hurdles to overcome—SOF need sufficient resources, the right hardware, good local information, language training, and cultural intelligence to achieve success—the focus of this chapter is on the political and institutional barriers U.S. SOF face when conducting and building partner nation (PN) capacity for CT overseas. Though barriers emanating from foreign partners receive most of this chapter's focus, attention is also devoted to limitations regarding USG and DOD approaches to foreign partnerships for CT.

The purpose of discussing the diverse political, institutional, and military organizational elements that SOF encounter during engagements with partners is twofold. First, forewarned is forearmed. There is a greater chance of success for individual engagements if special operators understand not only the partner forces and CT mission but also the political and other contextual factors that can complicate a military or government's willingness and ability to be effective partners. Second, it underscores the need for a U.S. strategic vision for CT. Thoughtful, well-crafted partnerships can be forged and maintained even in the face of challenges like factitious host nation politics and the reluctance of partner forces to employ civil-military operations (CMO). This requires a serious evaluation of the costs and inputs necessary to achieve desirable outcomes that contribute to long-term U.S. national security goals. SOF may be well-suited to navigate these complex situations with partners, but such engagements must take place in the context

of a coherent, whole-of-government approach to CT that includes multiple instruments of national power of multiple nations.

The first section outlines the CT-related advantages that accrue when U.S. SOF partner with local forces. Broadly speaking, partners provide local knowledge and access in the short term and—if successful—can provide a credible local CT presence over the long term. In many ways, capable PN governments and partner security forces, including partner SOF, offer the only real, long-term solution for protecting populations throughout the world, including the U.S. homeland, against the threat of terrorism. While U.S. SOF routinely collaborate with highly capable SOF partners from advanced industrialized countries—and these collaborations serve not only CT missions but broader political purposes while increasing interoperability—it should be noted that many points in this chapter will be most relevant to U.S. SOF partnerships with less advanced forces or governments in the developing world.

There are, however, numerous barriers to working productively with PNs and partner forces, which may hinder SOF effectiveness in achieving desirable CT outcomes. Some of these are located at the level of the partner government. The divergent interests of foreign leaders, coupled with a nation's sovereign rights within its territory, mean that U.S. and partner governments often clash—even when all parties have a genuine interest in reducing or eliminating terrorist threats. The partner forces who work with U.S. SOF can also present challenges. Often, partner forces are not yet materially and institutionally equipped to engage in effective and strategically sound CT operations. Additionally, these organizations may have biases that make population-centric CT particularly challenging to develop and implement—not unlike in the United States. The barriers located in partner governments and forces are addressed in the second section, as is a discussion of the unique strategic and practical issues posed by partnering with non-state actors.

There are also barriers to U.S. CT operations abroad that originate in the USG and particularly in the DOD. Funding limitations, competing priorities within a given engagement, and short time horizons are common problems in the USG's application of SOF to counter terrorist threats. These USG-level issues have serious implications. Also, there is currently no overarching DOD framework that reflects the reality that SOF face in CT partnerships. SOF are often simultaneously working to train partner forces, match partner

skills to missions, provide context-specific assets and functions, and employ population-centric measures like CMOs while also eliminating and degrading terrorist networks that are a threat to U.S. interests. These engagements are a serious challenge and call upon SOF to pull from multiple doctrines, often in an ad hoc manner. These USG and DOD-level issues are discussed in the third section. The final section concludes.

The main objectives of this chapter include:

- recognizing the connection between the demands of population-centric CT and the necessity of working by, with, and through partner governments and partner forces
- identifying the common ways in which partner government and U.S. interests may or may not align when it comes to CT
- understanding what absorptive capacity is and how partner force absorptive capacity impacts the success of U.S. SOF in long-term CT efforts
- recognizing the broader and contradictory strategic implications of SOF partnerships with non-state actors for U.S. and global security
- learning how USG thinking and planning around international partnerships can adversely affect SOF CT effectiveness

Effectiveness and Sustainability: Foreign Partners for Special Operations Forces Counterterrorism

Local partners are an essential component of a global CT strategy, a principle that has been enshrined in the NSS since the Clinton and, arguably, the Reagan administration.[261] Though rightly criticized as an incoherent strategy in its own right, engagement with other nations and their security forces is, nonetheless, a crucial component of a global CT effort. At a moment when U.S. strategic priorities are shifting to focus more heavily on great power competition, it is especially clear that the U.S. must embrace opportunities to work with PNs to counter terrorists and their networks. The farther "left of bang" that collaboration occurs, the better. Even "right of bang," effective SOF CT efforts abroad can prevent terrorist challenges to local governments from expanding into conflagrations that threaten the U.S. directly and require larger expenditures of blood and treasure to address.[262] Regrettably, transregional terrorist organizations like al-Qaeda and the Islamic State

have proven extremely adept at reorienting the violence of localized groups to serve their global ambitions.[263]

The nature of the current threat also points to the need for working with partners throughout the world to limit the impact and activities of terrorists and their networks. From al-Shabaab in Somalia, to al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb in the sparsely populated Timbuktu region of Mali, to the Islamic State's East Asia Province's fighters arrayed across the thousands of tiny islands in the archipelagos of Southeast Asia, terrorism and terrorist organizations thrive in the world's under-governed spaces.[264] Indeed, the threat is perhaps best characterized as a number of globally distributed terrorist networks with an ever-changing web of affiliations and relationships between highly transnational and decidedly local actors.[265] The sheer geographic reach of terrorists demands that CT is pursued as a similarly global enterprise.

Indeed, the vital role of partners and the difficulty in achieving strategic objectives without them was one of the hardest-learned lessons of the Global War on Terror. The large conventional ground operations of the Global War on Terror have had far-reaching, often negative consequences and second- and third-order effects on the Middle East, Central Asia, and farther afield; they have also been enormously costly.[266] The U.S. cannot—nor should it—unilaterally expend the effort to secure all volatile areas. A combination of working directly to reduce the immediate threat emanating from the worst hot spots and indirectly building the capacity of PNs is a much more sound and realistic approach.[267] In this sense, partners are the *sine qua non* of global CT—though not, of course, a panacea.

From a theoretical perspective, the critical role of foreign partners for CT is even clearer given the conclusion and primary argument of chapter 2—that, to achieve meaningful results, CT should look a lot more like COIN. It is worth noting that this also means CT can be rather low tech; the lack of certain capabilities—for example, precision strike—is less consequential for many partner forces than current approaches may make it seem. Rather, population-centric CT has several key components—including gathering information from locals and building greater trust in government. Indeed, too much emphasis on hardware or advanced technology may create a barrier between military forces and the population, thereby decreasing CT effectiveness, sometimes dramatically.[268] Local forces that engage in face-to-face interactions with the populace are particularly necessary, meaning

that most partners are at least materially well-suited for engaging in crucial CT activities.

Importantly, PN forces also bring a great deal of local knowledge to the table. This is not just in the form of enhanced understanding of local dialects and cultures, though that is in and of itself beneficial. Partner forces are also better positioned to understand and interpret the unique social and political dimensions of the terrorist threat and the root causes which make the population susceptible to terrorist recruitment. Moreover, a uniformed U.S. military presence can be controversial in some settings. The presence of U.S. troops may be used in terrorist propaganda narratives designed to drive resource mobilization. Mistrust and histories of colonialism in many PNs may make partners wary or even hostile toward a U.S. presence and interests.[269] Gaining access to territory and intelligence for effective CT in these circumstances may necessitate that the U.S. employ a by, with, and through approach that heavily leverages local partner forces. Moreover, the involvement and professionalization of local forces ultimately increases the populace's trust in their government; this negates common VEO recruitment narratives surrounding the incompetence, neglect, or corruption of the local government and its security forces. T.E. Lawrence's 15th article on Arab warfare nicely summarizes this reality: "Better the Arabs do it tolerably than you do it perfectly... Your practical work will not be as good as, perhaps, you think it is."[270] While Lawrence's focus was on irregular warfare in the Arab world, this recognition is much more broadly applicable.

Importantly, PN forces also bring a great deal of local knowledge to the table.

In short, only by partnering with foreign governments and their security forces can long-term, sustainable CT gains be made throughout much of the world. This is true even in areas where the USG is willing to expend massive amounts of American blood and treasure to counter subversion. The U.S. experiences in Vietnam, Afghanistan, and Iraq clearly illustrate that America's commitment to protracted and bloody conflicts is necessarily circumscribed. Unfortunately, VEOs also took notice of this reality. If the U.S. is unable to train and equip local forces to effectively and independently pursue CT, the departure of U.S. forces will merely create a power, capacity, and capability vacuum, which VEOs will exploit.[271] Recognizing this reality, Ho Chi Minh famously outlined his theory of victory to the French

colonialists in Vietnam, stating: "You will kill ten of us, we will kill one of you, but in the end, you will tire of it first."[272] While Ho Chi Minh was correct, neither the French nor the U.S. heeded his warning. Leaving behind capable CT partners after an engagement is essential to the sustainability of USG CT efforts.[273]

"Them" Barriers to Special Operations Forces Counterterrorism Effectiveness with International Partners

Unfortunately, no matter how central partners are to U.S. CT efforts, effective partnerships in this domain are difficult to realize. Limited capabilities and proficiencies within partner forces are not the only barriers. When the USG involves itself in a nation's security landscape, it is also necessarily stepping into the political landscape. The presence of U.S. SOF can alter regional geo-political power dynamics, affect the calculus and activities of armed groups both within and outside the country in question, provide fodder for various political and civil society entities, and even shift the balance of power between civilian and military institutions in the country. The institutional and political barriers located with "them"—international partners—are the focus of this section.

Partner Nation Politics and Governments

Sovereignty. For the purposes of this work, sovereignty can be understood as supreme authority within a territory, and it is this underlying authority that makes the partner government's interests and capacities important considerations for SOF. Certainly, the U.S. can and does negotiate with partners about CT activities and often has various kinds of leverage with reluctant or even recalcitrant partners. By virtue of being sovereign states, however, PNs have the authority to dictate and pursue their own laws, interests, perceptions, and priorities without reference to the United States. Dwight D. Eisenhower, drawing on his extensive World War II experience in managing the challenges of combined commands, had this to say on the subject: "No charter can be written for an allied commander and made to stick. As long as nations are sovereign, they always

Certainly, the U.S. can and does negotiate with partners about CT activities and often has various kinds of leverage with reluctant or even recalcitrant partners.

have the right to reverse a prior decision, get out of any situation they think they can when they can cut their losses."[274]

It also means that host governments have more control over the domestic social and political factors that matter most for CT and have international, legally recognized veto power over numerous details of an engagement. They can establish and change the rules, the agreements, the nature of the engagements, and their own laws and constitutions—with implications for crucial elements of agreements necessary to enable an engagement by U.S. SOF, such as the legal status of forces in PNs. In 2014, U.S. negotiations with the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan took months to resolve, as then-President Hamid Karzai expressed growing concern and frustration about Afghan casualties.[275] One of the specific sticking points was whether or not U.S. troops would be allowed into the homes of ordinary Afghans.[276] The bilateral security agreement ultimately signed as a result of these negotiations restricted independent U.S. combat operations, a dramatic shift in the nature of the U.S. military engagement there that altered everything from timetables to operational planning and long-term strategic outcomes. For SOF, these issues mostly fall well outside of the operator's control. It is worth noting that perceptions of excessive collateral damage or poor conduct by U.S. personnel, including contractors, can contribute to international tensions—a manifestation of tactical errors with profound strategic implications.

Most elements of an engagement, then, are not designed exclusively by U.S. military planners with a deep understanding of the requirements of a given (CT) mission. Rather, PN governments—including potentially, but not necessarily, partner force leadership—determine whether SOF is present at all, in what numbers, the size and location of the area of responsibility, and what objectives they can pursue. For instance, the U.S. may have an agreement with a PN that limits SOF to target only a certain group or type of group—and then only in a particular region—frustrating U.S. efforts to disrupt and degrade terrorist groups throughout the country. As one expert put it, in testimony to Congress, "Local governments can be fickle and uncooperative. A government that is willing to target Salafi-jihadist groups at one point can change its assessment."[277] This adds volatility to engagements and poses a serious challenge to SOF. Similarly, the duration and scope of training and capacity building efforts may be constrained by the terms of an agreement between the USG and the PN government, which was not necessarily written with the unitary goal of maximizing the efficacy of the SOF

partnership in mind. Finally, it is worth noting that circumstances—from permitted training content, to the nature of the terrorist threat, to the very composition of the PN government itself—can change. Fortunately, changes can go in both directions. As will be described in chapter 5, restraint and respect for the PN's authority in the Philippines built trust with the host government and led to more permissive rules of engagement and an expanded role for the U.S. with positive impacts on CT effectiveness.[278]

Alignment of Interests and Objectives. The authority of sovereign nations means that their interests must be taken into consideration. Unfortunately, SOF does not get to choose their partners; the USG and ultimately history, circumstance, and to a certain extent terrorists themselves do. The most fundamental hurdle that SOF effectiveness faces when conducting CT, either directly or indirectly, is a lack of alignment between PN and U.S. interests.[279] In a study on BPC effectiveness, RAND scholars found that "BPC is most effective when U.S. objectives align with PN objectives."[280] This was the most commonly identified factor across all cases of BPC success; when there is fairly close alignment on at least a set of CT-related issues and priorities, there is a much greater chance for success.[281] When this is lacking, capacity building—including in contexts where CT is the ultimate U.S. goal—proved ineffective. As the report rather bluntly notes, "You can't want it more than they do."[282]

Why should there be a lack of alignment on CT in particular? This question may appear difficult to answer. On the surface, it seems that governments of all stripes would prefer to have a monopoly on violence in their territory and eliminate the threat of terrorist organizations harming their citizens, societies, and economies.[283] One of the more common scenarios—and the one with the least negative impact on SOF effectiveness—is that PNs simply "want it less than we do." Namely, they are facing challenges and threats that they perceive to be bigger, more important, or generally higher priority than the threat and challenge of terrorism. Threats from neighboring countries might be the main focus of the national security apparatus; other governments may find that containing separatist conflicts or reducing narcotrafficking and transnational organized criminal groups are their top priorities.[284] If so, their best military and civilian personnel, political

Why should there be a lack of alignment on CT in particular?

attention, and material resources may be otherwise engaged and inaccessible to U.S. special operators engaged in CT. In fact, PNs might agree to work with U.S. SOF, not because of the security threat that terrorism poses but rather because they are interested in establishing a relationship with the United States. This means that devoting the country's own domestic resources—including military personnel—to build genuine CT capacity is not necessary for a partner government to achieve its objectives in an ostensibly CT-based engagement with U.S. forces. These scenarios leave the U.S. more invested in a CT mission than partners and often lead to unsatisfactory, or at least more limited, outcomes.

For democratic PNs, one important priority for ruling parties and politicians is maintaining their office. These parties and politicians are likely to pay close attention to popular opinion about the presence of U.S. forces and push for policies and agreements that increase their chances for reelection accordingly. Indeed, attitudes towards the U.S. and views about international relations therewith have been flashpoints—even in the domestic elections of close partners like the Republic of Korea.[285] BPC typically requires long-term engagement and is not likely to yield massive dividends within the scope of a single electoral cycle; popular sentiments towards cooperation with the U.S. military, however, can change rapidly. Even for partners genuinely committed to CT, electoral interests can drive governments to alter agreements with the U.S. in ways that have direct negative impacts on CT effectiveness.

For other regime types, it may be the military itself that poses the greatest threat to the current government, leadership, or party in power. These circumstances are less commonly encountered by U.S. SOF engaged in CT abroad but can have a stronger negative impact on the chances of achieving U.S. objectives. Political leadership may be more interested in protecting themselves against the threat of a military coup than countering terrorism.[286] In such instances, the training and capabilities that U.S. SOF offer security forces to tackle terrorist networks might run counter to regime security. If a government is worried about a military coup, the last thing they likely want is a cadre of highly trained, well-equipped, and well-coordinated military units.[287] Box 11 elaborates on the unintended relationship between U.S. CT support and military coups.

Box 11. Perverse Incentives, Perverse Results: U.S. Counterterrorism Support and Military Coups

More seriously, partner forces may have their own political interests and partner governments that fear coups may have every reason to do so. Civilian control of the military is a crucial component of stable democracies and at the very heart of the U.S. Constitution, but scholars have long been concerned about the pervasive and potentially negative impacts of military aid and training on PN politics and societies, particularly with respect to *coups d'états*.[288] High-profile examples like the 2014 coup in Burkina Faso[289] and the 2012 coup in Mali[290] saw U.S.-trained officers play leading roles in the overthrow of civilian governments. Recent scholarship suggests that this is not merely the case of a few opportunistic military leaders, but rather that U.S. military training is statistically correlated with higher incidences of military coups.[291] By increasing the human capital of military officers, U.S. training enhances the military's capacity and can change power dynamics within a regime.[292] Apart from the normative and political implications of this alarming correlation, there is also a strategic question to consider: Are U.S. CT objectives being achieved if partner forces are involved in military overthrows of civilian governments? In both Mali and Burkina Faso, there was a marked increase in terrorist activity in the years following these coups. These long-term negative outcomes reflect the reality that at best, U.S. CT support to partner forces is liable to be misused. At worst, it may be a fundamentally destabilizing force in weak polities that already face terrorist threats. Indeed, incidences of recent coups are one of the factors used to calculate the State Fragility Index, a commonly used indicator in social science research on state failure, ungoverned spaces, and regime stability.[293]

It is also possible that governments or some key officials may have perverse incentives in the area of CT and may derive benefits from an ongoing terrorist threat or presence. For example, the security threat may enable governments to implement policies that would otherwise been challenging to pursue, especially repressive measures that restrict civil rights and freedoms

and expand police and security forces powers.[294] Alternatively, the terrorist organization may prove useful in regional competition with a neighboring country; the government in Iraq supported the anti-government terrorist organization Mujahedin-e-Khalq in Iran during the 1980s for precisely this reason.[295] In addition, it is possible that the group in question shares ideological beliefs or salient identities with an important domestic, political constituency; precipitous action against the group could undermine fragile governing coalitions.[296] In these cases, U.S. and PN interests in CT are not just misaligned but are in direct opposition.

It can also behoove unpopular or struggling governments to have a terrorist scapegoat that distracts from persistent governance issues and corruption; the presence of such a threat may ultimately bolster support or even legitimacy of a government.[297] In Sudan, for instance, both military governments and democratically elected leaders routinely attempted to garner ethnically based support for otherwise inept or corrupt governments by stirring up ethnic and religious animus towards insurgent groups in the south. To the extent that this was effective for some regimes, it was because much of the population of southern Sudan—now South Sudan—had a different religious and ethnic demographic composition than the population in the north and the capital, Khartoum.[298] U.S. SOF assistance that effectively eliminates such groups would simultaneously remove a useful political tool.

In any of these scenarios, partners are less likely to provide support for U.S. CT operations or dedicate the time and attention to narrowly focused CT efforts. It may simply be that partners are not actively working to facilitate CT cooperation. Seemingly mundane stumbling blocks—like missed and inefficient meetings, having the wrong people involved, or not providing relevant information, orders, or authorizations for training and operations—can all inhibit the effectiveness of U.S. SOF CT efforts in the country. U.S. SOF, if they can recognize these issues for what they are, may be able to call on the interagency, such as the country team, to help generate local buy-in and improve outcomes.

In the cases of more seriously misaligned interests and priorities, it is possible that PN governments may use newfound skills and U.S. security aid to advance interests that do not align with, or even run counter to, U.S. strategic priorities.[299] If this sounds far-fetched, consider the case of Libya's General Khalifa Haftar. The military leader has led several coups and frequently invoked the language of CT and the war on terror to gain international

support while pursuing destructive and divisive military campaigns—targeting both jihadist groups like Ansar al Sharia and armed groups loyal to the elected government.[300] Such use of CT resources and rhetoric only exacerbates the turmoil, undermines the recognized government, and ultimately serves to increase the long-term threat of terrorism emanating from Libya. These perverse CT outcomes derive from more serious interest misalignment with partners. Avoiding, or at least tightly managing, these potentially more toxic partnerships is why a well-considered CT strategy—with a clear role for SOF—is so crucial.

Limited Government Capacity and Interagency Cooperation. Partner force SOF, like U.S. SOF, do not operate in a vacuum. Political and bureaucratic processes affect them and their ability to engage in effective and strategically sound CT. As explained in the previous context, dozens of USG organizations play an important role in CT efforts involving a mix of capabilities and authorities. Other countries face similarly complex domestic CT landscapes, which U.S. SOF must navigate when working with PN forces. Even large, powerful, and heavily institutionalized nations like the U.S. struggle to develop appropriate organizational structures and capabilities to engage in whole-of-government CT. Important issues like domestic terrorism laws are still being debated as the global terrorist threat changes and evolves over time.[301]

Partner force SOF, like U.S. SOF, do not operate in a vacuum.

Many partner countries—especially those experiencing severe issues with terrorism and under-governed spaces—have a bigger lift to achieve the legal and institutional infrastructure needed to effectively combat terrorism. A simple example of this reality is that many countries around the world do not have adequate terrorism laws on the books.[302] Albania, for instance, saw between 100 to 150 of its citizens travel to Iraq and Syria between 2012 and 2014 to support the Islamic State; it was not until late in 2014 that the "recruitment, act, and facilitation of foreign terrorist fighting" was included in the country's criminal code.[303] In the absence of antiterrorism laws such as statutes criminalizing foreign terrorist fighters, security forces have limited options when it comes to pursuing, arresting, detaining, trying, and incarcerating individuals involved in certain kinds of terrorist activities. In the Albanian case, there was an inability to prosecute foreign terrorist fighters

who left Albania to join the Islamic State prior to the 2014 law criminalizing traveling overseas to engage in terrorism; the limited size of the state police CT unit meant that while returning foreign terrorist fighters posed a clear security threat, the CT unit lacked the personnel to provide adequate surveillance. In addition to individual agencies and departments having limited tools, there is need for interagency cooperation in PNs. For example, had interagency coordination been more developed, the CT unit might have partnered with entities other than law enforcement to provide rehabilitation and reintegration to returning foreign terrorist fighters; individuals who posed a continuing security threat may have been reduced to a manageable number, given their limited surveillance resources. These dynamics—especially when it comes to coordinating security force activities with the work of civilian agencies—are a struggle for nations around the world.[304]

In addition to administrative structures and legal frameworks, a critical mass of partners and potential partners in CT lack the capacity to wage the population-centric approach to CT advocated by this monograph. These approaches require far more than martial skill. State capacity and penetration is low in many areas of some countries, which are not coincidentally often the front lines for CT—or COIN.[305] Governments may also lack sufficient material resources to deliver nutrition, healthcare, education, and other goods and services to citizens, while corruption and governance issues could further undermine efforts to gain legitimacy and undercut drivers of extremism. While these problems are not insurmountable, fixing them takes time, serious investments, and political will. Absent these types of interventions, the use of local or U.S. SOF will not contribute to long-term, strategic CT success.

Partner Forces

Diverse PN governments and political landscapes pose challenges to CT effectiveness. U.S. SOF often are, however, working most closely with the partner forces themselves, which can present their own set of barriers for achieving CT goals through these partnerships. For the purpose of this discussion, partner forces are limited to the security forces of the recognized PN; a separate subsection focuses on non-state actor partners. Limited organizational capacities, capability and resource gaps, and institutionalized biases are likely to be present to varying degrees when the U.S. partners with all but the most advanced forces—and sometimes, even with the most

advanced forces. For instance, during France's Operation SERVAL to counter the spread of terrorist groups in Mali, the U.S. was needed to provide essential support for logistics and transport; intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR); and aerial refueling, which the French armed forces simply lacked.[306] Understanding these barriers and planning for how and where they are most likely to interfere with achieving CT outcomes is a key step to improving U.S. SOF effectiveness.

Limited Capabilities. Partner forces ideally provide local knowledge, capacity, logistics, and every other advantage discussed in the first section of this chapter. However, partner forces are not always able, or not always immediately able, to contribute these toward the pursuit of USG interests or CT. A sophisticated and far-reaching worldwide SOF network with highly capable partners in all corners of the globe linked closely with theater special operations commands and geographic combatant commands may well be in place some decades from now.[307] However, just as U.S. SOF currently do not get to choose the nations and governments with which they partner, the nature of the partner forces they work with can and does vary widely.

This is the basic reason that training is such a crucial component of so many U.S. SOF CT engagements; U.S. SOF are frequently working with forces that have nontrivial limitations when it comes to conducting CT on their own. These can be anything from material capabilities and technologies to skills at the level of individual operators or small units. For instance, partner forces may have an extant intelligence apparatus that needs bolstering with advanced U.S. hardware. In such a case, training operators and integrating that hardware may be sufficient to leverage the advantages of local forces to achieve shared CT goals. Partner forces may also have much more severe capabilities limitations. Thus, the priorities for capability generation and capacity building will vary from engagement to engagement. These barriers must be overcome in order to achieve U.S. CT objectives by, with, and through partners.

Gaps between what SOF expect to find—in terms of partner capabilities—and what actually exists on the ground are a common feature of engagements. Fortunately, U.S. SOF are increasingly skilled in training partners; enhancing capabilities of partners can have positive and even synergistic effects for many types of capability generation. Training in battlefield medicine, for instance, not only develops that particular skill but can boost morale

and motivation for partner forces.[308] Author Koven recalls working with one of two Beninese Ministry of Interior forces designated as a SF unit. Prior to receiving training from U.S. Marine Forces Africa, the likelihood that a severely wounded trooper would succumb to his injuries through exsanguination or infection was almost certain. The force did not have even the most basic medical training—e.g., how to apply a tourniquet or pack a wound with hemostatic gauze. Despite myriad limitations, this unit was extremely dedicated to the mission at hand. Greater confidence instilled by U.S. training can increase the willingness of a partner force to engage subversives in the field and amplify their effectiveness when they met the opposition force on the battlefield. Successful contacts with the enemy can in turn provide forces with deeply valuable experience that training exercises cannot fully simulate.

Figure 6. Author Barnett S. Koven (L) and a Beninese SF officer pose for a photo during a USG-funded training course in Cotonou, Benin in June 2019. Source: Barnett S. Koven/used with permission

Fully understanding the limitations of partner forces and devising appropriate interventions to increase their capabilities is critical to building effective partner capacity. In many ways, the specific limitations that may be encountered—such as the lack of combat medical training among the Beninese Ministry of Interior forces—are easier to remedy than some of the issues described in this chapter. U.S. SOF regularly impart lessons that quickly increase the CT-relevant capabilities, at least at the tactical level, of partner forces.

Limited Absorptive Capacity. Other barriers are more difficult for U.S. SOF to address. In addition to having different and potentially lower baseline capabilities, partners vary in terms of their absorptive capacity. This refers to the ability of a partner to absorb or internalize and actually make use of

new material and training.[309] Existing absorptive capacity, like existing military capabilities, is determined by a range of factors including "equipment, organizational characteristics, readiness, the extent of existing training, technological sophistication, education, language abilities, and doctrine."[310] Put differently, partner defense establishments—from the macro level down to individual units—may lack the ability to internalize or employ equipment and training provided by U.S. SOF.

A major dimension of absorptive capacity rests with support personnel.[311] Just as whole-of-government CT requires a large and intricate interagency infrastructure, complex security endeavors like CT need a fair amount of defense ministry capacity to ensure effectiveness. Sometimes referred to as the "tooth to tail" problem, and hardly unique to CT or SOF, it is clearly the case that it is much easier to train a soldier to fire a weapon than it is to make sure that they have the right equipment, that said equipment is maintained, and that supply lines of communication exist to ensure they are resupplied with spare parts and ammunition in the field.[312] Moreover, too great a focus on developing combat skills can create a tactically effective partner force that is unable to translate kinetic effects into meaningful strategic gains.[313] Focusing on tactical skills like marksmanship and vehicle control point operations is tempting; results can be seen quickly in these domains and are easily measured. However, CT effectiveness often comes down not to the soldier firing a weapon but to the partner force's capacity to provide adequate material and information to support both kinetic and non-kinetic engagements. When this underlying capacity is lacking, there are limits to the strategic gains that training and cooperation with U.S. SOF can provide.

Building indigenous capacity to collect intelligence provides a good example of the absorptive capacity issue. ISR is often required to ensure that partner forces can locate and engage the opposition force. For the USG, providing ISR support is relatively easy but developing indigenous ISR capabilities among partner forces is difficult. This is in part because it is not just a challenge to create intelligence collection capabilities inside partner countries, it is even more complicated still to develop the necessary infrastructure to ensure the collection, fusion of disparate intelligence sources, and the diffusion of actionable intelligence to operational forces in the field. When author Koven worked with the Beninese

ISR is often required to ensure that partner forces can locate and engage the opposition force.

Ministry of Interior forces, one of the largest barriers for the unit related to obtaining actionable intelligence and then exploiting it to ensure they were in the right place at the right time—to engage the opposition force in a manner consistent with desirable security outcomes.[314] ISR requires so much "tail" and continues to be a pain point for many partner forces. Unfortunately, it is a problem that must be resolved; it does not matter in the least how tactically proficient partner forces are if they are unable to bring their martial skills to bear against the opposition force.

Security forces' absorptive capacity limitations can be at the level of the organization, but they can also be located at the level of individuals or units as well. Background levels of education, training, and professionalization of military forces prior to U.S. arrival and engagement may not sufficiently prepare partners to receive the high-level training that U.S. SOF are prepared to deliver. It is also worth recalling the strategic corporal discussion from chapter 2; though more rigorous and diverse training programs for NCOs are increasingly a focus of USSOCOM, counterparts in partner forces are likely to have significantly less training and extant educational attainment.[315] To the extent that U.S. SOF have the latitude to design engagements and articulate their own goals, focusing on developing partner defense ministries and military education can yield sizeable returns. Absent the ability to improve professional military education (PME) systems and improve recruitment standards in PNs, U.S. SOF must be careful to tailor efforts to build partner capacity to an appropriate level given the nature of the threat and the nature of partner forces absorptive capacity.

Building Capacity Versus Capturing Terrorists. Another limitation, or at least a source of frustration, is the fact that U.S. SOF are often balancing between achieving battlefield effects and enhancing partner capacity to counter terrorism on their own. In a study of SOF capacity building skills, one researcher quotes a SOF veteran, remarking that, "It's pretty obvious that we're not going to kill our way to victory."[316] The need for a long-term, indirect solution to global terrorism means that it is very often "better to allow the partner to do things poorly" than for U.S. SOF to take a leading role on tasks that partners will become responsible for successfully accomplishing in the long run.[317] Commanders must weigh whether or not DA by U.S. SOF will achieve greater returns than allowing partner units to (possibly) fail to achieve a given tactical objective —but to nonetheless learn by doing.[318] The

value of this approach came to be more broadly understood and accepted in the later stages of operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, but it can be frustrating for U.S. special operators, who recognize that they could have achieved mission success at moments when partners fail to do so.[319]

Military Biases and Organizational Interests. Like the individual services in the U.S., U.S. SOF, and the DOD itself, foreign military organizations tend to have their own cultures and biases. In terms of missions and activity preferences, partner forces also tend to have a preference for kinetic CT—much like that described in the core mission bias section of chapter 2. One way this instantiates itself to the detriment of CT effectiveness is with respect to the uneven development of partner force capabilities between SOF and their enablers and for distinct tasks within SOF units. This was an issue in Iraq among Iraqi special operations forces (ISOF). As one coalition member NCO involved in the partnership put it, individual ISOF operators tended not to want to be "the guy wearing a night observation device driving a truck with 20 assaulters in the back."[320] The assaulter role was more desirable. This is a sentiment, or at least an instinct, that many SOF might identify with—but also one that leads to unnecessary casualties from things like improper distribution of skilled personnel or even vehicle accidents if inadequate time and effort is expended on proper training for all relevant tasks.[321]

This means that even where the capabilities to conduct crucial CT activities like IO or CMO already exist within partner forces, SOF can be left to contend with an organizational bias that leaves partners with no interest in key activities or cultural changes. Because kinetic approaches tend to be more readily embraced by partners—as opposed to activities oriented towards winning hearts and minds—the challenge for SOF is often to impress upon partner forces the strategic importance of these latter types of activities. A related bias against NCOs and junior officers in some partner force organizational cultures can also hinder strategically sound CT. This was an issue that plagued ISOF and U.S. efforts in Iraq, where NCOs were marginalized and poorly regarded by some ISOF leaders despite the vital role these operators play in CT efforts, which require tactical flexibility—and thus the devolution of substantial authority to NCOs and junior officers.[322] As the discussion on absorptive capacity limitations above suggests, it may well be necessary to build a kind of "acceptance capacity" by demonstrating the utility of non-kinetic activities before partners are actually ready and willing to gain

knowledge and expertise from training or even support the efforts of U.S. SOF in these areas. Fortunately, like capabilities and capacities, these kinds of attitudes and beliefs can change as a result of well-planned partnerships with U.S. SOF, where the importance of these aspects of CT are not only taught in the classroom but demonstrated in partners' own communities.

Personalities. Finally, as with any cooperative enterprise, personalities can play a role in effective U.S. SOF-partner force engagements. This is an idiosyncratic feature that can be difficult to predict, but it is worth underscoring the extent to which having the right or wrong personnel in place can lead to major limitations or opportunities in U.S. SOF CT engagements.

Finally, as with any cooperative enterprise, personalities can play a role in effective U.S. SOF-partner force engagements.

Non-State Partners

Not all potential partners for U.S. SOF are government forces. In the fall of 2001, U.S. and coalition forces and the Northern Alliance rapidly ousted the Taliban from power and dominance in Afghanistan. SOF played a central and celebrated role in these initial stages of Operation ENDURING FREEDOM Afghanistan.[323] There are times when the USG needs on-the-ground partners in areas that are denied to government forces or in countries where the sitting government and leadership—like the Taliban government in Afghanistan circa 2001—is an unsuitable partner. There are also circumstances in which the U.S. has tasked SOF with pursuing CT security interests in areas where there are no effective government forces with which SOF can partner, perhaps due to political instability, regime change, or collapse—for instance, in Libya circa 2011. In these cases, partnering with violent non-state actors like the Northern Alliance—or in the more contemporary setting of the Syrian conflict, the Kurdish Peshmerga—offers a potential solution. Indeed, working with such forces is one of the 12 core activities with which USSOCOM is explicitly tasked.

These types of partners, however, present their own set of challenges. In some ways, these challenges should not be thought of as distinct from those already described above—indeed, partnering with violent non-state actors present many of the same political and military considerations as partnering with state forces. Many of the key issues with respect to partner

governments and partner armed forces are also at play when it comes to violent non-state actor partners. For many of these factors, the barriers and challenges discussed in this section will be even more severe and the solutions more fraught for U.S. SOF trying to wage effective CT. There is likely to be an even greater lack of alignment when it comes to goals and objectives and an even greater chance of pernicious unintended consequences when U.S. SOF expands the capabilities and capacities of violent non-state actors. This reality became all too clear during the early days of the Afghan war. Special operators were forced to quickly confront the reality that the Northern Alliance they were embedded with—officially known as the United Front forces—were anything but united. Rather, the Alliance was a loose configuration of the forces of three warlords of diverse ethnic and religious backgrounds: Abdul Rashid Dostum was an ethnic Uzbek and an atheist; Atta Muhammad Nur was an ethnic Tajik, and Mohammad Mohaqiq was an ethnic Hazara and orthodox Shiite. One Pakistani diplomat and expert on the Northern Alliance succinctly summarized the situation, observing that "I'm sorry to say, nobody likes each other," and "revenge is ingrained in their minds."[324] In short, U.S. SOF was forced to devote considerable attention to keeping the Northern Alliance focused on fighting the Taliban versus killing each other.

Non-state actor partnerships can also create friction and complicate USG relations with a partner government if the USG partners with violent non-state actors in areas denied to government forces but still within the territory of a friendly government. Doing so clearly demonstrates to the citizenry that the partner government lacks control over swaths of their own territory. Additionally, limitations in terms of existing capabilities and absorptive capacity are likely to be more pronounced for the violent non-state actors versus state forces that U.S. SOF partner with. Indeed, the example of the Northern Alliance precisely illustrates this point. A situation report filed by an SF officer embedded with the Northern Alliance during the early days of the Afghan war—which describes the Alliance's tactics—is worth quoting in detail:

> I am advising a man on how to best employ light infantry and horse cavalry in the attack against Taliban T-55s (tanks), mortars, artillery, personnel carriers and machine guns—a tactic which I think became outdated with the invention of the Gatling gun. The Mujahadeen

> have done that every day we have been on the ground... We have witnessed the horse cavalry bounding overwatch from spur to spur to attack Taliban strong points—the last several kilometers under mortar, artillery and sniper fire. There is little medical care if injured, only a donkey ride to the aid station, which is a dirt hut.[325]

This all being said, it is an interesting theoretical question as to whether partnering with non-state actors has a useful and legitimate role to play in global CT. Certainly, it is difficult to argue that the campaign against the Islamic State, in which the U.S. was working very closely with Kurdish Peshmerga forces, was not a form of CT in its most fundamental sense. At the same time, an overall strategic approach to global CT necessitates empowering partners to close inadequately governed spaces, increasing the military capacity—not to mention the political relevance—of non-state actors. However, those non-state actors may well be at cross-purposes with the broader objective of bolstering the strength and capacity of governments around the world to maintain a monopoly on violence within their borders. It is of course possible to imagine a comprehensive, sound NSS that incorporated violent non-state actor-SOF partnerships in CT engagements, but there are contradictions that necessitate careful strategic, geopolitical consideration when it comes to these partnerships.[326] Choosing to work with active and vocal ethnic minorities—or those like the Kurds in Syria, who have complex ties to existing governments—has political and security implications that may ultimately increase instability and even fuel terrorism in the future.

"Us" Barriers to U.S. Special Operations Forces Counterterrorism Effectiveness with Partners

When it comes to partnering for CT, the barriers located within partner governments and military institutions are further compounded by limitations within the DOD and, more broadly, the USG. Sometimes, U.S. SOF efforts at CT are hindered by the fact that partnerships were not designed or intended to primarily achieve CT-related ends. In particular, the funding streams for BPC are fraught with implications for—and effects on—the long-term planning and commitments to U.S. CT partners. Though the DOD has well-developed doctrine to guide special operators conducting CT and security force assistance (SFA) with partners, these engagements are inherently complex and tend to vary enormously—making the planning and

effective execution of by, with, and through approaches to CT somewhat ad hoc and thus even more difficult for U.S. SOF.

U.S. Government and Politics

Counterterrorism Aims as Secondary. CT is only one of several objectives of U.S. SOF engagements with PNs. Just as partner governments may have more important priorities than CT, the USG may be interested in achieving a variety of disparate aims through U.S. SOF engagements with other nations. Reducing the terrorist threat is certainly a goal of ostensibly CT-focused partnerships, but it may not be the highest priority; resourcing, tasking, and engagement lengths are not necessarily tailored to the demands of successful SOF CT.

