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Links between terrorist and organized crime networks: emerging patterns and trends

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Almost eight years ago, I published an article on *The Links between Transnational Organized Crime and Terrorist Crimes*². At that time, these links were still a matter of dispute. Today, Security Council resolution 1373 openly acknowledges the existence of such links, referring to a ‘close connection’.

Table 1: Security Council Resolution # 1373 (28 Sept. 2001) on Links between International Terrorism and Transnational Organized Crime

“4. *Notes with concern the close connection between international terrorism and transnational organized crime, illicit drugs, money-laundering, illegal arms-trafficking, and illegal movement of nuclear, chemical, biological and other potentially deadly materials, and in this regard emphasizes the need to enhance coordination of efforts on national, subregional, regional and international levels in order to strengthen a global response to this serious challenge and threat to international security*”.

In my article, I noticed a number of differences between terrorist and organized crime groups, the most important being the political motivation behind much of contemporary terrorism.

Table 2: Differences between Terrorist and Organized Crime Groups

- Terrorist groups are usually ideologically or politically motivated while organized crime groups are profit-oriented;
- Terrorist groups often wish to compete with governments for legitimacy, organized crime groups do not;
- Terrorist groups usually relish in media attention; organized crime groups do not;
- Terrorist victimization is generally less discriminate than the violence used by organized crime groups;

Source: Alex P. Schmid. *The Links between Transnational Organized Crime and Terrorist Crimes*. *Transnational Organized Crime*, Vol. 2, No. 4, Winter 1996, pp. 40-82.

¹ The views and opinions expressed in this paper are solely those of the author and do not represent in any way official positions of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime where the author serves as Senior Crime Prevention & Criminal Justice Officer of the Terrorism Prevention Branch of the UN Office on Drugs and Crime in Vienna..

² Alex P. Schmid. *The Links between Transnational Organized Crime and Terrorist Crimes*. *Transnational Organized Crime*, Vol. 2, No. 4, Winter 1996, p.40-82. – For definitions of terrorism and organized criminal group, see appendices III and IV.

I also noticed a number of similarities, including the role of intimidation, based on the threat of violence, characterizing both terrorist and organized crimes.

Table 3: Similarities between Terrorist and Organized Crime Groups

- Both operate secretly and usually from an underground;
- Both use ‘muscle and ruthlessness’ and produce mainly civilian victims;
- Intimidation is characteristic of both groups;
- Both use similar (though not entirely overlapping) tactics: kidnappings, assassination, extortion (“protection money”, “revolutionary taxes”);
- In both cases, the control of the group over the individual is strong;
- Both use front organizations such as legitimate businesses or charities.

Source: Alex P. Schmid. *The Links between Transnational Organized Crime and Terrorist Crimes. Transnational Organized Crime, Vol. 2, No. 4, Winter 1996, pp. 40-82.*

Such generalizations, as contained in these two tables, inevitably downplay the diversity and heterogeneity of the groups involved. An unpublished study of the Office on Drugs and Crime on 40 organized crime groups in 16 countries found that “...the most striking outcome of the criminal group data collection exercise is the variety of groups on which information has been collected.³”. The same is probably true for terrorist groups.

International Terrorism and Transnational Organized Crime: Alliance, Association, Connection, Cooperation, Confluence, Symbiosis or Convergence? Questioning the Nature of Links.

Have the similarities increased and the differences decreased? Is there a convergence of terrorist and organized crime groups taking place, as some analysts’ claim? ⁴ Or are there only ad hoc links between such organizations or networks?⁵ It all depends on what one wishes to understand by terms like ‘links’ and ‘convergence’.

Table 4: ‘Links’ between international terrorism and transnational organized crime: some lexical (near-) synonyms of ‘links’ (italics) and ‘convergence’.

- **Association:** alliance, brotherhood, cartel, coalition, *partnership*, syndicate, *merger, union*.
- **Alliance:** *affiliation, connection, consortium, pact, relationship*.
- **Cooperation:** assistance, collaboration, coordination, help, *joint action*, mutual support.

³ United Nations. Office on Drugs and Crime. *Towards a Monitoring System for Transnational Organized Crime Trends: Results of a Pilot Survey of 40 Selected Organized Criminal Groups in 16 Countries*. Vienna, ODC, 2002, p. 7.