In many cases, BPC efforts are a way that the USG provides general military aid to partners. It can also be a crucial tool for gaining access to foreign governments and militaries when other kinds of partnerships do not exist or are politically complicated for one or both governments.[327] Because the U.S. prioritizes CT and terrorism is a globally distributed threat, the substantive focus of many training and combined activities in which U.S. SOF take part will likely include a CT component. Indeed, programs like the Counterterrorism Fellowship Program have established a good reputation, global reach, and comparatively steady funding and political buy-in domestically—making CT an appealing and reliable vehicle for forming and strengthening security partnerships without necessarily achieving specific CT ends.[328] This does not suggest that CT programs are somehow misused; these partnerships can be more effective instruments of long-term national security than disruption-oriented CT missions. However, understanding the relative importance to the USG of CT versus other priorities can help U.S. SOF make sense of how and why CT efforts in a PN are producing lackluster results.

The threat from terrorist organizations and networks that PNs and the USG face can also be complex and—as discussed prior—may require pulling from different doctrines and working with partners on a variety of overlapping security-related missions. Even if activities seem clearly related to CT, if CT is not the primary goal of an engagement or if competing goals exist, CT outcomes may be suboptimal. As an example, counternarcotics operations are often pursued alongside CT. While narcotrafficking often provides a portion of the financing used by diverse terrorist groups, jointly pursuing

counternarcotics and CT can create inefficiencies and even perverse outcomes. A 2008 study from the Center for Naval Analysis found that there is "complete overlap" between capabilities that partners need for the conduct of CT and counternarcotics missions.[329] However, the objectives, lead agency, and cognitive models of these activities are distinct.[330] This means that even if reducing terrorist capabilities and financing is the goal, and if a number of the skills, assets, and capabilities being employed are the same as those U.S. SOF and partner forces would use for CT, special operators may find that conducting effective counternarcotics has a limited effect on countering terrorism. It is also possible that pursuing counternarcotics may undermine CT efforts. This is the case to the extent that common counternarcotics activities—like forced eradication—target the livelihoods of poor, peasant farmers and merely serves to drive them into the open arms of local terrorists.[331] A coherent global CT strategy that clearly articulates relative priorities and carefully integrates activities in pursuant of distinct priorities is necessary to minimize negative externalities and maximize synergies during U.S. SOF engagements with partner forces.

Funding Streams. Part and parcel to the variety of USG entities engaged in CT, which were discussed in chapter 3, is the wide range of funding streams for CT activities both at home and abroad. The most strident notes of discord in interagency competitions can be heard in debates surrounding funding and budgets. Prior to the Global War on Terror, U.S. SOF engagements that involved partner forces typically took place under Title 22, which is to say, DOS authority.[332] However, the planning and review cycle for the programs was lengthy. In Section 1206 ("Global Train and Equip") of the 2006 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), Congress afforded DOD Title 10 authorities to appropriate funds and manage security cooperation (SC) programs.[333] Interestingly, these were set up as "dual key" programs, requiring both the DOD and DOS to sign off on certain types of training funding and programs.[334] Though the split authority model did increase interagency coordination, the DOD's planning, implementation, and assessment of these programs was considered lacking.[335] It also had the effect of giving the Pentagon greater influence over what were traditionally

The most strident notes of discord in interagency competitions can be heard in debates surrounding funding and budgets.

DOS-led activities and made the DOS more reliant on DOD resources and assets.[336]

More recently, in the 2017 NDAA, a wide variety of SC programs and activities were consolidated under Title 10, Chapter 16.[337] Such efforts to improve the stovepiped and piecemeal landscape that came before are certainly both needed and laudable. Indeed, if U.S. SOF CT was exclusively an SC enterprise, the impact of this consolidation of authority under Title 10 may have been enormous.[338] Yet, there are also profound drawbacks. For instance, most of the Title 10 SC funding is available in only one- or two-year programs, while the DOD's strategic planning tends to be developed around five-year plans.[339] Moreover, as discussed throughout this text, U.S. SOF CT effectiveness is the result of far more lines of effort than capacity building and SC. Other agencies and departments continue to play important roles, and there are countless programs that do not fall under the SC rubric articulated in the aforementioned NDAAs—such as the activities operated out of USAID via subcontractors or being executed by local governments, NGOs, and intergovernmental organizations. Efforts to consolidate authority for SC under a single chapter in the U.S. code is an important step toward achieving more coherent interagency efforts in PNs. Nevertheless, the way in which consolidation occurred— particularly by reducing the role of the DOS—does not adequately address the need to conceive of, plan, and fund holistic programs that enable and ensure a strategically sound approach to countering terrorism.

Within the DOD, funding for working with PNs—and especially SOF CT partnerships—occurs through a variety of mechanisms. Major overseas contingency operations are sometimes explicitly funded by Congress, and funding for U.S. SOF efforts come out of these budgets; the military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan are examples of this.[340] It is also the case that operations can be authorized and funds appropriated specifically for CT efforts, like those in the Philippines and Colombia described in the subsequent two chapters of this monograph. Ultimately, though, it remains the fact that many SOF engagements are funded and coordinated via ad hoc mechanisms with geographic combatant command authorities—using, for instance, operations and maintenance budgets at the discretion of a given combatant commander.[341] As another example, from 2009–2011, a train-and-equipment program called the Georgia Development Initiative required that planners cobble together five separate authorities, one each to fund the

program launch, pay for training execution and training equipment loans, deploy equipment and vehicles; authorize a mission rehearsal exercise, and permanently supply equipment to Georgia's government.[342] In such situations, DOD officials note that when programs encounter a problem with one funding authority, the "entire program may collapse" like a "house of cards."[343] In short, there exists a patchwork of funding streams and programming that ultimately decreases the effectiveness, sustainability, and certainly the efficiency of U.S. SOF CT engagements overseas.

Commitments and Time Horizons. Commitments and time horizons are particularly important when one considers the population-centric model of CT advocated in this monograph. Establishing trust and relationship between security forces and populations takes time; improving governance takes even more time. Government forces also need to have continuous, regular access to previously denied areas to ensure that gains made both against terrorists and with the populations are sustained. Further, SOF CT is a demanding discipline where tactical mistakes can have strategic-level consequences—meaning that extensive training and experience is required. All these aspects of strategically sound CT suggest that the USG's partnerships should be viewed on a scale of years and decades, rather than months or election cycles.

Though this has changed over the course of the past decades as the USG has learned how and how not to fight terrorism, Washington has struggled to maintain sufficient funding and political will to commit to SOF CT partnerships for the long haul. Too often, SOF leave before partners have made lasting changes to their own institutions and practices—and before efforts to prevent the resurgence of terrorist networks are consolidated. It is increasingly recognized that "transition," which is to say, sustainably transferring control of CT to partner forces, is a necessary component of U.S. SOF CT activities abroad.[344] The DOD, in particular, and the USG, more generally, have made a real effort to maintain a U.S. SOF presence in PN countries after larger engagements wind down—even if this means assigning individual special operations liaison officers (SOLOs) to a given country. These are important steps. Nonetheless, with the strategic pivot that emphasizes the centrality of great power competition, maintaining enough funding and attention to undergird long-term CT partnerships will likely prove challenging.

Within the Department of Defense and U.S. Special Operations Command

A Patchwork of Doctrine versus a Unified Framework for U.S. Special Operations Forces Counterterrorism Partnerships

There is no such thing as a typical U.S. SOF CT engagement, and perhaps the only constant is the diversity of activities and skills that are required for working with partners to conduct and build capacity in this arena. Unfortunately, there is limited definitional clarity or unifying doctrine when it comes to managing and planning for the diverse array of activities, competing objectives, and political pressures that U.S. SOF face on a day-to-day basis when conducting CT. This is especially the case when working with partner forces to do so. There are, of course, thick doctrinal manuals for many of these individual topics. U.S. Army Colonel (ret.) David Maxwell, erstwhile commander of Joint Special Operations Task Force (JSOTF)-Philippines, identified 36 different terms from the DOD's *Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms* that related to SFA alone.[345]

As already noted, few U.S. SOF efforts with partner forces are uniquely focused on CT alone.[346] Almost without fail, an engagement is also an exercise in partner capacity building and in SC. Yet, guidance is lacking as to how U.S. SOF should cobble together the best practices for special operations,[347] CT,[348] stability operations,[349] FID,[350] SFA,[351] SC,[352] and interagency cooperation[353] for a particular engagement; naturally, key attributes of the strategic, operational, and tactical landscapes are limited by complex and changing political—not to mention security—circumstances. The result is that SOF CT partnerships are often ad hoc affairs, which limits the potential for establishing broadly effective holistic approaches.

An apt analogy here is planning and executing a lengthy road trip using a few dozen separate paper maps. Some display only some of the roads—highways on one, local roads on another. Most show only a single province, though not every province has its own map. Certain essential features—like gas stations—only appear on one map. None of them are drawn to the same scale. And different planners have different ideas about the group's destination in the first place.[354] Whereas map algebra—a form of set-based algebra designed for the manipulation of geographic data—offers a solution to this analogy, an elegant, formulaic solution for merging diverse doctrine does not exist.

There has been a push by some in the SOF enterprise to begin thinking about better integrating guidance for SOF in this regard; indeed, this kind of engagement is understood to be a key area—not only for SOF operations, but for research on theory, doctrine, best practices, and training.[355] Maxwell makes the argument that countering terrorism is likely to look most like FID most of the time:

> If we accept that the WOT (war on terrorism) is COIN on a global scale then we also should accept that the correct way to contribute to the defeat and deterrence of terrorism is to enable friends, allies, and partners with sufficient capacity to defend their countries. This of course is the province of FID and should be accepted as the overarching unifying doctrinal concept for employment of U.S. instruments of national power both civilian and military.[356]

Yet, this framework has not been formally adopted, and these efforts are still in early phases.[357] Moreover, theoretical siloing of this nature is a difficult intellectual tendency to overcome; and CT, like other complex operations, manages to span key, foundational dichotomies in SOF thinking like special warfare versus surgical strike.[358] Certainly, strict instructions and cookie-cutter solutions are no solution at all, but U.S. SOF CT engagements with partners lack a single unified framework, while, at the same time, they are incredibly demanding on operators and planners. Even without a clear overarching set of strategic goals and trade-offs for the USG, the Pentagon has an opportunity, one that is only slowly being realized, to provide a more systematic and modern framework for SOF CT partnerships.

Conclusion

Strengthening a global network of effective partner forces for CT, whether they are elite SOF units or effective local police, is crucial to achieving U.S. CT strategic aims. In dozens of PNs, U.S. SOF are today working closely with partner forces, local populations, partner governments, and numerous other in-country actors to achieve U.S. strategic CT objectives.[359] Though training partner forces and BPC are familiar tasks for many U.S. special operators, it is clear many aspects of the political and institutional landscape can serve as barriers to effective outcomes. A better understanding of these can help better prepare operators and planners to devise and implement solutions.

The strategic deployment of SOF assets can have a profoundly positive impact on U.S. national security in both the short and long term, and SOF can work with a wide variety of partners to effectively counter terrorism. SOF can and have overcome many challenges, but they do not have the authority or capacity to unilaterally solve all of the aforementioned issues that may arise when working with international partners. Consequently, to effectively work with partner forces, SOF must also be adept at leveraging the interagency—the focus of the preceding chapter. A coherent CT strategy—one that uses a variety of the instruments of national power, leverages diverse agencies and departments and carefully marshals resources while building an international network of partnerships—would greatly enhance SOF CT effectiveness both when going it alone and especially when working with PNs.

Key Takeaways

- Partner governments and partner forces are well-situated to effectively and credibly conduct population-centric CT, and they are necessary to affordably and practicably counter the modern, globally networked terrorist threat.
- Partner government and U.S. interests do not always align when it comes to CT; due to the legal authority that sovereign nations have on their own soil, the USG and U.S. SOF must take partners' interests seriously and make every effort to understand them.
- Partner forces need more than military equipment and training to become strategic CT partners; SOF may need to develop partners' absorptive capacity as well as their norms to achieve desirable long-term outcomes.
- SOF violent non-state actor partnerships are likely to be more challenging when it comes to "them" barriers to effectiveness, and there are serious long-term strategic implications for CT when enhancing violent non-state actor capabilities.
- There are several common ways that the USG practices and thinks about CT partnerships that negatively impact the effectiveness of SOF.
- There is currently no unified framework for SOF CT engagements with partners, which increases the burden on planners and operators and decreases effectiveness.

Part II. Limited Achievement: Reexamining Two Oft-Cited Special Operations Forces Counterterrorism Success Stories: The Philippines and Colombia

Chapter 5. U.S. Special Operations Forces Counterterrorism in the Philippines: Tactical Successes Without Strategic Gains

The USG, often with SOF playing a central role, has been engaged in CT in the Philippines since even before the launch of the Global War on Terror. A series of contingent events, not the least of which were the 9/11 attacks on Washington, D.C. and New York City, brought the Philippines into sharp focus in 2001. By January 2002, the U.S. began OEF-P by deploying what was to be 1,200 U.S. Special Operations Command Pacific personnel to the country. Of these personnel, 160 operators assisted the Armed Forces of the Philippines in a CT mission primarily targeting two designated FTOs: the Abu Sayyaf Group and, to a lesser extent, Jemaah Islamiyah.[360] While OEF-P formally lasted from 2002–2015 and OPE-P formally began in 2017, the lapse in named operations is misleading. Rather, U.S. SOF presence in support of the Armed Forces of the Philippines has been essentially continuous for nearly two decades.

CT efforts in the Philippines have been lauded by journalists, politicians, military leaders, and academics. Article and monograph titles like *Winning in the Pacific: The Special Operations Forces Indirect Approach*, *Success in the Shadows*, *Anatomy of a Successful COIN Operation*, and *Treading Softly in the Philippines: Why Low-Intensity Conflict Seems to be Working There* clearly capture the approbation, and at times relief and euphoria, associated with evaluations of U.S. operations there.[361] Particularly when cast against the coincident conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan, the small footprint, population-centric, capacity building-focused CT efforts in the Pacific archipelago do indeed shine brightly. U.S. costs were low, at around $52 million annually.[362] While certainly tragic, the 17 U.S. fatalities—only one of which was due to enemy action, sustained during OEF-P—pale in comparison to figures from Iraq and Afghanistan.[363]

Especially between 2008 and 2014, experts and practitioners came to view U.S. SOF-led engagement in the Philippines as the model for CT. As *The Weekly Standard* put it, in referring to OEF-P in 2009, "almost forgotten …

is a tiny success story in Southeast Asia that may offer a more apt template than either Iraq or Afghanistan for fighting extremists in many corners of the world."[364] Even more assertive is an analysis of the situation prepared by Booz Allen Hamilton in 2010:

> If the future is going to consist of an era of persistent conflict in which the hallmark prophylactic strategy will involve U.S. armed forces in various foreign internal defense and stability and support operations, the ongoing collaboration with the Armed Forces of the Philippines, now in its ninth year under the title Operation ENDURING FREEDOM Philippines, should serve as a model.[365]

As the shortcomings, spillover effects, and full costs of Iraq and Afghanistan became clearer, more and more attention was paid to the Philippines model in the late 2000s and early 2010s.

There are certainly bright spots. As this chapter will discuss, U.S. SOF engaged in OEF-P during its thirteen-year run and managed to overcome several barriers to effective CT discussed earlier. Planners and operators held a broad view of the engagement from the start—in the initial months, the DOD conducted a thorough assessment of the security situation and existing Armed Forces of the Philippines capabilities, as well as the local population—while also intentionally cultivating interagency partnerships for their engagement. It was also an instance where the USG was able to identify shared interests with the PN and adopt a light footprint approach that accounted for Philippine domestic political concerns. On the ground, U.S. SOF combined kinetically focused training with population-centric approaches, using CMOs to gain intelligence and improve local perceptions of the government of the Republic of the Philippines. Indeed, limited by the PN from directly engaging in combat, training and working by, with, and through the Armed Forces of the Philippines to develop their capacity for CT took center stage. Finally, serious attention was paid to the tempo and manner of the U.S. drawdown, with the Joint Special Operations Task Force-Philippines (JSOTF-P) prioritizing civilian and military institution-building to sustain the gains made in the early days of the operation.

Regrettably, most of these successes proved to be tactical in nature and short lived. Over the course of the last few years, analysts have begun to question the long-term outcomes of this apparent success story.[366] Just two short years after OEF-P formally ended, groups affiliated with the Islamic

State seized and held Marawi—a major city of over 200,000 people on the island of Mindanao—for five months, where so much effective population-centric CT had been staged in the early 2000s.[367] Foreign terrorist fighters have flocked to the scene in the southern Philippines, which has now seen a spate of suicide bombings, a brutal tactic that is relatively new to the country.[368] The current picture in the Philippines—a tableau of insecurity in which the 2017 battle for Marawi is perhaps the most spectacular but hardly the seminal element—makes it far less clear that the light footprint of the U.S. SOF-driven CT approach in the Philippines is the panacea for achieving lasting national security outcomes.

This chapter makes two interrelated arguments about SOF CT in the Philippines since 2001. The first is that there are numerous ways in which U.S. forces in the Pacific nation clearly overcame essential barriers to CT effectiveness. In many ways, it is a vital proof of concept that many pieces of the CT puzzle are within USSOCOM's control and that the right people and the right approaches can make real gains on the ground for combating terrorist threats to U.S. national security. That said, the second point is that the overarching themes of a lack of coherent strategy and a focus on tactical, kinetic solutions to strategic, governance, and politics-related aspects of modern terrorism can and will undermine even the most well-planned and otherwise successful SOF CT efforts. This bifurcation between tactical versus strategic and short- or medium- versus long-term approaches makes it clear that even when U.S. SOF manage to do just about everything right on the ground, CT effectiveness is a complex and challenging enterprise and one in which many actors and factors must align to achieve meaningful, sustainable, and security-enhancing outcomes.

Brief History and Context

The Philippines is an archipelago in Southeast Asia that has both a complicated history of colonialism and insurgency and long-standing ties as an important strategic ally in the region for the United States. The country's thousands of islands are home to nearly 110 million citizens; though linguistically and ethnically diverse, the Philippines is predominantly Roman Catholic—80 percent of the population—with a further 12 percent of inhabitants adhering to non-Catholic denominations or forms of Christianity.[369] Though Islam first came to the Philippines in the thirteenth century, only a

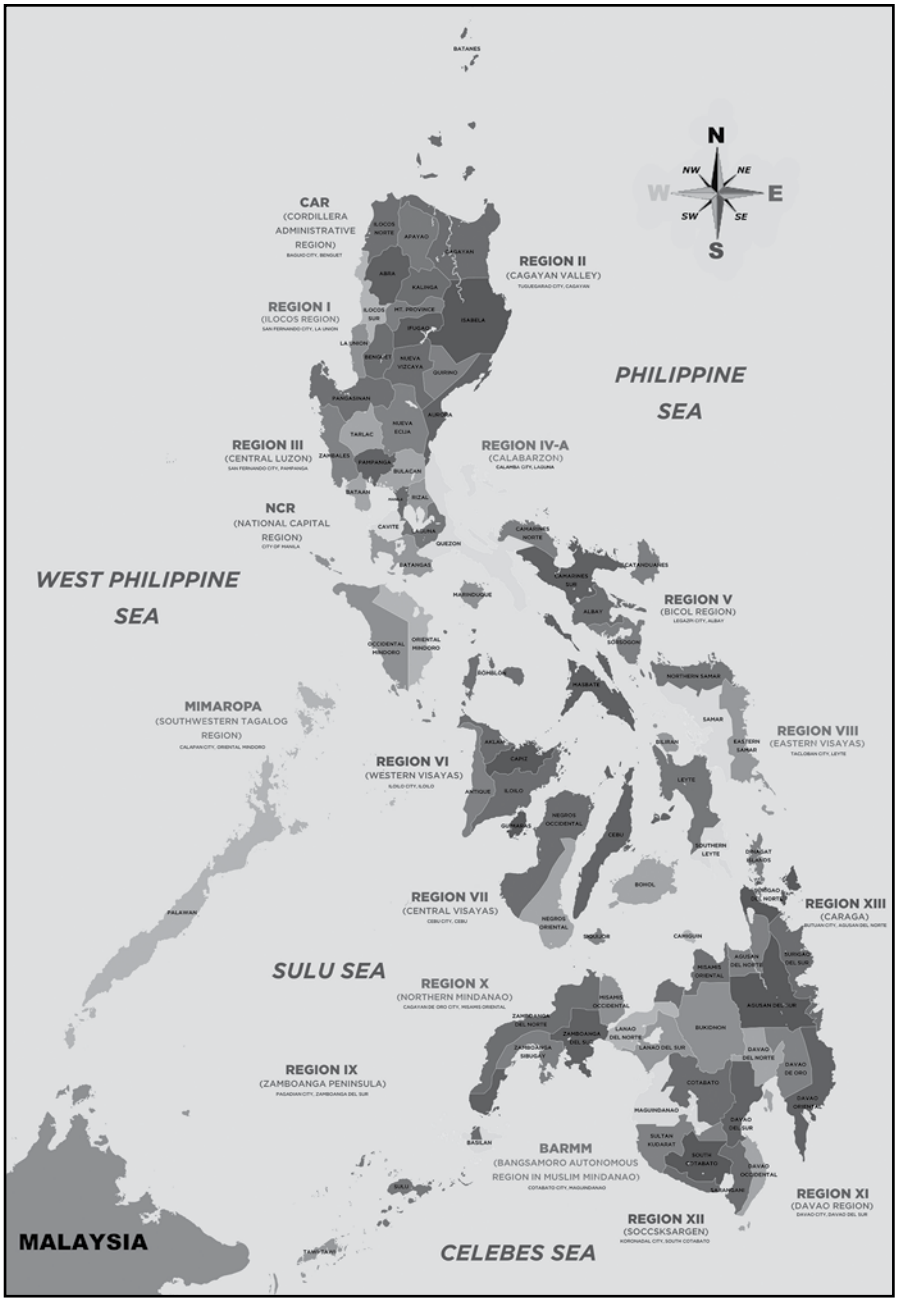


Figure 7. Map of the Philippines. Source: Creative Commons CC BY-SA 4.0; creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/legalcode

small fraction of Filipinos—between five and six percent—identify as Muslim today, largely due to the influence of concerted colonization efforts by the Spanish in the 1500s.[370] The Muslim population, widely known as "Moros," is heavily concentrated in Mindanao, the largest and most populous island in the southern Philippines, as well as in the Sulu Archipelago of the smaller islands of Basilan, Sulu, and Tawi-Tawi.[371]

The southern Philippines has long been a contested area. Spanish, American, Japanese, and subsequently the independent Philippine government ruled primarily from capitals in the northern parts of the country and have long faced resistance and separatist movements from the Moro regions. Culturally and religiously distinct from the majority Christian north, these regions have historically seen brutal and indiscriminate application of military force against them, national land policies designed to turn regions of the south from Moro majority to Moro minority areas, and periods of neglect by the central government.[372]

This history and the political tensions in the southern Philippines form the backdrop for twenty-first century insurgency and terrorism. Local separatist organizations, chief among which are the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, have alternatively fought against and negotiated with the government in Manila to achieve increased autonomy in Muslim-majority areas. Splinter groups adopting more radical, violent, and internationalist ideologies have emerged from these. The most prominent from the U.S. CT perspective is the Abu Sayyaf Group.[373] Simultaneously, foreign groups like Jemaah Islamiyah, with roots in Indonesia, have taken advantage of ungoverned spaces in the southern islands to evade Indonesian authorities. Most recently, Islamic State-affiliated and Islamic State-inspired VEOs like the Maute Group and radical offshoots of other Moro-oriented groups in the south have all found both willing recruits and a permissive operating environment in the Southern Philippines.[374] All of these groups have been central subversive players at one time or another in recent Philippine history. Figure 8 traces the lineage of various Moro and other subversive groups operating in the Philippines.

The concern of the USG about terrorism in the region grew throughout the 1990s. During this time period, the region—and the Philippines in particular—experienced especially sensational terrorist violence. The al-Qaeda-linked Abu Sayyaf Group engaged in increasingly violent and successful efforts against Christian and Western targets.[375] Abu Sayyaf, often

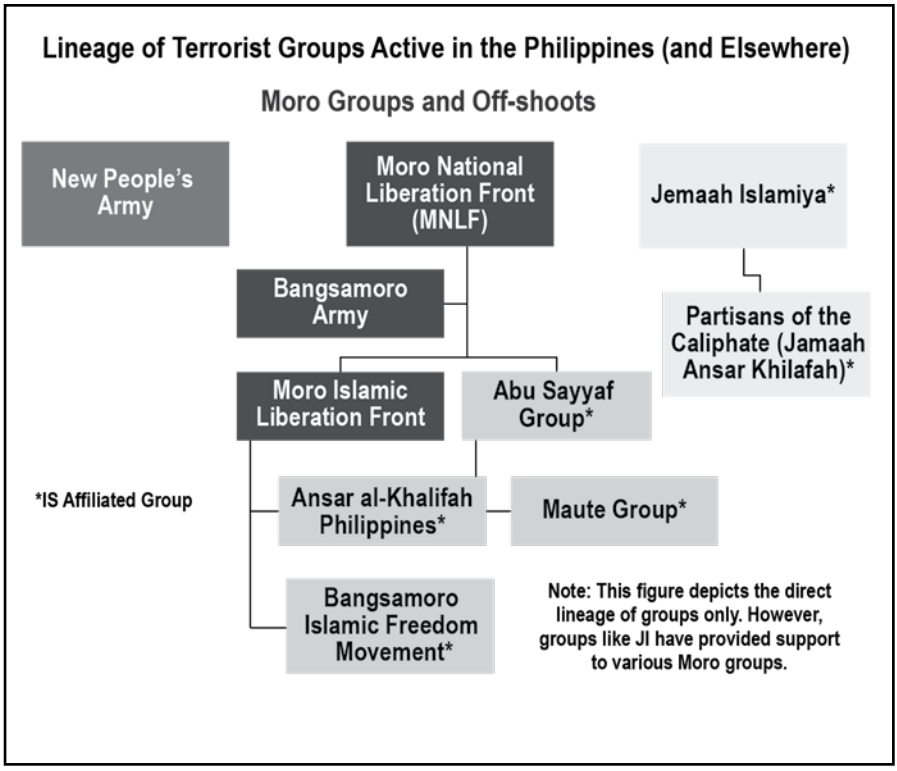


Figure 8. Lineage of Subversion in the Philippines. Source: Barnett S. Koven, lecture at Combatting Terrorism Seminar, Federal Law Enforcement Training Center

translated to mean "father of the sword," was initially a splinter group from the Moro Islamic Liberation Front. It quickly divested from violent clashes with the Armed Forces of the Philippines and directed its focus toward kidnap-for-ransom efforts and the brutal murders, including beheadings, of their victims.[376] This pre-9/11 terrorist threat caused the USG to make overtures toward the Philippines in the late 1990s in an effort to rebuild security ties that had atrophied due in part to domestic Philippine political resistance to U.S. military presence. Washington and Manila could not agree on terms for a renewed lease on U.S. Naval Base Subic Bay and Clark Air Base. Consequently, the lease lapsed in 1991.[377]

Several somewhat unrelated developments set the stage for a larger U.S. CT role, led by U.S. SOF, to begin in 2002. A new Philippine government,

with Gloria Macapagal Arroyo in the presidency, came to power in January 2001. This new government emerged following the impeachment and revolutionary ouster of the former president of the Philippines, who had been highly resistant to the idea of expanding SC with the United States.[378] The Arroyo Administration was more amenable to a U.S. presence, and as a result, U.S. personnel—with U.S. SOF in the lead—were soon training select Armed Forces of the Philippines members to form a CT-focused Light Reaction Company.[379] In May 2001, the Armed Forces of the Philippines demonstrated great tactical prowess in their response to the Dos Palmos kidnappings, wherein they raided an island resort and secured 20 hostages, including three Americans.[380] In response to this, Washington endeavored to leverage the regularly scheduled, bilateral "Balikatan" joint-training exercises to ramp up CT support and training for the Armed Forces of the Philippines. The 9/11 attacks redoubled the U.S. commitment to CT globally. Given that the Abu Sayyaf Group had links to the 9/11 perpetrators and planners, the Philippines necessarily became a USG CT priority.[381] Thus the groundwork for comprehensive U.S. involvement in CT in the Philippines was laid.

The Operation Enduring Freedom-Philippines Period, 2002–2015

In terms of U.S. SOF CT effectiveness, OEF-P featured a strong approach that was competently applied, overcoming a number of barriers and pitfalls described in Part I. Rather than attempt to offer a comprehensive history of OEF-P, this section focuses on several crucial aspects of U.S. SOF engagement in the Philippines in a rough chronological order. It is worth noting here that the criticisms and shortfalls of U.S. engagement, including ongoing corruption and governance concerns in the Philippines, are not the focus of this section, which emphasizes the role of U.S. SOF in the archipelago during the operation. Though the next section will outline some of the strategically relevant limitations evident in the PN, most of what happened during this period was based on sound planning and was successful over the short and medium term. It is also worth noting that partner forces in the Philippines were actively engaged in CT operations throughout the entire period of OEF-P; however, they receive limited attention given this text's focus on U.S. SOF.

This section explores five features of the U.S. CT mission in the Philippines that reflect the ability of U.S. SOF to overcome or otherwise address key barriers to effectiveness—namely, a population-centric COIN-inspired approach to CT; working with the interagency; and navigating PN relationships, politics, and capacities. First, the initial groundwork for effectiveness was laid by a rigorous assessment of the CT landscape to include partner force capabilities. Moreover, the assessment process itself encouraged cooperation across the interagency from the start. The second feature is the terms of reference and the agreement between the USG and the Philippines, which forced the USG to focus on both working by, with, and through local partners and limiting kinetic efforts to countering only some of the militant groups operating in the region. Third, it examines the actual CT activities—particularly in Basilan—in which U.S. SOF and the Armed Forces of the Philippines engaged. These activities look very much like the sound, population-centric COIN-style CT advocated in Part I of this monograph. Fourth, this section discusses ongoing interagency coordination with U.S. SOF. Finally, the institutional capacity-building efforts throughout the engagement and the slow drawdown of the U.S. presence are described in the fifth subsection. Note that combat operations and joint training exercises with the Armed Forces of the Philippines do not feature heavily in this analysis for the simple reason that training programs and joint exercises are already areas of strength for U.S. SOF and do not elucidate this text's key points about SOF CT effectiveness.

Terrorism Coordination and Assistance Visit

Even while negotiations about the terms of U.S.-Philippine SC were under way, and even before 9/11, the U.S. conducted a thorough assessment of the situation in the Philippines. U.S. Army (ret.) Lieutenant General David P. Fridovich took the lead on what was known as the Terrorism Coordination and Assistance Visit assessment, gathering information on everything from the political environment in Manila to the capabilities, competencies, and limitations of Armed Forces of the Philippines to the socioeconomic situation on the ground in Basilan.[382] He and his interagency team conducted extensive surveys of the local population, both Christian and Muslim, to understand the material needs of the communities and gain insight into how the population itself was thinking about the politics and the conflict around them.[383]

These assessments helped prepare the ground in multiple ways. One of the hurdles that SOF must overcome when working with partner forces is the lack of extant capabilities. General Fridovich's assessment helped with the train-and-assist components of the engagement. For instance, in addition to collecting a list of material and capabilities issues—insufficient quantities of functioning weapons, limited ammunition for training, and a shortage of well-maintained mobility assets—they discovered that the Armed Forces of the Philippines were trained primarily for larger maneuvers and had difficulty finding and closing with terrorist fighters.[384] This, and the fact that the Armed Forces of the Philippines were known to abuse the population and had problems with endemic corruption, were all incorporated into the assessment's findings and passed on to planners from the start.[385] This provided valuable context for the CMO, IO, and CA aspects of the operation as U.S. SOF knew what services the population both lacked and wanted most and how local security forces were likely to be received. The Terrorism Coordination and Assistance Visit assessment, at the outset of OEF-P, equipped U.S. SOF with knowledge about the challenges that they—and especially the partner force—would face when it came to implementing a population-centric approach to CT. This reduced some of the barriers to working with partner forces and provided a roadmap for SOF to eventually leverage those benefits of working with locals on CT outlined in chapter 4.

The Terrorism Coordination and Assistance Visit assessment also both relied on and engendered better interagency coordination—especially with the DOS and the country team—and fostered a more open and trusting relationship with the PN. The U.S. Embassy and country team made it possible for the Terrorism Coordination and Assistance Visit assessment team to more accurately and fully evaluate the capabilities and limitations of the Armed Forces of the Philippines.[386] General Fridovich and his team needed access to higher levels of military leadership to understand and truly assess the Armed Forces of the Philippines. They also needed these leaders and other government officials to be open and candid when discussing their security concerns, military assets, training and recruitment procedures, and other topics. By working through the Embassy, the Terrorism Coordination and Assistance Visit assessment team was not only able to gain access to interviews with the right people, but the expertise and relations fostered by the country team helped ensure that they got the needed information out of the leaders and officials they met with.

This was achieved in part by the willingness of U.S. SOF to reciprocate with the interagency by sharing their assessment and findings. This reciprocity was one of the first of many such exchanges and had several benefits. First, it facilitated buy-in from the DOS. Having been involved from the very earliest stages—having seen the methods of and established trust in the Terrorism Coordination and Assistance Visit assessment evaluators—they tended to agree with the evaluation's findings. Furthermore, establishing this shared understanding meant that the DOS could design and administer programs and activities that addressed needs on the ground in a manner that was synergistic with the efforts the DOD planned to undertake. Finally, by sharing the Terrorism Coordination and Assistance Visit assessment with Philippine leaders, General Fridovich continued to build trust with the PN government. Maintaining and improving these relations in such a sensitive political setting also improved buy-in from Manila. It would be difficult to overstate the importance of the Terrorism Coordination and Assistance Visit assessment in securing interagency and PN support. U.S. SOF would draw on this support in the later stages of OEF-P.

It would be difficult to overstate the importance of the Terrorism Coordination and Assistance Visit assessment in securing interagency and PN support.

Partner Nation Alignment and a Limited U.S. Role in Combat Operations

Partner Nation Concerns and Priorities. The Philippine government was genuinely interested in curtailing the violent lawlessness that had taken root in Mindanao and the southern archipelago, but this was balanced against domestic politics and other, more immediate security threats. Though presented here in the most truncated of formats, the long history of colonialism in the Philippines retains a great deal of saliency and entails domestic political implications that affected partnering with U.S. SOF on CT. Drafted with concern about interference from abroad in mind, the country's constitution, at least by some readings, forbade foreign armed forces from fighting on Philippine soil.[387] Further, though the population of the Philippines had reasonably positive views of the U.S., fears, reservations, and rumors about U.S. armed forces were also present.[388] Common narratives centered around popularly held concerns that American forces would take advantage

of Filipino women.[389] Even the limited agreement with the Philippines that formed the basis of OEF-P was controversial, with some political actors voicing serious concerns about an American "Trojan horse" ploy.[390] There was thus a fair amount of political pressure on the Arroyo administration to limit U.S. involvement in combat operations and to ensure that U.S. forces maintained a low profile while on Philippine soil.

Furthermore, while the Philippine government truly wanted to reduce terrorist activity in the south, it also faced bigger internal military and insurgent threats. The communist insurgency in the north—waged by the armed wing of the Community Party of the Philippines, the New People's Army, and a collection of partner leftist groups—posed a serious and sustained challenge to Manila and Philippine stability.[391] In the mid-1980s, the communist groups contested government control in some 53 of the 73 Philippine provinces and by the early 2000s had been designated an FTO by the DOS.[392] More crucial, however, was the complex and precarious security situation in Mindanao itself. The Philippine government had been engaged in somewhat fraught peace negotiations with Moro separatist groups.[393] Previous rounds of negotiations had led to the establishment of a Moro autonomous area, and the government was leery of allowing U.S. forces to engage in militarized CT when a negotiated settlement with the Moro militants was still a possibility. Despite the record of terrorist violence associated with the MNLF and Moro Islamic Liberation Front, the Philippine government was adamant that the U.S. should focus on targeting Abu Sayyaf Group and Jemaah Islamiyah—and avoid activities that would jeopardize a potential agreement with the more locally-oriented separatist militants.[394]

These concerns about Philippine sovereignty and prospects for peace and stability achieved through negotiations in Mindanao and the Sulu Archipelago led to the terms of reference for the U.S. SOF presence in the country.[395] The first relevant term of reference for this analysis is that U.S. forces were not to have any role in direct combat, though forces could be armed and use their weapons in self-defense.[396] Though rumors abounded among U.S. SOF that this provision would change, U.S. personnel spent the 13 years of OEF-P providing intelligence coordination, equipment, logistical support, and training but refrained from directly engaging with the enemy.[397] Indeed, so sensitive were the politics surrounding the U.S. presence that U.S. SOF-Armed Forces of the Philippines interactions were initially billed as subject

matter expert exchanges—rather than U.S. training missions—to place the players officially and publicly on more even footing.[398]

The second relevant term of reference for this analysis was that the USG would provide this support and training on CT efforts against Abu Sayyaf Group and Jemaah Islamiyah in the southern Philippines. This included only operating in Abu Sayyaf Group, Jemaah Islamiyah, or government strongholds—and uncontrolled areas of Mindanao and Basilan islands. These were not, of course, the only players in the region. The MNLF and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front had enclaves of power and influence in the southern Philippines, meaning that U.S. presence was geographically restricted. Further, Moro separatists had ties with both Jemaah Islamiyah and Abu Sayyaf Group in the ungoverned south. This only served to further complicate the operating environment. Thus, the Philippine government had drawn an artificial bright line between what they termed "international terrorists" (Jemaah Islamiyah and Abu Sayyaf Group) and "local separatists" (MNLF and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front).[399]

Ultimately, then, U.S. SOF presence was to be relatively small and quiet—with concerns about PN political sensitivity and avoiding bad press at the forefront. As discussed in chapter 4, even humanitarian assistance missions in times of crisis or disaster can embarrass the host government if the act of assistance demonstrates the lack of domestic capacity and resources. Indeed, in response to similar pressures just a decade earlier, the Philippine government closed U.S. bases on its territory. In short, the only option for the U.S. would be to employ an indirect approach in the Philippines.

The Indirect Approach and Strategic Benefits of Tactical Concessions. The by, with, and through indirect approach that characterized SOF engagement in the Philippines during OEF-P is, in retrospect, its defining feature. It also helped SOF overcome some of the challenges to effective CT, though it was not necessarily how USSOCOM would have preferred to run the operation. In particular, the priorities and interest of the PN meant that BPC was an important feature of the engagement, and the narrower focus on the Abu Sayyaf Group and Jemaah Islamiyah provided space for nonmilitary approaches to addressing the Moro separatist question. OEF-P became largely an FID operation, characterized by three lines of effort: 1. building the capacity of the Armed Forces of the Philippines and Philippine SF, 2. CMOs, and 3. IO "to emphasize the success of the first two lines of operation."[400]

This approach played on a number of U.S. SOF-specific strengths and also helped the U.S. to maintain a much lower profile while still providing crucial assistance in both training and resources—particularly in the IO domain—to Philippine partners.[401]

As noted, this was not the approach preferred by USSOCOM or the USG as a whole. In 2004, U.S. Army Colonel (ret.) David Maxwell, who went on to command the JSOTF-P from 2006–2007, wrote an article drawing on his experience in Mindanao and Basilan with 1st Special Forces Group (Airborne) (SFG [A]) that described frustrations with the limitations placed on U.S. special operators in the Philippines.[402] The theory of effective SOF CT addressed earlier noted that one of the challenges to partner capacity building for CT was the tendency for U.S. forces to want to engage with the enemy directly, rather than allow less well-developed partners to try—and perhaps fail—to achieve tactical victories on their own. In this sense, the fact that U.S. troops would not be involved directly in kinetic, combat actions against terrorists meant that a key barrier was overcome—simply by top-down constraints on the U.S. role in the country. Also as noted, U.S. SOF in the southern Philippines circa 2002 were ever convinced that new guidance and new terms were forthcoming, and many operators "remained confident that they could destroy any and all terrorists in the region … in four to six weeks."[403] That the engagement did not consist of U.S.-led HVT raids on Abu Sayyaf Group strongholds in the mountains of Basilan island for a few weeks is a product of the politics of the PN more than it is the result of careful decision making by U.S. planners.

Because U.S. SOF was precluded from doing much of the CT activity for partner forces, it became crucial to focus on building Armed Forces of the Philippines CT capacity. In the initial Terrorism Coordination and Assistance Visit assessment, General Fridovich's team found that the Armed Forces of the Philippines had not developed multiple key capabilities and had limited capacity for essential CT functions, like small unit independent maneuver and decision making. After the indirect efforts of U.S. SOF in the Philippines over a decade, a RAND analysis of the operation concluded that the country had developed "one of Asia's most competent joint SOF."[404] These efforts, including reform and institutionalization within the PN and Armed Forces of the Philippines, had also—as will be discussed in the next subsection—greatly improved local attitudes toward the government and reduced popular support for terrorist groups.[405]

The distinction—however artificial—between international terrorists and local separatists likely kept the door open for long-term political resolutions. Forbidding U.S.-assisted operations against the Moro Islamic Liberation Front and MNLF certainly created operational complexities and frustrations for U.S. SOF. Colonel Maxwell was not alone in voicing his concern about the fact that prohibiting U.S. presence or support in Moro Islamic Liberation Front-controlled areas granted Abu Sayyaf Group and Jemaah Islamiyah terrorists a *de facto* safe haven.[406] However, this approach appears to have successfully incentivized local separatists to disentangle themselves from Jemaah Islamiyah and Abu Sayyaf Group associations. After it became clear to the Moro Islamic Liberation Front that they were not the target of activities supported by the U.S., they began to force Abu Sayyaf Group leaders to depart from their protection and their areas of control.[407] Ultimately, the Philippine government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front reached a negotiated settlement. The Bangsamoro Organic Law that resulted in a "Bangsamoro" (or "Moro nation") was ratified in 2019. The Moro Islamic Liberation Front, at the time of this writing, is in the process of demobilizing and transitioning into an unarmed political movement focused on governance of the new autonomous region.[408] Resolving regional conflicts and improving governance of contested areas is a crucial part of the long-term strategic goals of SOF CT around the world. Whether other means could have achieved this end is a valid question, but efforts to distinguish between international terrorists and local separatists were certainly instrumental in the Moro Islamic Liberation Front's transformation over the past decade.

Resolving regional conflicts and improving governance of contested areas is a crucial part of the long-term strategic goals of SOF CT around the world.

Counterinsurgency Inspired Counterterrorism in the Southern Philippines

COIN as CT. The types of U.S. SOF and Armed Forces of the Philippines activities on the ground in the Philippines—especially during the first year of the engagement when they were operating heavily in Basilan—are another example of what the OEF-P model "got right." The titles of articles written describing success in the Philippines tend to use CT and COIN

interchangeably—or not use the term CT at all. This is a reflection not of journalistic ignorance but of the fact that U.S. SOF and PN forces were, in 2002, relying on approaches to CT that are cornerstones to U.S. approaches to population-centric COIN—and which would later be enshrined in FM 3-24 and subsequently *Joint Publication (JP) 3-24*.

Partly as a result of the Terrorism Coordination and Assistance Visit assessment, it was clear that the Muslim-minority populations in the Philippines were at times neglected and abused by government forces. OEF-P began by building roads and digging wells on the island of Basilan and was soon building schools and offering other services. Particularly effective and widespread were health-related efforts. The Medical Civic Action Programs (MEDCAPs), Dental Civic Action Programs (DENTCAPs), and Veterinary Civic Action Programs employed in the southern Philippines saw over 20,000 patients.[409] Furthermore, U.S. SOF were careful to put the Armed Forces of the Philippines—rather than themselves—at the center of the conversation and give them credit during these initiatives; as one U.S. Army master sergeant interviewed put it, "we want to show what the Armed Forces of the Philippines have done for the people, and we want the people to ask, What has Abu Sayyaf Group ever done for us?"[410]

The programs were, of course, not pure humanitarian assistance but served CT purposes by increasing SOF access, mobility, and intelligence. Getting out into the villages gave the Armed Forces of the Philippines and U.S. SOF access to significantly better information and situational awareness, and new roads were an integral part of providing the Armed Forces of the Philippines and U.S. personnel rapid mobility on the relatively underdeveloped island of Basilan.[411] MEDCAPs and DENTCAPs also provided a way for forces to begin to keep track of the populace, with toothbrushes and vitamins given in exchange for names and dates of birth.[412] These programs may have even directly prevented attacks. According to one U.S. SOF NCO interviewed, there was an incident in which one of the local Abu Sayyaf Group operatives on the island of Jolo was ordered by his leadership to set and detonate an IED during one of the MEDCAPs. However, the operative's family needed medical care and intended to make use of the program, so the Abu Sayyaf Group operative refused.[413] Clearly, CMOs played a direct role in countering terrorism.

IO was another key component of the population-centric SOF activities during OEF-P. Some of these operations were extremely low tech and

consisted of U.S. SOF and their Philippine counterparts making repeated visits to villages where development projects were ongoing. This alone contributed hugely to countering the Abu Sayyaf Group narrative that the U.S. forces could not be trusted and would ultimately abandon the people.[414] U.S. forces also endeavored to target the youth population—which traditionally served as recruits for Abu Sayyaf Group—by hosting movie nights at U.S. bases for local children, for example. To counter the rumors that subsequently arose that they were trying to convert young Muslims to Christianity, U.S. forces asked local clerics to bless and attend these events.[415] U.S. forces also drew heavily on the expertise of their Military Information Support Team (MIST). In one example, the MIST helped to produce a comic book series called "Barbargsa," which featured a young teenager and told the story of how he protected his home and people from terrorists.[416] The comic was available in multiple local languages and distributed freely in communities.

This is emblematic of the overarching purpose of these efforts. These CMOs began to pay considerable dividends; the local Muslim population that had backed or at least tolerated the Abu Sayyaf Group began to provide support and crucial information to government forces instead.[417] It was only a few months after the official start of OEF-P that SOF penetration into remote areas of Basilan pushed the Abu Sayyaf Group out of strongholds and even led to mass surrenders.[418] SOF treated the local populace as the key center of gravity in CT and sought to realign the population with government forces. U.S. SOF operations applied the principles of population-centric CT outlined in chapter 2 to great positive effect in the Philippines. Surveys conducted by RAND near the end of OEF-P saw sizeable declines in the level of local support for subversives.[419]

Partner Adoption of CMOs. Another barrier discussed previously was overcome by U.S. SOF in the southern Philippines during OEF-P—namely, the partner force came to embrace CMOs and population-centric approaches to CT. According to multiple interviews conducted by RAND to evaluate OEF-P, the Armed Forces of the Philippines adopted the model of employing CMOs to gain traction with local populations, gather intelligence, and ultimately sway populaces to support the government.[420] General Juancho Sabban, one of the highest ranking Philippine personnel involved in operations in the south, had internalized this view.[421] He took great care to identify commanders within the Philippine forces who understood the importance of

CMOs and to place them where they were most needed.[422] As their capabilities grew and CT efforts continued, Philippine forces prioritized the well-being of civilians and sought to avoid civilians casualties; when these did occur, they prioritized civilians over their own personnel for medical evacuations.[423] This, in turn, led to massive improvements in how the Philippine forces were perceived by the local Muslim population. One local observed that Philippine forces "used to come with guns, missiles, and heavy weapons. Now they are messengers of peace and [are] building our schools."[424] In contrast, the Abu Sayyaf Group, increasingly on its heels, continued to kidnap locals for ransom and even gained a reputation for abusing the women they held hostage.[425]

In short, CMOs had rapid, positive effects when employed by U.S. SOF. This led to their adoption by the Armed Forces of the Philippines, which saw similarly quick improvements in regions they had been struggling to control for decades. Providing services and avoiding civilian casualties simply produced better outcomes than the heavy-handed approach the Philippine forces had been using before receiving U.S. support and training. As one Philippine officer put it, "Constraint is a weapons system."[426]

Continued Interagency Cooperation

The assessment, PN agreement, and population-centric CT efforts of the initial years of OEF-P showed U.S. SOF overcoming several barriers to effectiveness. These efforts were all reinforced by another oft-cited strength of U.S. SOF in the Philippines: interagency collaboration. As already mentioned, interagency coordination occurred during the Terrorism Coordination and Assistance Visit assessment. It also continued throughout the engagement. U.S. SOF worked particularly closely with the country team and the DOS. Though the JSOTF-P was based in the south, the JSOTF-P was a constant presence at U.S. Embassy Manila and frequently hosted country team members at its headquarters.[427] U.S. SOF liaison staff resided at U.S. Embassy Manila and facilitated weekly meetings with top interagency counterparts and typically included the ambassador.[428] Smaller efforts, like what will be discussed in greater detail in chapter 7—wording and structuring the assessments U.S. SOF conducted in accordance with the Interagency Conflict Assessment Framework (ICAF) that the DOS and USAID already used—smoothed the way further.[429] The interagency eventually established the Mindanao Working Group and developed the Mindanao Engagement

Strategy—a plan to formally integrate the various lines of USG effort in the southern Philippines.[430]

Harmony within the USG also helped to reassure the civilian government of PNs, which faced concerns and pressure about the U.S. presence throughout the duration of the operation. In working to gather intelligence about terrorist activities and whereabouts, U.S. SOF soon found that the ISR capabilities of the Philippine forces were extremely limited. With the Abu Sayyaf Group hiding in mountain strongholds and moving through dense jungles, additional hardware and systems—in particular, UAS—would be necessary to detect and disrupt terrorist activity. This was a sensitive issue because UAS were precisely the kind of technology likely to cause political trouble for the PN leadership and ultimately hinder U.S. SOF operations. Ambassador Ricciardone, however, understood the importance of the system for the mission and smoothed the way, arranging for a choreographed demonstration of the UAS and an exhibition of the control room for the president and the minister of defense.[431] The host government was reassured and approved the use of and the Armed Forces of the Philippines' training on this crucial CT tool.

Box 12. Interagency Disagreements: From Fish Farming to Clearances

Interagency cooperation was certainly not perfect, and issues did emerge. The country team found that their U.S. SOF counterparts did not always rely on the embassy's expertise, and assessments and survey efforts were often redundant between the DOD and DOS.[432] There was also an instance in which USAID and JSOTF-P disagreed over which species of fish should be used for a fish farming program, resulting in the JSOTF-P taking full financial responsibility for the project.[433] Clearances proved to be a sticking point in some circumstances as well, as U.S. SOF had a limited allotment of TOP SECRET billets, but this level of clearance was required to access diplomatic cables at the Embassy.[434] Incidents like these did not derail interagency relations in the Philippines but certainly created friction.

As described in chapter 3, population-centric CT is more effective when coordinated with the interagency—and especially USAID. While the DOD was funding and running several construction projects and other assistance efforts designed to secure short-term gains, USAID was pouring resources into underserved areas in the southern Philippines. Many of USAID's programs were designed to have longer-term effects. Grants associated with the largest programs—the Growth with Equity in Mindanao and the Mindanao Peace and Development Program—totaled well over $300 million.[435] While U.S. SOF and their Philippine counterparts continued to maintain contacts with villages, especially in areas where Abu Sayyaf Group activity was a threat, they also provided protection for U.S officials to monitor ongoing projects, which helped to reduce corruption and ensure that development work was actually completed.[436] As in the assessment phase, cooperation went both ways. The USAID mission director in 2010 noticed that her agency's maps were not drawn using the same districts and boundaries as the DOD and therefore did not clearly show the JSOTF-P's area of operations, leading her to redraw the maps to better align and coordinate efforts.[437] This had precisely the kind of synergistic impact outlined in chapter 3, leveraging a wider range of expertise and resources to influence the population and expand on U.S. SOF-led CMOs.

Drawdown and the Tail: Partner Institutional and Educational Capacity for the Long Term

The way in which the U.S. wound down OEF-P suggested an awareness of and willingness to tackle key hurdles to SOF CT effectiveness, even if there was not enough institutionalization or systemic reform to make a deep and lasting change. Years before the end of the operation, the focus shifted to the "tail," namely the institutional and educational aspects of the Philippine defense establishment. There was also no abrupt or total withdrawal of forces. U.S. SOF retained a presence and continued to work in an advisory capacity, as well as to coordinate joint training and exchanges. U.S. SOF simply shifted to working out of U.S. Embassy Manila after the end of the named operation.[438]

In the Philippines, U.S. SOF anticipated the long-term institutional needs of their partners. Though this was not a focus in the initial years of OEF-P, by the late 2000s, JSOTF-P's attention had turned to military institutional capacity in the Philippines. A Philippines SF headquarters with an SF school

and the distinct Special Operations Command Philippine Army were both stood up during the engagement with U.S. support and modeled, in part, on comparable U.S. institutions.[439] Though the teeth still came before the tail, commanders nonetheless invested several years in advising and assisting the development of this institutional capacity before formally ending OEF-P.[440]

Another important barrier to effective CT is the demands that it places on junior officers and NCOs. During the engagement itself, U.S. SOF focused on these capacities, making it a point to train PN junior officers and NCOs.[441] They also made serious efforts to institutionalize this education. The newly minted Philippine SF quickly developed recruitment criteria, doctrine, and training and education programs, including an NCO academy.[442] The thoughtful incorporation of PME for Philippine SF into OEF-P was part of an effort to address a barrier to effectiveness directly and build the foundation for ongoing domestic CT undertaken by local partners.

Another important barrier to effective CT is the demands that it places on junior officers and NCOs.

Finally, what made these capacity and institutional building activities possible was the fact that OEF-P drew down slowly. It was in 2011 that the USG and the Philippines agreed that U.S. SOF had achieved the primary mission of OEF-P.[443] Additional assessments, though, indicated that a quick withdrawal of most U.S. personnel would create issues. For instance, USAID would no longer have access to certain areas with ongoing projects, which would necessitate a more comprehensive plan for turning control of development initiatives over to local authorities.[444] Even more pressing was the concern that, without U.S. SOF working closely with Philippine SF, a withdrawal would create serious gaps in intelligence and situational awareness surrounding the terrorist threat. Though the Abu Sayyaf Group had been degraded, it had not been eliminated—and new local threats, some declaring their *bay'ah* or allegiance to the Islamic State, were already emerging.[445] These concerns led to a slower drawdown that lasted four years and plans to ensure that U.S. SOF maintained a consistent and functional presence in the Philippines even after OEF-P came to an end.[446]

Post-OEF-P: The Islamic State, Marawi and Operation Pacific Eagle-Philippines

Upbeat assessments of the situation in the Philippines followed the formal conclusion of OEF-P. The Abu Sayyaf Group was on the run, and Jemaah Islamiyah had largely returned to Indonesia. The Philippine government had more support in the south than it ever had before. Negotiations with Moro separatists were ongoing, and a more capable Armed Forces of the Philippines remained to turn its attention to the internal threat posed by the New People's Army in the north and external threats emanating from an increasingly uneasy southeast Asian regional security environment. The U.S. had apparently established and solidified a strategic ally and—after struggling to find a long-lasting solution to terrorism in the Middle East and central Asia—come up with a low-cost, low-casualty, low-profile model for SOF-driven CT through FID and BPC in the Philippines.[447]

Yet, especially after the Siege of Marawi—which will be described in the following subsection—there was a serious reassessment. Media coverage, which was once replete with glowing titles about the success of the Basilan model, shifted. Observers began asking different questions and finding different answers about U.S. SOF in the Philippines: "Where Did the U.S. Go Wrong in the Philippines? A Hard Look at a 'Success' Story" and "Moro Separatism in the Philippines: The Strategic Failure of a Promising Counterinsurgency."[448] This next section will overview the security situation in the Philippines during the period 2015 through early 2020, with particular emphasis on the Siege of Marawi. It will then expound on the question of "What went wrong?" by referring to some of the major themes in this text: principally, the fundamental problem of translating tactical gains into strategic outcomes; a highly-militarized approach to CT that does not sufficiently consider the social, economic, and historical context of terrorism as political violence; and the overarching lack of a U.S. CT strategy.

The Islamic State and Marawi

It was the Battle of Marawi that brought the Philippines exploding back onto the U.S. national security radar. That Islamic State-affiliated militants could come to seize and hold—for five months—a major city in Mindanao only two short years after OEF-P's successful conclusion was troubling. Evident in the lead-up to the standoff, its conduct, and the aftermath is the fact that

whatever gains had been made during OEF-P did not persist into the second half of the decade.

The Battle of Marawi was not without precedent. In 2013, a MNLF splinter group[449] clashed with Philippine forces in Zamboanga City, one of the most populous cities in the country, and the second largest in the south. Only after four weeks of fighting, characterized as a "bloody urban struggle" that left more than 10 percent of the city's inhabitants homeless, were the Armed Forces of the Philippines able to dispatch or scatter a critical mass of militants.[450] The Zamboanga City crisis was marked by many of the same features that would reappear in Marawi a few years later: the use of human shields and hostages by militants, dozens of civilian casualties, poor Armed Forces of the Philippines treatment of prisoners and suspects,[451] and difficulty by the Armed Forces of the Philippines in navigating and operating in urban terrain. Though initially viewed as a success due to the surrender of rebel forces and the fact that peace talks were not completely derailed, in retrospect, it presaged a longer and even deadlier siege.[452]

Rather than offer a complete history, this section endeavors to highlight the details of the Marawi siege that are relevant to the present analysis. First, it was touched off by a serious failure of Philippine intelligence. In May 2017, intelligence had reached the Philippine forces that Isnilon Hapilon, the head of Abu Sayyaf Group and the alleged leader of the Islamic State in Southeast Asia at the time, was in Marawi.[453] It was only during the failed raid to capture/kill Hapilon that Philippine security forces discovered Marawi had become home to large numbers of armed militants from the Maute Group, as well as other Islamic State-affiliated and Islamic State-inspired groups. The forces had been assembling and were planning to seize the city during Ramadan of that year, emulating devastating Islamic State actions in Mosul, Iraq.[454] Perhaps the best that can be said of the raid is that it accelerated the militants' timetable; intelligence-wise, Philippine forces were unaware of both the sheer size of the opposition force, as well as its plans and objectives.

Other features of the five-month siege are also worth noting. The Armed Forces of the Philippines had limited experience and training in urban warfare, having trained for and fought principally rural engagements against the Abu Sayyaf Group in the south and the communists in the north.[455] To their credit, Philippine forces quickly began to address this shortcoming, evincing flexibility, as well as identifying their own strengths and bringing them to bear against the enemy. For instance, in response to the Maute Group's large

stockpile of anti-armor munitions, mechanized units improvised wooden cages to protect their vehicles from warheads that detonated on impact.[456] Short on ISR capabilities, Philippine SF also took it upon themselves to acquire small commercial drones to use for surveillance—a measure that the Maute Group had taken some months prior when planning the Marawi assault.[457] The technical proficiency of the Armed Forces of the Philippines snipers also soon began to wear on the militants, who could not reliably hide behind the hostages they used as human shields.[458] Further, Philippine security forces were able to eliminate two high-ranking leaders; both Isnilon Hapilon and Omarkhayyam Maute, one of the two brothers who founded the Maute Group, were killed during the Marawi conflict. All this suggests that the 2016 RAND report—which concluded that the Philippine SF were some of the most proficient and effective forces in Asia—was accurate when it came to kinetic, tactical engagements.

Perhaps more important than the battle itself, though, was the aftermath. Civilian casualties were officially cited at 47, and while the worst abuses were attributable to the Maute Group, the Armed Forces of the Philippines engaged in looting and treated prisoners and fleeing civilians harshly.[459] Moreover, the fighting in Marawi featured the use of aerial bombardments by Philippine forces, which leveled portions of the city and left some 360,000 from the city and surrounding areas homeless.[460] Many languished in internally displaced person camps for over a year, with an estimated 70,000 still without homes, as bomb disposal teams continued to find unexploded ordinance and efforts by the Duterte government to rebuild the city were met with delays and corruption.[461] Such an environment foments anti-government sentiment, and contributes to the support that terrorists need to operate. Not surprisingly, this heavily Muslim population is now a fertile recruiting ground for the Maute Group and other, even more extreme off-shoots.[462]

Perhaps more important than the battle itself, though, was the aftermath.

As the smoke cleared from Marawi, a different picture of the extremist and terrorist threat landscape in the Philippines could be seen. A number of Maute Group fighters killed during the siege hailed not from the Philippines or from Indonesia and Malaysia but also from Bangladesh, Pakistan, and a handful of Middle Eastern countries.[463] Despite the clear signs of ties between the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria and terrorist activities

in the Philippines—including video content in which Filipinos in Iraq and Syria called on their fellow countrymen to join the Islamic State, as well as video and published statements of allegiance to the Islamic State from the Abu Sayyaf Group and Maute Group leadership—the Philippine government had been slow to address or even acknowledge the transregional ties that emerged in the mid-2010s.[464] Even as the Islamic State lost territorial control in the Levant, Southeast Asia—particularly the Philippines with its still poorly-governed spaces in the southern islands—became a major hub for the Islamic State and a global network of foreign terrorist fighters. Though violent extremists do not hold swaths of territories like the Abu Sayyaf Group had before U.S. involvement, the terrorist threat is that of "small but more ruthless groups" that engage in sensational and brutal violence.[465] Certainly, these trends began before Marawi and have changed and shifted in its aftermath. Ultimately, however, despite nearly two decades of U.S. CT presence and support, the terrorist landscape in the Philippines is replete with VEOs, many with militant Islamist ideologies and affiliated with growing and increasingly sophisticated global terrorist networks. To the astute observer, this portrait may sound quite like the circumstances in the Philippines circa 2001.

Relations between the U.S. and the Philippines today are growing more complex. The events of 2017 clearly alarmed Congress, and the USG was eager to prevent the Islamic State from establishing a new base of operations within the territory of an important ally.[466] In September 2017, OPE-P was launched with a mission "to support the Philippine government and military in their efforts to isolate, degrade, and defeat Islamic State of Iraq and Syria affiliates and other VEOs in the Philippines."[467] The operation featured less than 100 U.S. SOF and fewer than 200 conventional U.S. forces, who, after the end of the siege of Marawi, provided primarily ISR assets and support for the Armed Forces of the Philippines.[468] However, in February 2020, Philippines President Rodrigo Duterte announced that the country would seek to end the Visiting Force Agreement with the U.S., which would make U.S. training, military, and even humanitarian aid in the Philippines more difficult, time consuming, and costly.[469]

How Tactical Gains from Operation Enduring Freedom-Philippines Were Lost

As noted, the Philippines today does not look significantly better—from the perspective of U.S. national security—than it did circa 2001 when the Abu Sayyaf Group dominated the south of the archipelago. The authors argue that, while exemplary on numerous dimensions, the U.S. SOF engagement in the Philippines failed to overcome two fundamental barriers during OEF-P. The first was the focus on tactical successes against armed actors, both among U.S. SOF and the Armed Forces of the Philippines, including Philippine SF. While CMOs, development aid, and interagency coordination were employed, they ultimately were used to improve the effectiveness and success of kinetic capture/kill operations in the southern Philippines, serving short-term tactical goals. Second, and relatedly, was the lack of an overall strategy that would lay the groundwork for sustainable gains and long-term answers to political and governance issues in the PN that gave rise to the conditions for terrorism and insurgency in the first place. One analyst described the situation, identifying how these two considerations drove outcomes:

> Overall, the COIN strategy implemented in the Philippines focused on kinetic operations to produce reactive tactical outcomes. The strategy funneled foreign aid into Mindanao's population without bolstering local institutions to build the foundation for long-lasting financial gains. Further, few political concessions were granted to help ease the Moro community's frustrations, and a feeling of political and cultural alienation continued past the termination of OEF-P and the U.S. withdrawal. In the U.S.' absence, the Armed Forces of the Philippines continued to struggle with implementing an effective COIN strategy, and the population remained skeptical of Manila's motivations.[470]

The focus on the tactical level at the expense of the strategic level is a profound enough error to counteract the hard-won gains of U.S. SOF and the Armed Forces of the Philippines during OEF-P in just a few short years. The remainder of this section turns to an analysis of some concrete instantiations of these problems.

Kinetics over Ideas. In chapter 2, the core mission bias of military organizations was discussed at some length. USSOCOM is hardly immune to the DOD's tendency to place combat at the center of the metaphorical map. While USSOCOM and the JSOTF-P emphasized CMOs, these were undertaken in order to enable kinetic military operations focused on identifying and neutralizing terrorist cells in the southern Philippines. Though necessary for reducing violence and setting the conditions for future stability, this narrow focus drew attention away from addressing the many root causes of radicalization. As one MIST member recalls, "those units that focus more on civilian populations and the broader political environment … are considered 'enablers' for their SF and SEAL counterparts (as my bosses often reminded me)."[471]

This contributed to the U.S. missing opportunities to forestall major linkages between the Islamic State and the Philippines in 2014 and 2015. Indeed, when the MIST wanted to add a person to the team to specialize in counter-messaging efforts on social media, the request was denied.[472] This experience is not unique to the Philippines; it is a barrier to overall U.S. SOF effectiveness to superordinate tactical approaches—including tactical training of partners—over IO and messaging that counter the long-term ideological foundations of terrorist support.

More broadly, the measures of success in the Philippines were enemy centric. U.S. SOF was tasked to:

> support the comprehensive approach of the Armed Forces of the Philippines in their fight against terrorism in the southern Philippines. At the request of the government of the Philippines, JSOTF-P works alongside the Armed Forces of the Philippines to defeat terrorists and create the conditions necessary for peace, stability and prosperity.[473]

While this mission emphasizes the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the importance of local conditions, "defeat[ing] terrorists" came to the fore in defining the success of combined efforts. In particular, the number of suspected Abu Sayyaf Group fighters and their violent activities, especially the extent to which terrorist activity had been reduced, featured prominently in assessments. In their overall evaluation of OEF-P, RAND spent pages documenting decreases in the number of enemy-initiated attacks and devoted

several additional pages to the disposition and capabilities of remaining VEOs in its conclusion.[474] This tendency to focus on the enemy and to target individual groups is a problematic hallmark of U.S. SOF CT operations, one that unfortunately still very much applies to the Philippines.

Lack of Sustainable Capabilities of the Armed Forces of the Philippines. Not unrelatedly, the post-OEF-P events have demonstrated that key Armed Forces of the Philippines, Philippine SF, and Philippines defense establishment capacities remain underdeveloped and could not be sustained in the ways or at the levels necessary to conduct effective CT in the absence of U.S. personnel and resources. Though Philippine SF proved to be adaptable and tactically skilled during the siege of Marawi, it was a failure of intelligence that allowed so many Maute Group and affiliated fighters to infiltrate the city in the first place and contributed to the botched raid that touched off the engagement in May 2017. At the time of this writing, the USG is focused on supplying Armed Forces of the Philippines partners with ISR assets and integrating them into their operations.[475] Philippine forces have also returned to employing heavy-handed approaches to CT—or as Zachary Abuza stated, the Armed Forces of the Philippines "has reverted to tactics the United States tried so hard to wean them off of."[476] Some of this may well stem from frustrations caused in part by the Armed Forces of the Philippines' limited resources at a time when the force is facing multiple armed threats.[477] Corruption within Philippine forces also serves to degrade the efficacy of the force and stymie population-centric CT efforts. This reality suggests that even with a small footprint for 14 years, U.S. SOF engagement may not have been sufficient to professionalize a large organization like the Armed Forces of the Philippines.[478]

Issues of limited Philippine capabilities and capacity, as well as problems with corruption, were not unforeseeable and have undermined the long-term sustainability and effectiveness of Philippine CT efforts. A frank assessment of the Philippine forces training capacity in the mid-2010s stated that, "Poor tactical skills on the part of conventional forces indicated that the Armed Forces of the Philippines had no universally effective training methods for continuing to impart skills that U.S. SOF had taught to dozens of units in 14 years."[479] Communications and logistics were always a weak point for the Philippine forces.[480] ISR has been an issue for some time, as the emergency acquisition and use of commercial off-the-shelf UAS during the Marawi

crisis illustrates. Even if ISR assets—such as purpose-built UAS—had been acquired, it is not clear that many Philippine military units would have had sufficient absorptive capacity to effectively integrate them.[481] It is precisely these problems that have made it difficult for government forces to counter the terrorist threat effectively. Despite the USG taking training and institutional capacity building seriously during the engagement, Philippine forces had come to depend on their U.S. partners for both funding and certain technical capabilities.[482]

The Government of the Republic of the Philippines and Governance Challenges. Ultimately, what U.S. SOF was able to stitch together in the Philippines unraveled, primarily because of the persistence of the underlying political, social, and economic circumstances—as well as grievances that have fueled insurgency, terrorism, and subversion in the archipelago for decades, if not centuries. Corruption, inequality, and poor governance remain central issues, and, for many, the situation has only deteriorated in the past decade. Insofar as the U.S. engagement failed to devote adequate attention to these issues, strategic-level effects in the Philippines were effectively forestalled. Indeed, the U.S. often looked the other way when it came to corruption, including among the Philippine forces and anti-democratic tendencies in the country.[483] That said, it is impossible to know whether pressure on the Philippine government or Philippine forces leadership to address these issues would have borne fruit or merely undermined relations.

More acutely, U.S. operations left little sustainable development behind. Led by U.S. SOF whose primary mission in southern Philippine CMOs was to establish trust and short-term operational breathing space within the communities, these programs were never designed to be long lived. Even if infrastructure did improve—and it did—a failure to follow-up initial assistance efforts with larger initiatives to truly develop and improve the local economy did little to spur sustained, long-term growth and prosperity in the region.[484] Coupled with the lack of resources for Philippine forces to conduct CT according to population-centric practices, as well as ongoing strife in the region with international terrorists as well as the Moro Islamic Liberation Front and other local separatists, the fragile stability and trust between Philippine forces and the population were easily eroded.

Most important of all, though, is the fact that the basic issues that fueled the population's discontent with the government in Manila remained

unchanged as a result of the U.S. SOF engagement. This fact was understood at the time; even in 2004, critics drew attention to the unresolved, underlying issues in the region and cautioned against overall rosy outlooks.[485] The RAND report also notes that one of the handful of limitations to OEF-P was that "the drivers of conflict continue to exist in the south."[486] It has also been revisited and rehashed by observers since. These individual notes all strike a single, fairly clear chord—that the SOF-heavy U.S. engagement did not focus on or engender the systemic changes necessary to translate tactical and operational successes against terrorist organizations in the Philippines into strategic objectives.[487]

Conclusion

"In many ways they did everything right."[488] Abuza's seven words offer an insightful summarization of U.S. SOF CT in the Philippines. From population-focused operations to lengthy engagements that seriously invested in partner forces, it is easy to understand why the Philippines was seen as a model for CT, especially in an era when other CT efforts seemed so obviously fraught. Unfortunately, a tactical emphasis and a failure to address long-term corruption and governance issues carried the most weight in deciding the outcome of U.S. SOF engagement in the Philippines. Strategic-level gains simply were not made or were not sustained.

Chapter 6. U.S. Special Operations Forces Counterterrorism in Colombia: Winning the War, Losing the Peace

Whereas the Philippines started off auspiciously with close alignment between U.S. and Philippine interests, the same could not be said of Colombia. While the USG was principally concerned with countering the flow of illicit narcotics, the Colombian government desired to prioritize COIN and CT. That said, an exogenous shock—in the form of the 9/11 terrorist attacks—ultimately served to better align USG and Colombian interests. Subsequently, the U.S. supported Colombia's preferred approach to CT. The provision of tactical training and the immense financial contributions by the USG certainly helped to enable the successful conclusion of the military campaign against Colombia's largest subversive organization, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia or *Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia* (FARC). That said, this often-cited success story of U.S. efforts at BPC may not be the shining star that many have claimed.

This is the case for at least two reasons. First, while certainly necessary, U.S. tactical and material support in isolation would almost certainly have proven insufficient to defeat the FARC. The Philippines case study offered in the previous chapter demonstrates as much. Rather, three additional factors enabled the Colombian government to convert U.S. assistance into desirable strategic effects. First, Colombia exhibited an extremely high degree of buy-in from both senior military officials and the country's top civilian leadership. This made possible many of the substantial reforms necessary for success. Second, and most notably, Colombia articulated a sound theory of victory. Third, and relatedly, sweeping changes were made across both the Colombian Ministry of National Defense and the Colombian interagency to enable the necessary population-centric approaches for prosecuting the conflict. While the U.S. may have indirectly influenced and supported these additional factors, they largely occurred organically within the Colombian government and Ministry of National Defense. In short, what the Colombians did on their own was far more important than the support provided by the USG.

Second, the martial success of the Colombian security forces, while impressive, could not forestall political considerations from undermining the resultant peace process. Ultimately, a rushed agreement that lacked popular support was promulgated and hastily and haphazardly implemented. This left much of the Colombian population perturbed, many FARC fighters out in the cold with few options but to reengage in violence, and Colombian military and police forces stretched too thin to secure the huge swaths of territory rapidly vacated by the FARC. For the USG's part, disdain for the peace deal—on the part of the wife of Colombian decent of a U.S. Senator—saw USG support for their Colombian partners to secure the peace evaporate.[489]

This chapter proceeds in four sections. The first offers a brief historical overview of the Colombian conflict, which has been raging since 1964. The second explores the Colombia-U.S. partnership. Focus is first directed to exploring the divergent aims of the two partners and the role that 9/11 played in synchronizing objectives. Subsequently this section overviews the tactical training and material resources provided by the USG. It then delves into a discussion of the critical changes implemented at the initiative of the Colombian government. U.S. support for these organic changes is also discussed. The penultimate section explores the failure of both governments to secure the peace. The final section concludes. In doing so, it also overviews crucial components for successful BPC for CT efforts based on both case studies presented in this monograph.

Conflict History: Civil Strife and the FARC, 1964 to 1998

The Colombian civil war began in 1964 in response to the exclusion of the left from politics.[490] This current wave of civil strife stems from the resolution—or lack thereof—of a previous internal conflict. In 1948, presidential front-runner Jorge Eliécer Gaitán Ayala was assassinated. This precipitated a decade of conflict known in Colombia as simply The Violence or *La Violencia*. Fighting only ceased as a result of the implementation of a power-sharing agreement wherein Colombia's two major political parties, the Liberals and the Conservatives, would alternate control of the government. While effective at ending the fighting between the two dominant parties, the agreement excluded everyone else, including the left, from political participation.[491] Beyond simply being precluded from power, the left was subjected

to extensive political violence at the hands of the Liberal and Conservative governments and their constituents.[492]

This reality fomented the rise of two Marxist-Leninist subversive groups in 1964—the FARC and the National Liberation Army or *Ejército de Liberación Nacional*. Over the next two decades, four additional Marxist-Leninist guerrilla groups would emerge.[493] However, the FARC constituted by far the largest and most sophisticated threat to the Colombian state. Moreover, except for the National Liberation Army, which remains in existence, all the other leftist subversives demobilized prior to 1991.[494]

The FARC mounted a serious and sustained challenge to the Colombian government for over half a century.[495] Indeed, at its height, the FARC amassed between 17,000 and 21,000 fighters.[496] Numbers were not their only strength. The FARC proved very capable of employing complex tactics. In 1996, the FARC brought these strengths to bear and went on the offensive. The Colombian military suffered a series of spectacular defeats that culminated with the 1998 battle of El Billar. During this engagement, between 600 and 800 FARC fighters laid ambush to the elite 52nd Counter-Guerrilla Battalion. The FARC utilized a combination of carefully planned fixed-fighting positions and mobile tactics. They even executed a successful envelopment of the Colombian Army soldiers. Despite their close air support, at the end of five days of sustained contact, approximately 70 percent of the battalion had been killed, wounded, or captured, rendering it combat ineffective.[497] The defeat at El Billar marked the nadir for the Colombian military. General (Ret.) Charles E. Wilhelm, the Commanding General of U.S. Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM) at the time, expressed "little cause for optimism," highlighting the Colombian military's "inability to see threats, followed closely by their lack of competence in assessing and engaging them."[498] General (Ret.) Wilhelm further indicated that Colombia was "in urgent need of our [U.S. Government] support." The election of President Andrés Pastrana Arango in 1999 and his appointment of U.S.-trained general officers to crucial positions in Colombia's defense establishment (e.g., Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Chief of Staff of the Army) set the stage for a massive, extended security partnership between the two governments.

Partnering to Counter Terrorism in Colombia, 1999 to 2016

This section is devoted to exploring the evolution of the Colombia-U.S. partnership and the prosecution of CT against the FARC beginning in 1999 through adoption of a peace accord by the end of 2016. It first explores the divergent interests of the two partners and the role 9/11 played in aligning their aims. The subsequent subsection overviews USG-provided training and material support. The final subsection overviews far more sweeping changes that the Colombian government made on their own initiative. The role of the U.S. interagency in helping Colombia achieve these changes is, however, consequential. It is therefore also covered in this subsection.