⁴ E.g. Carlos Resa and Flavio Mirella. *Terrorism, Drugs Trafficking, Weapons and the Caribbean: not so far away...* Unpubl. Paper, 2001; Tamara Makarenko. *Transnational Crime and Its Evolving Links to Terrorism and Instability. Jane’s Intelligence Review*, 11/2001; Phil Williams and Ernesto Savona posed this possibility still as a question in 1995, stating: “If the means and ends of criminal and terrorist organizations are very different, however, they may be a growing, and perhaps irreversible, trend towards convergence”. - Phil Williams and Ernesto U. Savona. *Introduction: Problems and Dangers Posed by Organized Crime in the Various Regions of the World. Transnational Organized Crime*, Vol. 1, No. 3, Autumn 1995, p.25.

⁵ R.T. Naylor phrases the question in this way: “The central question then becomes whether crime and insurgency are really coalescing into a long-term strategic alliance (as distinct from the occasional tactical combination) within the ambit of a growing worldwide black market economy.” – R.T. Naylor. *Wages of Crime. Black Markets, Illegal Finance, and the Underworld Economy*. Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 2002, p. 45.

- **Symbiosis:** (usually mutually advantageous) *association* of two different organisms living attached to one another.
- **Convergence:** approaching each other; move toward the same point or place; the formation of similarities in unrelated organisms living in the same environment.

Source: Oxford Dictionary & Thesaurus. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1997.

It is hard to generalize and make statements about the nature of 'links' of hundreds of terrorist and organized crime groups or networks. Network is also an awfully broad and vague concept.⁶ So are the concepts of association, alliance, symbiosis or convergence. Take, for instance, 'convergence'. It can mean at least three things:

- 1) 'approaching each other'. It can also mean
- 2) 'move toward the same point or place' (confluence). In biology, convergence means
- 3) the formation of similarities in unrelated organisms living in the same environment.

If one takes the last meaning, one could, for instance, say that this common environment is the clandestine underworld in which both transnational organized crime and international terrorism have to act. If one takes that particular meaning, one could say that there is a certain degree convergence in that some traditional organized crime groups have discovered the advantages of cell-structured organizations over hierarchical ones.⁷ Some of them have moved towards this classical terrorist model or organization. There are three basic ways for protecting an underground organization from the eyes of the police and the security services (Table 5). In the first model, members have to make a pledge of secrecy. In the second model, the cell-structure of the organization itself ensures a degree of secrecy. In the third and most recent model, the protection of the movement is done by having no leaders at all in the underground.

Table 5: Three Models of Underground Organizations:

1. The conspiratorial secret (parallel) society with a hierarchical **pyramid organization**, commanding obedience and loyalty, sometimes mimicking a military hierarchy, sometimes based on ancient local traditions and organized as "families" or syndicates, each headed by a boss. The rank-and-file are subject to strong discipline and all members' risk of being killed if they violate "the law of secrecy". This is the classical model of a secret society.
2. The secretive **cellular-structured organization** wherein each cell consists of 3-5 persons⁸. All but one person in the cell do not know other members of the terrorist organization. The cell leader is the

⁶ Phil Williams defines network as "...a series of nodes that are connected. The nodes can be individuals, organizations, firms, or computers, so long as they are connected in significant ways". - Phil Williams. Transnational Criminal Networks. In: John Arquilla and David F. Ronfeldt (Eds.). Networks and Netwars: The Future of Terror, Crime and Militancy. St. Monica, Rand Corporation, 2001, p.66.

⁷ For instance, a number of Mexican drug cartels, formerly organized as large pyramid structure under the control of a single person now consist of a series of cells which enjoy a certain degree of independence. - United Nations, Drugs and Crime Office. Toward a Monitoring System for Transnational Organized Crime Trends: Results of a Pilot Survey of 40 Selected Organized Criminal Groups in 16 Countries. Vienna, ODC, 2002. The same study found that "...just under one third of the groups have a rigid hierarchical structure. A further ten have a devolved hierarchical structure. Four groups are conglomerates of a number of hierarchical groups. The remainder (again, about a third) are more loosely organized; either consisting of a core criminal group of individuals or a criminal network. Thus, the overall majority of groups (two thirds) have some form of hierarchy to their structure". The remainders (one third) are more loosely structured, ranging from small groups of core individuals around which criminal activities are organized, to a series of individuals operating in a more loosely structured criminal network". It should be noted that the sample of 40 groups studied was not representative. - Ibid., pp. 21 -25.