From Divergent Aims to Aligned Interests

In 1999, the USG's interest in Colombia was clear: counternarcotics—not CT or COIN. At the time, President Clinton was facing pressure from Republican legislators who sought to characterize the administration as ineffectual in curtailing the steady flow of Colombian cocaine into the United States. The issue was especially salient given that the U.S. was in the midst of a crack cocaine epidemic.[499] Whereas the USG was interested in counternarcotics, the Pastrana administration preferred a much larger COIN and CT effort targeting the FARC. Unfortunately for Colombia, U.S. leaders were weary of more extensive involvement in Colombia due to fears about being dragged into a larger military engagement that—given the current state of Colombian security forces—was likely unwinnable and may have entailed extensive human rights abuses on the part of Colombian security forces.[500] Nevertheless, facing pressure from his own military leadership who recognized that without USG

Figure 9. Author Barnett S. Koven stands on a captured FARC semisubmersible that was used to smuggle cocaine HCL at naval base ARC Bolivar. Photo by Thomas R. Luley, Jr./used with permission

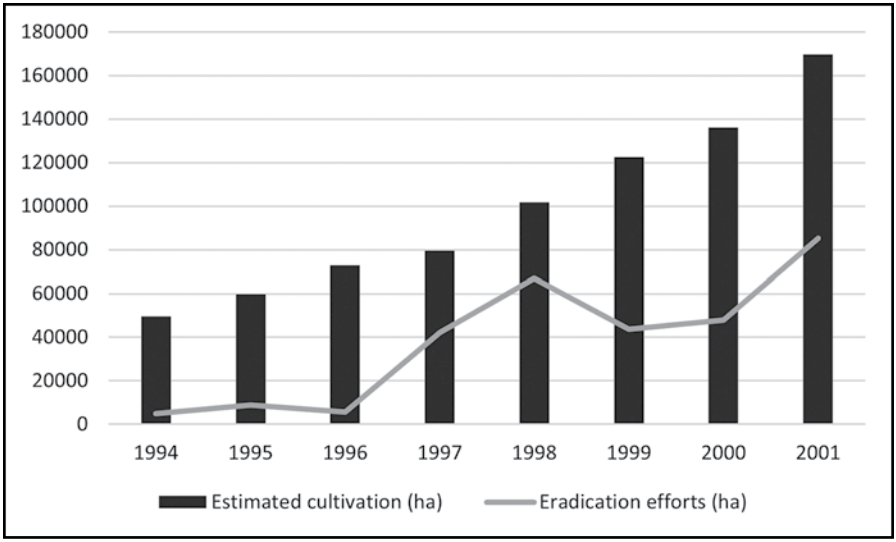


Figure 10. Colombian Coca Cultivation and Forced Eradication, 1994–2001. Source: U.S. Department of State

assistance, Colombian forces were unlikely to make substantial gains on any front (counternarcotics, COIN or CT), Pastrana acquiesced.[501] The two governments quickly promulgated Plan Colombia. The six-year plan allocated $7.5 billion to employ the Colombian armed forces to eradicate coca in FARC-controlled territory.[502]

Because Colombia needed U.S. assistance, it was forced to adopt a losing approach. One might think that pursuing forced eradication would be helpful in defeating the FARC, insofar as it denies the subversives access to illicit financing.[503] However, the Colombian government recognized what the USG did not; previous forced eradication efforts had merely displaced FARC cultivation efforts to other parts of the country. As figure 10 shows, the number of hectares of Colombian territory used for coca cultivation expanded at a rate that more than kept pace with increasing eradication efforts throughout much of the 1990s and early 2000s. More insidiously, by attacking the livelihoods of poor peasant farmers, forced eradication risked driving an already disenfranchised rural population into the FARC's open arms.[504]

The Colombian government's preferred approach to SC—emphasizing COIN and CT—would only become the focus of bilateral efforts when U.S. national security priorities shifted following 9/11. During a series of joint

press conferences in 2002 and early 2003 with newly elected Colombian President Alvaro Uribe, President Bush articulated the Colombia-U.S. security partnership's shifting focus toward CT. President Bush stated:

> terrorists attacked our country and hurt us. If they attack Colombia and hurt them, they're still equally as guilty, as far as we're concerned … I look forward to working with President Uribe to hold others to account, if they continue to terrorize the world.[505]

During a subsequent joint press conference, President Bush also stated:

> All I know is the man [Uribe] is absolutely committed to fighting terror. For that, I appreciate it. He has got a straightforward, strong vision about what has to happen to people who are willing to kill innocent people. And that is, they must be dealt with severely.[506]

President Bush's speeches would usher in a new phase of bilateral SC that would see USG support to Colombia expand massively, representing a USG commitment of more than $10 billion dollars by fiscal year 2016[507] in a program that involved as many as 20 distinct USG agencies and departments.[508]

U.S. Special Operations Forces and Interagency-Led Efforts to Build Colombian Capacity

U.S. SOF, led by the U.S. Army's 7th SFG [A] along with operators from U.S. Naval Special Warfare Command and combat air advisors from the U.S. Air Force Special Operations Command, immediately began training both Colombian special operators and CF.[509] Before the decade was out, more than 77,000 partner force personnel had received training.

Notable highlights include the standing up of the counter-narcotics Jungle Company or *Comandos Jungla*, which—despite the name—was comprised of three airmobile companies trained and equipped to target cocaine processing laboratories and HVTs to enable the pursuit of counternarcotics objectives in a manner that did not alienate the population. The company not only benefited from U.S. SOF training, they received seven embedded advisors from the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration.[510] In addition, a rapid deployment force comprised of four brigades—three CF brigades and a SOF brigade—and a separate rotary-winged aviation brigade were established to ensure that the Colombian military could take the fight to the subversives at a moment's notice.[511] Finally, while the FARC largely operated

in the countryside, an elite urban counterterrorism special forces group—the *Agrupación de Fuerzas Especiales Antiterroristas Urbanas*—was also stood up.[512]

As members of these and other units mastered basic tactics, the scope and complexity of training expanded. More specifically, Colombian personnel received instruction on close air support, combat engineering, combat medicine, communication, escape and evasion, fire and maneuver, intelligence, leadership development, operational planning, riverine operations, rules of engagement, secure communications, and navigation.[513]

Recognizing that "tactical mobility has long been the Achilles heel of Colombia's Armed Forces,"[514] the DOD and DOS collaborated to equip the Colombian military and police with a fleet of UH-60 Black Hawk and UH-1 Iroquois helicopters. Rather than simply providing the airframes, the DOS and DOD ensured sustainability by investing in the training and infrastructure necessary to produce highly capable aircrews and maintainers to ensure the fleet of aircraft would remain in service.[515]

In addition, CIA officers and contractors built an elaborate network of regional intelligence fusion cells—with the first one stood up on the grounds of U.S. Embassy Bogota. In addition to training analysts how to fuse and direct actionable intelligence to operational forces, the CIA provided extensive instruction to Colombian intelligence officers in order to enable them to recruit and run their own HUMINT sources.[516]

The combined impact of increased mobility afforded by rotary-winged aviation assets and a sophisticated intelligence capability resulted in some extremely impressive and successful operations. Intelligence support and rotary-winged aviation are credited, for example, in the 2004 capture of FARC leader Simón Trinidad (*nom de guerre* Juvenal Ovidio Ricardo Palmera Pineda)[517]—who was the highest ranking member of the FARC to be detained at the time[518]—and the rescue of more than a dozen hostages, including three U.S. contractors employed by Northrop Grumman, former Colombian presidential candidate Ingrid Betancourt, and 11 Colombian police and army personnel held captive by the FARC since 2008.[519]

Organic Colombian Reforms with United States Government Support

Despite contributing to tactical and operational successes, Colombia's strategic success in their armed competition against the FARC would require additional changes beyond U.S. training and assistance. More specifically,

it would require the Colombian government to articulate a sound theory of victory and then make the necessary structural changes to their force—and their interagency—in order to implement the population-centric approaches called for by their new theory of victory. While the Colombian government took the initiative in this regard, the USG stepped in to support Colombia's efforts to pursue reforms. It did so in a manner that effectively integrated interagency efforts.

A Sound Theory of Victory. Almost immediately upon his election, President Uribe got to work devising a new strategy for Colombia's fight against the FARC. The plan, known as the Democratic Security and Defense Policy (DSDP) had its basis in Major General Carlos Alberto Ospina Ovalle's insistence—a COIN expert—that tactical successes against narcotrafficking, transnational criminality, or terrorism were insufficient. Rather, the general recognized that the FARC viewed themselves "as a revolutionary movement [which] sought to implement [a] people's war."[520] Countering them would therefore require a holistic approach that enfranchised the rural populations the FARC claimed to represent. The DSDP, therefore, articulated a theory of victory wherein the government would win by extending state control and more importantly, state services throughout the countryside—thereby enfranchising the entirety of the Colombian population. More specifically, the DSDP called for a three-pronged strategic approach:

1. The Government will gradually restore state presence and the authority of state institutions, starting in strategically important areas. Once the intelligence services have identified and located a threat, the Armed Forces and the National Police will begin the recovery process with an offensive operation. Reinforcements will be provided when necessary.

2. Once the Armed Forces and the National Police have reestablished control over an area, units comprising professional soldiers, *campesino* soldiers [military conscripts completing their compulsory service in their local communities] and National Police *carabineros* [a mobile, paramilitary police force] will maintain security and protect the civilian population. This will enable state organisations and criminal investigation authorities to work in the area. Together with representatives of the Public Prosecutor's Office, the Attorney

> General's Office, the Judicial Police and the Administrative Department of Security, the Armed Forces and the National Police will form a support structure, which will be responsible for identifying and bringing to justice members of the illegal armed groups and those who commit crimes which have a major impact on society.
>
> 3. Once a basic level of security has been established, the State will embark upon a policy of territorial consolidation, reestablishing the normal operation of the justice system, strengthening local democracy, meeting the most urgent needs of the population, broadening state services and initiating medium to longterm projects aimed at creating sustainable development. Ministries and other government departments involved in these projects will follow directives from the National Defence and Security Council, so that projects are executed once territorial control has been consolidated and are thus not the [*sic*] threats and extortion of the illegal armed groups.[521]

In short, the DSDP prioritized extending the presence of state services and democracy to all of Colombia. While security was necessary for the Colombian interagency to extend the reach of civilian branches of government into the countryside, the effort clearly called for considerably more than simply ensuring the control of terrain by Colombian forces. While the USG encouraged Uribe's efforts to draft the DSDP, this was very much a Colombian-led effort informed by Colombian experts such as General Ospina.[522] That said, the plan called for massive efforts by and reforms within the Ministry of National Defense and the Colombian interagency. In this regard, the USG interagency would play a supporting but consequential role.

Structural Reforms. The ambitious nature of the DSDP would require substantial reforms within the partner force and the Colombian interagency. Regarding Colombian security forces, efforts to integrate disparate services—both military and police—under joint commands with a diverse contingent of highly specialized units would prove highly successful—operating in unison coupled with professionalization through training and a shift away from a conscript force. Despite initial resistance from the Colombian Army, by late 2004, military efforts against the FARC shifted from being under the control of Army "divisional areas"—wherein each area of operations was controlled by the commanding general of a Colombian Army division—to

joint operational commands. This enabled more effective coordination of efforts across Colombia's military services. Equally as important, the Colombian National Police were incorporated into the joint commands.[523] This was especially critical as, under Colombian law, only the Colombian National Police had the authority to arrest subversives or conduct searches and seizures. While the partner force made the decision to shift to a joint warfighting model on their own, U.S. support—especially in the form of joint training, where Colombian military and police officers were trained side by side—helped enable more effective joint operations.[524]

Integration extended beyond joint commands to involve the simultaneous and synergistic application of distinct, specialized units. Typically, highly trained airmobile forces would clear an area of the FARC. These elite military forces would then be replaced with the *Caribineros*. These forces were training and equipped like regular Colombian Army personnel. However, they benefited from police authorities as members of the Colombian National Police. While the *Caribineros* maintained a steady state presence in the cleared areas, a local army force known as the *Soldados de mi Pueblo* (Soldiers of My Village or Home Guards) would be stood up, taking advantage of a recently rediscovered law from the 1940s that allowed a portion of military conscripts to serve in their home towns. These forces would be trained and equipped like regular Colombian Army and Marine units led by career officers. However, because they were comprised of soldiers from the local area, they received an unprecedented amount of support and tips from local villagers. This intelligence was then leveraged by Colombian SOF to target FARC leadership. Specialized MIST personnel would then capitalize on the capture or killing of FARC leaders by devising IO, which often led to the surrender of rank and file FARC fighters, who would be processed by Colombian National Police officers and judicial officials.[525]

These complex operations required the Ministry of National Defense to build a professional, modern force out of a largely conscript military. In 2000, nearly 70 percent of the Colombian military was comprised of conscripts who served for just 12 to 18 months.[526] Colombian law allowed those who could afford to pay a onetime tax to avoid conscription.[527] Similarly, those with a high school education, while not automatically exempted from conscription, were legally barred from being employed in combat operations.[528] This meant that Colombia's conscript military was comprised of the poorest, least educated members of society. Colombian Army General Alberto Mejía described

these conscripts derisively as "robot soldiers," reflecting the fact that while they might be expected to obey orders, they were unlikely to take the initiative or prove particularly adept at complex operations.[529] To enable the shift from enemy-centric to much more complex population-centric approaches, the Colombian government endeavored to build a modern volunteer force. The government set to work replacing conscripts with volunteers at a rate of 10,000 personnel per year. Moreover, conscripts would be used for manpower intensive tasks like static defense of linear infrastructure. This would free up better trained volunteer forces for offensive operations against the FARC.[530] Partner force volunteers benefited from U.S. SOF provided training, as described previously. Importantly, this training not only conferred tactical skills but helped inculcate human rights norms. The former Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict observed that "there was a time … when the security forces may have committed over 50 percent of political violence in Colombia, but that number is now less than 2 percent. So we think they have made dramatic progress in that area."[531] Indeed, respect for human rights would prove crucial in winning the support of the civilian population.

While impressive, these changes within the partner force alone would be insufficient to succeed against the FARC; Colombia's interagency would need to also be involved. In 2004, USSOUTHCOM proposed enhanced coordination between diverse agencies and departments across both the Colombian and U.S. governments. The Colombian Ministry of National Defense and President Uribe himself would ultimately adopt the idea as their own. In 2006, Colombia unveiled the *Centro de Coordinación de Acción Integral*, or Coordination Center for Integrated Action (CCAI). CCAI, with U.S. funding and support, would stand up civilian-military fusion centers staffed by personnel from nearly 20 Colombian government ministries and agencies, as well as their USG counterparts.[532] While the U.S. DOS was placed in charge of the USG's effort to support the Colombian government, an innovative arrangement emerged wherein Colombia would be divided into regions, and a different USG entity—the DOD, DOS, or USAID—would lead depending on the prevailing conditions in each region. For example, in areas where insecurity was still high and the FARC maintained a strong presence, the DOD would be placed in charge. In areas where security had already been established, USAID might take the helm.[533]

This model would prove extremely effective and is often touted as the model for USG interagency coordination.[534] Beyond being a success story for interagency coordination, CCAI also proved highly effectual against the FARC.[535] One sailor[536] who was involved in CCAI's first success in Montes de María noted that he is "completely convinced [that] the solution is social" and CCAI is fundamentally important.[537] He further explained that "bullets can kill a person, but his ideas persist. [CC]AI can change his thinking."[538] As regards his level of commitment to CCAI, he further stated, "my daughter's inheritance will be peace achieved through integral action and not money."[539] Another officer explained that prior to CCAI, the "fundamental strategic error" was the political and military indifference to the plight of the population.[540]

High-Level Support. Effectively implementing these sweeping reforms required high-level support. Regarding the structural changes to security forces, Colombian Army buy-in was especially important given that the focus on jointness entailed the Army ceding its position of primacy in Colombian security forces efforts. President Pastrana, eager to demonstrate his commitment to the nascent bilateral security partnership, quickly replaced his military leadership with general officers—especially Army officers held in high regard by their U.S. counterparts. Specifically, Pastrana appointed General Fernando Tapias Stahelin as the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Jorge Enrique Mora Rangel was appointed as Chief of Staff of the Army, and General Ospina took command of the critical 4th Division headquartered in Meta. The latter two officers in particular had been educated in the U.S. PME system and understood the importance of joint operations. [541] This trend was continued with one 2018 assessment observing "that the majority of Colombian Army officers who rose in rank were recipients of U.S. training, which has fundamentally reshaped organizational culture and doctrine."[542]

Effectively implementing these sweeping reforms required high-level support.

Other subsequent reforms, such as substantially increasing the number of volunteer versus conscript military personnel—an expensive undertaking, given that conscripts received nominal compensation for their service while volunteers of equivalent rank had to be paid a living wage that was approximately ten times greater—and the effective integration of the Colombian

interagency under CCAI required very high-level support.[543] Indeed, both initiatives were supported by President Uribe himself. Uribe was buoyed by immense popular support—having won the presidency in the first round of voting, a virtually unprecedented outcome in Colombia's runoff election system—and extensive U.S. assistance. Initial success, such as a 23 percent reduction in terrorist attacks, ensured that Uribe's popularity remained at 78 percent as he neared the end of his first year in office.[544] This in turn enabled the Uribe administration to accelerate the pace of reforms. In one remarkable episode, his administration levied a onetime war tax to raise funds for security sector reforms. Not only did the population happily pay the new tax, many voluntarily over contributed.[545]

Losing the Peace, 2016–Present

U.S. and Colombian collaboration enabled the Colombian government to make impressive inroads against the FARC. This served to convince the subversives to begin peace negotiations in earnest. The peace process formally began in November 2012, with the FARC declaring a two-month ceasefire coinciding with the beginning of talks with the Colombian government in Havana, Cuba. Four years later, in November 2016, a final peace deal was signed.[546]

U.S. and Colombian collaboration enabled the Colombian government to make impressive inroads against the FARC.

Curiously, even though the Colombian government was negotiating from a position of strength, the negotiated accord entailed myriad substantial concessions to the FARC, which have proven highly unpopular. In particular, the accords provided for a separate judicial process for ex-combatants. For the most part, those who confessed their crimes and made reparations—for example, by helping the government to clear landmines laid by the FARC—did not serve jail time. The deal also did not provide a clear mechanism to ensure that the FARC's multi-billion-dollar war chest was turned over to the state and used to finance the implementation of the peace process and reparations for victims of the violence. Finally, the FARC was guaranteed seats in the Colombian legislature.[547] To this end, retired Peruvian General of the Army Otto Guibovich, who has closely studied the Colombian conflict, reversed the Clausewitzian adage that "war is the continuation of politics

by other means" and lamented that "politics would be the continuation of their [the FARC's] war through other means that begin with congressmen and delegates in the parliament."[548] These terms have led some to suggest that then President Juan Manuel Santos rushed the agreement, favoring any agreement that could be implemented before he left office—in a bid to secure a Nobel Peace Prize and the UN Secretary Generalship[549]—over the right agreement for the country.[550]

Given these issues, Colombian voters rejected a public referendum on the deal in October 2016. As a result, the agreement was quickly but minimally modified. The new agreement was ratified not by public vote but by the Colombian legislature and upheld by the judiciary. The terms of the agreement again became a critical issue during the 2018 presidential campaign. Iván Duque won the elections, based in part on his promise to modify the deal. While President Duque has only a limited ability to formally change the terms of the deal, his administration has been able to undermine the implementation of parts of the agreement.[551]

Even before Duque assumed office, the peace agreement was faltering. For example, the government failed to construct the demobilization centers called for by the agreement. Ultimately, the FARC took it upon themselves to construct these critical facilities.[552] If former FARC fighters are not effectively reintegrated into Colombian society, there is a serious risk that they will return to the battlefield. Indeed, the FARC's 1st Front has already vowed to continue the fight, despite the accords.[553] The National Liberation Army, which has not demobilized, is also more than happy to accept former FARC guerrillas among their rank. So too are transnational criminal organizations.[554] For example, the Brazilian transnational criminal organization First Capital Command or *Primeiro Comando da Capital* has offered any former guerrilla generous compensation to come work for them.[555] In early 2017, Colombian Defense Minister Luis Carlos Villegas suggested that perhaps five to 10 percent of FARC fighters will not demobilize.[556] Others have put the figure much higher. Indeed, if past Colombian peace processes are any indication, perhaps as many as 30 percent of the FARC will either fail to demobilize or quickly remobilize.[557]

Colombia is already experiencing an explosion of rural violence as myriad heavily armed criminal entities are fighting to lay claim to highly lucrative territory vacated by the FARC.[558] Coca cultivation in these areas has ballooned as a result. Specifically, the United Nations Office on Drugs and

Crime indicated that Colombian coca cultivation hit a record high of 171,000 hectares in 2017,[559] an increase of 25,000 hectares or approximately 17 percent over 2016.[560] Against this backdrop, the U.S. government has reduced its support for the Colombian government following a private, Mar-a-Lago meeting between President Trump and two former Colombian presidents opposed to the deal. The meeting was brokered by Senator Marco Rubio. Rubio and his wife—the daughter of Colombian immigrants—are strongly opposed to the deal.[561]

In short, while U.S. assistance helped to secure a negotiated peace after decades of armed conflict, the long-term viability of the agreement is in serious jeopardy. The future U.S. role in Colombia is also currently uncertain, though relations between Washington and Bogota have warmed with the inauguration of President Ivan Duque.

Conclusion: Envisioning Future U.S. Special Operations Forces Building Partnership Capacity Efforts

Colombia, like the Philippines, is often hailed as a BPC success story. No doubt, aspects of U.S.-Colombia engagement on CT were highly successful. U.S. training and assistance provided Colombian security forces with the ability to effectively execute complex operations. More importantly, the USG encouraged the Uribe administration's development of the DSDP, while USSOUTHCOM planted the idea for CCAI. That said, the tactical successes afforded by U.S. SOF training and the provision of material assistance—such as rotary-winged aviation—required an extended U.S. SOF commitment, taking years to materialize. Moreover, the strategic shifts in Colombia's approach to CT, while supported by the USG—including through novel approaches to coordinating USG efforts across the interagency—resulted from the Colombian government's initiative. Consequently, replicating the Colombian outcome elsewhere is by no means assured.

Furthermore, both the Colombian and U.S. governments failed to secure the peace. While the USG publicly claims to not negotiate with terrorists, many U.S. allies and partners do.[562] The case of the Provisional Irish Republican Army, or indeed the negotiations between the Philippine government and various Moro groups, demonstrate as much. While USG support helped the Colombian government take the fight to the FARC, at the time negotiations began in 2012, militarily defeating the FARC on the battlefield was at

best a long way off and was by no means guaranteed. Under these circumstances, it is understandable that the Colombian government pursued negotiations. Unfortunately, the Colombian government agreed to unfavorable terms that were not reflective of the relative strength of the belligerents. The implementation of the peace deal was also seriously botched. For its part, the USG stepped back and substantially reduced support during the implementation of the peace accords.

While neither of the case studies discussed in this monograph are panaceas, they do provide insight into what is required for strategically effective efforts to build partner CT capacity. Tactical capabilities are important and developing these is an area where U.S. SOF already excel. Both case studies demonstrate as much. However, more is needed in order to translate tactical effects into strategic ends. Specifically, PNs must adopt appropriate theory of victories. U.S. SOF succeeded in encouraging their Philippine military counterparts to engage in efforts to improve rapport with the local population. Unfortunately—absent structural reforms in the force and better efforts to integrate activities across the Philippine interagency—these efforts were not sustained after the drawdown of U.S. forces. In Colombia, the necessary structural reforms occurred to sustain these approaches, though not primarily as a result of USG efforts. It is likely the case that partner-led CT efforts are unlikely to succeed absent extensive reforms. The USG can and should encourage these changes, but they are unlikely to materialize absent a high degree of support from PN leadership. As noted in chapter 4, the PN must desire success to at least the same degree as the USG and has to be willing to undertake substantial efforts to obtain it. Otherwise, both sides may be wasting their time. Regrettably, this reality suggests serious limitations to USG efforts at BPC related to population-centric approaches to CT in some less democratic contexts, where extending governance to large numbers of previously disenfranchised citizens may be antithetical to the interests of the ruling elite. Additionally, effective interagency coordination by the USG—as demonstrated in both case studies—is necessary for successful efforts. This is especially true given the large number of interrelated lines of effort required by population-centric approaches to CT. Finally, as both case studies emphasize, results take time to materialize; it takes even longer to secure martial or negotiated gains. While certainly less expensive both in terms of American lives lost and financial outlays, successful BPC efforts for CT are not quick and easy endeavors.

Part III. Insights and Recommendations for Future Special Operations Forces Counterterrorism Efforts

Chapter 7. Improving Special Operations Forces Counterterrorism Effectiveness

The first part of this monograph explored numerous extant limitations to SOF CT effectiveness, including the lack of a U.S. grand strategy to guide CT, an over-emphasis on disruption-focused approaches to CT, and limitations with respect to interagency processes and barriers to international CT partnerships. The second part leveraged two case studies—the Philippines and Colombia—to further elucidate many of the issues identified in Part I, as well as to explore what worked well. Whereas Part I and to an extent Part II were focused on understanding these problems, this chapter now turns to offering solutions.

The solutions offered herein are not panaceas. Rather, the focus of this chapter is on tractable areas for improvement that are within the scope of what this monograph's readership can practicably affect. Understanding that the primary audience for this monograph is SOF, the principal focus is on improvements that are within the purview of USSOCOM to affect. Recognizing that readership may extend to the interagency, there is also focus on improvements that can be made collaboratively between SOF and interagency personnel. Finally, while many of the suggestions offered herein can be implemented at lower levels within USSOCOM, it is the hope of the authors that senior leaders also find this text useful. To that end, some of the suggestions offered may be outside of the scope of what individual SOF operators can affect on their own but are nonetheless bureaucratically feasible and reasonable for senior leaders to attempt to tackle.

This chapter proceeds in three sections. The first explores potential solutions broken down thematically according to the problems articulated in the introduction and the chapters of Part I—disruption-centric approaches and limitations to interagency as well as international coordination. Recognizing that effective measurement is crucial to both enable policymakers to justify adopting some of the alternative approaches advocated in the first section of this chapter and to refine these nuanced approaches to maximize efficacy, the second section is devoted to improved measurement. As will be discussed in detail in this section, it is critical that any approach to measurement be informed by a theory of victory and not the other way

around. Otherwise, measurement ends up driving strategy—and operations and tactics—in potentially destructive ways. Consequently, in addition to offering approaches for improving measurement, this section articulates key components of an appropriate theory of victory for USG CT. The final section concludes.

Suggestions for Addressing Thematic Problems

This section is focused on addressing each of the four thematic issues highlighted in this monograph. It is therefore further divided into four subsections, one for each thematic issue area: lack of grand strategy, overemphasis on disruption-focused CT, limitations to existing interagency processes, and barriers to effective international CT cooperation.

Lack of Grand Strategy

The lack of a clearly articulated CT strategy denies SOF a "rationale for how force will achieve [its] purpose" and has contributed to a phenomenon where tactical and operational CT successes have failed to translate into the desired strategic-level outcomes.[563] The absence of an explicit grand strategy limits the ability of the USG to align all or multiple instruments of national power synergistically.[564] That said, the USG seemingly has implicit grand strategic aims revolving around maintaining the liberal international order and the territorial integrity of existing states.[565]

Unfortunately, transregional terrorist groups such as al-Qaeda and the Islamic State not only explicitly reject this worldview, they offer a positive, alternative vision of the future for those left behind or otherwise disadvantaged by the current system. For example, Abdelmalek Droukdal, the recently deceased former leader of al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, explained, "We are one nation with one religion and one language. Our history is the same, but our land is divided, torn apart into states by colonialism."[566] In discussing Algerian oil rents, Droukdal elaborates on systemic factors that allow American and European interests—in collaboration with corrupt Algerian government officials—to "rob" the Algerian people. He offers a vision of the future, wherein Algerian Muslims are empowered and benefit from these natural resources, but notes that his vision will not be achieved until "Muslim youths ... carry the weapon to take back their rights and push away the domination of those agents [principally the West, but also local officials he sees as Western cronies]."[567]

In short, the USG must offer a competing, positive view of the future for those left behind by the current international system in order to compete with groups like al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb for influence. While MEDCAP and DENTCAP programs are great tools for short-term stabilization, USG efforts must go further. Only by working with partners and helping to instantiate long lasting change through governance reform and development assistance will the USG be successful. The following section offers tractable solutions for doing so.

Disruption-Focused CT

Chapter 2 articulated that disruption-centric CT is at best ineffective and at worst counterproductive, insofar as it merely targets capabilities while ignoring—or perhaps inadvertently exacerbating—motivations. Similarly, the discussion in the previous section of this monograph demonstrates the need to offer a positive vision for the future. This section offers recommendations for building/rebuilding necessary skills to better enable SOF to move beyond DA CT and engage in non-kinetic tasks like governance reform and development assistance, work with diverse subnational actors, and sequence kinetic and non-kinetic interventions effectively.

Building/Rebuilding Skills. SFODAs have often been termed "warrior-diplomats," given that their doctrine focuses on indirect missions leveraging "linguistic, interpersonal, and cross-cultural communications skills, regional orientation, and training skills to influence indigenous forces."[568] Yet, nearly two decades of sustained, high-operational tempo, DA CT has caused SF's unique focus on and concomitant skillset for indirect engagements to atrophy. Indeed, one SF soldier lamented,

> We as a force are very confused about what the role of Special Forces is. We are an awesome force with so much potential, but, unfortunately, it is being squandered with this perception that we are a super-infantry/Ranger/[Special Mission Unit] type unit. This has to change or I fear our traditional role as the premier unconventional warfare (UW) force will be taken by another SOF element (read Marine Forces Special Operations Command [MARSOC]/ SEALs) while we continue, haphazardly, trying to figure out who we are.[569]

Rebuilding the capacity for SFODAs or building this capacity in other SOF units necessarily requires investment in training and education. Specifically, U.S. Army Major Pat Collins of 1st SFG (A) lamented that neither the SF qualification course nor its culminating exercise, Robin Sage, leverage nonviolent approaches to gain political legitimacy. Major Collins further notes "that nonviolent methods can often be more effective than violent ones and these lessons should have a spot in the special operator's toolkit."[570] Incorporating training that equips SFODAs to "not only close with the enemy but also negotiate agreements, operate with nonmilitary agencies and other nations, restore basic services … orchestrate political deals, and get 'the word' on the street"—activities called for in the tactical- and operational-level companion to U.S. COIN doctrine, which are also necessary for a population-centric approach to CT—will be crucial to SOF CT success.[571] For the next generation of SFODA soldiers, the SF qualification course offers an important opportunity to provide instruction on "nonviolent" methods for doing just this, while Robin Sage could serve as a realistic sandbox to practice deploying these skills. For current SFODA operators, existing USSOCOM schoolhouses—such as the John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School and JSOU—ought to provide substantially expanded course offerings in this regard. Following new guidance from the Joint Chiefs of Staff on their vision for PME, these short courses should involve tabletop exercises designed to provide a safe space to experiment with nuanced approaches to such things as information campaigns.[572]

Admittedly, the SF qualification course is already 53 weeks long; current, heightened operational tempos similarly limit the ability to provide in-depth instruction to existing SFODAs.[573] While no doubt there is limited time and competing priorities, the increasing emphasis on great power competition may help make the argument that this type of instruction is essential—even at the expense of other content. The Joint Chiefs of Staff clearly noted that in order to make room for new material, "PME programs will have to ruthlessly reduce coverage of less important topics."[574] Moreover, the same types of non-kinetic skillsets needed for unconventional warfare—a potentially crucial component of long-term competition with countries like China and Russia—are needed for effective CT. Indeed, Major Collins' argument imploring SFODAs to cultivate more non-kinetic skills was geared toward UW and not CT.

All of this said, SFODAs do not need to go it alone. Rather, they can and should leverage other specialized personnel that have heightened understanding of the human terrain and relevant non-kinetic skillsets. This includes Security Force Assistance Brigades (SFAB), which receive specialized training on "cross cultural communication, building rapport, working with interpreters and negotiation" to enable them to engage with partner forces.[575] In addition, CA—to include SOF CA personnel from the 95th Civil Affairs Brigade (Airborne)—are likely to be especially relevant. CA soldiers are focused on long-term stability and on attacking not only VEOs but also their underlying ideology through a diverse array of tasks—including "disaster prevention, management, and recovery, and … human and civil infrastructure assistance programs."[576] CA soldiers are trained to work with foreign partners in foreign languages.[577] Finally, military information support operations (MISO) forces are experts in influence operations, and are comprised of "regional experts and linguists who understand political, cultural, ethnic and religious subtleties and use persuasion to influence perceptions and encourage desired behavior."[578] Leveraging the interagency, the focus of the subsequent section, can also be extremely impactful in this regard.

Moreover, this need not—and indeed should not— be the sole domain of SFODAs. The previous quote from an SFODA solider indicated a fear that other SOF forces were encroaching on their "warrior-diplomat" ethos. Even if SFODAs re-learn what it means to be warrior-diplomats and lead in this domain, the entire SOF enterprise must be equipped to at least understand the importance of non-kinetic tools for CT. Unlike SFODAs, even if they are not trained to be experts in diverse, non-kinetic tasks, they must be adept at leveraging the expertise of SFAB, CA, and MISO personnel. This requires, at minimum, increased focus on joint warfighting within SOF. The author, Koven, recently provided a briefing to a platoon of U.S. Navy SEALs in advance of an upcoming deployment. In preparing for the briefing, one SEAL indicated that this would be one of their first deployments alongside Army CA and MISO personnel, further noting that while Army SOF may have more extensive experience working with CA and MISO personnel—which are disproportionally drawn from the Army—Naval Special Warfare (NSW) does not. Consequently, the author devoted ample attention to leveraging CA and MISO personnel during his briefing. NSW and their SOF brethren from the Air Force Special Operations Command (AFSOC), and MARSOC,

ought to similarly receive instruction designed to help them leverage these types of personnel to pursue non-kinetic approaches to CT. This instruction should not take the form of an ad hoc briefing—resulting from the initiative of one officer—in advance of a specific deployment. It should also be coupled with practical exercises or other opportunities that expose NSW, AFSOC and MARSOC to largely Army SFAB, CA, and MISO personnel.

Engage with Subnational Actors

When conducting development assistance or governance reform, there is a tendency to focus on the central government. While certainly necessary, exclusive focus on the central government ignores the reality that the central government is not the sole provider of governance. Indeed, in many contexts, alternative governance structures exist in parallel to the central government. Results from a survey fielded in Benin to help provide baseline data against which to evaluate the training provided to the USSF—described in detail in chapters 2 and 4—illustrate this point. Figure 11 shows that approximately 60 percent of the 937 respondents from rural Benin would "always" or "often" go to the police if a group they belonged to was involved in a conflict. Whereas the police in this case are a national force and thus an extension of the central government, likely they are the only emissaries of the central government that many of these rural respondents regularly interact with. Seventy-three percent of the population would "often" or "always" seek redress from sources of governance beyond the central government to include the village chief (36 percent), religious leaders (17 percent), and local government officials (20 percent). Note these figures sum to more than 100 percent; this reflects that some respondents would simultaneously seek redress from multiple parties.[579] Moreover, by also targeting local governance providers, it makes it much easier to tailor approaches to the hyper-local development and governance realities on the ground.

While certainly necessary, exclusive focus on the central government ignores the reality that the central government is not the sole provider of governance.

While the DOS and USAID tend to be organized and structured around engagements with national governments in capital cities, the DOD—and especially SOF—is uniquely positioned to effectively engage at the subnational level. For example, in Iraq, development assistance distributed through

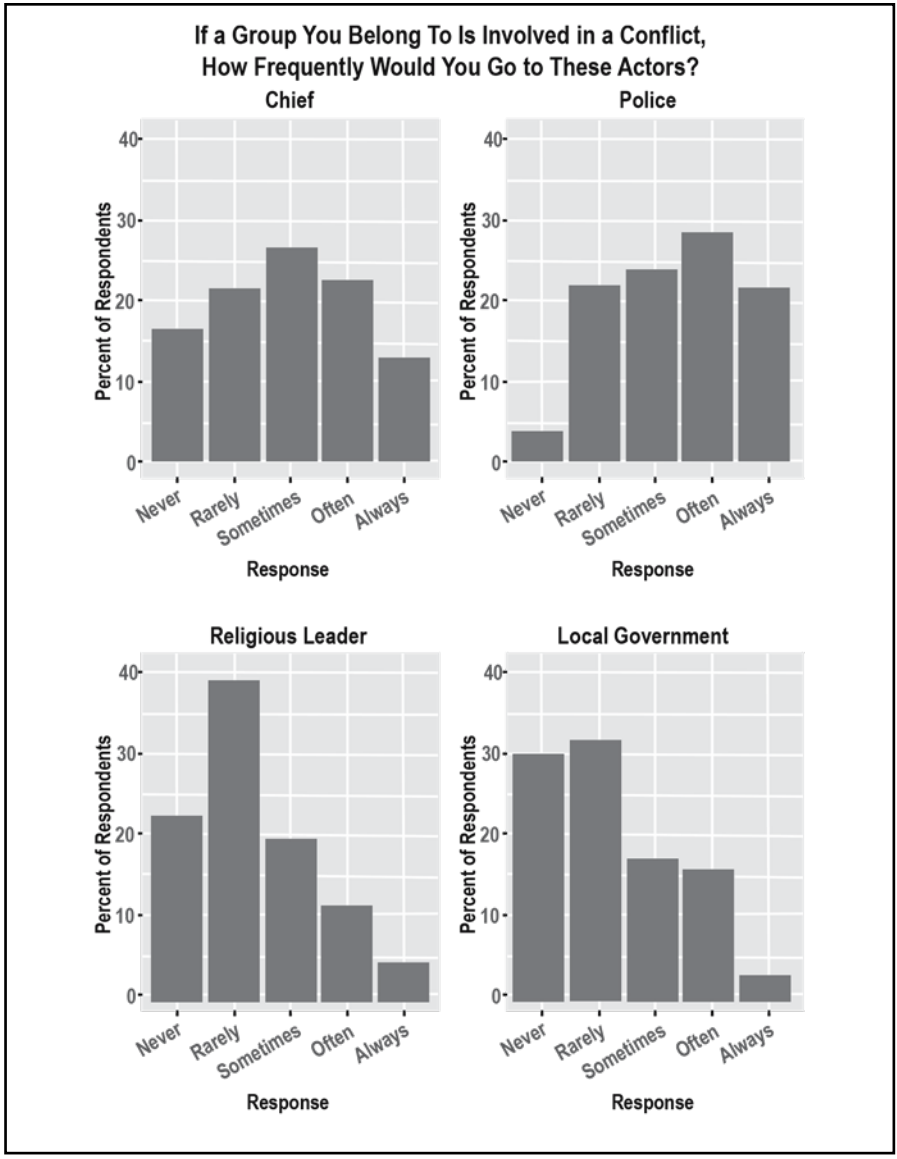


Figure 11. Sources of Governance in Rural Benin. Source: U.S. Department of State's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs and U.S. Embassy Cotonou

the military-run CERP resulted in a statistically significant reduction in insurgent violence—both where it was implemented and in contiguous districts.[580] Whereas, the USAID's Community Action Program and the Community Stabilization Program failed to reduce violence in the areas where they were implemented and actually contributed to statistically significant increases in violence in surrounding areas.[581] These divergent results are a result of the presence of military forces on the ground. Military commanders distributing CERP funds had regular access to the populations receiving assistance and were therefore able to both ensure projects were tailored to local needs and curb corruption. The USAID officials lacked regular access to these same insecure areas where Community Action Program and Community Stabilization Program projects were implemented.[582]

Sequencing

As chapter 2 highlighted, development assistance and governance reform are necessary, but they cannot prevent imminent attacks. It therefore becomes necessary to sequence kinetic and non-kinetic interventions. Moreover, non-kinetic approaches may help reduce the potential for VEOs to leverage DA CT interventions to drive resource mobilization efforts. Evidence from Colombia demonstrated that while terrorist attacks increased following DA CT interventions, it took terrorist recruiters time to "fully exploit increased motivations to drive recruitment and resource mobilization thereby enabling substantially more attacks."[583] Specifically, figure 12 demonstrates that "the delta between the predicted increase in terrorist violence in months one and two [following DA] is especially large (approximately three-quarters of an attack)."[584] This suggests that quickly following DA CT efforts with non-kinetic engagements—such as IO or development assistance designed to shape the narrative around a DA operation or demonstrate continuing support for the local population—can be especially helpful at forestalling subsequent terrorist resource mobilization efforts. Importantly, the narrow window for sequencing kinetic and non-kinetic operations dictates that, where possible, kinetic and non-kinetic operations should be planned alongside each other. This way, as soon as a DA operation concludes, if not sooner, the non-kinetic engagement can begin.[585]

Moreover, while CT requires continued use of DA, SOF should exercise increased discretion. Sequencing DA and IO, for example, is not a panacea. Doing so may reduce—but not completely forestall—terrorists' ability to use

SOF-led DA efforts to drive resource mobilization. Therefore, disruption should only be employed where alternative approaches are not effective or possible.

Interagency Processes

As chapter 1 emphasized, the interagency does not subscribe to a single definition of terrorism or CT. This, however, does not mean all is lost. The interagency can still unite around a shared purpose to counter terrorism. Doing so, nevertheless, requires overcoming pronounced barriers such as bureaucratic politics and structural constraints inherent in the current interagency process. Effectively navigating these and other barriers requires a shared understanding of the diverse cultures, vernaculars, and incentive structures that exist in disparate USG agencies and departments. Most importantly, it requires leaders and staff who are adept at managing the myriad personalities that exist across the interagency. Fortunately, the DOD is well-resourced and uniquely positioned for leading efforts designed to increase mutual understanding across the interagency, ensuring that personalities are effectively managed by assigning personnel to tasks they are best

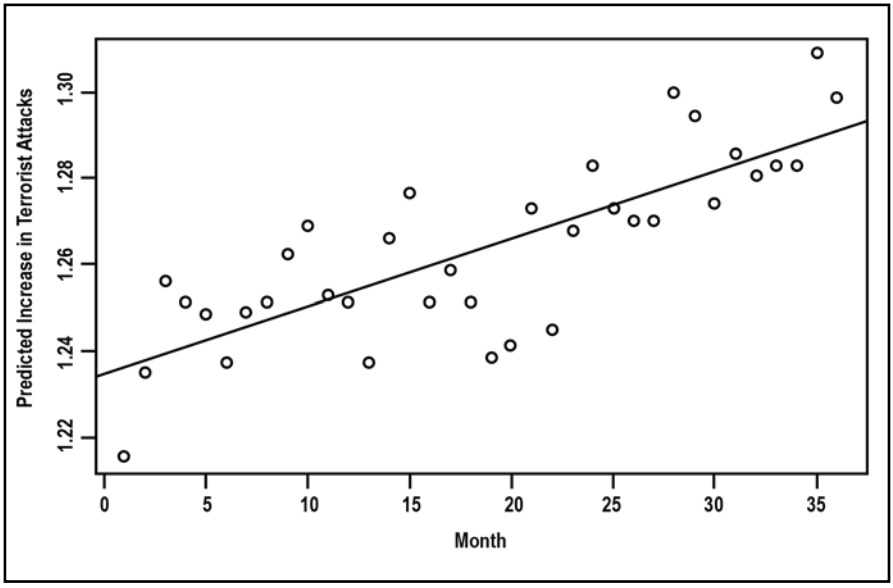


Figure 12. DA CT's Effects on Terrorist Attacks in Colombia. Source: Barnett Koven/used with permission

suited for. This subsection explores three areas for improvement along these lines involving leveraging former military personnel now serving across the interagency, expanding interagency participation in PME courses, and ensuring the personnel that are in roles involving interagency processes are well-suited for interagency work by improving personnel selection and changing incentive structures. While not the exclusive focus of this subsection, the PME system—and especially recently proposed changes thereto—offer substantial opportunities for improvement in these areas, which will be discussed throughout this subsection.

Leverage Former Military Personnel

Following the Civil War, Congress enacted legislation—which has been expanded over time—that gives veterans preferential consideration in federal government hiring in recognition of their military service.[586] The result of this preference is that veterans are overrepresented in the U.S. civil service. In 2016, the last year for which data is available from the Office of Personnel Management, the more than 635,000 veterans employed by the USG constituted roughly one-third of the civilian USG workforce.[587] Yet, less than eight percent of the U.S. population are veterans.[588] The net result of this overrepresentation of veterans in the U.S. civil service is that there are substantial numbers of veterans across most USG agencies and departments. At the low end, 7.5 percent of the personnel in the Department of Health and Human Services were veterans in 2016. On the high end, 47.5 percent of the civilian DOD workforce were veterans in that same year. Importantly, among the agencies and departments most relevant to CT efforts, the percentage of veterans among their ranks is consistently in the double digits.[589]

This presents an opportunity for the DOD and the interagency. By virtue of their prior uniformed service, these individuals already possess an understanding of—and potentially an affinity for—DOD culture and the associated vernacular as well as processes. DOD and interagency personnel ought to seek out and leverage these individuals to help improve mutual understanding across agencies and departments. Ideally, these relationships should be established and built upon in advance of specific collaborative efforts.

Expand Interagency Professional Military Education Courses

The DOD, to a far greater extent than the rest of the interagency, invests in continuing education and training for its workforce.[590] The PME system

offers a unique opportunity to educate military personnel on the organizational culture, terminology, and incentive structures evident in other agencies and departments. Something as simple as knowing that the DOS communicates using cables and memos versus the slide decks preferred by the DOD can ensure interagency engagements get started on the right track. In addition, DOD classrooms can continue to be used to also educate interagency personnel. For example, one USAID Liaison Officer (LNO) to USSOCOM HQ highlighted DOD schoolhouses as avenues for professional development for their workforce, noting that USAID does not provide many opportunities for professional education.[591]

Admittedly, JSOU and other DOD schoolhouses—such as the U.S. Air Force Special Operations School—already provide coursework for SOF on the interagency. These offerings are also currently open to practitioners from the interagency. However, efforts ought to be made to expand interagency participation. Robust interagency participation is critical as the value of the instruction is not only that participants leave these courses with an enhanced understanding of interagency processes, but networking results between practitioners from diverse agencies and departments. JSOU's suite of courses held in the national capital region is a great step in the right direction. Their satellite location in northern Virginia makes these courses more accessible to interagency personnel. However, additional funding and billets for and robust marketing to interagency personnel is needed across the PME system—irrespective of whether the coursework is explicitly focused on interagency coordination—in order to fully leverage PME to improve interagency collaboration. Moreover, since a large portion of the value proposition is the networking and relationships that result, PME instruction should change to enable more collaboration in the classroom. The Joint Chiefs of Staff's vision for future PME strongly encourages tabletop exercises and other hands-on activities.[592] These forms of instruction are exactly what is required to utilize the PME system to help build deeper understanding and personal relationships across the interagency.

Improve Personnel Selection

Since the quality of interagency coordination is so heavily dependent on the personnel involved across agencies and departments, personnel selection offers an important area for improving interagency collaboration. Improving personnel selection entails both identifying the right people for interagency

roles and incentivizing them to perform these critical functions. In regard to identifying personnel best suited for roles requiring interagency collaboration, recent efforts to reform the PME system again prove insightful. To the extent that the above recommendation involving expanding and improving interagency-focused PME instruction is adopted, performance in these courses—following guidance from the Joint Chiefs of Staff—should then be used to help select personnel who excelled into roles that entail interagency work.[593] Beyond PME, regular evaluations that are already commonplace in the military—like fitness reports, officer evaluations, and promotion boards—could be adapted to include evaluation criteria to help improve personnel selection.

Improving personnel selection entails both identifying the right people for interagency roles and incentivizing them to perform these critical functions.

Of course, identifying personnel well-suited for interagency work is only half of the battle. There must also be appropriate incentive structures so that these personnel seek out and are enthused by working with the interagency. Currently, interagency work is seen as detrimental to one's career. As noted in chapter 3, the SOST program is often referred to as the "no colonel left behind" program, a place for field grade officers who were passed over for command to conclude their military service.[594] One USAID LNO to USSOCOM HQ similarly noted that liaison assignments to the various combatant commands (COCOMs) were viewed as non-traditional assignments that took officers off their career path—especially when these assignments were in relatively nice locations such as Tampa, Honolulu, and Stuttgart instead of the developing world—adding to the dim view within the agency on the value of these positions. Unsurprisingly, with few exceptions, they tend to attract personnel who were unconcerned with further career advancement.[595] For the DOD, recoding some of these positions and ensuring that these assignments are seen as career enhancing may encourage the best-suited applicants to fill these roles. A similar approach is also warranted across the interagency. The same USAID LNO suggested that one way the agency might improve the view toward these positions is if there was a specific, interagency career track; officers would obtain initial exposure at a COCOM, return to the Agency for an overseas field assignment, and then return to a COCOM in a more senior role.[596]

International Collaboration

As chapter 4 demonstrated, numerous barriers exist to collaborating with foreign partners on CT. Despite this, a population-centric approach to CT demands it. Moreover, leveraging foreign partners is especially important now that the USG faces new resource constraints for CT as focus shifts toward great power competition. This subsection offers suggestions for U.S. SOF to help foreign partners overcome some of the same barriers that they face. It also explores avenues for reducing barriers to CT effectiveness that are unique to some partner forces and PNs. Finally, it provides suggestions for navigating situations where U.S. SOF must partner with violent non-state actors versus state forces. Many of these suggestions can be adopted by individual SOF units deployed for BPC efforts. Others require, or at least substantially benefit from, collaboration with the interagency through the country team.

Expect Similar Issues

Many international partners will experience barriers to effective CT that are similar to those that the USG continues to grapple with. These include disruption-focused approaches and limited interagency coordination. Many of the potential solutions to these issues, discussed above, will also prove relevant when working with PNs. That said, the DOD should avoid the temptation to build partner forces in their own image. Doing so may further exacerbate or lock in many of these issues. SOF and SFABs have an opportunity to place greater emphasis on non-kinetic capabilities among partner forces. In addition, whereas the U.S. military is heavily reliant on high technology, many partner forces lack the ability to afford, maintain, and field highly sophisticated weapons systems. This presents an opportunity for SOF to provide instruction focused on low technology approaches to CT where interacting with the local population can be emphasized. Evidence from Iraq suggests that lightly mechanized and motorized units fared much better with regards to collecting the necessary intelligence to identify and separate subversives from the population at large. Because lightly mechanized forces engaged in substantially more dismounted patrolling, they were more likely to interact and build rapport with the local population. Local perceptions that these forces shared in the risk—since they lacked the protection of armored vehicles—further increased trust. These forces were also simply more accessible to locals inclined to provide useful information.[597]

Also Expect Additional Barriers

In addition to experiencing many of the same barriers to effective CT, foreign partners may also be adversely affected by the lack of high-level support for the partnership or the focus on CT, factions within the security services, maintenance and logistical challenges, corruption, and tactical inflexibility. As regards high-level buy-in, it is entirely possible that either partnering with U.S. forces or focusing on CT will run contrary to the interests of senior leaders. For example, a history of colonialism may make it more difficult for politicians and other senior leaders to justify the presence of foreign troops on their soil. Alternatively, regional rivalries between states or other security priorities may make terrorism and CT a secondary or tertiary consideration for some PNs. Indeed, as chapter 5 demonstrates, these barriers were present in the Philippines. Until high-level support is secured, long-term U.S. SOF CT engagements overseas are unlikely to be successful. In attempting to obtain support from PN officials, SOF ought to utilize the country team—an approach that proved extremely successful in the Philippines. Embassy personnel can leverage their extended time in-country and deepen understanding of local dynamics and players to help SOF prepare for key leader engagements. Often, they can also help open doors and arrange meetings, providing SOF access that the DOD does not possess.

High-level buy-in alone does not ensure success. It does, however, afford U.S. SOF the opportunity to work with partner forces to overcome other barriers inherent in the force. For example, in some countries, the state's security services are factionalized, exhibiting competing loyalties. For instance, the Somali National Army is comprised of personnel who are loyal to specific clans over the state.[598] While Somalia is an extreme example, it is not unique in this regard. In these environments, U.S. SOF should attempt to build *esprit de corps*. Where possible, U.S. SOF ought to engage diverse units with competing loyalties in the same trainings to increase exposure and interoperability between units. In addition, treating partner forces as equals in trainings with U.S. SOF may serve to increase pride in the partner force. If U.S. SOF see a partner force as a worthy partner, so too should the servicemembers serving in said partner force. Regrettably, U.S. forces do not always treat partner forces as if they are equals. For example, one Peruvian officer who

High-level buy-in alone does not ensure success.

had received training by both U.S. and Colombian personnel—with the latter providing training through a triangulated SC initiative financed and coordinated by the USG—indicated a strong preference for the latter, noting that Colombian personnel behaved like an "older brother" teaching a "younger brother," whereas U.S. forces behaved more like a "father" chastising a "son."[599] While the former approach may help build esprit de corps, the latter clearly highlights the partner force's second-rate status. Indeed, chapter 5 referenced a combined CT training exercise between U.S. and Philippine forces. The exercise was aptly named Balikatan, which means "shoulder-to-shoulder." This emphasized the shared nature of the fight and the equal footing of the partners.[600]

Information sharing presents another way of demonstrating to partner forces that they are a valuable and respected partner. While classification issues may preclude sharing certain data streams, unclassified alternatives often exist. For example, the GTD—used to produce some of the figures in chapter 2—is the largest open-source database of terrorist attacks worldwide. Not surprisingly then, it is routinely used by USG personnel.[601] Gifting of challenge coins and unit patches to members of partner forces that U.S. SOF works with may have a similar effect.

Enhanced esprit de corps can also help compensate for other limitations within the force that may be harder to overcome during a single U.S. SOF deployment aimed at BPC. These include the inability of the partner force to maintain crew-served weapons systems—and especially, to undertake complex logistics, as well as corruption within the force.[602] Admittedly, enhanced esprit de corps may only offer minor improvements in the face of these challenges. Solving these issues likely entails reforming recruiting practices—e.g., attracting better qualified personnel through increased pay and other benefits, extending service commitments, and investing more heavily in education and training—and other structural changes to the force. These long-term changes are almost certainly beyond the scope of what a SOF unit can accomplish during a single BPC deployment. That said, the SOF representative or SOLO may be able to work with the partner force and the country team to help instantiate improvements over the medium to long term.

Many partner forces do not exhibit the same levels of tactical flexibility and initiative as U.S. SOF do. This is likely a product of military structures that do not delegate similarly large amounts of authority to junior

officers and NCOs and the relatively lower levels of educational attainment among the junior officer and NCO corps. Illustrating this point, former CIA Persian Gulf military analyst Ken Pollack described Egyptian junior officer performance during various conflicts with Israel as "consistently demonstrat[ing] an unwillingness to maneuver, innovate, take the initiative, or act independently."[603] Again, the long-term solution likely rests with structural reforms and is perhaps the domain of the country team, SOF representative, or SOLO versus SOF units deployed on BPC missions. Nevertheless, tactical instruction by SOF can contribute to improvements over the short term.

Regardless of the specific barrier that U.S. SOF are trying to overcome, tying the necessary changes by the partner force to operational outcomes is advisable. As chapter 6 noted, Colombian forces have internalized human rights norms over decades of collaboration with U.S. forces. Initial adoption of behavior in keeping with human rights norms, however, occurred because doing so was tied to favorable operational outcomes versus deeply held normative beliefs.[604] The author, Koven, experienced similar successes applying this approach when providing instruction to officers from Benin's USSF.[605]

In addition, U.S. SOF must adopt reasonable expectations during BPC engagements. For U.S. special operators, who are used to succeeding at the virtually impossible on a regular basis, this may be a difficult piece of guidance to accept. That said, U.S. SOF must strive to make reasonable gains based on the time horizon of their intervention, the degree of commitment evident among the partner force and senior leadership, and the existing level of capabilities. Nevertheless, U.S. SOF can increase the scope of what can be accomplished by working with the country team, SOF representative, or SOLO to better understand the situation on the ground before deployment so that they are better able to hit the ground running. They can similarly collaborate with the country team, SOF representative, or SOLO to synchronize efforts across individuals and units with divergent time horizons. Ultimately, senior leadership must understand that BPC is a slow endeavor, requiring long-term commitments. The two case studies in chapters 5 and 6 of this monograph demonstrate as much.

The Paradox of Partnering with Violent Non-State Actors

As noted in chapter 4, in some circumstances a viable state force with which to partner may not exist. If U.S. SOF are required to partner with violent

non-state actors to effectively counter terrorism overseas, SOF must recognize that doing so visibly signals the weakness of the PN to the opposition, and also to the local population. Moreover, these violent non-state actors—if not eventually incorporated into the state—may end up posing a challenge to the partner government. Where possible, SOF should carefully select violent non-state actor partners that can subsequently be incorporated into state security forces or into the state more broadly. Too often, the USG—and U.S. SOF in particular—have elected to partner with minority ethnic groups that, under the best of circumstances, would be difficult to incorporate back into the state upon cessation of hostilities, as with Iraqi and Syrian Kurds or the Montagnard in Vietnam. In these cases, the USG engaged in little to no planning for their eventual reincorporation into the state.[606] The country team, CA, and other personnel with localized knowledge can help SOF identify potential partners that may be easier to incorporate into the state at a later date, and the interagency will be necessary in developing concrete plans to do so. SOF and interagency personnel may want to look at the successful example of Peru's peasant rounds for guidance as this force emerged independently of the state, proved instrumental in defeating a powerful subversive threat, and was incorporated into state security forces along the way.[607] Box 13 provides a brief overview of Peru's experience. The case of Burkina Faso's vigilante groups, which have proved more effective than state security forces at countering the threat posed by terrorist groups linked to al-Qaeda and the Islamic State, may also warrant future investigation. Currently, the government is making efforts to incorporate these forces into state security services. At the time of this writing, it is too early to tell whether these efforts will be successful.[608]

Box 13. Peru's Rondas Campesinas: Integrating Violent Non-State Actors into State Counterterror Efforts

Peru's *Rondas Campesinas* (peasant rounds) emerged organically—in the absence of a state security presence—as a form of self-protection against cattle rustling and other forms of theft in the remote, Peruvian highlands. However, the Peruvian government would ultimately integrate the *Rondas* into the state security apparatus in a move that proved critical to denying leftist subversives—principally *Sendero*

Luminoso (Shining Path) guerrillas—access to recruiting, foodstuffs, and safe havens in the countryside. By decreasing abuses perpetrated by the state against Peru's peasants, providing shotguns and some other armaments, enabling peasants to perform their compulsory military service in their local *Ronda,* and, eventually expanding the program by helping to stand up additional *Rondas*, the Peruvian government turned the tide against the subversives.[609]

Toward Improved Measurement

What's at Stake

Measurement deserves its own section as it is fundamental to all potential areas for improvement. Unfortunately, there is a strong tendency to measure what is easily measurable and draw inference from that data in isolation. At the extreme, that which cannot be easily measured is simply ignored. This phenomenon is all too common in the national security space. Indeed, social scientist Daniel Yankelovitch termed this phenomenon the "McNamara fallacy," in reference to former Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara's reliance on quantitative indicators such as body count at the expense of all other qualitative data in guiding the USG's prosecution of the Vietnam Conflict.[610] It is also prevalent in the analysis of terrorism and CT. Data on terrorist attacks, for example, is relatively easily measured. As such, scholars and USG personnel alike make regular use of the GTD, replete with over 200,000 observations spanning half a century and dozens of variables. Unfortunately, more valuable data that speaks to root causes of terrorism, popular support for state and VEO actors, etc. is not easily collected and therefore is largely ignored in quantitative analyses of terrorism and CT.[611]

That said, the McNamara fallacy—which can be summarized as "if you cannot measure it, it does not exist"[612]—is only partly fallacious. While ignoring what cannot be easily measured is problematic, it is evident that policymakers must be able to justify their approaches to their leadership, and ultimately to the American people. If the efficacy of an approach cannot be easily measured, it will be difficult for policymakers to advocate pursuing it. Because much of what is being proposed in this chapter will yield results over the medium and long term versus the short term, or be more difficult to measure (for example, winning hearts and minds versus prosecuting terrorist

targets through HVT raids and UAS strikes) adopting these approaches will require better measurement. Improved measurement not only helps policymakers justify pursuing novel approaches to CT, it also helps practitioners to better understand and subsequently refine nuanced methods.

This section explores the role of improved measurement. It does so by first discussing the interplay between the theory of victory and measurement. Importantly, the former must drive the latter and not the other way around. Having outlined the critical components of an appropriate theory of victory for CT, the subsequent subsection turns to detailing an integrated and generalizable approach to measurement that is consistent with appropriate CT theories of victory. The final subsection offers suggestions for developing the necessary capabilities for complex measurement and analysis within government, as well as for leveraging outside expertise.

What's Needed: A Compelling Theory of Victory

Useful metrics are not devised in a vacuum. Rather, they must flow from a theory of victory. Choosing metrics without articulating a theory of victory allows metrics to drive strategy, operations, and tactics. Indeed, this is precisely what occurred during the Vietnam Conflict, wherein measuring loss-exchange ratios ultimately dictated a theory of victory based on attrition. This, in turn, led to the prioritization of search and destroy missions in the prosecution of the conflict. In this case, metrics not only dictated the theory of victory and thus strategy, operations, and tactics, they led to the adoption of an inappropriate theory of victory.[613] As Ho Chi Minh articulated, his forces and the broader north Vietnamese society were prepared to sustain disproportionately higher casualties. It is worth reiterating Ho Chi Minh's 1946 warning to the French, which was equally applicable to the U.S. experience in Vietnam: "You can kill ten of our men for every one we kill of yours. But even at those odds, you will lose and we will win."[614] Indeed, the North Vietnamese Army and the Viet Cong guerrillas were able to sustain approximately 1.1 million personnel killed in action, compared to 57,939 U.S. and 200,000–250,000 South Vietnamese servicemembers killed in action; as Ho Chi Minh predicted, U.S. public support for the conflict soured first.[615]

Unfortunately, articulating the USG's theory of victory for CT absent a CT grand strategy is a challenge. Nevertheless, a useful starting point is to examine what the theory of victory should not be. From this exercise, it will also become clear that numerous, often-used measures are at best woefully

insufficient and at worst misleading and inappropriate—at least when used in isolation. As noted throughout this monograph, terrorism and CT at their core are political phenomenon, and targeting capabilities without addressing motivation is insufficient, if not counterproductive. Consequently, theories of victory that emphasize capturing or killing terrorists and otherwise targeting their networks are not compelling. This is unfortunate, as the DOD is well-suited to these types of activities, which are in turn easy to measure.

Similarly, theories of victory that focus exclusively on reducing terrorist attacks are shortsighted. Terrorist attacks are an important way in which terrorist groups demonstrate resolve and drive resource mobilization and recruitment. However, attacks are not the only avenue for doing so. For example, many terrorist organizations engage in extensive social services provision.[616] Restricting focus to terrorist violence ignores the multidimensional nature of the problem. Again, this is unfortunate, as attack reduction is certainly desirable and easily measurable. In this vein, author Koven demonstrated that in 2016, the precipitous decline in terrorist violence in Afghanistan occurred because the Afghan Taliban had cemented territorial control—and secured bases of operations—throughout much of the Afghan countryside. While attacks were down, when they did occur they were substantially deadlier and much better targeted.[617] In this instance, decreased attacks meant the Afghan Taliban was winning.

An appropriate theory of victory for CT must originate from an understanding of terrorism and CT as a multifaceted, political phenomenon. More specifically, it is worth revisiting Bernard B. Fall's sage advice that "a government that is losing to an insurgency isn't being out-fought—it's being outgoverned."[618] As indicated in chapter 2, while Fall was discussing COIN, this insight is equally applicable to CT. From this follows the conclusion that a sound CT theory of victory must recognize the central role of influence and popular support. Quite simply, CT is a fight between VEO and governmental forces for influence over and support from the population.

Unfortunately, influence and popular support are much harder to measure than loss exchange ratios and terrorist attacks. But harder does not mean impossible. Public opinion polling, which is sometimes funded directly by the USG (the DOS and MISO personnel)—but which is also regularly undertaken by academia and civil society, including by research networks such as Arab Barometer, Afrobarometer, and AmericasBarometer—can prove especially valuable.[619] When carefully constructed, these polls have

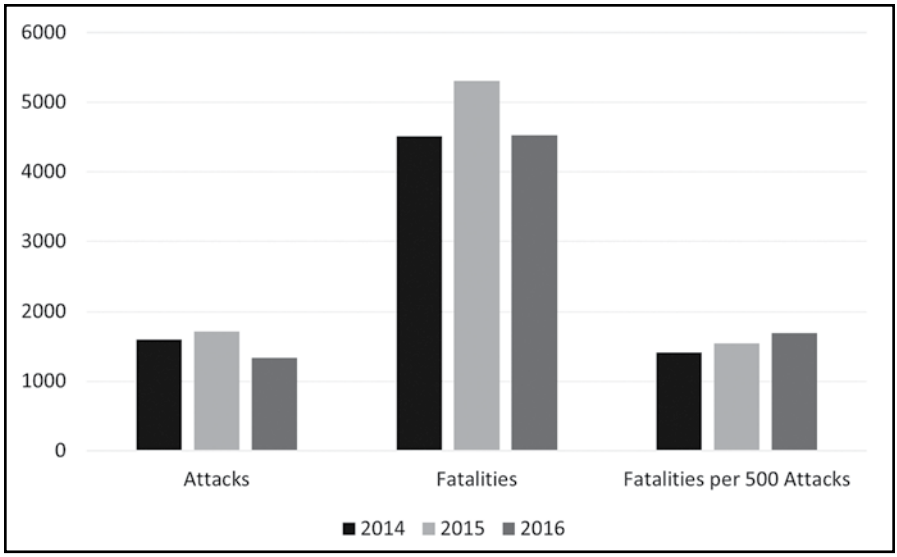


Figure 13. Attacks and Fatalities in Afghanistan, 2014–2016. Source: Barnett S. Koven, *Small Wars Journal*/Creative Commons CC BY-NC-SA 3.0

the potential to measure popular support for the local government as well as for subversives, and they can do so longitudinally. Box 14 addresses public opinion polling for sensitive questions—like those surrounding support for VEOs—in more detail. It is also possible to measure the reach of DOD and interagency efforts to win hearts and minds (e.g., percentage of the local population served by CMOs) and their impact (e.g., percentage of valid, unsolicited tips from the population).

Box 14. Asking Sensitive Questions: Survey Experimental Question Designs

Understandably, directly asking if a survey respondent supports a terrorist group not only places both the enumerator and the respondent at risk but also will likely result in preference falsification, a phenomenon wherein the respondent masks their true feelings in their responses. Survey experimental questions offer a safer and more accurate means of eliciting sensitive information.

Numerous scholars have utilized list or item-count and endorsement experimental designs to gauge support for different combatants

in Afghanistan.[620] Endorsement experiments work by asking a control group if they support a specific policy. A treatment group is asked the same question, but the policy is explicitly attributed to a specific actor—for example, the subversive group. The difference between treatment and control is the measure of support for the specific actor indicated in the treatment version of the question. Although it is impossible to know if any single respondent endorsed a policy because they liked the policy or because they approved of the terrorist group endorsing it—this approach limits incentives for preference falsification.

List experiments operate by having the enumerator read the control group a list of organizations. The subjects are asked to indicate only the number—not the names—of organizations listed that they support. The treatment group is asked the same question with a list that is identical, except for the addition of one organization that is of interest to the researchers—for example, the subversive group. The average difference between the response numbers indicated by members of each group indicates the level of support for the experimental group.[621] Again, preference falsification is reduced as any individual response to list experimental questions does not betray the specific groups that an individual supports, and the results are only meaningful in aggregate. The author Koven has successfully used this approach to measure support for Boko Haram along the Benin-Nigeria border.[622]

Integrated and Generalizable Measurement and Analysis

Given that CT requires the engagement of diverse actors across myriad distinct lines of effort, it should not be surprising that no single measure is going to be sufficient for evaluating CT. Rather, it will be necessary to integrate diverse indicators that speak to governance, economic development, and the security of the population. Frameworks that integrate and provide a common operating picture across varied metrics—such as the USAID ICAF or the START CounterTerrorism Net Assessment Data Structure (CT-NEADS) overviewed in figure 14—ensure that disparate data are available to practitioners. They also help to enable interagency coordination by ensuring that personnel from different agencies and departments share a common understanding. It is equally important that personnel across COCOMs or regional bureaus have access to the same data. Transregional terrorist groups

do not respect national boundaries, and, moreover, successful CT activities in one area of responsibility (AOR) may serve to exacerbate the threat in a neighboring AOR, as terrorist groups shift resources and focus geographically following degradation of their organization in one area.[623]

Box 15. START's Counterterrorism Net Assessment Data Structure

Counterterrorism Net Assessment Data Structure (CT-NEADS) is an enhanced data collection and integration framework designed to help policymakers and practitioners leverage diverse, extant data on CT, broadly defined. It includes red (e.g., data on terrorist behavior), green (e.g., relevant contextual data on the population and PN), and blue (e.g., data on CT and preventing or countering violent extremism) data. By doing so, it allows for holistic analysis of terrorism and CT. As an example of its utility, CT-NEADS was used to evaluate the effect of military considerations, governance, development, and societal factors on the impact of USG-provided CT assistance.[624]

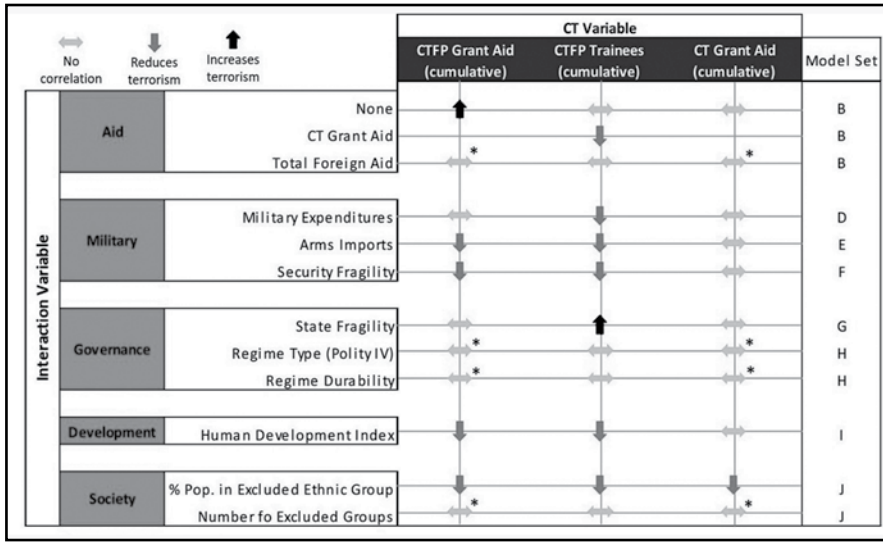


Figure 14. Integrated Data. Source: Barnett S. Koven, Katy Lindquist, and Max Erdemandi/*START*

Hierarchical measurement is also needed in order to provide operational forces a nuanced, micro-level understanding of the operating environment, which can then be aggregated so that it is nationally and cross-nationally generalizable and thus also useful for strategic planners. These measures must start from a hyperlocal understanding. For example, in order to measure the degree of governance present in an area, it would be relatively easy to count police stations, schools, and other government buildings. While this may be at least roughly appropriate in some contexts, in areas inhabited by, for example, the Tuareg people in north and west Africa, these measures would not accurately reflect governance among what is a nomadic population. Instead, a subject matter expert would know that governance is typically provided through *shuras* and *jirgas* in Herat, Afghanistan, whereas in Somaliland, it occurs through district council meetings along with less formal meetings of clan elders.[625] They could then design an indexed measure of governance that accounts for the number of shuras and jirgas held in Herat, coupled with an assessment of their efficacy—for example, the percentage of disputes satisfactorily resolved. A similar index that accounted for district council and clan meetings along with their efficacy would be developed for Somaliland. These indices would provide locally appropriate measurement, which could then be aggregated into a cross-nationally comparable measure of governance reflecting the number of times the locally appropriate governing bodies convened and the percentage of disputes resolved or issues tackled by these bodies.

In addition to being hierarchical, measurement must be repeated over time. Only by measuring longitudinally can we know if the situation on the ground is improving or deteriorating. Even if the reality on the ground is not phenomenal, a steadily improving trajectory may go a long way toward garnering public support. Fortunately, many measures—including the aforementioned public opinion polling conducted by academia and civil society—are repeated annually or at other, regular time intervals.[626] USG data collection enterprises must similarly be designed to be longitudinal. It is important to collect baseline data prior to a CT intervention, as well as mid- and end-line data.

Finally, both quantitative and qualitative measures should be leveraged. Qualitative measures are strong, whereas quantitative data is weak and vice versa.[627] For example, quantitative data can undergird regression analysis and demonstrate causal relationships in a generalizable manner, but it takes

qualitative information to tease out the often complex, causal processes at play.

Additional Considerations

More sophisticated approaches to measurement likely require personnel with advanced training or improved access to those skillsets outside of government. Specifically, more funding and emphasis on graduate education in social science and survey methodologies is warranted. This is likely to prove especially useful for personnel likely to play a role in designing and fielding these types of instruments, such as MISO personnel and foreign and civil service officers assigned to the DOS Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations. Similarly, increased funding to field rigorous survey instruments and to do so repeatedly over time is needed.

USG personnel may also look to foster relationships with academia in order to access specialized skillsets that may not exist within government. This requires understanding incentive structures evident in academia. For example, while academics are typically evaluated based in large measure on their publication history, those that collaborate with the USG on sensitive CT-related work may not always be able to publish their work. Moreover, USG personnel also need to recognize which disciplines may be receptive to collaborating with the government. For example, anthropologists may have a hard time doing so. As a result of experiences with the Phoenix Program in Vietnam and the Human Terrain System program in Iraq and Afghanistan, anthropologists are more likely to face severe backlash in their departments for collaborating with the DOD than other disciplines.[628] Fortunately, the DOD already engages in outreach to academia. Strategic multilayer assessment under the Joint Staff J-39 helps to synthesize and translate academic efforts across diverse national security domains for the benefit of various COCOMs. JSOU—and the PME system more broadly—similarly increases exposure between military personnel and academics by hosting guest lecturers in their courses and publishing the work of outside experts. Programs like the summer workshop for the Analysis of Military Operations and Strategy, run by Columbia University's Saltzman Institute of War and Peace Studies, does an excellent job of increasing civilian academics' exposure to the DOD by providing detailed instruction on DOD processes and its lexicon in a joint setting involving civilian and military faculty and graduate students. JSOU and the PME system ought to consider adopting a similar model. Author

Koven has been both a frequent guest lecturer in DOD schoolhouses and a student in one JSOU class—despite not being employed by the USG. This was, to the authors knowledge, an exception to the norm. It could, however, become a more regularized occurrence.

Conclusion

This monograph explored major barriers to SOF CT effectiveness—which included the absence of a U.S. grand strategy for CT and the overreliance on disruption-focused approaches, interagency processes, and limitations evident in international collaborations. In addition to the theoretical discussion offered in Part I of the monograph, Part II further explicated these phenomena through case studies of the Philippines and Colombia. This final chapter turned its attention toward suggesting areas for improvement. These suggestions were not intended as panaceas. Rather, they endeavored to provide guidance that would likely be implementable by this monograph's targeted readership to reduce the substantive barriers to SOF CT effectiveness. A second set of solutions were focused specifically on measurement. Measurement allows policymakers to justify adopting new approaches to CT, while enabling practitioners to refine nuanced CT efforts to maximize efficacy.

Acronyms

AFSOC	Air Force Special Operations Command
AOR	area of responsibility
AQI	al-qaeda in Iraq
BPC	building partnership capacity
CA	civil affairs
CAP	combined action platoon
CCAI	Centro de Coordinación de Acción Integral or Coordination Center for Integrated Action
CERP	Commanders' Emergency Response Program
CF	conventional forces
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CMO	civil-military operations
COCOM	combatant command
COIN	counterinsurgency
CT	counterterrorism
CTPF	Counterterrorism Partnerships Fund
CT-NEADS	Counterterrorism Net Assessment Data Structure
DA	direct action
DENTCAP	dental civic action program
DHS	Department of Homeland Security
DOJ	Department of Justice
DOD	Department of Defense
DOS	Department of State

DSDP	Democratic Security and Defense Policy
EU	European Union
FARC	Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia or Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
FID	foreign internal defense
FM	field manual
FTO	foreign terrorist organization
GTD	Global Terrorism Database
HQ	headquarters
HUMINT	human intelligence
HVT	high-value target
IC	intelligence community
ICAF	Interagency Conflict Assessment Framework
IO	information operations
ISOF	Iraqi special operations forces
ISR	intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance
ISWAP	Islamic State West Africa Province
JP	Joint Publication
JSOTF-P	Joint Special Operations Task Force-Philippines
JSOU	Joint Special Operations University
LNO	liaison officer
MARSOC	Marine Special Operations Command
MEDCAP	medical civic action program
MISO	military information support operations

MIST	military information support team
MNLF	Moro National Liberation Front
NCO	noncommissioned officer
NCTC	National Counterterrorism Center
NDAA	National Defense Authorization Act
NGO	nongovernmental organization
NSC	National Security Council
NSS	National Security Strategy
NSW	naval special warfare
ODNI	Office of the Directorate of National Intelligence
OEF-P	Operation Enduring Freedom-Philippines
OPE-P	Operation Pacific Eagle-Philippines
PN	partner nation
PME	professional military education
SC	security cooperation
SF	Special Forces
SFA	security force assistance
SFAB	Security Force Assistance Brigades
SFG (A)	Special Forces Group (Airborne)
SFODA	Special Forces Operational Detachment-Alpha
SOF	Special Operations Forces
SOLO	special operations liaison officer
SOST	special operations support team
START	National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism

TFTP	Terrorist Finance Tracking Program
UAS	unmanned aircraft system
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USG	United States Government
USSF	Unité Spéciale de Surveillance des Frontières
USSOCOM	United States Special Operations Command
USSOUTHCOM	United States Southern Command
UW	unconventional warfare
VEO	violent extremist organization

Endnotes

1. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Doctrine for the Armed Forces of the United States, JP 3-05 Special Operations* (Washington, D.C.: Joint Chiefs of Staff, 18 April 2011), ix, https://fas.org/irp/doddir/dod/jp3-05.pdf.
2. U.S. Department of Defense, "Summary of the 2018 National Defense Strategy of The United States of America" (Washington, D.C.: Department of Defense, 2018), 1.
3. "Global Terrorism Database (GTD)," *National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START)*, 2019, accessed October 2020, https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd.
4. "Global Terrorism Database (GTD)."
5. Richard K. Betts, "Is Strategy an Illusion?" *International Security* 25, no. 2 (Fall 2000): 5.
6. Steven Metz, "Why Aren't Americans Better at Strategy?" *Military Review* (May 1989): 9.
7. Metz, "Why Aren't Americans Better at Strategy?" 9.
8. Daniel L. Byman, "Takeaways from the Trump Administration's New Counterterrorism Strategy," The Brookings Institution, 5 October 2018, https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2018/10/05/takeaways-from-the-trump-administrations-new-counterterrorism-strategy/.
9. Byman, "Takeaways from the Trump Administration's New Counterterrorism Strategy."
10. Jonny Hall, "A Closer Inspection of Trump's New Counterterrorism Strategy Shows that it is Anything But," London School of Economics U.S. Centre, 20 December 2018, https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/usappblog/2018/12/20/a-closer-inspection-of-trumps-new-counterterrorism-strategy-shows-that-it-is-anything-but/; White House, *National Security Strategy of the United States* (Washington, D.C.: The White House, 2018).
11. Betts, "Is Strategy an Illusion?," 5; Colin S. Gray, *The Strategy Bridge: Theory and Practice* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 262.
12. Peter Layton, "The Idea of Grand Strategy," *The RUSI Journal* 157, no. 4 (2012): 58.
13. Tami Davis Biddle, *Strategy and Grand Strategy: What Students and Practitioners Need to Know* (Carlisle Barracks: United States Army War College Press, 2015), 13.
14. Metz, "Why Aren't Americans Better at Strategy?," 10.
15. Biddle, *Strategy and Grand Strategy*, 13–14. Whereas feasibility and suitability are explicit frames for the discussion in chapters two through four, acceptability's incorporation is implicit. That said, it was of course considered in every recommendation offered.
16. Boaz Ganor, "Terrorist Organization Typologies and the Probability of a Boomerang Effect," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 31, no. 4 (2008): 277–8.