⁸ Ed Mickolus found in 1981 that the average acting terrorist cell has 4.4 members. - Edward F. Mickolus. Combating International Terrorism: A Quantitative Analysis. Ph.D. Diss. New Haven, Yale University, 1981; cit.

contact person with the cell above him. The organization is based on the principle of compartmentalization, which serves to control damage in case of penetration, desertion or arrest. There is usually a central commanding committee at the top, and each cell is specialized for a specific task. For an operation, cells with complementary skills are organized into a “column”⁹. This is the classical model for terrorist organizations;

3. **‘Leaderless resistance’** – an agglomeration of wholly autonomous units, often consisting of only one lone actor, whose information and ideological needs are satisfied by external channels (produced by a legal political movement advocating the same goals but not overtly advocating violent means for their realization, and mass media, including the internet). Immune to infiltration, the lone wolf terrorists are self-reliant and do not take orders but act on their individual initiative when and where they see it fit to advance a common cause.¹⁰ This model was developed in the United States by right-wing patriot militias.

In the real world, specific organizations rarely correspond to such ideal-type models.¹¹ Many terrorist organizations, which are usually seen as belonging to the second type, are still showing features of the first organizational type.¹² Organized crime, on the other hand, is said to be moving away from hierarchical forms of organization to criminal networks. However, a recent pilot study of the Office on Drugs and Crime found that only about ten per cent of the groups in a sample of forty groups showed network characteristics. If this is the wave of the future, and if this sample is representative, organized crime has still some way to go to catch up with the alleged trend.

Kent Layne Oots. *A Political Organization Approach to Transnational Terrorism*. Westport, Conn., Greenwood Press, 1986, p.39.

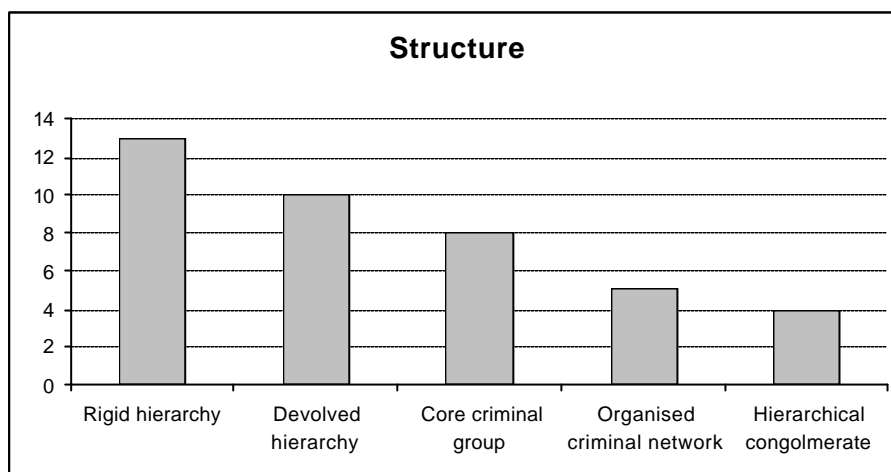
⁹ Osama bin Laden remarked, in a videotape released by the US State Department, with regard to the 9/11 attackers: “Those who were trained to fly didn’t know the others. One group of people did not know the other group”. – Valdis E. Krebs. *Uncloaking Terrorist Networks*. *First monday* (Peer-reviewed Journal on the Internet), Vol.7, No.4, April 2002, p.4.

¹⁰ Louis R. Beam. ‘Leaderless Resistance’. *The Seditonist*, 12 (February 1992); cit. J. Kaplan. ‘Leaderless Resistance’. , in: David C. Rapoport (Ed.). *Inside Terrorist Organizations*. London, Frank Cass, 2001, p.267.

¹¹ Some observers used the familiar business corporation model to describe Al Qaeda. CNN, for instance reported on 5 October 2001: “Analysts say al Qaeda needs to be viewed as a corporation, with bin Laden as the chairman of the board” Bin Laden is a totally multinational enterprise”, said terrorism analyst Magnus Ransdorp.” He has tentacles and followers all around the world”. Like many global companies Al Qaeda is a combination of partnerships, experts say. It has strategic alliances with other groups, as well as some wholly owned subsidiaries. (...)A new business partner for bin Laden appears to be the GIA, Algeria’s Armed Islamic Group. (...)The problem of countering the bin Laden organization is that it mutates continuously”, “Ransdorp said. It is not only a multinational enterprise with followers with financial infrastructure across the globe, it mutates, continuously shifting in order to insulate the organization from ...attempts at removing top leadership”. – Al Qaeda has complex terrorist networks, analysts say. *CNN*, Atlanta, 5 October 2001, 18:05 GMT (<<http://www.cnn.com/2001/US/10/02/inv.binladen.friends/>>)

¹² James Fraser, a counterterrorism specialist, describes a terrorist group as organized something like a pyramid. “At the very top are a few leaders who make the overall policy and plans. Below them is a somewhat larger group of terrorists who actually carry out attacks. This is called the *active cadre*. Members of the active cadre often specialize in particular activities, such as intelligence or surveillance, bomb-making, or communications. The next lower and broader level of the pyramid is composed of the “active supporters”. These people are crucial for the sustained operation of the terrorist campaign, because they provide intelligence and warning, weapons and supplies, communications, transportation, and safe houses. Finally, there is a diffuse group of “passive supporters” who agree with the goals of the terrorists, help spread their ideas, and provide money and other support”. Cit. Harry Henderson. *Global Terrorism. The Complete Reference Guide*. New York, Checkmark Books, 2001, p. 17.