17. Audrey Cronin, *The 'FTO' List and Congress: Sanctioning Designated Foreign Terrorist Organizations, CRS Report No. RL32120* (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service Report, 21 October 2003), 10.
18. Adebowale Adefuye, "Nigerian Ambassador Adebowale Adefuye: Radical Islamists Cannot Be Defeated by Military Means Alone," *The Hill*, 20 September 2012, https://thehill.com/policy/international/250777-nigerian-ambassador-adebowale-adefuye-radical-islamists-cannot-be-defeated-by-military-means-alone#ixzz320QOyfMu.
19. Alex P. Schmid and Albert J. Jongman, *Political Terrorism*, 2nd ed. (New Brunswick: Transaction, 2008), 3.
20. Brian Jenkins, *The Study of Terrorism: Definitional Problems* (Santa Monica: The RAND Corporation, 1980), 1.
21. Daniel Byman, *Deadly Connections: States that Sponsor Terror* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 7.
22. Schmid and Jongman, *Political Terrorism*, 1.
23. Alex P. Schmid, "The Definition of Terrorism," in *The Routledge Handbook of Terrorism Research*, ed. Alex P. Schmid (New York: Routledge, 2013), 39.
24. In Alex Schmid's survey of 109 definitions of terrorism in 1984, "violence, force" was the most common concept across all of them; see Schmid and Jongman, *Political Terrorism*, 5–6.
25. Alex P. Schmid, "Introduction" in *The Routledge Handbook of Terrorism Research*, ed. Alex P. Schmid (New York: Routledge, 2013), 2.
26. Association for Safe International Road Travel, "Road Safety Facts," accessed 4 November 2019, https://www.asirt.org/safe-travel/road-safety-facts/; Center for Disease Control, "Know the Facts About Heart Disease," https://www.cdc.gov/heartdisease/docs/ConsumerEd_HeartDisease.pdf.
27. Anthony Richards, "Conceptualizing Terrorism," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 37 (2014): 213–236.
28. Bradley McAllister and Alex P. Schmid, "Theories of Terrorism" in *The Routledge Handbook of Terrorism Research*, ed. Alex P. Schmid (New York: Routledge, 2013), 246.
29. Most notably, an example of proscribed rules of warfare are the Geneva Conventions, which were crafted following WWII and protect certain classes of people during wartime—namely civilians, the wounded, and prisoners of war.
30. Boaz Ganor, *The Counter-Terrorism Puzzle* (New Brunswick: Transaction, 2005), 22–23.
31. Bruce Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*, 3rd ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2017), 2–3.
32. The April 2019 decision to designate the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps as a FTO presents an exception.
33. Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*, 44.
34. Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*, 43–44.

35. Jenkins, *The Study of Terrorism: Definitional Problems*, 3.
36. Airplane hijackings were a serious and common enough terrorist tactic that a large number of Western countries felt the need to come up with a coordinated response and procedure when one occurred, leading to the "Declaration on International Terrorism" in 1978. Interestingly, the "international terrorism" declaration focused almost exclusively on hijackings, suggesting that terrorism more or less meant hijackings, at least for a large number of policymakers at one time in our recent history. For analysis and relevant agreement text, see James J. Busuttil, "The Bonn Declaration on International Terrorism: A Non-Binding International Agreement on Aircraft Hijacking," I*nternational and Comparative Law Quarterly* 31, no. 3 (1982): 474–487, especially footnote 5.
37. Ganor, *The Counter-Terrorism Puzzle*, 17.
38. David Rapaport, "Before the Bombs There Were the Mobs: American Experiences with Terror," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 20, no. 2 (2008): 189.
39. Martha Crenshaw, "The Causes of Terrorism," *Comparative Politics* 13, no. 4 (July 1981): 379.
40. Title 22 USC Chapter 38, Sec. 2656f(d)(2).
41. U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Counterterrorism, *Country Reports on Terrorism* 2017 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of State Publication, 2017), https://www.state.gov/reports/country-reports-on-terrorism-2017/.
42. U.S. Department of State Bureau of Counterterrorism, *Country Reports on Terrorism* 2017 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of State Publication, 2017), https://www.state.gov/reports/country-reports-on-terrorism-2017/.
43. Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, *DOD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms* (Washington, D.C.: The Joint Staff, 2020), 215.
44. *Homeland Security Act of 2002*, Pub. L. No. 107–296, 116 Stat. 2135–25 (2002), Section 2.
45. Michael B. Kraft and Edward Marks, *U.S. Government Counterterrorism: A Guide to Who Does What* (Boca Raton: CRC Press/Taylor and Francis, 2012), 27.
46. Schmid, "The Definition of Terrorism."
47. Schmid, "The Definition of Terrorism," 51.
48. For instance, United Nations, "General Assembly Unanimously Adopts Resolution Calling for Strong Coordinated Action by Member States to Tackle Terrorism, Violence Extremism Worldwide," 26 June 2018, https://www.un.org/press/en/2018/ga12035.doc.htm.
49. Ganor, *The Counter-Terrorism Puzzle*, 42.
50. Ganor, *The Counter-Terrorism Puzzle*, 41.
51. Ganor, *The Counter-Terrorism Puzzle*, 38.
52. Schmid, ed., *The Routledge Handbook of Terrorism Research*, 620.
53. Cynthia Lum, Leslie W. Kennedy, and Alison Shirley, "Are Counter-terrorism Strategies Effective? The Results of the Campbell Systematic Review on

Counter-terrorism Evaluation Research," *Journal of Experimental Criminology* 2 (2006): 490, DOI: 10.1007/s11292-006-9020-y.

54. United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism, "UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy," accessed 29 October 2019, https://www.un.org/counterterrorism/ctitf/en/un-global-counter-terrorism-strategy.
55. United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism, "UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy."
56. United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism, "UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy."
57. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Doctrine for the Armed Forces of the United States, JP 3-26 Counterterrorism* (Washington, D.C.: Joint Chiefs of Staff, 24 October 2014), vii, https://www.jcs.mil/Portals/36/Documents/Doctrine/pubs/jp3_26.pdf.
58. Ganor, *The Counter-Terrorism Puzzle*, 2005.
59. "Does our Counter-Terrorism Strategy Match the Threat?," *House International Relations Committee, Subcommittee on International Terrorism and Nonproliferation*, 29 September 2009 (Santa Monica: The RAND Corporation, 2005) (testimony of Bruce Hoffman), 15–16.
60. Nicholas M. Horrock, "The Hostage Effect," *The Chicago Tribune*, 9 October 1988, https://www.chicagotribune.com/news/ct-xpm-1988-10-09-8802070399-story.html.
61. Statement by Secretary of State Alexander M. Haig, Jr., in Philip Taubman, "U.S. Tries to Back Up Haig On Terrorism," *The New York Times*, 3 May 1981.
62. David C. Wills, *The First War on Terrorism* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2003), xii.
63. David Ignatius, "A Clear Plan to Handle Terrorism Still Eludes Divided Reagan Camp," *The Wall Street Journal*, 6 July 1985, A1. This criticism came in the wake of yet another high-profile event during the Administration's tenure: the hijacking of TWA flight 847 with 85 Americans on board.
64. Wills, *The First War on Terrorism*, 1–14.
65. Wills, *The First War on Terrorism*, xiii.
66. Aryeh Neier, Jemera Rone, and June E. Méndez, "Human Rights in Nicaragua: 1985–1986," *Americas Watch* (February 1987): 5.
67. James M. Scott, *Deciding to Intervene: The Reagan Doctrine and American Foreign Policy* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1996).
68. "Public Report of the Vice President's Task Force on Combatting Terrorism" (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, February 1986), 7.
69. Donna G. Starr-Deelen, *Presidential Policies on Terrorism: From Ronald Reagan to Barack Obama* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2014), 79. Starr-Deelen draws on Allan Gerson and Jerry Adler, *The Price of Terror: Lessons of Lockerbie for a World on the Brink* (New York: Harper Collins, 2001).
70. Starr-Deelen, *Presidential Policies on Terrorism*, 101.

71. Starr-Deelen, *Presidential Policies on Terrorism*, 86.
72. Conflicting accounts of this attempted assassination exist. Early evidence suggested the effort was undertaken by Iraqi state intelligence. However, subsequent evidence and analysis has raised doubt about Iraqi state involvement. See for example: "CIA Says Iraqi Plot to Kill Bush May Be Fiction," *The Chicago Tribune*, 23 May 1993; Tim Weiner, "Plot by Baghdad to Assassinate Bush is Questioned," *The New York Times*, 25 October 1993.
73. Clinton quoted in Starr-Deelen, *Presidential Policies on Terrorism*, 96.
74. "The 9/11 Commission Report: Final Report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States (9/11 Report)" (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 22 July 2004), https://govinfo.library.unt.edu/911/report/911Report.pdf/.
75. Robert Singh, "The Bush Doctrine" in *The Bush Doctrine and the War on Terrorism,* eds. Mary Buckley and Robert Singh (New York: Routledge, 2006), 17.
76. Starr-Deelen, *Presidential Policies on Terrorism*, 127.
77. White House, *National Security Strategy of the United States* (Washington, D.C.: The White House, 2002), i and 5.
78. White House, *National Strategy for Combating Terrorism* (Washington, D.C.: The White House, February 2003), 1.
79. White House, *National Strategy for Combating Terrorism*, 11–12.
80. Andrew T. H. Tan, *U.S. Strategy Against Global Terrorism: How It Evolved, Why It Failed, and Where It Is Headed* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 118.
81. Tan, *U.S. Strategy Against Global Terrorism*, 4.
82. Singh, "The Bush Doctrine," 12. Punctuation altered from the original for clarity.
83. David Kilcullen, "Blood Year: Terrorism and the Islamic State," *Quarterly Essays* 58 (2015): 1–98.
84. "The 9/11 Commission Report," section 11.
85. White House, *National Security Strategy of the United States* (2002), 5.
86. Starr-Deelen, *Presidential Policies on Terrorism*, 149–156. It is also worth noting that these raids outside of declared conflict zones—sometimes without authorization from the government of the target nation—served to further upset foreign publics.
87. White House, *National Security Strategy of the United States* (Washington, D.C.: The White House, May 2010), 8.
88. White House, *National Security Strategy of the United States* (2010), 20.
89. Cited in Leonard Cutler, *President Obama's Counterterrorism Strategy in the War on Terror* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 5.
90. Starr-Deelen, *Presidential Policies on Terrorism*, 175–187.
91. Cutler, *President Obama's Counterterrorism Strategy in the War on Terror*, 1.
92. Kilcullen, "Blood Year," 52–55.

93. Cutler, *President Obama's Counterterrorism Strategy in the War on Terror*, 2.
94. White House, *National Strategy for Counterterrorism for the United States of America* (Washington, D.C.: White House, 2018), 5.
95. White House, *National Strategy for Counterterrorism for the United States of America* (2018), i.
96. Other end states include "our borders and ports of entry into the United States are secure against terrorist threats" and "Terrorism, radical Islamist ideologies, and other violent extremist ideologies do not undermine the American way of life," from White House, *National Strategy for Counterterrorism* (2018), 1.
97. White House, *National Strategy for Counterterrorism* (2018), 2.
98. White House, *National Strategy for Counterterrorism* (2018), 11.
99. Joshua A. Geltzer and Stephen Tankel, "Whatever Happened to Trump's Counterterrorism Strategy?" *The Atlantic*, 1 March 2018, https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2018/03/trump-terrorism-iraq-syria-al-qaeda-isis/554333/; also Third Way, "Thematic Brief: Preventing and Countering Terrorism," *ThirdWay.org*, 7 March 2019, https://www.thirdway.org/primer/thematic-brief-preventing-and-countering-terrorism.
100. Pamela Engel, "A New Pro-ISIS Propaganda Video Features Donald Trump Trashing Brussels," *Business Insider*, 25 March 2016, https://www.businessinsider.com/donald-trump-isis-propaganda-brussels-2016-3; Tom Liddy, "Al-Shabaab Releases Recruitment Video Featuring Donald Trump," ABC News, 1 January 2016, https://abcnews.go.com/Politics/al-shabaab-releases-recruitment-video-featuring-donald-trump/story?id=36052185.
101. Hoffman, "Does our Counter-Terrorism Strategy Match the Threat?," 20.
102. Starr-Deelen, *Presidential Policies on Terrorism*, 124.
103. William Braniff, Seamus Hughes, Shanna Batten, and Matthew Levitt, "From CVE to 'Terrorism Prevention': Assessing New U.S. Policies," *The Washington Institute* (17 November 2017), https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/from-cve-to-terrorism-prevention-assessing-new-u.s.-policies.
104. Authors' calculations from Stimson Study Group, "Counterterrorism Spending: Protecting America While Promoting Efficiencies and Accountability" (The Stimson Center, 2018), https://www.stimson.org/wp-content/files/file-attachments/CT_Spending_Report_0.pdf.
105. Authors' calculations from Stimson Study Group, "Counterterrorism Spending."
106. Stimson Study Group, "Counterterrorism Spending," 16.
107. Department of Defense Joint Operation Concept, *Irregular War: Countering Irregular Threats* (Washington, D.C.: Department of Defense, 2010), 22, https://www.jcs.mil/Portals/36/Documents/Doctrine/concepts/joc_iw_v2.pdf?ver=2017-12-28-162021-510.

108. Cynthia Lum, Leslie W. Kennedy, and Alison Sherley, "The Effectiveness of Counter-Terrorism Strategies," *Campell Systematic Reviews* 2 no. 1 (1 January 2006): 3, https://doi.org/10.4073/csr.2006.2.
109. "Global Terrorism Database (GTD)." For spending figures, see Stimson Study Group, "Counterterrorism Spending," 5.
110. White House, *National Strategy for Counterterrorism for the United States of America* (Washington D.C.: White House, 2018), 11.
111. White House, *National Security Strategy of the United States* (Washington, D.C.: The White House, 2002), n.p.; White House, *National Security Strategy of the United States* (Washington, D.C.: The White House, 2006), 12; White House, *National Strategy for Combating Terrorism* (Washington, D.C.: The White House, 2006), 1; White House, *National Security Strategy of the United States* (Washington, D.C.: The White House, 2010), 17; White House, *National Strategy for Counterterrorism* (Washington, D.C.: The White House, 2011), 8; and White House, *National Security Strategy of the United States* (Washington, D.C.: The White House, 2015), 7.
112. "Global Terrorism Database (GTD)."
113. CNN Wire Staff, "Magazine Details al Qaeda Cargo Plane Plots," *CNN.com*, 21 November 2010, https://www.cnn.com/2010/WORLD/meast/11/21/al.qaeda.magazine/index.html.
114. Bart Elias, *Aviation Security: Background and Policy Options for Screening and Securing Air Cargo*, CRS Report No. RL34390 (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, 25 February 2008), https://www.hsdl.org/?view&did=483861.
115. Al-Qaeda and its affiliates are mentioned throughout all of the strategy documents noted in footnote 9; the Islamic State and Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant are a central focus in the introductory letters from President Obama and President Trump in, respectively, White House, *National Security Strategy of the United States* (2015), n.p., and White House *National Strategy for Counterterrorism* (2018), n.p.
116. Barnett S. Koven, "The Islamic State and its Associated Movements" (lecture, Combatting Terrorism Seminar, Federal Law Enforcement Training Center, Charleston, January 2020).
117. From "Global Terrorism Database (GTD)." N.B., the GTD treats complex-coordinated attacks that occur in multiple parts/locations as distinct events. For example, the 9/11 attack on the World Trade Center would be coded as distinct from the attack on the Pentagon. This coding rule affects the number of attacks with more than 100 fatalities. That said, clustering these types of linked attacks would not substantively alter the discussion.
118. *The Future of U.S. Antiterrorism Policy: Hearing before the Committee on Foreign Affairs,* 103rd Cong. 1st sess (13 July 1993) (testimony of Timothy E. Wirth, U.S. Department of State counselor), 105.

119. Aki Peritz, "What Whac-a-Mole Can Teach Us About How to Fight Terrorism," *Foreign Policy*, 12 August 2015, https://foreignpolicy.com/2015/08/12/what-whac-a-mole-can-teach-us-about-how-to-fight-terrorism/.
120. For U.S. law on providing material support or resources to designated foreign terrorist organizations, see 18 U.S. Code § 2339B (2011); see also the United Nation Security Council, "Resolution 1373" (2001), S/RES/1373 (2001), https://undocs.org/S/RES/1373(2001); Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*, 44; and Crenshaw, "The Causes of Terrorism," 379.
121. Boaz Ganor, *The Counter-Terrorism Puzzle* (New Brunswick: Transaction, 2005), 42.
122. Masi Noor, Nurit Shnabel, Samer Halabi, and Arie Nadler, "When Suffering Begets Suffering: The Psychology of Competitive Victimhood Between Adversarial Groups in Violent Conflict," *Personality and Social Psychology Review* 16 no. 4 (2012): 351–374; Daniel Bar-Tal, Lily Chernyak-Hai, Noa Schori, and Ayelet Gundar, "A Sense of Self-Perceived Collective Victimhood in Intractable Conflicts," *International Review of the Red Cross* 91, no. 874 (2009): 229–258.
123. Barack Obama, interview by Steve Kroft, *60 Minutes*, CBS, 4 May 2011.
124. Erik Soloman, "Al Qaeda Confirms Bin Laden Death and Vows Revenge," *Reuters.com*, 6 May 2011, https://www.reuters.com/article/us-binladen-qaeda-confirmation/al-qaeda-confirms-bin-laden-death-and-vows-revenge-idUSTRE74528A20110506.
125. Andrew H. Kydd and Barbara F. Walter, "The Strategies of Terrorism," *International Security* 31 no 1 (Summer 2006): 49–80.
126. Graig Klein, "Rethinking Terrorism as a Strategy of Provocation," *PoliticalViolenceAtAGlance.org*, 1 June 2015, http://politicalviolenceataglance.org/2015/06/01/rethinking-terrorism-as-a-strategy-of-provocation/.
127. Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, ed. and trans. Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976): 89.
128. Clausewitz, *On War*, 89.
129. Margaux Hoar and Jonathan Schroden, "Do the SEALS have a Culture Problem or an OPTEMPO Problem? The Answer Might be 'Yes'," *InDepth* (blog), *Center for Naval Analysis*, 12 August 2019, https://www.cna.org/news/InDepth/article?ID=8.
130. Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, *DOD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms* (Washington D.C.: The Joint Staff, 2020), 52.
131. Stanley McChrystal, "Gen. McChrystal's Speech on Afghanistan," *RealClearPolitics.com*, 1 October 2009, https://www.realclearpolitics.com/articles/2009/10/01/gen_mcchrystals_address_on_afghanistan_98537.html.
132. Stanley McChrystal, "Gen. McChrystal's Speech on Afghanistan."
133. Richard K. Betts, "Is Strategy an Illusion?" *International Security* 25 no. 2 (Fall 2000): 5.

134. Bernard B. Fall, "The Theory and Practice of Insurgency and Counterinsurgency," *Naval War College Review* (April 1965), cited in David Kilcullen, *Counterinsurgency* (New York: Oxford University Press 2010), 149.
135. See U.S. Army and Marine Corps, *The U.S. Army-Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Field Manual (*FM 3-24) (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007).
136. See Seung-Whan Choi and James A. Piazza, "Ethnic Groups, Political Exclusion, and Domestic Terrorism," *Defence and Peace Economics* 27 (2016): 37–63; James A. Piazza, "Poverty, Minority Economic Discrimination, and Domestic Terrorism," *Journal of Peace Research* 48 no. 3 (2011): 339–353; Tim Kreiger and Daniel Meierrieks, "Does Income Inequality Lead to Terrorism?" CESifo Working Paper Series No. 5821 (23 March 2016), SSRN: https://ssrn.com/abstract=2766910; and Walter Enders and Gary A. Hoover, "The Nonlinear Relationship between Terrorism and Poverty," *American Economic Review* 102 no. 3 (2012): 267–72, DOI: 10.1257/aer.102.3.267.
137. Barnett S. Koven, "Development Assistance and the Diffusion of Insurgent Violence" (PhD diss., The George Washington University, 2017).
138. David J. Kilcullen, "Subversion and Countersubversion in the Campaign against Terrorism in Europe," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 30, no. 8 (2007): 658.
139. Koven, "Development Assistance and the Diffusion of Insurgent Violence," 48–49.
140. Andy Rohling (Brigadier General, U.S. Army), in discussion with the author, 27 May 2015.
141. John Richardson (Brigadier General, U.S. Army), in discussion with the author, 6 May 2015; Rob Salome (Colonel, U.S. Army), in discussion with the author, 8 May 2015.
142. U.S. Army and Marine Corps, *Counterinsurgency Field Manual*, 2.
143. N.B. prior to 2002—when UNITA was severely weakened following the death of their leader, Jonas Savimbi—the group would have been accurately characterized as insurgents.
144. Assaf Moghadam, Robit Berger, and Polina Beliakova, "Say Terrorist, Think Insurgent: Labeling and Analyzing Contemporary Terrorist Actors," *Perspectives on Terrorism* 8 no. 5 (October 2014): 1–17.
145. Ned Parker, Isabel Coles, and Raheem Salman, "Special Report: How Mosul Fell—An Iraqi General Disputes Baghdad's Story," *Reuters.com*, 14 October 2014, https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-gharawi-special-report/special-report-how-mosul-fell-an-iraqi-general-disputes-baghdads-story-idUSKCN0I30Z820141014.
146. Robyn Kriel and Briana Duggan, "Kenya Covers up Military Massacre," *CNN.com*, 31 May 2016, https://www.cnn.com/2016/05/31/africa/kenya-soldiers-el-adde-massacre/index.html.
147. Yomi Kazeem, "A Boko Haram Attack on a Nigerian Army Base has Left up to 100 Soldiers Dead," *QuartzAfrica.com*, accessed 03 November 2019,

https://qz.com/africa/1473661/boko-haram-kill-100-nigerian-soldiers-in-army-base-attack/.

148. "Boko Haram Raids Military Posts in Northeast Nigeria," *France24.com*, 1 March 2019, https://www.france24.com/en/20190103-boko-haram-raids-military-posts-northeast-nigeria.
149. "Yemen Officials: Al-Qaida Kills at Least 20 at Military Camp," *The New York Times,* 2 August 2019, https://www.nytimes.com/2019/08/02/world/middleeast/yemen-officials-al-qaida-kills-at-least-20-at-military-camp.html.
150. Moghadam, Berger, and Beliakova, "Say Terrorist, Think Insurgent," 3.
151. Moghadam, Berger, and Beliakova, "Say Terrorist, Think Insurgent," 11.
152. Department of the Army, *Insurgencies and Countering Insurgencies*, FM 3-24/MCWP 3-3.33.5 (Washington, D.C.: Department of the Army, May 2014), https://fas.org/irp/doddir/army/fm3-24.pdf; see also David S. Ucko, "The Real Myths of Counterinsurgency," *WarOnTheRocks.com*, 10 June 2014, https://warontherocks.com/2014/06/the-real-myths-of-counterinsurgency/.
153. Ucko, "The Real Myths of Counterinsurgency."
154. Javid Ahmad (Afghani expert on the Taliban), in discussion with the author, 8 April 2014.
155. Morton H. Halperin, Pricilla A. Clapp, and Arnold Kanter, *Bureaucratic Politics and Foreign Policy*, 2nd ed. (Brookings Institution Press, 2006), 27, 32.
156. Deborah D. Avant, "The Institutional Sources of Military Doctrine: Hegemons in Peripheral Wars," *International Studies Quarterly* 37 no. 4 (1993): 420.
157. John J. Mearsheimer, *Conventional Deterrence* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983).
158. Samuel P. Huntington, "The Lonely Super Power," *Foreign Affairs* 78 no. 2 (March-April 1999): 36; Patrick E. Tyler, "U.S. Strategy Plan Calls for Insuring No Rivals Develop, A One-Superpower World," *New York Times,* 8 March 1992. See also Stephen G. Brooks and William C. Wohlforth, *World Out of Balance: International Relations and the Challenge of American Primacy* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2008).
159. One reputable figure cites the number of military deployments from 1989–2001 at just under 300; see Frank N. Schubert, *Other than War: The American Military Experience and Operations in the Post-Cold War Decade* (Washington, D.C.: Joint History Office/Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, 2013), iii. For a more teleological view of how military operations other than war shaped the Global War on Terror, see Janine Davidson, *Lifting the Fog of Peace: How Americans Learned to Fight Modern War* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2010).
160. Secretary of Defense Les Apsin, "Report on the Bottom Up Review" (Washington, D.C.: Department of Defense, October 1993), https://www.hsdl.org/?view&did=448259.
161. SOCOM Assessor, in discussion with START-affiliate Stephen Tankel, 2 August 2019.

162. Charles C. Krulak, "The Strategic Corporal: Leadership in the Three Block War," *Marines Magazine*, January 1999, https://apps.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a399413.pdf.
163. Lynda Liddy, "The Strategic Corporal: Some Requirements in Training and Education (Education, Training and Doctrine)," *Australian Army Journal* 2, no. 2 (2004): 140.
164. Basil H. Liddell-Hart, *Strategy* 2nd rev. ed. (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1968), 348–9.
165. Noor et al., "When Suffering Begets Suffering," and Bar-Tal et al., "A Sense of Self-Perceived Collective Victimhood in Intractable Conflicts."
166. U.S. Embassy Cotonou, "Benin Forces Secure Borders with Training from U.S. Marines and Sailors," *U.S. Department of State News and Events*, 25 September 2015, https://bj.usembassy.gov/benin-forces-secure-borders-training-u-s-marines-sailors-sept-25-2015/.
167. United Nations Development Program (UNDP), "Journey to Extremism in Africa: Drivers, Incentives, and the Tipping Point for Recruitment," *UNDP Region Bureau for Africa* (New York: United Nations Development Program, 2017), https://www.undp.org/content/dam/rba/docs/UNDP-JourneyToExtremism-report-2017-english.pdf.
168. U.S. Department of State Bureau of International and Law Enforcement Affairs, Grant Award Number SINLEC18GR2066 made to the University of Maryland, National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism.
169. White House, *National Strategy for Counterterrorism for the United States of America* (Washington, D.C.: White House, October 2018), 17, https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/NSCT.pdf.
170. Joint Special Operations University, *Special Operations Forces Interagency Reference Guide*, 4th ed. (MacDill AFB, FL: JSOU Press, April 2020), 6-24, https://jsou.libguides.com/ld.php?content_id=54416711.
171. Joint Special Operations University, *Special Operations Forces Interagency Reference Guide*, 6-1.
172. Joint Special Operations University, *Special Operations Forces Interagency Reference Guide*, chapter 6.
173. Joint Special Operations University, *Special Operations Forces Interagency Counterterrorism Reference Manual*, 3rd ed. (Tampa: JSOU Press, September 2013), A-1. The list does include NGOs and intergovernmental organizations, but these are the organizations that DOD—or at least the USG—has partnered with or is likely to partner with in CT.
174. Richard H. Shultz, "U.S. Counterterrorism Operations during the Iraq War: A Case Study of Task Force 714," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 40, no. 10 (2017): 817. Lieutenant General Michael Flynn told the task force in no uncertain terms that the CIA was granting them "access to some of their most sensitive

human intelligence data and you're going to use it appropriately" (in Schultz, "U.S. Counterterrorism Operations during the Iraq War," 817).

175. Richard A. Best, Jr. and Andrew Feickert, *Special Operations Forces (SOF) and the CIA Paramilitary Operations: Issues for Congress*, CRS Report No. RS22017 (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service Report, 3 August 2009), 2.
176. Robert Chesney, "Military-Intelligence Convergence and the Law of the Title 10/Title 50 Debate," *Journal of National Security Law and Policy* 5, (2012): 539–629, http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.1945392.
177. Chesney, "Military-Intelligence Convergence and the Law of the Title 10/Title 50 Debate," 566.
178. Joint Special Operations University, *Special Operations Forces Interagency Reference Guide*, 4-1.
179. Joint Special Operations University, *Special Operations Forces Interagency Reference Guide*, 4-3. The status of the chief of mission is codified in Section 207 of the Foreign Service Act of 1980, cited in the reference guide.
180. USAID laison officer (LNO), in discussion with the author, 14 November 2019.
181. Timothy Lawn, "USAID, SOF partner to accomplish the 3Ds (Defense, Diplomacy, Development)," *The Tip of the Spear* (June 2019), 12.
182. Joint Special Operations University, *Special Operations Forces Interagency Reference Guide*, 7-2.
183. For a thoughtful account of missed opportunities for DOD-DOS coordination see, Donald R. Drechsler, "Reconstructing the Interagency Process after Iraq," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 28, no. 1 (2005): 3-30, https://doi.org/10.1080/01402390500031973.
184. Joint Special Operations University, *Special Operations Forces Interagency Reference Guide*, 7-5.
185. Graham T. Allison and Morton H. Halperin, "Bureaucratic Politics: A Paradigm and Some Policy Implications," *World Politics* 24 (Supplement, 1972): 48.
186. Tom Christensen, Per Lægard, Paul G. Roness, and Kjell Arne Røvik, *Organization Theory and the Public Sector: Instrument, Culture, and Myth* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 11.
187. Janine Davidon, *Lifting the Fog of Peace: How Americans Learned to Fight Modern War* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2010), 13.
188. Anthony Downs, *Inside Bureaucracy* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1967), 211.
189. Samuel P. Huntington, "Interservice Competition and the Political Roles of the Armed Services," *The American Political Science Review* 55, no. 1 (1961): 40–52, doi:10.2307/1976048.
190. Downs, *Inside Bureaucracy*, 212.
191. Allison and Halperin, "Bureaucratic Politics," 48.

192. Anne L. Clunan, "The Fight Against Terrorist Financing," *Political Science Quarterly* 121 no. 4 (2006).
193. See, for example, Eric Schmitt, "Clash Foreseen between CIA and Pentagon," *New York Times* (10 May 2006), https://www.nytimes.com/2006/05/10/washington/10cambone.html; Marc Ambinder, "Intel Wars: DIA, CIA, and Flynn's Battle to Consolidate Spying," *DefenseOne.com*, 15 July 2013, https://www.defenseone.com/politics/2013/07/intel-wars-dia-cia-and-flynns-battle-consolidate-spying/66716/.
194. Andrew J. Swab, "Black Budgets: The U.S. Government's Secret Military and Intelligence Expenditures" (briefing paper #72, Harvard Law School Briefing Papers on Federal Budget Policy, May 2019), 5.
195. Anne Daugherty Miles, *Intelligence Community Programs, Management, and Enduring Issues*, CRS Report No. R44681 (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, 8 November 2016), 8.
196. Andru E. Wall, "Demystifying the Title 10-Title 50 Debate: Distinguishing Military Operations, Intelligence Activities, and Covert Action," *Harvard National Security Journal* 3 (2011): 89–91.
197. Official in DOJ Counterterrorism Section, in conversation with Bill Braniff, 26 July 2019.
198. Michael B. Kraft and Edward Marks, *U.S. Government Counterterrorism: A Guide to Who Does What* (Boca Raton, FL: CRC Press, 2012), 330.
199. "The 9/11 Commission Report: Final Report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States (9/11 Report)" (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 22 July 2004), https://www.9-11commission.gov/report/.
200. "The 9/11 Commission Report," 275.
201. "The 9/11 Commission Report," 277.
202. Homeland Security Act of 2002, Pub. L. No. 107–296, 116 Stat. 2135 (2002), https://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/publications/hr_5005_enr.pdf.
203. Partnership for Public Service and Booz Allen Hamilton, "Securing the Future: Management Lessons of 9/11" (Washington, D.C.: Booz Allen Hamilton, 2011), 10, https://ourpublicservice.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/d6da374bd6813743984f4d41b9321178-1402683339.pdf.
204. Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004, Pub. L. No. 108–458, 118 Stat. 3638 (2002), https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/PLAW-108publ458/pdf/PLAW-108publ458.pdf.
205. From Responsibilities and Authorities of the Director of National Intelligence 50 USC § 403-1 (2006).
206. Partnership for Public Service and Booz Allen Hamilton, "Securing the Future: Management Lessons of 9/11," 2.

207. Stimson Study Group, "Counterterrorism Spending: Protecting America While Promoting Efficiencies and Accountability" (Washington, D.C.: The Stimson Center, 2018), 12–13.

208. Stimson Study Group, "Counterterrorism Spending," 12–13.

209. Stimson Study Group, "Counterterrorism Spending," 12–13. This is out of a total estimated $2.8 trillion for total CT spending, including Overseas Contingency Operations.

210. Downs, *Inside Bureaucracy*, 100. For the routine-related biases of military organizations, see also Scott D. Sagan, "The Perils of Proliferation: Organization Theory, Deterrence Theory, and the Spread of Nuclear Weapons," *International Security* 18 no. 4 (Spring 1994): 68.

211. Counterterrorism experts in the intelligence community, in discussion with the authors, 6 August 2019.

212. See Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Pub. L. No. 103-236, 108 Stat. 382 (1993), and Omnibus Consolidated and Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act, Pub. L. No. 105-277, 1112 Stat. 2681 (1998).

213. The full statement reads: "The Bureau of Counterterrorism (CT) works to strengthen partnerships, civilian capacity, and information sharing around the world to counter evolving terrorist threats and prevent the spread of violent extremism. CT designs, manages, and oversees foreign assistance to build the civilian capabilities of foreign government partners to counter terrorism and violent extremism in an effective and sustainable fashion. CT seeks to build law enforcement and judicial capabilities to mitigate attacks, disrupt terrorist transit, and arrest, investigate, prosecute, and incarcerate terrorists in accordance with the rule of law." From the website for the U.S. Department of State, accessed 31 March 2020, https://www.state.gov/bureaus-offices/under-secretary-for-civilian-security-democracy-and-human-rights/bureau-of-counterterrorism-and-countering-violent-extremism/.

214. Amy Roberts, "By the Numbers: U.S. Diplomatic Presence," CNN, (9 May 2013), https://www.cnn.com/2013/05/09/politics/btn-diplomatic-presence/index.html.

215. From the website of the U.S. Department of State, accessed 5 November 2019, https://www.state.gov/bureaus-offices/under-secretary-for-civilian-security-democracy-and-human-rights/bureau-of-counterterrorism-and-countering-violent-extremism/.

216. "Program and Initiatives: Bureau of Counterterrorism," accessed 31 March 2020, https://www.state.gov/bureau-of-counterterrorism-programs-and-initiatives/.

217. For DOS figure: "Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Bill," S. Rep. No. 114-290 (U.S. Government Publishing Office, 29 June 2016), https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CRPT-114srpt290/html/CRPT-114srpt290.htm. For DOD figure: Offices of the Secretary of Defense (Comptroller), "Department of Defense Budget Fiscal Year (FY) 2017" (February 2016), https://securityassistance.org/content/counterterrorism%20partnerships%20fund.

218. USAID, "The Development Response to Violent Extremism and Insurgency: Putting Principles into Practice," *USAID Policy* (2011), https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1870/VEI_Policy_Final.pdf.
219. USAID, "The Development Response to Violent Extremism and Insurgency," 7.
220. USAID, "The Development Response to Violent Extremism and Insurgency," 7.
221. USAID, "The Development Response to Violent Extremism and Insurgency," 7.
222. Carlos Hernandorena, "U.S. Provincial Construction Teams in Afghanistan: 2003–2006 Obstacles to Interagency Cooperation" in *The Interagency and Counterinsurgency Warfare: Stability, Security, Transition, and Reconstruction Roles,* ed. Joseph R. Cerami and Jay W. Boggs (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 2007), 121–170.
223. USAID, "The Development Response to Violent Extremism and Insurgency," ii. The preface is signed by USAID Administrator Rajiv Shah.
224. From the website of the Department of Homeland Security, accessed 5 November 2019, https://www.dhs.gov/counter-terrorism-and-homeland-security-threats.
225. From the website of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, accessed 5 November 2019, https://www.fbi.gov/about/mission.
226. From the website of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, accessed 5 November 2019, https://www.fbi.gov/investigate/terrorism.
227. From the website of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, accessed 5 November 2019, https://www.fbi.gov/investigate/terrorism.
228. "Terrorism and Illicit Finance," from the website of the U.S Department of the Treasury, accessed 29 March 2020 https://home.treasury.gov/policy-issues/terrorism-and-illicit-finance.
229. From the website of the U.S Department of the Treasury, accessed 18 October 2019, https://www.treasury.gov/about/organizational-structure/offices/Pages/Office-of-Terrorism-and-Financial-Intelligence.aspx.
230. Sagan, "The Perils of Proliferation," 72.
231. A *RAND* study in 2008 found that "there is often little emphasis on formal training" about interagency matters; some agencies, for instance USAID, had "no formal training for working with other departments, such as DoD." Michael Spirtas, et al., *Department of Defense Training for Operations with Interagency Multinational, and Coalition Partners* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2008), 35. Kraft and Marks suggest that emphasis on training has been growing, though unevenly, throughout the interagency—Kraft and Marks, *U.S. Government Counterterrorism*, 338–339. Both sources note that DOD has made a stronger effort than other departments on the training front.
232. Chesney, "Military-Intelligence Convergence and the Law of the Title 10/Title 50 Debate," 615–616.

233. Andru E. Wall, "Demystifying the Title 10-Title 50 Debate: Distinguishing Military Operations, Intelligence Activities, and Covert Action," *Harvard National Security Journal* 3, (2011): 91.
234. Wall, "Demystifying the Title 10-Title 50 Debate," 122.
235. See Chesney, "Military-Intelligence Convergence and the Law of the Title 10/ Title 50 Debate."
236. Wall, "Demystifying the Title 10-Title 50 Debate," 88–89.
237. Wall, "Demystifying the Title 10-Title 50 Debate," 88–89.
238. Wall, "Demystifying the Title 10-Title 50 Debate," 89.
239. Best and Feickert, *Special Operations Forces (SOF) and the CIA Paramilitary Operations: Issues for Congress*.
240. United States Office of Personnel Management, "Sizing up the Executive Branch: Fiscal Year 2017" (February 2018), 6, accessed 1 April 2020, https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/data-analysis-documentation/federal-employment-reports/reports-publications/sizing-up-the-executive-branch-2016.pdf.
241. Lolita C. Baldor, "Army Lowers 2017 Recruiting Goal; More Soldiers Staying On," *The Associated Press*, 11 April 2018, https://www.armytimes.com/news/your-army/2018/04/22/army-lowers-2017-recruiting-goal-more-soldiers-staying-on/; "Department of Defense Announces Fiscal Year 2018 Recruiting and Retention Numbers," *Defense.Gov* (15 November 2018), https://www.defense.gov/newsroom/Releases/Release/Article/1691314/department-of-defense-announces-fiscal-year-2018-recruiting-and-retention-numbe/.
242. Robert B. Polk, "Interagency Reform: An Idea Whose Time Has Come," in *The Interagency and Counterinsurgency Warfare: Stability, Security, Transition, and Reconstruction Roles,* ed. Joseph R. Cerami and Jay W. Boggs (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 2007), 320.
243. Paraphrased from Edgar H. Schein: "The culture of a group can … be defined as a pattern of shared basic assumptions learned by a group as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, which has worked well enough to be considered valid, and therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems." *Organizational Culture and Leadership* 4th ed. (San Francisco: Jossy-Bass/Wiley, 2010), 18.
244. Joint Special Operations University, *Special Operations Forces Interagency Reference Guide*, 7-4, emphasis added.
245. Amanda Smith, "Strategic Communication: Interagency Rhetoric and Consistent Interpretation," in *The Interagency and Counterinsurgency Warfare: Stability, Security, Transition, and Reconstruction Roles,* ed. Joseph R. Cerami and Jay W. Boggs (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 2007), 344.
246. U.S. Army SF Colonel, in discussion with the authors, 18 July 2019.
247. U.S. Department of Defense, *Joint Publication 1-02, Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*, 15 February 2016.