Table 6: Structure of 40 organized criminal groups in ODC pilot study sample.¹



Al Qaeda

How would you, for instance, place Al Qaeda in an organizational model? Bin Laden's organization has been described by some as an "umbrella organization"¹³. Others see Al Qaeda and Bin Laden as part of a Global Jihad Network in which Al Qaeda is but one component. They hold that a number of autonomous groups are united together by a shared common ideology of global Jihad to destroy the secular democratic world, and impose Islamic Caliphates.¹⁴ Al Qaeda is a nebulous, apparently sophisticated, decentralized transnational network – or perhaps even "network of networks" – which includes militants, sleepers, front organizations, legitimate business enterprises and non-governmental organizations, operating in more than

¹ 1. *Rigid hierarchy*: Single boss. Organization or division into several cells reporting to the centre.

Strong internal systems of discipline.

2. *Devolved hierarchy*: Hierarchical structure and line of command. However regional structures, with their own leadership hierarchy, have a degree of autonomy over day to day functioning.

3. *Hierarchical conglomerate*: An association of organized crime groups with a single governing body. The latter can range from an organized umbrella type to more flexible and loose oversight arrangements.

4. *Core criminal group*: Ranging from relatively loose to cohesive group of core individuals who generally regard themselves as working for the same organization. Horizontal rather than vertical structure.

5. *Organized criminal network*. Defined by the activities of key individuals who engage in illicit activity together in often shifting alliances. They do not necessarily regard themselves as an organized criminal entity. Individuals are active in the network through the skills and capital that they may bring.

Source: Crime Trends: Results of a Pilot Survey of 40 Selected Organized Criminal Groups in 16 Countries. Vienna, ODC, 2002, p.20.

¹³ Rohan Gunaratna, in interview with *Der Spiegel* (Hamburg), No. 48, 2002, p. 155. See also: Rohan Gunaratna. *Inside Al Qaeda. Global Network of Terror*. London, Hurst & Company, 2002. – Al Qaeda operates under various aliases: The World Islamic Front for Jihad Against Jews and Crusaders, the Islamic Army for the Liberation of the Holy Places, the Islamic Salvation Foundation, and the Group for the Preservation of the Holy Sites. Al Qaeda encompasses members and factions of national Islamic militants such as Egypt's Islamic Group and Al-Jihad, Algeria's Armed Islamic Group (GIA), Pakistan's Harakat ul-Mujahidin, the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan and opposition groups in Saudi Arabia. It has links to the Abu Sayyaf Group in the Philippines and to Islamic militants in Indonesia. – Kenneth Katzman (Foreign Affairs, Defense, and Trade Division). *Terrorism: Near Eastern Groups and State Sponsors*, 2001. In: John Prados (Ed). *America Confronts Terrorism*. Chicago, Ivan R. Dee, 2002, pp.191-193.

¹⁴ M.J. Gohel, Asia Pacific Foundation, summarizing findings of a conference on 'Militant Islam in Asia – The Challenges', London, RUSI, 21-22 November 2002 (private communication).

60 countries.¹⁵ The influence of the charismatic leader, Osama Bin Laden, might be even more far-reaching than the actual financial support he provides to far-away sleepers.¹⁶ A number of cells of this Islamist network are apparently able to finance themselves through criminal activities such as kidnapping, trafficking in narcotics and petty crime. Some attacks – such as the killing of Americans in the Middle East and South Asia – are apparently perpetrated by Al Qaeda sympathizers with no known connection to the network beyond what they learn about Al-Qaeda from the media. Their activities resemble in some ways those of the “leaderless resistance” paradigm which Valery Tishkov from the Russian Academy of Sciences sees as a possible paradigm for the future. He postulates that

*“To avoid capture, terrorists will increasingly adopt new organizational models and move toward a form of organization called ‘leaderless resistance’. The premise is that if there are no chain-of-command and no communications between headquarters and operatives in the field, the risk of penetration and discovery is minimized – assuming basic principles of tradecraft are practiced. The idea is that small, totally independent cells of individuals will strike when they find a lucrative target and believe the moment propitious”.*¹⁷