248. Joint Special Operations University, *Special Operations Forces Interagency Reference Guide*, 3-14.
249. U.S. Army SF Colonel, in discussion with the authors, 18 July 2019.
250. Tobias Heinrich, Carla Martinez Machain, and Jared Oestman, "Does Counterterrorism Militarize Foreign Aid? Evidence from Sub-Saharan Africa," *Journal of Peace Research* 54, no. 4 (2017): 527–541.
251. Smith, "Strategic Communication," 337–386.
252. U.S. Army SF Colonel, in discussion with the authors, 18 July 2019.
253. USAID LNO, in discussion with the authors 14 November 2019.
254. USAID LNO, in discussion with the authors, 14 November 2019.
255. Joint Special Operations University, *Special Operations Forces Interagency Reference Guide*, 1-6.
256. Former CIA case officer, in discussion with the authors, 25 July 2019.
257. Shultz, "U.S. Counterterrorism Operations during the Iraq War," 817.
258. Clubb is citing a 2003 *Frontline* interview. See Glen E. Clubb, "Strategy is Not Enough: Why Bush Administration Efforts Failed to Integrate the Interagency" (master's thesis, School of Advanced Military Studies, 2018), 30, https://apps.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/1071548.pdf.
259. U.S. Army Intelligence Officer, in discussion with Stephen Tankel, 25 July 2019.
260. U.S. Army SF Colonel, in discussion with the authors, 18 July 2019.
261. "Engagement" has been an element of U.S. grand strategy since the end of the Cold War. See White House, *A National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement* (Washington, D.C.: The White House, 1996); White House, *A National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement* (Washington, D.C.: The White House, 1994), 7–9. The *National Security Strategy of the United States,* in 1987 and 1988, also both note that the United States should work closely with allied and democratic governments against the threat of international and state-sponsored terrorism. See White House, *National Security Strategy of the United States* (Washington, D.C.: The White House, 1987) and White House, *National Security Strategy of the United States* (Washington, D.C.: The White House, 1988). Though this is not a capacity-building, by, with, and through approach to CT, it underscores the importance of partners on the ground in territories where terrorist organizations are located and operating.
262. Brian S. Petit, *Going Big by Getting Small: The Application of Operational Art by Special Operations in Phase Zero* (Parker: Outskirt Press, 2017); Kyle Johnston, "U.S. Special Operations Forces and the Interagency in Phase Zero," *InterAgency Journal* 8, no. 1 (Winter 2017): 76-104.
263. Barnett S. Koven, "The Islamic State and its Associated Movements" (lecture, Combatting Terrorism Seminar, Federal Law Enforcement Training Center, Charleston, January 2020).

264. James A. Piazza, "Incubators of Terror: Do Failed and Failing States Promote Transnational Terrorism," *International Studies Quarterly* 52, no. 3 (2008): 469–488; Stewart Patrick, "'Failed' States and Global Security: Empirical Questions and Policy Dilemmas," *International Studies Review* 9, iss. 4 (December 2007): 644–662, DOI: https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2486.2007.00728. See also Monty G. Marshall, Ted Robert Gurr, and Barbara Harff, "PIFT-State Failure Problem Set: Internal Wars and Failures of Governance, 1955-2018," *Center for Systemic Peace* (2019), http://www.systemicpeace.org/inscrdata.html.

265. Martha Crenshaw and Gary LaFree, *Countering Terrorism* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings, 2017), 119–121; see also Brian M. Jenkins, "The New Age of Terrorism" in *The McGraw-Hill Homeland Security Handbook* (2006), 123, https://www.rand.org/pubs/reprints/RP1215.html.

266. Stimson Study Group, "Counterterrorism Spending."

267. Robert M. Gates, "Helping Others Defend Themselves: The Future of U.S. Security Assistance," *Foreign Affairs* 89, no. 3 (May/June 2010): 2-6.

268. Jason Lyall and Isaiah Wilson III, "Rage Against the Machines: Explaining Outcomes in Counterinsurgency Wars," *International Organization* 63 no. 1 (Winter 2009): 73.

269. It is worth noting that there are countries in which local authorities and armed forces are more poorly regarded than U.S. operators. Corruption and a lack of professionalization, as well as simple parochial interests, can give local security forces a well-deserved bad reputation among their own populaces. In such instances, U.S. forces have their work cut out for them, and even more time and resources may be required to shift these local perceptions because, in the majority of cases, U.S. SOF will not be the ones to conduct day-to-day CT and governance in the long run.

270. "Lawrence of Arabia/Arab Warfare," *PBS*, accessed 8 June 2020, https://www.pbs.org/lawrenceofarabia/revolt/warfare4.html.

271. For discussion of the concept of limited war for occupiers, see Ivan Arreguín-Toft, "How the Weak Win Wars: A Theory of Asymmetric Conflict," *International Security* 26, no. 1 (Summer 2001): 93–128. For a discussion of the counterinsurgent as occupier, see Lyall and Wilson, "Rage Against the Machines." For the challenge of withdrawal, see Andrea M. Lopez, "Engaging or Withdrawing, Winning or Losing? The Contradictions of Counterinsurgency Policy in Afghanistan and Iraq," *Third World Quarterly* 28 (2007): 245–260.

272. Ho Chi Minh, cited in Bill Jones, *The Body Burning Detail: Memoir of a Marine Artilleryman in Vietnam* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland and Company, 2018), 42.

273. Thomas K. Livingston, *Building the Capacity of Partner States through Security Force Assistance*, CRS Report No. R41817 (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, 5 May 2011), 29–30, https://fas.org/sgp/crs/natsec/R41817.pdf.

274. Dwight D. Eisenhower, "Problems of Combined Command" (lecture, National War College, Washington, D.C., 18 June 1948), 5.

275. Charles Recknagel, "Key Points in U.S.-Afghan Bilateral Security Agreement (Explainer)," *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty* (blog), 30 September 2014, https://www.rferl.org/a/explainer-bsa-afghan-us-security-agreement-bsa/26613884.html.
276. Karen DeYoung and Tim Craig, "U.S. to Offer Afghans Assurances to Remove Hurdle in post-2014 Deal," *The Washington Post*, 20 November 2013, https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia_pacific/kerry-offers-to-write-letter-to-afghan-people-on-past-us-mistakes-kabul-officials-say/2013/11/19/11d16802-5159-11e3-9ee6-2580086d8254_story.html.
277. Seth Jones, *Counterterrorism and the Role of Special Operations Forces*, Congressional Testimony (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2015), 6.
278. Specifically, U.S. SOF were initially allowed only to advise and assist in the field at the battalion level but as the relationship grew, were able to accompany partner forces at the company level, even when contact with the enemy was considered likely, see Linda Robinson, Patrick B. Johnston, and Gillian S. Oak, *U.S. Special Operations Forces in the Philippines: 2001–2014* (Santa Monica: RAND, 2016), 129.
279. Daniel Byman, "Friends like These: Counterinsurgency and the War on Terrorism" *International Security* 31, no. 2 (2006): 79–115.
280. Christopher Paul et al., *What Works Best When Building Partner Capacity and Under What Circumstances?* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND), xvii.
281. Paul et al., *What Works Best When Building Partner Capacity and Under What Circumstances?,* 81–82.
282. Paul et al., *What Works Best When Building Partner Capacity and Under What Circumstances?,* 85.
283. The concept of a monopoly on violence as a fundamental characteristic of a state is widely attributed to Weber; Andreas Anter, "The Modern State and Its Monopoly on Violence" in *The Oxford Handbook on Max Weber*, eds. Edith Hanke, Lawrence Scaff, and Sam Whimster (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2019), DOI: 10.1093/oxfordhb/9780190679545.001.0001.
284. See Christian Davenport, "Multi-Dimensional Threat Perception and State Repression: An Inquiry Into Why States Apply Negative Sanctions," *American Journal of Political Science* 39, no. 3 (Aug. 1995): 683–713. Though Davenport is focused on state repression activity as a dependent variable, his theoretical approach to regime perceptions of multi-dimensional threats is highly relevant here.
285. Byong-Kuen Jhee, "Anti-Americanism and Electoral Politics in Korea," *Political Science Quarterly* 123, no. 2 (2008): 301–318.
286. For a theoretical overview of coups-proofing, see the foundational work in this field: James T. Quinlivan, "Coup-Proofing: Its Practice and Consequences in the Middle East," *International Security* 24, no. 2 (1999): 131–165.

287. Ulrich Pilster and Tobias Böhmelt, "Coup-Proofing and Military Effectiveness in Interstate Wars, 1967–99," *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 28, no. 4 (2011): 331–350.

288. Edward T. Rowe, "Aid and Coups d'Etat: Aspects of the Impact of American Military Assistance Programs in the Less Developed Countries," *International Studies Quarterly* 18, no. 2 (July 1974): 239–255.

289. Craig Whitlock, "Coup Leader in Burkina Faso Received U.S. Military Training," *The Washington Post*, 3 November 2014, https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/coup-leader-in-burkina-faso-received-us-military-training/2014/11/03/3e9acaf8-6392-11e4-836c-83bc4f26eb67_story.html.

290. Alan Boswell, "Leader of Mali Military Coup Received U.S. Training," *McClatchy DC*, 23 March 2012, https://www.mcclatchydc.com/news/nation-world/world/article24726655.html.

291. Jesse D. Savage and Jonathan Caverley, "When Human Capital Threatens the Capitol: Foreign Aid in the Form of Military Training and Coups," *Journal of Peace Research* 54, no. 4 (2017): 542–557, DOI: https://doi.org/10.1177/0022343317713557. It is worth noting that Savage and Caverley's research does not identify the particular units involved in each coup attempt and thus does not claim that individuals or units actually involved in U.S. training are more (or less) likely to be involved in coup attempts. The data does focus on the Counterterrorism Fellowship Program, however, making it particularly germane to this discussion.

292. Savage and Caverley, "When Human Capital Threatens the Capitol."

293. Monty G. Marshall and Gabrielle Elzinga-Marshall, "State Fragility Index and Matrix 2018," *Center for Systemic Peace*, accessed 4 December 2019, http://www.systemicpeace.org/inscrdata.html.

294. Terrorism and CT since 9/11 have brought conversations about civil liberties and terrorism to the fore. See Bruce Ackerman, *Before the Next Attack: Preserving Civil Liberties in an Age of Terrorism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), among numerous others. These tactics might also be employed by governments who are very genuinely committed to counterterrorism but lack the capacity or capability to respond less severely or more effectively. Evidence from dictatorships, however, suggests that repressive measures are more likely to increase terrorism than provide additional security; see Deniz Aksoy, David B. Carter, and Joseph Wright, "Terrorism in Dictatorships," *The Journal of Politics* 74, no. 3 (2012): 810–826; James. A Piazza, "Repression and Terrorism: A Cross-National Empirical Analysis of Types of Repression and Domestic Terrorism," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 29, no. 1 (2017): 102–118, DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2014.994061.

295. Daniel Byman, *Deadly Connections: States that Sponsor Terrorism* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 37.

296. Byman, *Deadly Connections*, 47–49.

297. For a recent example of Azerbaijani authorities using terrorist threats to distract from human rights criticism, see Shahla Sultanova, "Conflict & Diplomacy: For

Baku, Islamic Terror As Scapegoat?," *Transitions Online* (25 June 2012), https://www.ceeol.com/search/article-detail?id=20317. There is evidence that at least in democratic states, existing governments can receive greater political support as a result of terrorist attacks through a 'rally around the flag' effect; see Christophe Chowanietz, "Rallying Around the Flag or Railing against the Government? Political parties' reactions to terrorist acts," *Party Politics* 17, no. 5 (2011): 673–698.

298. Heather J. Sharkey, "Arab Identity and Ideology in Sudan: The Politics of Language, Ethnicity, and Race," *African Affairs* 107, no. 426 (2008): 21–43.

299. For instance, Ryan Browne, "U.S. is Cutting Some Military Aid to Somalia Amid Allegations of Misuse," *CNN.com*, (14 December 2017), https://www.cnn.com/2017/12/14/politics/us-aid-somalia/index.html.

300. Anas El Gomati, "Haftar's Rebranded Coups," *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace* (30 July 2019), https://carnegieendowment.org/sada/79579.

301. Senior DHS official involved in developing the agency's response to domestic terrorism, in conversation with author 7 February 2020. See also the April 2020 joint report from the Program on Extremism at George Washington University and the Center for Extremism at the Anti-Defamation League: Jon Lewis, Seamus Hughes, Oren Segal, and Ryan Greer, "White Supremacist Terror: Modernizing Our Approach to Today's Threat," accessed 23 April 2020, https://extremism.gwu.edu/sites/g/files/zaxdzs2191/f/White%20Supremacist%20Terror%20final.pdf.

302. According to the 2017 Country Reports on Terrorism by the U.S. Department of State, only 70 countries had laws that were suitable for prosecuting or penalizing foreign terrorist fighters, see U.S. Department of State Bureau of Counterterrorism, *Country Reports on Terrorism 2017* (Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of State Publication, 2017), 10, https://www.state.gov/reports/country-reports-on-terrorism-2017/.

303. "Albania: Extremism & Counter-Extremism," *Counter Extremism Project*, 4, accessed 23 April 2020, https://www.counterextremism.com/sites/default/files/country_pdf/AL-12292017.pdf.

304. For examples of CT efforts in Peru in particular, see Barnett S. Koven, "Emulating U.S. Counterinsurgency Doctrine: Barriers for Developing Country Forces, Evidence from Peru," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 39, no. 5-6 (2016): 888.

305. James D. Fearon and David D. Laitin, "Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War," *American Political Science Review* 97, no. 1 (2003): 75–90; Cullen S. Hendrix, "Measuring State Capacity: Theoretical and Empirical Implications for the Study of Civil Conflict," *Journal of Peace Research* 47, no. 3 (2010): 273–285.

306. Sergei Boeke and Bart Schuurman, "Operation 'Serval': A Strategic Analysis of the French Intervention in Mali, 2013–2014," *The Journal of Strategic Studies* 38, no. 6 (2015): 801–825, http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/01402390.2015.1045494; see page 816 for reference to in-flight refueling. See also Gabe Starosta, "The Role of the U.S. Air Force in the French Mission in Mali," *The Atlantic Council.org*

(blog), 4 November 2013, https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/natosource/the-role-of-the-us-air-force-in-the-french-mission-in-mali/.

307. Thomas S. Szayna and William Welser IV, *Developing and Assessing Options for the Global SOF Network* (Santa Monica: RAND, 2013); Keenan D. Yoho, Tess deBlanc-Knowles, and Randy Borum, "The Global SOF Network: Posturing Special Operations Forces to Ensure Global Security in the 21st Century," *Journal of Strategic Security* 7, no. 2 (2014): 1–7. See also Daniel Byman and Ian A. Merritt, "The New American Way of War: Special Operations Forces in the War on Terrorism," *The Washington Quarterly* 41, no. 2 (2018): 79–93.
308. Karen S. Vogt, "Origins of Military Medical Care as An Essential Source of Morale," *Military Medicine* 180, no. 6 (2015): 604–606.
309. Paul et al., *What Works Best When Building Partner Capacity and Under What Circumstances?,* xvii.
310. Paul et al., *What Works Best When Building Partner Capacity and Under What Circumstances?,* xx.
311. Austin Long et al., *Building Special Operations Partnerships in Afghanistan and Beyond* (Santa Monica: RAND, 2015); Paul et al., *What Works Best When Building Partner Capacity and Under What Circumstances?*
312. Long et al. notes that having "tail" lag behind "tooth" development is a formula for "short-term gain but long-term pain," *Building Special Operations Partnerships in Afghanistan and Beyond*, xiii.
313. Stephan R. Bolton, "Partners of Choice and Necessity: Special Operations Forces and the National Security Imperatives of Building Partner Capacity," *School of Advanced Military Studies* (master's thesis, Leavenworth KS, January 2015), 6.
314. For an overview of author's training and research project in Benin, see "Community-Oriented Policing and Community Engagement in Benin," from the website *START* at the University of Maryland, https://www.start.umd.edu/research-projects/community-oriented-policing-and-community-engagement-benin.
315. Liddy, "The Strategic Corporal."
316. In Whitney Grespin, "From the Ground Up: The Importance of Preserving SOF Capacity Building Skill," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 7, no. 2 (Summer 2014): 39.
317. Bolton, "Partners of Choice and Necessity," 35; Petit, *Going Big by Getting Small*, 169.
318. Long et al., *Building Special Operations Partnerships in Afghanistan and Beyond*, 10.
319. Long et al. found that while units at all levels fundamentally understood that leaving operations to partner units is "for the collective good," it was still a source of frustration for some among SOF units interviewed in Afghanistan; *Building Special Operations Partnerships in Afghanistan and Beyond*, 10.
320. From interview conducted by RAND, quoted in Long et al., *Building Special Operations Partnerships in Afghanistan and Beyond*, 49.

321. Long et al., *Building Special Operations Partnerships in Afghanistan and Beyond*, 49.
322. David Witty, *The Iraqi Counter Terrorism Service* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institute, 2015), 14.
323. David Tucker and Christopher Lamb, *United States Special Operations Forces* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), xviii and 8-17.
324. John Ward Anderson and Molly Moore, "For Now, Rival Warlords Put Aside Bitter Feuds of Past," *The Washington Post,* 12 November 2001, https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/2001/11/12/for-now-rival-warlords-put-aside-bitter-feuds-of-past/a2886916-8064-414f-a7e5-a80fb2d48bcd/.
325. See Harold Kennedy, "Special Ops Equipment: Newest—and Oldest," *National Defense,* 1 February 2002, https://www.nationaldefensemagazine.org/articles/2002/1/31/2002february-special-ops-equipment-newestand-oldest.
326. It is also worth noting that, thus far, the USG has struggled to incorporate NSA partnerships into a sound global strategy. The United States has a tendency to work with NSA partners for short-term, tactical endeavors but not provide the long-lasting support to help them translate those into local political gains and thereby establish viable U.S. partners in these foreign countries. These failures often lead to very negative outcomes for NSAs that partner with the USG; for instance, the Kurds in Iraq suffered a great deal of violence and repression as a reprisal from the Ba'athist regime in Baghdad after their support of U.S. and coalition forces during the first Gulf War.
327. Paul et al., *What Works Best When Building Partner Capacity and Under What Circumstances?,* 4.
328. A 2015 report on the CTFP outlines the broad set of engagement programs that all fall under the heading of CT, specifically noting that "the reputation of CTFP symposiums has become so strong that beginning in FY 2011 some countries requested out-of-sector invitations and funded participation themselves." See U.S. Department of Defense, "Regional Defense Combating Terrorism Fellowship Program Report to Congress: Fiscal Year 2015," 23, https://www.hsdl.org/?abstract&did=794761.
329. Ralph Espach, "Differentiating between Partner Capacity Building Efforts for Counterterrorism and Counternarcotics Missions," *Center for Naval Analysis* (December 2008), 14.
330. Espach, "Differentiating between Partner Capacity Building Efforts for Counterterrorism and Counternarcotics Missions," 3.
331. Barnett S. Koven and Cynthia McClintock, "Cooperation and Drug Policies: Trends in Peru in the Twenty-First Century," in *Cooperation and Drug Policies in the Americas: Trends in the Twenty-First Century,* ed. Roberto Zepeda and Jonathan Rosen (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2014), 62–3.
332. Nina M. Serafino, *Security Assistance Reform: "Section 1206" Background and Issues for Congress*, CRS Report No. RS22855 (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, 8 December 2014), 2.

333. Sharif Calfee, Joseph Lee, Peter Crandall, and Young Rock An, "Security Cooperation, Security Assistance, and Building Partner Capacity: Enhancing Interagency Collaboration," *Joint Forces Quarterly* 61 no. 2 (2011): 102–107.

334. Calfee et al., "Security Cooperation, Security Assistance, and Building Partner Capacity," 103.

335. Inspector General, DOD, "Evaluation of Department of Defense Efforts to Build Counterterrorism and Stability Operations Capacity of Foreign Military Forces with Section 1206/2282 Funding" (21 July 2017), p. i-ii. DODIG-2017-099 (Project No. D00SPO-0190.000).

336. Glen E. Clubb, "Strategy is Not Enough: Why Bush Administration Efforts Failed to Integrate the Interagency," *School of Advanced Military Studies* (master's thesis, Leavenworth, 2018), 20–21.

337. For a thorough breakdown of changes to pre-2017 programs in the NDAA see Thomas N. Williams Jr., "FY2017 Security Cooperation/Assistance Legislation Recap," Defense Institute of Security Cooperation Studies (2017), 9–14, www.discs.dsca.mil › documents › FY17_SC_Legislation_Recap_Final.pdf.

338. As of yet, it is difficult to assess any substantive impact of the change, but see Susan B. Epstein and Liana W. Rosen, *U.S. Security Assistance and Security Cooperation Programs: Overview of Funding Trends*, CRS Report No. R45091 (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, 1 February 2018), 18–19.

339. David E. Thaler et al., *From Patchwork to Framework: A Review off Title 10 Authorities for Security Cooperation* (Santa Monica: RAND, 2016), 19.

340. Stimson Study Group, "Counterterrorism Spending." Also, William McRaven, "Posture Statement of Admiral William H. McRaven, USN, Commander, United States Special Operations Command before the 113th Congress Senate Armed Services Committee," 11 March 2014, 6, https://www.armed-services.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/McRaven_03-11-14.pdf.

341. Hiesler, 38, drawing on Paul et al., 8–11 and 120 Pickup, "Security Force Assistance: Additional Actions Needed to Guide Geographic Combatant Command and Service Efforts," *Government Accountability Office* (May 2012).

342. Thaler et al., *From Patchwork to Framework*, 12–13.

343. Interviews with DOD officials with RAND in Thaler et al., *From Patchwork to Framework*, 13.

344. Russell S. Thacker and Paul W. Lambert offer a compelling case for maintaining long-term relationships with international graduates of U.S. military education and training programs. See Thacker and Lambert, "Low Cost, High Returns: Getting More from International Partnerships," *Joint Forces Quarterly* 74, no. 4 (2014), https://ndupress.ndu.edu/JFQ/Joint-Force-Quarterly-75/Article/577564/low-cost-high-returns-getting-more-from-international-partnerships/.

345. David Maxwell, "Considerations for Organizing and Preparing for Security Force Assistance Operations," *Small Wars Journal*, 28 March 2008, https://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/security-force-assistance-operations.

346. The exceptions, as noted in the introduction, are highly kinetic, highly covert operations, which could potentially be understood as a kind of "Pure CT." It is worth once more drawing attention to the fact that reconsidering the value of these kinds of activities on the strategic level is one of the major themes of this text overall.

347. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Doctrine for the Armed Forces of the United States*, JP 3-05 *Special Operations* (Washington, D.C.: Joint Chiefs of Staff, 18 April 2011), https://fas.org/irp/doddir/dod/jp3-05.pdf.

348. JP 3-26, *Counterterrorism*.

349. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Doctrine for the Armed Forces of the United States*, JP 3-07 *Stability* (Washington, D.C.: Joint Chiefs of Staff, 3 August 2016), https://www.jcs.mil/Portals/36/Documents/Doctrine/pubs/jp3_07.pdf.

350. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Doctrine for the Armed Forces of the United States*, JP 3-22 *Foreign Internal Defense* (Washington, D.C.: Joint Chiefs of Staff, 17 August 2018), https://fas.org/irp/doddir/dod/jp3_22.pdf.

351. Joint Docitine Note 1-13, *Security Force Assistance,* 29, April 2013, https://www.hsdl.org/?view&did=736034.

352. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Doctrine for the Armed Forces of the United States*, JP 3-20 *Security Cooperation* (Washington, D.C.: Joint Chiefs of Staff, 23 May 2017), https://fas.org/irp/doddir/dod/jp3_20.pdf.

353. Joint Special Operations University, *Special Operations Forces Interagency Reference Guide*; see also Joint Chiefs of Staff, "Joint Guide for Interagency Doctrine: Supplement to Joint Publication 3-08 Interorganizational Cooperation Appendices," 4 November 2019, https://www.jcs.mil/Portals/36/Documents/Doctrine/Interorganizational_Documents/jg_ia.pdf?ver=2020-02-03-151039-500.

354. A GAO review of DOD BPC efforts called for "setting clear goals and defining terminology" as its number one recommendation for the department. See Janet A. St. Laurent, "Building Partner Capacity: Key Practices to Effectively Manage Department of Defense Efforts to Promote Security Cooperation," *United States Government Accountability Office* (Washington D.C., 14 February 2013), front matter.

355. Though no longer termed "Phase Zero," many of the insights about phase zero operational art remain valid for SOF engaged in CT partnerships. See Petit, *Going Big by Getting Small*; also Kyle Johnston, "U.S. Special Operations Forces and the Interagency in Phase Zero," *InterAgency Journal* 8 no. 1 (Winter 2017): 76–104.

356. Note that WOT refers to the War on Terrorism. Maxwell, "Considerations for Organizing and Preparing for Security Force Assistance Operations."

357. Christopher Marsh, James Kiras, and Patricia Blocksome, "Special Operations Research: Out of the Shadows," *Special Operations Journal* 1, no. 1 (2015): 1–6.

358. Whereas COIN is "special warfare," CT still tends to remain in the "surgical strike" category. See Christopher Marsh, Mike Kenny, and Nathaniel Joslyn, "SO

What? The Value of Scientific Inquiry and Theory Building in Special Operations Research," *Special Operations Journal* 1, no. 2 (2015): 96, 100.

359. Nick Turse, "American Special Operations Forces are Deployed in 70 Percent of the World's Countries," *The Nation*, 5 January 2017, https://www.thenation.com/article/american-special-forces-are-deployed-to-70-percent-of-the-worlds-countries/.
360. Gregory Wilson, "Anatomy of a Successful COIN Operation: OEF-Philippines and The Indirect Approach," *Military Review* (November-December 2006): 6.
361. David P. Fridovich and Fred T. Krawcuk, "Winning in the Pacific: The Special Operations Forces Indirect Approach," *Joint Forces Quarterly* 44, no. 1 (Quarter 2007): 24–27; Barry M. Stentiford, *Success in the Shadows: Operation Enduring Freedom-Philippines and the Global War on Terror 2002–2015* (Fort Leavenworth: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2018); Wilson, "Anatomy of a Successful COIN Operation," 2; Max Boot and Richard Bennet, "Treading Softly in the Philippines: Why Low-Intensity Counterinsurgent Strategy Seems to be Working There," *The Weekly Standard* 17, no. 16 (05-09 January 2009).
362. Linda Robinson, Patrick B. Johnston, and Gillian S. Oak, *U.S. Special Operations Forces in the Philippines: 2001–2014* (Santa Monica: RAND, 2016), 112.
363. Boot and Bennet, "Treading Softly in the Philippines," 6.
364. Boot and Bennet, "Treading Softly in the Philippines," 1.
365. Richard Swain, "Case Study: Operation Enduring Freedom Philippines," *Booz Allen Hamilton* report (October 2010), 4.
366. B. K. Schaefer, "Moro Separatism in the Philippines: The Strategic Failure of a Promising Counterinsurgency," *Small Wars Journal*, accessed 26 February 2020, https://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/moro-separatism-philippines-strategic-failure-promising-counterinsurgency; Zachary Abuza, "Where Did the U.S. Go Wrong in the Philippines? A Hard Look at a 'Success' Story," *War on the Rocks* (14 June 2018), https://warontherocks.com/2018/06/where-did-the-u-s-go-wrong-in-the-philippines-a-hard-look-at-a-success-story/.
367. *Black Flags over Mindanao: Hearing before the H.R. Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific, Committee on Foreign Affairs*, 115th Cong. (12 July 2017); Philippine Statistics Authority, "Population of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (Based on the 2015 Census of Population)," last modified 10 June 2016, https://psa.gov.ph/content/population-autonomous-region-muslim-mindanao-based-2015-census-population.
368. Quinton Temby, "Cells, Factions and Suicide Operatives: The Fragmentation of Militant Islamism in the Philippines Post-Marawi," *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 41, no. 1 (April 2019): 114–37.
369. Central Intelligence Agency, "Philippines," *The World Factbook* (2020), accessed 3 March 2020, https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/rp.html.
370. Bilveer Singh, *The Talibanization of Southeast Asia: Losing the War on Terror to Islamist Extremists* (Westport: Praeger Security International, 2007), 33.

371. Bob East, *The Neo Abu-Sayyaf: Criminality in the Sulu Archipelago in the Republic of the Philippines* (Tyne: Cambridge Scholars, 2016), xv-xvi.
372. East, *The Neo Abu-Sayyaf*, 8-23. In the 1970s, the Marcos regime in the Philippines waged a counterinsurgency that was responsible for an estimated 120,000 causalities (civilians, militants, and government forces.) See also Benedicto R. Bacani, "The Mindanao Peace Talks: Another Opportunity to Resolve the Moro Conflict in the Philippines," *The United States Institute of Peace*, Special Report 131 (Washington: USIP, January 2005), 3; and Schaefer, "Moro Separatism in the Philippines."
373. The Bangsamoro Islamic Fighters Front (the BIFF) is a more recent off-shoot of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front.
374. Kit Collier, "Terrorism: Evolving Regional Alliances and State Failure in Mindanao," *Southeast Asian Affairs* 2006, no. 1 (2006): 26–27, https://muse.jhu.edu/article/399598/summary. Collier provides a useful overview of the relevant terrorist and insurgency landscape.
375. Mapping Militant Organizations, "Abu Sayyaf Group," *Stanford University*, last modified August 2018, https://cisac.fsi.stanford.edu/mappingmilitants/profiles/abu-sayyaf-group.
376. See East, *The Neo Abu Sayyaf*.
377. Stentiford, *Success in the Shadows*, 25–27. U.S. forces were asked to leave in 1992.
378. Swain, "Case Study: Operation Enduring Freedom Philippines," 14.
379. Robinson, Johnston, and Oak, *U.S. Special Operations Forces in the Philippines*, 14–16.
380. Alex Spillus, "Americans among 20 Hostages in Resort Raid," *The Telegraph* (28 May 2001), https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/philippines/1331981/Americans-among-20-hostages-in-resort-raid.html.
381. Mapping Militant Organizations, "Abu Sayyaf Group."
382. Robinson, Johnston, and Oak, *U.S. Special Operations Forces in the Philippines*, 19–20. This *RAND* report, published in 2016, was the result of an extensive research effort. The research team had access to several dozen officials and operators with intimate knowledge of JSOTF-P and OEF-P, as well as detailed information about enemy contact, and public opinion data from surveys conducted by USG and partners in the southern Philippines. Research on U.S. operations in the Philippines is greatly informed by this richly-sourced report, and, as such, this section of the text draws heavily on its evidence and insights.
383. Swain, "Case Study: Operation Enduring Freedom Philippines," 19.
384. Stentiford, *Success in the Shadows*, 2.
385. Stentiford, *Success in the Shadows*, 2.
386. Robinson, Johnston, and Oak, *U.S. Special Operations Forces in the Philippines*, 19–22.

387. Stentiford, *Success in the Shadows*, 7; Eric Ramos, "RP-U.S. Balikatan Exercises: A Peace-Building Tool for Mindinao" (master's thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, CA, 2005), 12. Some are less confident in this interpretation, especially David Maxwell, "Operation Enduring Freedom: Philippines: What Would Sun-Tzu Say?" *Military Review* (May-June 2004): 22.

388. The population of the Philippines has been described as "pro-American." See Boot and Bennet, "Treading Softly in the Philippines," 6. Stentiford also notes that U.S. troops did not need to worry about force protection in the Philippines during WWII, see *Success in the Shadows*, 24.

389. Stentiford, *Success in the Shadows*, 92.

390. George Baylon Radics, "Terrorism in Southeast Asia: Balikatan Exercises in the Philippines and the U.S. 'War against Terrorism,'" *Stanford Journal of East Asian Affairs* 4, no. 2 (Summer 2004): 117.

391. Counter Extremism Project, "The Philippines: Extremism and Counter-Extremism," accessed 10 September 2019, https://www.counterextremism.com/countries/philippines. See also Swain, "Case Study: Operation Enduring Freedom Philippines," 11.

392. Jose P. Magno, Jr. and A. James Gregor, "Insurgency and Counterinsurgency in the Philippines," *Asian Survey* 26, no. 5 (May 1986): 502, DOI: 10.2307/2644479 https://www.jstor.org/stable/2644479; also U.S. Department of State, "Foreign Terrorist Organizations."

393. The Moro Islamic Liberation Front was a more extreme splinter group from the MNLF, whose armed efforts against the Philippine government ultimately resulted in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao in 1989.

394. In another example of the fluidity of definitions, especially at the government level, for "terrorism," this accommodation to PN interests and political needs extended to the Department of State not naming the Moro Islamic Liberation Front a FTO; Robinson, Johnston, and Oak, *U.S. Special Operations Forces in the Philippines*, 59.

395. See David S. Maxwell, "Partnership, Respect Guide U.S. Military Role in Philippines," *World Politics Review* (5 February 2013), https://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/articles/12685/partnership-respect-guide-u-s-military-role-in-philippines.

396. Linda Robinson, "The SOF Experience in the Philippines and the Implications for Future Defense Strategy," *PRISM* 6, no. 3 (7 December 2016), https://cco.ndu.edu/PRISM-6-3/Article/1020239/the-sof-experience-in-the-philippines-and-the-implications-for-future-defense-s/.

397. Stentiford, *Success in the Shadows*, 39. It is worth noting that U.S. forces did serve combat support functions, provided MEDEVAC services, and certainly did see firefights in self-defense.

398. Stentiford, *Success in the Shadows*, 37.

399. Soliman M. Santos Jr., "Counter-terrorism and Peace Negotiations with Philippine Rebel Groups," *Critical Studies on Terrorism* 3, no. 1 (2010): 139–141, DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/17539151003594301.
400. Wilson, "Anatomy of a Successful COIN Operation," 42.
401. Fridovich and Krawchuk, "Winning in the Pacific," 24–25.
402. Maxwell, "Operation Enduring Freedom-Philippines: What Would Sun-Tzu Say?," 21. Maxwell was particularly concerned about additional restrictions placed on U.S. troops by our own commanders and politicians, primarily in the name of force protection.
403. Stentiford, *Success in the Shadows*, 8.
404. From a 2014 interview, in Robinson, Johnston, and Oak, *U.S. Special Operations Forces in the Philippines*, xxvi.
405. Robinson, Johnston, and Oak, *U.S. Special Operations Forces in the Philippines*, xii.
406. Maxwell, "Operation Enduring Freedom-Philippines: What Would Sun-Tzu Say?," 22.
407. Swain, "Case Study: Operation Enduring Freedom Philippines," 25.
408. Temby, "Cells, Factions and Suicide Operatives," 115.
409. Robinson, Johnston, and Oak, *U.S. Special Operations Forces in the Philippines*, 29–30.
410. Interview in Boot and Bennet, "Treading Softly in the Philippines," 4.
411. Radics, "Terrorism in Southeast Asia," 125.
412. Boot and Bennet, "Treading Softly in the Philippines," 3.
413. Sergeant Major William Eckert, "Defeating the Idea: Unconventional Warfare in the Southern Philippines," *Special Warfare* 19, no. 6 (November-December 2006): 21.
414. Boot and Bennet, "Treading Softly in the Philippines."
415. Stentiford, *Success in the Shadows*, 74.
416. Stentiford, *Success in the Shadows*, 64.
417. C. H. Briscoe, "Rescuing the Burnhams: The Unspoken SOCPAC Mission," *Special Warfare* 17, no. 1 (September 2004): 48.
418. Briscoe, "Rescuing the Burnhams," 48.
419. Robinson, Johnston, and Oak, *U.S. Special Operations Forces in the Philippines*, xiii.
420. Robinson, Johnston, and Oak, *U.S. Special Operations Forces in the Philippines*, 89.
421. An article by Jack Murphy for *Special Operations Force Report* recounts the author's recent meeting and conversations with General Sabban, in which they discussed his views on counterinsurgency and "how humans are the center of gravity" in such conflict. See Jack Murphy, "Meeting General Sabban, an Architect

of Philippine Counter-Insurgency," *SOFREP.com* (24 May 2017), https://sofrep.com/news/meeting-general-sabban-architect-philippine-counter-insurgency/.

422. Robinson, Johnston, and Oak, *U.S. Special Operations Forces in the Philippines*, 89.
423. Larry Lewis, Geoffrey Lambert, and Sarah Sewall, "Operation Enduring Freedom-Philippines: Civilian Harm and the Indirect Approach," *PRISM* 4, no. 3 (June 2012): 124.
424. Lewis, Lambert, and Sewall, "Operation Enduring Freedom-Philippines: Civilian Harm and the Indirect Approach," 123.
425. Briscoe, "Rescuing the Burnhams," 48.
426. Lewis, Lambert, and Sewall, "Operation Enduring Freedom-Philippines: Civilian Harm and the Indirect Approach," 123.
427. Robinson, Johnston, and Oak, *U.S. Special Operations Forces in the Philippines*, xxv.
428. Robinson, Johnston, and Oak, *U.S. Special Operations Forces in the Philippines*, 58.
429. Robinson, Johnston, and Oak, *U.S. Special Operations Forces in the Philippines*, 81.
430. Col. Fran Beaudette, "JSOTF-P Uses Whole-of-Nation Approach to Bring Stability to the Philippines," *Special Warfare* 25, no.3 (July-September 2012), https://www.soc.mil/swcs/SWmag/archive/SW2503/SW2503BringStabilityToThePhilippines.html.
431. Robinson, Johnston, and Oak, *U.S. Special Operations Forces in the Philippines*, 31, from an interview with officials familiar with the event.
432. Robinson, Johnston, and Oak, *U.S. Special Operations Forces in the Philippines*, 83.
433. Robinson, Johnston, and Oak, *U.S. Special Operations Forces in the Philippines*, 69.
434. C. H. Briscoe, "Reflections and Observations on ARSOF Operations During Balikatan 2-1," *Special Warfare* 17, no. 1 (September 2004).
435. Robinson, Johnston, and Oak, *U.S. Special Operations Forces in the Philippines*, 18.
436. Boot and Bennet, "Treading Softly in the Philippines," 3; Robinson, Johnston, and Oak, *U.S. Special Operations Forces in the Philippines*, 83. Importantly, monitoring efforts were able to reduce but certainly not eliminate corruption.
437. Robinson, Johnston, and Oak, *U.S. Special Operations Forces in the Philippines*, 83.
438. U.S. Embassy Manila, "U.S. and Philippine Special Forces Train to Counter Insurgency," 27 February 2020, https://ph.usembassy.gov/us-and-philippine-special-forces-train-to-counter-insurgency/.
439. Robinson, Johnston, and Oak, *U.S. Special Operations Forces in the Philippines*, xxxi.

440. There were also efforts on the non-military side to create capacity for combating terrorism, and a legal framework for charging and prosecuting captured militants for acts of terrorism emerged in 2007 with the passage of the "Philippines Human Security Act of 2007." See P.E. Eadie, "Legislating for Terrorism: The Philippines' Human Security Act 2007," *Journal of Terrorism* Research 2, no. 3 (2001): 24–33.
441. They did so down to the captain level. C. H. Briscoe, "Reflections and Observations on ARSOF Operations During Balikatan 2-1," *Special Warfare* 17, no. 1 (September 2004): 55.
442. Robinson, Johnston, and Oak, *U.S. Special Operations Forces in the Philippines*, xxxi.
443. Schaefer, "Moro Separatism in the Philippines."
444. Robinson, Johnston, and Oak, *U.S. Special Operations Forces in the Philippines*, 105.
445. The BIFF, in particular, emerged during the end of OEF-P. Robinson, Johnston, and Oak, *U.S. Special Operations Forces in the Philippines*, 103.
446. Stentiford, *Success in the Shadows*, 88.
447. Swain, "Case Study: Operation Enduring Freedom Philippines," 29; Stentiford, *Success in the Shadows*, 84.
448. Abuza, "Where Did the U.S. Go Wrong in the Philippines?" and Schaefer, "Moro Separatism in the Philippines."
449. Though the MNLF had been partially demobilizing following successful negotiations with the government in 1996, multiple splinters had emerged in the interim, especially as the lack of development in the southern regions and heavy-handed tactics of the Armed Forces of the Philippines continued. A more proximate cause of the Zamboanga crisis was the negotiations with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front for a bigger, better deal with the Republic of the Philippines regarding regional autonomy. MNLF elements were classic "spoilers" here; see Chapter 1 of this text, and also Al-Jazeera, "Rebels Lose Ground in Southern Philippines," *Al-Jazeera*, 18 September 2013, https://www.aljazeera.com/news/asia-pacific/2013/09/20139184360163181.html).
450. Stentiford, *Success in the Shadows*, 88.
451. See the Human Rights Watch reports on the use of hostages and the Armed Forces of the Philippines's treatment of prisoners. "Philippines: Mistreatment, Hostage-Taking in Zamboanga," *Human Rights Watch*, 19 September 2013, https://www.hrw.org/news/2013/09/19/philippines-mistreatment-hostage-taking-zamboanga.
452. This was generally seen as a success for the Philippine security forces; see Janice Burton, "Zamboanga Crisis," *Special Warfare* 27, no. 1 (January-March 2014): 42–43.
453. Countering Violent Extremism Project, "The Philippines: Extremism and Counter-Extremism," 3.

454. See Robert Postings, "Misinformation and Intelligence Failures: How the Philippines Underestimates ISIS," *TheDefensePost.com* (blog), 22 October 2018, https://thedefensepost.com/2018/10/22/how-the-philippines-underestimates-isis/.

455. Joseph Franco, "Preventing Other 'Marawis' in the Southern Philippines," *Asia and the Pacific Policy Studies* 5, no. 2 (2018): 365, DOI: https://doi.org/10.1002/app5.227.

456. Franco, "Preventing Other Marawis," 366.

457. Thomas Luna, "DJI Drones Are Getting Shot Down in the Battle of Marawi," *We Talk UAV* (blog), 17 July 2017, https://www.wetalkuav.com/dji-drones-used-surveillance-battle-marawi/. The fact that Philippine SF were able to come up with the funding and apply the authority to actually purchase the commercial UAVs is a testament to the institutional capacity building that started under OEF-P and was genuinely embraced by the Republic of the Philippines.

458. Franco, "Preventing Other Marawis," 366.

459. Amnesty International, "Philippines: 'The Battle for Marawi' Leaves Trail of Death and Destruction," *Amnesty International* (17 November 2017), https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2017/11/philippines-battle-of-marawi-leaves-trail-of-death-and-destruction/.

460. Estimates on the number of displaced and homeless vary, though all hover around 400,000. The 360,000 figure here is likely a bit conservative and taken from a report by Amnesty International "Philippines: 'The Battle for Marawi' Leaves Trail of Death and Destruction."

461. Carmela Fonbunea, "Marawi One Year After the Battle: A Ghost Town Still Haunted by the Threat of ISIS," *The Guardian*, 21 May 2018, https://www.theguardian.com/global/2018/may/22/marawi-one-year-siege-philippines-ghost-town-still-haunted-threat-isis; Antoine Hasday and Nicolas Quénel, "Marawi, the Philippines' Ruined City," *Le Monde Dipolmatique*, April 2020, https://mondediplo.com/2020/04/08philippines.

462. Temby, "Cells, Factions and Suicide Operatives," 117.

463. Counter Violent Extremism Report, "The Philippines: Extremism and Counter-Extremism," 4. Experts in a congressional hearing about the Marawi crisis noted that: "Deceased fighters have even identified as Malaysian, Indonesian, Saudi, Yemeni, Chechen, and Indian nationals," see Ted Yoho's testimony in U.S. Congress, *Black Flags Over Mindanao*, 4.

464. Postings, "Misinformation and Intelligence Failures."

465. Temby, "Cells, Factions and Suicide Operatives," 114. This is also in part because of the establishment of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao and demobilization of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, resulting in smaller, more extreme splinter groups that at least claim to want more concessions from Manila with respect to Moro autonomy.

466. *Black Flags over Mindanao,* 31.

467. "Operation Pacific Eagle-Philippines," Lead Inspector General Report to the United States Congress (1 October 2018–31 December 2018), forward.

468. "Operation Pacific Eagle-Philippines," Lead Inspector General Report to the United States Congress, 4.

469. Scott Neuman and Julie McCarthy, "Philippines Says It Will End U.S. Security Agreement," *NPR*, 11 February 2020, https://www.npr.org/2020/02/11/804751958/philippines-says-it-will-end-u-s-security-agreement; the U.S. mutual defense treaty with the Philippines remains in place, see Aaron Jeb Rabena and Elliot Silverberg, "Is the U.S.-Philippines Alliance Obsolete?" *The Diplomat*, 22 April 2020, https://thediplomat.com/2020/04/is-the-us-philippines-alliance-obsolete/.

470. Schaefer also notes that there was "a strong emphasis on building military superiority, and subsequently using the military advantage to then administer services to the Moro population," see Schaefer, "Moro Separatism in the Philippines." This kind of sequencing is certainly important and tactical successes are a necessary step, but the building of capacity to continue to administer services in the long run, not to mention increase local government's interest in truly governing the population with limited corruption, is no less necessary for achieving positive CT outcomes than clearing the area of terrorists.

471. Emphasis added. Cole Liveratos, "A Cultural Failure: U.S Special Operations in the Philippines and the Rise of the Islamic State," *War on the Rocks* (blog), 3 July 2017, https://warontherocks.com/2017/07/a-cultural-failure-u-s-special-operations-in-the-philippines-and-the-rise-of-the-islamic-state/.

472. Liveratos, "A Cultural Failure."

473. Maxwell, "Partnership, Respect Guide U.S. Military Role in Philippines," n.p.

474. Robinson, Johnston, and Oak, *U.S. Special Operations Forces in the Philippines*, 109–111; see page 116 for attack chart. Importantly, this was not the only measure used, as population surveys were important indicators of government support in that study.

475. "Operation Pacific Eagle-Philippines," Lead Inspector General Report to the United States Congress.

476. Abuza, "Where Did the U.S. Go Wrong in the Philippines?"

477. Schafer notes that Philippine SF employs conventional approaches to COIN due to a lack of equipment and proper funding, and the Armed Forces of the Philippines often assigns CF units to areas where COIN tactics would be more likely to get results.

478. "Philippines Names New Military Chief Amid Corruption Scandals," *Reuters*, 6 March 2011, https://www.reuters.com/article/us-philippines-military-idUSTRE7250KQ20110306.

479. Robinson, Johnston, and Oak, *U.S. Special Operations Forces in the Philippines*, 124. Despite this assessment, though, the tone of the report still treats the engagement as an overwhelming success and covers newly-learned tactical proficiencies in some detail (see pages 117–122.)

480. Stentiford, *Success in the Shadows*, 59.

481. Prashanth Parameswaran, "Battle for Marawi Exposes Philippines' Military Intelligence Crisis," *The Diplomat*, 16 August 2017, https://thediplomat.com/2017/08/battle-for-marawi-exposes-philippines-military-intelligence-crisis/.

482. Abuza, "Where Did the U.S. Go Wrong in the Philippines?"

483. Nathan Gilbert Quimpo, "The Philippines: Predatory Regime, Growing Authoritarian Features," *The Pacific Review* 22, no. 3 (2009): 335–353; Steven Rogers, "Beyond the Abu Sayyaf-The Lessons of Failure in the Philippines," *Foreign Affairs* 83, no. 1 (January-February 2004): 19–20.

484. Chris Schnabel, "World Bank Cuts Philippines GDP Forecast Again," *Rappler.com*, 4 October 2017, https://www.rappler.com/business/184305-world-bank-cuts-philippine-gdp-forecast-2017-2018.

485. Rogers, "Beyond the Abu Sayyaf," 15.

486. Robinson, Johnston, and Oak, *U.S. Special Operations Forces in the Philippines*, 125. This is the last of four limitations included in the report and roughly 140 words are dedicated to its discussion.

487. Lewis, Lambert, and Sewall, "Operation Enduring Freedom-Philippines: Civilian Harm and the Indirect Approach," 129.

488. Abuza, "Where Did the U.S. Go Wrong in the Philippines?"

489. Franco Ordoñez and Anita Kumar, "Secret Meeting at Mar-a-Lago Raises Questions about Colombia and Trump," *The Miami Herald*, 20 April 2017.

490. Part of this section is excerpted with permission and revised from Barnett S. Koven, "Development Assistance and the Diffusion of Insurgent Violence" (PhD diss., The George Washington University, 28 February 2017), N.B. This section is not envisioned as a comprehensive overview of the Colombian conflict. It merely serves to provide critical context for readers of this chapter.

491. Danielle Renwick, "Colombia's Civil Conflict," *CFR Backgrounders*, 25 August 2016.

492. James Bargent, "The FARC 1964–2002: From Ragged Rebellion to Military Machine," *InSight Crime*, 25 May 2014, http://www.insightcrime.org/investigations/the-farc-1964-2002-from-ragged-rebellion-to-military-machine; David L. DeAtley, "Illicit Drug Funding: The Surprising Systemic Similarities between the FARC and the Taliban" (master's thesis, School of Advanced Military Studies, 2010).

493. They were the 19th of April Movement (Movimiento 19 de Abril; M-19), the Popular Liberation Army (Ejército Popular de Liberación; EPL), the Quintín Lame Armed Movement (Movimiento Armado Quintín Lame; MAQL) and the Workers Revolutionary Party of Colombia (Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores de Colombia; PRT).

494. Angel Rabasa and Peter Chalk, *Colombian Labyrinth: The Synergy of Drugs and Insurgency and Its Implications for Regional Stability* (Santa Monica: RAND, 2001), chapter 7.

495. Barnett S. Koven, "Demystifying Gray Zone Conflict: A Typology of Conflict Dyads and Instruments of Power in Colombia, 2002-present," Report to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security Science and Technology Office of University Programs and the U.S. Department of Defense Strategic Multi-Layer Assessment Branch (College Park: START, November 2016), 6–7.
496. Robert D. Ramsey III, *From El Billar to Operations Fenix and Jaque: The Colombian Security Force Experience, 1998–2008* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2009), chapter 3, https://usacac.army.mil/cac2/cgsc/carl/download/csipubs/ramseyop34.pdf; "Evaluación de la Política de Defensa y Seguridad Democrática, 2002–2010," Universidad Militar Nueva Granada, Instituto de Estudios Geostratégicos y Asuntos Políticos (1 September 2020).
497. Koven, "Demystifying Gray Zone Conflict," 14.
498. Robert D. Ramsey III, *From El Billar to Operations Fenix and Jaque*, 30.
499. June S. Beittel and Liana W. Rosen, *Colombia's Changing Approach to Drug Policy*, CRS Report No. R44779 (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, November 2017), 1, https://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/R44779.pdf.; William M. LeoGrande and Kenneth E. Sharpe, "Two Wars or One? Drugs, Guerillas and Colombia's New 'Violencia'," *World Policy Journal* 17, no. 3 (Fall 2000): 6.
500. Mark Moyar, Hector Pagan, and Wil R. Griego, "Persistent Engagement in Colombia," *Joint Special Operations University* Report 14-3 (July 2014), 58, http://www.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a617138.pdf; Ramsey, *From El Billar to Operations Fenix and Jaque*, 110–111.
501. LeoGrande and Sharpe, "Two Wars or One?" 6.
502. LeoGrande and Sharpe, "Two Wars or One?" 6; Dario Teicher, "The Decisive Phase of Colombia's War on Narco-Terrorism," *The Counterproliferation Papers, Future Warfare Series* 28 (Maxwell AFB: Air University, January 2005): 4, https://permanent.access.gpo.gov/lps66911/a476813.pdf.
503. Barnett S. Koven and Cynthia McClintock, "Cooperation and Drug Policies: Trends in Peru in the Twenty-First Century," in *Cooperation and Drug Policies in the Americas: Trends in the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Roberto Zepeda and Jonathan Rosen (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2014), 69–70.
504. Barnett S. Koven, "Building Partner Capacity in Colombia: Evaluating U.S. Involvement," in *The Diplomacy of Force*, forthcoming.
505. George W. Bush and Alvaro Uribe, "Remarks by President Bush and President Alvaro Uribe of Colombia in Photo Opportunity," Washington, D.C., 25 September 2002, https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/09/text/20020925-1.html.
506. George W. Bush and Alvaro Uribe, "President Bush and President Uribe of Colombia Comment on the Roadmap and Terrorism," Washington, D.C., 30 April 2003, https://2001-2009.state.gov/p/nea/rls/rm/20196.htm.

507. June S. Beittel, *Colombia: Background and U.S. Relations*, CRS Report No. R43813 (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, 29 November 2019), https://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/R43813.pdf.

508. Dilshika Jayamaha, Scott Brady, Ben Fitzgerald, and Jason Fritz, "Lessons Learned from U.S. Government Law Enforcement in International Operations," *Strategic Studies Institute*, PKSOI Papers (December 2010), 55, https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/7d37/46dc147db76660bfe2d27cbd86cc7803410f.pdf?_ga=2.165502271.1038410425.1591276066-1680176183.1591276066.

509. Moyar, Pagan, and Griego, "Persistent Engagement in Colombia," 58.

510. Moyar, Pagan, and Griego, "Persistent Engagement in Colombia," 58; also "Run through the Jungle: Colombia's Jungla Commandos," *Small Wars Journal*, 22 November 2011, http://smallwarsjournal.com/blog/run-through-the-jungle-colombia%E2%80%99s-jungla-commandos.

511. Austin et al., *Building Special Operations Partnerships in Afghanistan and Beyond*, 62-65; Eric Sof, "Agrupación de Fuerzas Especiales Antiterroristas Urbanas—AFEUR," *Spec Ops Magazine*, 4 August 2013, https://special-ops.org/4042/agrupacion-de-fuerzas-especiales-antiterroristas-urbanas-afeur/; "Staying Alive," *The Economist*, 23 May 2002, https://www.economist.com/the-americas/2002/05/23/staying-alive.

512. Austin et al., *Building Special Operations Partnerships in Afghanistan and Beyond*, 62–65.; Eric Sof, "Agrupación de Fuerzas Especiales Antiterroristas Urbanas —AFEUR."

513. Normal Brozenick, Jr., "Another Way to Fight: Combat Aviation Advisory Operations" (thesis, Air University Air Force Fellows Program, 2002), 48, http://www.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a420700.pdf; Austin et al., *Building Special Operations Partnerships in Afghanistan and Beyond*, 65; "Staying Alive," *The Economist*.

514. *Joint Hearing on Supplemental Request for Plan Colombia: Testimony before the Subcommittees on Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs; Defense; and Military Construction*, 106th Cong. 2 (2000) (statement of General Charles Wilhelm, Commander in Chief, U.S. Southern Command), https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CHRG-106shrg63941/html/CHRG-106shrg63941.htm.

515. *Implementing Plan Colombia: The U.S. Role. Hearing before the Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere of the Committee on International Relations*, 106th Cong. 1 (2000), https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CHRG-106hhrg69868/html/CHRG-106hhrg69868.htm.

516. Dana Priest, "Covert Action in Colombia: U.S. Intelligence, GPS Bomb Kits Help Latin American Nation Cripple Rebel Forces," *The Washington Post*, 21 December 2013, https://www.washingtonpost.com/sf/investigative/2013/12/21/covert-action-in-colombia/?utm_term=.6881284077cb.

517. Juan Forero, "Colombians, with U.S. Aid, Tracked Rebel for Months," *New York Times*, 5 January 2004, https://search.proquest.com/docview/92860652?accountid=14696.

518. Christian T. Miller, "Colombian Rebel Commander is Arrested," *Los Angeles Times*, 4 January 2004, http://articles.latimes.com/2004/jan/04/world/fg-colombia4.
519. Sibylla Brodzinsky and Caroline Davies, "Colombia Hostage Rescue: The Audacious Plot that Freed World's Most Famous Captive," *The Guardian*, 5 July 2008, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2008/jul/06/colombia.
520. Thomas A. Marks, "Sustainability of Colombian Military/Strategic Support for 'Democratic Security,'" *Strategic Studies Institute* (July 2005): 9, https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/report/2005/ssi_marks.pdf.
521. Office of the Presidency of the Republic of Colombia and the Ministry of Defense, Democratic Security and Defense Policy (Bogotá, Colombia: Ministerio de Defensa, 2003), https://www.mindefensa.gov.co/irj/go/km/docs/Mindefensa/Documentos/descargas/Documentos_Home/Seguridad%20Democratica.pdf.
522. Marks, "Sustainability of Colombian Military/Strategic Support for 'Democratic Security,'" 7.
523. Thomas A. Marks, "Colombian Military Support for 'Democratic Security,'" *Small Wars and Insurgencies* 17, no. 2 (2006): 210-211, DOI: 10.1080/09592310600563108.
524. Janice Burton, "ARSOF in Colombia: 50 Years of Persistent Engagement," *Special Warfare* 25, no. 4 (2012): 29, http://www.soc.mil/SWCS/SWmag/archive/SW2504/SW_2504.pdf.
525. Marks, "Colombian Military Support for 'Democratic Security,'" 209–210.
526. Rabasa and Chalk, *Colombian Labyrinth*, 104.
527. "Colombia—Military Personnel," GlobalSecurity.org, accessed 11 June 2020, https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/colombia/personnel.htm.
528. Rabasa and Chalk, *Colombian Labyrinth*, 104.
529. Zachary Ryan, "Colombia Seeks to Create a Volunteer-only Military," *Colomia Focus*, 19 June 2017, https://colombiafocus.com/colombia-seeks-to-create-a-volunteer-only-military.
530. Peter DeShazo, Johanna Mendelson Forman, and Phillip McLean, "Countering Threats to Security and Stability in a Failing State: A Lesson from Colombia," *Americas Program* Report (Washington, D.C.: Center for Strategic and International Studies, September 2009), 14, https://csis-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/legacy_files/files/publication/090930_DeShazo_CounteringThreats_Web.pdf.
531. *Implementing Plan Colombia: The U.S. Role. Hearing before the Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere of the Committee on International Relations.*
532. Cynthia J. Arnson and Arlene B. Tickner, "Colombia and the United States: Strategic Partners or Uncertain Allies?" in *Contemporary U.S.-Latin American Relations: Cooperation or Conflict in the 21st Century?,* eds. Jorge I. Domínguez and Rafael Fernández de Castro (New York: Routledge, 17 March 2016).
533. Jayamaha et al., "Lessons Learned from Law Enforcement in International Operations," 53.

534. Jayamaha et al., "Lessons Learned from Law Enforcement in International Operations," 49.
535. The remainder of this paragraph is excerpted with permission and revised from Koven, "Development Assistance and the Diffusion of Insurgent Violence."
536. Note that the Colombian Navy has been heavily involved in COIN. Riverine forces play a critical role, as many insurgent strongholds are not accessible overland. Moreover, the distinction between Colombian Marine Infantry (Infantería de Marina de Colombia) and other Colombian naval forces is not nearly as substantial as it is with the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps, for example.
537. Cesar Barretto (Colombian Navy Chief involved with AI), in discussion with the authors, 7 June 2016.
538. Cesar Barretto (Colombian Navy Chief involved with AI), in discussion with the authors, 7 June 2016.
539. Cesar Barretto (Colombian Navy Chief involved with AI), in discussion with the authors, 7 June 2016.
540. Velasquez Romero (Colombian Army Colonel (ret.), and Calros Alfonso (professor at Universidad de La Sabana), in discussion with the author, 2 June 2016.
541. DeShazo, Forman and McLean, "Countering Threats to Security and Stability in a Failing State," 14; Brozenick Jr., "Another Way to Fight: Combat Aviation Advisory Operations"; "General Jorge Enrique Mora Rangel," *GlobalSecurity.org*, accessed 11 June 2020, https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/colombia/mora.htm; "GEN (ret.) Carlos Ospina Ovalle: Distinguished Professor of Practice," *National Defense University*, http://cisa.ndu.edu/Portals/76/Documents/About/FacultyBios/COspinaBio.pdf.
542. Barnett S. Koven, "Building Partner Capacity in Colombia: Evaluating U.S. Involvement," in *The Diplomacy of Force*, forthcoming.
543. Marks, "Sustainability of Colombian Military/Strategic Support for 'Democratic Security,'" 11.
544. Ann Masson, "Colombia's Democratic Security Agenda: Public Order in the Security Tripod," *Security Dialogue* 34, no. 4 (2003): 398.
545. Embassy of Colombia in Washington, D.C., "Democratic Security and Defense Policy," 24 March 2005–2 February 2017, https://web.archive.org/web/20071017035016/http:/www.colombiaemb.org/opencms/opencms/defense/.
546. "Colombia Profile-Timeline," *BBC News*, 8 August 2018, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-19390164.
547. Barnett S. Koven, "'Give Peace a Chance'? Explaining Colombia's Failed Peace Process with the FARC," *START Consortium*, 4 November 2016, https://www.start.umd.edu/news/give-peace-chance-explaining-colombia-s-failed-peace-process-farc.
548. Quoted in Koven, "'Give Peace a Chance'?"
549. While President Santos failed to secure the UN Secretary Generalship, he did succeed at winning a Nobel Peace Prize.

550. Koven, "'Give Peace a Chance'?"
551. Vanda Felbab-Brown, "Death by Bad Implementation? The Duque Administration and Colombia's Peace Deal(s)," *Brookings* (blog), 24 July 2018, https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2018/07/24/death-by-bad-implementation-the-duque-administration-and-colombias-peace-deals/.
552. Adriaan Alsema, "FARC Demobilization Delayed as Colombia Govt. Fails to Provide Basic Infrastructure," *Colombia Reports*, 29 December 2016, https://colombiareports.com/farc-demobilization-delayed-colombia-govt-fails-provide-basic-infrastructure/.
553. Koven, "'Give Peace a Chance'?"
554. Koven, "'Give Peace a Chance'?"; Rogerio Jelmayer, Kejal Vyas, and Samantha Pearson, "Brazilian Gang Enlists FARC Rebels for Drug Trade," *Wall Street Journal*, 31 January 2017, https://www.wsj.com/articles/brazilian-gang-enlists-farc-rebels-for-drug-trade-1485858609.
555. Jelmayer, Vyas, and Pearson, "Brazilian Gang Enlists FARC Rebels for Drug Trade."
556. Jelmayer, Vyas, and Pearson, "Brazilian Gang Enlists FARC Rebels for Drug Trade."
557. Koven, "Demystifying Gray Zone Conflict," 8.
558. Koven, "'Give Peace a Chance'?"
559. Cultivation declined in 2018, the last year for which data is currently available, but only by 2,000 hectares. See "Colombia: Monitoreo de Territorios Afectadospor Cultivos Ilícitos 2018," *United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime*, August 2019, 11, https://www.unodc.org/documents/crop-monitoring/Colombia/Censo_cultivos_coca_2018.pdf.
560. "Coca Crops in Colombia at All-time High, UNODC Report Finds," *United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime*, 19 September 2018, http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/frontpage/2018/September/coca-crops-in-colombia-at-all-time-high--unodc-report-finds.html.
561. Jonathan Kealing, "President Trump, What is Your Position on the Colombian Peace Process?" *Public Radio International*, 21 April 2017, https://www.pri.org/stories/2017-04-21/president-trump-what-your-position-colombian-peace-process.
562. J. Robert Kane, "Terrorism Defined and Why it Matters," *Small Wars Journal*, 10 August 2018, https://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/terrorism-defined-and-why-it-matters#_ednref5.
563. Richard K. Betts, "Is Strategy an Illusion?," *International Security* 25, no. 2 (2000): 5.
564. Peter Layton, "The Idea of Grand Strategy," *The RUSI Journal* 157, no. 4 (2012): 58.
565. The authors wish to thank JSOU and USSOCOM participants during a November 2019 presentation of this work at JSOU for suggesting this important addition to the text.
566. "An Interview with Abdelmalek Droukdal," *The New York Times*, 1 July 2008, https://www.nytimes.com/2008/07/01/world/africa/01transcript-droukdal.html.

567. "An Interview with Abdelmalek Droukdal."

568. Philip A. Buswell, "Keeping Special Forces Special: Regional Proficiency in Special Forces" (master's thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, December 2001), 64. Buswell is drawing on Kenneth E. Tovo, *Special Forces' Mission Focus for the Future* (Fort Leavenworth, KA: School of Advanced Military Studies, 1995), 3, http://www.dtic.mil/cgi-bin/GetTRDoc?Location=U2&doc=GetTRDoc.pdf&AD=ADA309816.

569. Survey response, cited in Buswell, "Keeping Special Forces Special," 64.

570. Pat Collins, "Disruption: Lessons of Application for UW," *Special Warfare* 28, no. 1 (January-March 2015): 22.

571. Department of the Army, *Tactics in Counterinsurgency*, FMI 3-24.2 (Washington, D.C.: Department of the Army, 2009), ix.

572. Joint Chiefs of Staff, "Developing Today's Joint Officers for Tomorrow's Ways of War: The Joint Chiefs of Staff Vision and Guidance for Professional Military Education & Talent Management" (Washington, D.C.: Joint Chiefs of Staff, 1 May 2020), 6, https://www.jcs.mil/Portals/36/Documents/Doctrine/education/jcs_pme_tm_vision.pdf?ver=2020-05-15-102429-817.

573. "Special Forces Training," *goarmy.com*, accessed 12 June 2020, https://www.goarmy.com/special-forces/training.html.

574. Joint Chiefs of Staff, "Developing Today's Joint Officers for Tomorrow's Ways of War," 6.

575. "Careers and Jobs: Security Force Assistance Bridge (SFAB)," *goarmy.com*, accessed 12 June 2020, https://www.goarmy.com/careers-and-jobs/current-and-prior-service/advance-your-career/security-force-assistance-brigade.html.

576. "9th Civil Affairs Brigade (Airborne)," *United States Army Special Operations Command*, accessed 12 June 2020, https://www.soc.mil/95th/95thhomepage.html.

577. "9th Civil Affairs Brigade (Airborne)."

578. "Military Information Support Operations Command (Airborne) (Provisional) Fact Sheet" (Fort Bragg: U.S. Army Special Operations Command Public Affairs Office, n.d.), https://www.soc.mil/MISOC/MISO%20fact%20sheet.pdf.

579. John McCauley et al., "Community-Oriented Policing and Community Engagement in Benin: Baseline Community Survey Report," report prepared for the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) and the U.S. Embassy in Benin, Contract No. SINLEC18GR2066, May 2020.

580. Koven, "Development Assistance and the Diffusion of Insurgent Violence," 58–60.

581. Koven, "Development Assistance and the Diffusion of Insurgent Violence," 61–64.

582. Koven, "Development Assistance and the Diffusion of Insurgent Violence," 40–69.

583. Barnett S. Koven, "Re-Evaluating Special Operations Forces-Led Counterterrorism Efforts," occasional paper, *Joint Special Operations University* (MacDill AFB: JSOU Press, March 2020), 10.

584. Koven, "Re-Evaluating Special Operations Forces-Led Counterterrorism Efforts," 10.

585. Koven, "Re-Evaluating Special Operations Forces-Led Counterterrorism Efforts," 10, 12.

586. "Veteran's Services: Vet Guide," *United States Office of Personnel Management*, accessed 12 June 2020, https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/veterans-services/vet-guide-for-hr-professionals/.

587. "OPM Releases Veteran Employment Data," *United States Office of Personnel Management*, 12 September 2017, https://www.opm.gov/news/releases/2017/09/opm-releases-veteran-employment-data/.

588. Jennifer Schultz, "Veterans by the Numbers," *The National Conference of State Legislatures* (blog), 10 November 2017, https://www.ncsl.org/blog/2017/11/10/veterans-by-the-numbers.aspx.

589. Ken Chamberlain, "Where are the Veterans in the Federal Workforce?" *MilitaryTimes*, 7 April 2018, https://www.militarytimes.com/home/2018/04/07/where-are-the-veterans-in-the-federal-workforce/.

590. Michael Spirtas, et al., *Department of Defense Training for Operations with Interagency Multinational, and Coalition Partners* (Santa Monica: RAND, 2008); Kraft and Marks, *U.S. Government Counterterrorism*, 338–339.

591. USAID LNO, in discussion with the author, 14 November 2019.

592. Joint Chiefs of Staff, "Developing Today's Joint Officers for Tomorrow's Ways of War," 6.

593. Joint Chiefs of Staff, "Developing Today's Joint Officers for Tomorrow's Ways of War," 6.

594. U.S. Army SF Colonel, in discussion with the authors, 18 July 2019.

595. USAID LNO, in discussion with the author, 14 November 2019.

596. USAID LNO, in discussion with the author, 14 November 2019.

597. Lyall and Wilson, "Rage Against the Machines," 96–99. N.B. The large-n statistical analysis presented in this article is seriously flawed. Nevertheless, the qualitative comparison of two divisions offered at the end of the article (pages 94–103) is not only sound, it offers important insights for IW.

598. Colin D. Robinson, "The Somali National Army: An Assessment," *Defense & Security Analysis* 35, no. 2 (April 2019): 212.

599. Arlene B. Tickner (academic expert on U.S.-Colombia triangulated security cooperation), in discussion with the author, 2016.

600. Stentiford, *Success in the Shadows*, 35.

601. Defense Intelligence Agency Official, in discussion with START's Bill Braniff, 2 August 2019; Officials from Joint Special Operations Command, in discussion with START's Bill Braniff, 17 July 2019.

602. Barnett S. Koven, "Emulating U.S. Counterinsurgency Doctrine: Barriers for Developing Country Forces, Evidence from Peru," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 39, no. 5-6 (2016): 878–898.
603. Kenneth M. Pollack, *Arabs at War: Military Effectiveness, 1948–1991* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2002), 146.
604. Cesar Barretto (Colombian Navy Chief), in discussion with the author (Ministry of National Defense, Colombia), 7 June 2016.
605. John McCauley et al., "Community-Oriented Policing and Community Engagement in Benin: Report on the Survey of USSF Agents," report prepared for the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) and the U.S. Embassy in Benin, Contract No. SINLEC18GR2066, May 2020.
606. Ben Hubbard, Charlie Savage, Eric Schmitt, and Patrick Kingslet, "Abandoned by U.S. in Syria, Kurds Find New Ally in American Foe," *New York Times*, 13 October 2019 (updated 23 October 2019), https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/13/world/middleeast/syria-turkey-invasion-isis.html; Kevin Kondell, "The Ones We Left Behind," War is Boring (blog), 26 February 2014, https://medium.com/war-is-boring/the-ones-we-left-behind-ca5a6f7293df.
607. Barnett S. Koven and Cynthia McClintock, "The Evolution of Peru's Shining Path and the New Security Priorities in the Hemisphere," in *Reconceptualizing Security in the Americas in the Twenty-First Century,* ed. Bruce M. Bagley, Hanna Kassab, and Jonathan Rosen (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2015).
608. "Burkin Faso Approves State Backing for Vigilantes Fighting Jihadists," *Reuters,* 22 January 2020, https://www.reuters.com/article/us-burkina-security/burkina-faso-approves-state-backing-for-vigilantes-fighting-jihadists-idUSKBN1ZL1UT.
609. Barnett S. Koven and Cynthia McClintock, "The Evolution of Peru's Shining Path and the New Security Priorities in the Hemisphere," *Reconceptualizing Security in the Americas in the Twenty-First Century,* ed. Bruce M. Bagley, Hanna Kassab, and Jonathan Rosen (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2015).
610. Jon Danielsson, "The McNamara Fallacy in Financial Policymaking," *Vox.com* (blog), 1 June 2018, https://voxeu.org/content/mcnamara-fallacy-financial-policymaking.
611. Barnett S. Koven, Katy Lindquist, and Max Erdemandi, "Counterterrorism Net Assessment Data Structure (CT-NEADS) Project," Final Report to the Combating Terrorism Technical Support Office (CTTSO), U.S. Department of Defense (College Park: START, 2020).
612. Cited in Alex Manzoni and Sardar M.N. Islam, *Performance Measurement in Corporate Governance: DEA Modelling and Implications for Organizational Behaviour and Supply Chain Management* (Melbourne: Physica-Verlag Heidelberg, 2009), 48.

613. Scott Nunn, "Back Then: Vietnam Casualty Counts Reported Daily in 1967," *StarNews*, 12 November 2017, https://www.starnewsonline.com/opinion/20171112/back-then-vietnam-casualty-counts-reported-daily-in-1967.
614. Nunn, "Back Then."
615. Encyclopedia Britannica, s.v. "Vietnam War," last modified 28 April 2020, https://www.britannica.com/event/Vietnam-War.
616. Alexus G. Grynkewich, "Welfare as Warfare: How Violent Non-State Group Use Social Services to Attack the State," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 31, no. 4 (2008): 250–370.
617. Barnett S. Koven, "The End of Afghanistan's Spring Fighting Seasons and the Demise of the Afghan National Security Forces?," *Small Wars Journal*, 9 July 2017, https://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/the-end-of-afghanistan%e2%80%99s-spring-fighting-seasons-and-the-demise-of-the-afghan-national-secu.
618. Bernard B. Fall, "The Theory and Practice of Insurgency and Counterinsurgency," *Naval War College Review* (April 1965), cited in David Kilcullen, Counterinsurgency (New York: Oxford University Press 2010), 149.
619. Mederka Center, "Countering Violent Extremism Baseline Assessment Survey," report from DOS-sponsored survey conducted with 1,213 voters in Malaysia 11–27 July 2018; John McCauley et al., "Community-Oriented Policing and Community Engagement in Benin: Questionnaire for Community Baseline Report." See also "Surveys and Methods," *Afrobarometer.org*, accessed 12 June 2020, http://www.afrobarometer.org/surveys-and-methods; "Overview: Survey Data," *Arab Barometer*, accessed 12 June 2020, https://www.arabbarometer.org/survey-data/; and "Survey Data," Latin American Public Opinion Project, *Vanderbilt University*, accessed 12 June 2020, https://www.vanderbilt.edu/lapop/survey-data.php.
620. Graeme Blair, Kosuke Imai, and Jason Lyall, "Comparing and Combining List and Endorsement Experiments: Evidence from Afghanistan," *American Journal of Political Science 58*, no. 4 (2014): 1043–1063; Jason Lyall, Graeme Blair, and Kosuke Imai, "Explaining Support for Combatants during Wartime: A Survey Experiment in Afghanistan," *American Political Science Review* 107, no. 4 (November 2013): 679–705; Kentaro Hirose, Kosuke Imai, and Jason Lyall, "Can Civilian Attitudes Predict Civil War Violence? Ideology and Insurgent Tactical Choice in Civil War," *Journal of Peace Research 54*, no. 1 (2017): 47–63.
621. Blair, Imai, and Lyall, "Comparing and Combining List and Endorsement Experiments: Evidence from Afghanistan."
622. John McCauley, "Community-Oriented Policing and Community Engagement in Benin" (presentation at the START-Lund University Collaboration Workshop, START, College Park, MD, 10 December 2019); N.B., portions of this text are reproduced and modified with permission from Barnett S. Koven, "Development Projects, Relative Deprivation, and Insurgent Violence: The Cases of Peru (1980–1992), Colombia (1964–Present), Iraq (2003–2011), and Afghanistan (2001–2011)," unpublished manuscript (10 October 2014).
623. Koven, "Re-Evaluating Special Operations Forces-Led Counterterrorism Efforts."

624. Barnett S. Koven, Katy Lindquist, and Max Erdemandi, "Counterterrorism Net Assessment Data Structure (CT-NEADS) Project Overview," START, 13 April 2020.

625. Steven Pressfield, "Tribal Engagement Tutorial: The Jirga and the Shura," *Steven Pressfield* (blog), April 2010, https://stevenpressfield.com/2010/03/tribal-engagement-tutorial-the-jirga-and-the-shura/; and Emilia Rossi, "Participation and Effective Governance in Somaliland: Assessment Report," *Progressio* (London: Progressio.org, September 2014), https://www.progressio.org.uk/sites/progressio.org.uk/files/peg_cs_assessment_final_5_sept.pdf.

626. For Afrobarometer, seven rounds of the survey have been completed since 1999. The Arab Barometer has conducted five waves since 2006, and the AmericasBarometer has seven waves of survey data, collected biannually since 2004. These data are open-source resources, free and available to researchers, the public, and the USG.

627. Robert H. Bates, "Area Studies and the Discipline: A Useful Controversy?" *PS: Political Science and Politics* 30, no. 2 (1997): 166–169; Henry E. Brady and David Collier, *Rethinking Social Inquiry: Diverse Tools, Shared Standards* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2004); Michael Coppedge, "Thickening Thin Concepts and Theories: Combining Large and Small in Comparative Politics," *Comparative Politics* 31, no. 4 (July 1999): 465–76; Harry Eckstein, "Case Studies and Theory in Political Science," in *Handbook of Political Science*, Vol. 7, ed. Fred Greenstein and Nelson Polsby (Reading: Addison-Wesley, 1975); Adam Przeworski, "Is the Science of Comparative Politics Possible?" in *Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics*, ed. Carles Boix and Susan C. Stokes (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007); Ajay Verghese, "Multi-Method Fieldwork in Practice: Colonial Legacies and Ethnic Conflict in India," *Qualitative and Multi-Methods Research* (Fall 2012), 41-4.

628. For a detailed discussion of issues regarding differing incentive structures, see Barnett S. Koven, "University Research Centers and SOF," *Interagency Orientation for Special Operations Forces* (U.S. Air Force Special Operations School, Hurlburt Field, course 19C, November 2018 and course 19F, July 2019).