Advances in communication technology – especially the ubiquity of the World Wide Web on the Internet and the possibility to encrypt messages – might in fact make something resembling the leaderless-resistance model more feasible. The Internet could serve as vehicle to provide remote guidance and instruction to self-appointed militants. Lately, public domain encryption has become so powerful, that the reading of communications of terrorists and other lawbreakers has become increasingly difficult. It has been suggested that Al Qaeda not only used encrypted e-mail but also hides encrypted message texts within picture files (steganography) or other data that could be downloaded from a Website. Advances in secure communication have turned the Internet into a powerful tool for the transfer of encrypted messages.¹⁸ This not only helps terrorists but also organized crime groups, allowing them, with the help of stolen and reprogrammed cell phones and encryption, to network with each other – both horizontally with

¹⁵ Executive Summary. Countering the Changing Threat of International Terrorism. Report of the National Commission on Terrorism, June 7, 2000. Repr. In: John Prados (Ed.). America Confronts Terrorism. Understanding the Danger and How to Think About It. Chicago, Ivan R. Dee Publ., 2002, p. 44. – Phil Williams discussing criminal networks made an observation which is also worth keeping in mind when talking about terrorist networks: “One of the most significant points about [criminal] networks is that they are not immediately and obviously visible. Criminal networks can hide behind various licit activities, can operate with a lower degree of formality than other types of organization, and can maintain a profile that does not bring them to the attention of law enforcement”. – Phil Williams. Transnational Criminal Networks. In: John Arquilla and David F. Ronfeldt (Eds.). Networks and Netwars: The Future of Terror, Crime and Militancy. St. Monica, Rand Corporation, 2001, p.71

¹⁶ R. T. Naylor, goes even further when he writes: “In reality, El Qai’da seems less an organization than a loose association of independent cell-like entities that changes form and personnel ad hoc in response to threats and opportunities. Just as the Mafia is less a formal institution than a type of behavior, so too El-Qaïda seems less an entity than a shared state of mind, less a political organization than a cult of personality that the United States seems committed to strengthening”. – R.T. Taylor, op. cit., p. 290.

¹⁷ Valery Tishkov. Roots of Terror. Unpubl. MS, Nov. 2002. – Jeffrey Kaplan defined ‘leaderless resistance’ as “a kind of lone wolf operation in which an individual, or a very small highly cohesive group, engage in acts of anti-state violence independent of any movement, leader or network of support. This violence may take the form of attacks on state institutions or operatives, or it may take the form of random targets of opportunity selected on the basis of their perceived vulnerability and their symbolic importance”. J. Kaplan. ‘Leaderless Resistance’. In: David C. Rapoport (Ed.). Inside Terrorist Organizations. London, Frank Cass, 2001, p.260.

¹⁸ Stephen Budiansky. Losing the Code War. At: [HYPERLINK](http://theatlantic.com/issues/2002/02/budiansky.htm)
<http://theatlantic.com/issues/2002/02/budiansky.htm> . Budiansky noted that “it is now virtually impossible to break the encrypted communication systems that PCs and the Internet have made available to everyone – including, apparently, al Qaeda”.

other cell members and vertically with their leaders - in ways which are hard if not impossible to trace.¹⁹ The global access to information, which the Internet provides and transmits, allows the preparation of dispersed but simultaneous activities with a growing degree of secrecy. This advance in communication technology is one of four major features that have allowed a 'quantum leap' forward for transnational crime and international terrorism, creating a lead which national law enforcement in most countries still has to catch up with.

Table 7: Globalization Features Facilitating Transnational Organized Crime and International Terrorism

1. Border Porosity (incl. opening of Iron Curtain)
2. Population Transfer (diasporas)
3. Financial and commercial developments (e.g. electronic banking, trade liberalization)
4. Communication technology (internet, encryption)

Source: Tamara Makarenko. Transnational Crime and its Evolving Links to Terrorism and Instability. Jane's Intelligence Review, 11/2001.

Let me come back to the question I raised earlier: "Are the trajectories of international terrorism and organized crime converging?"

If one takes the second meaning of 'convergence'- confluence or moving toward the same point or place' where they overlap, there are indeed examples for this. In July this year the US Attorney-General, John Ashcroft said that he had asked federal law enforcement agencies to draw up a single list of the major trafficking groups responsible for the U.S. drug supply. He then found that

"Nearly one third of the organizations of the State Department's list of Foreign Terrorist Organizations (33 at that time, AS) appear also on our list of targeted U.S. drug suppliers".²⁰

How representative this sample of the US government is, I do not know. There are many hundreds of terrorist groups and thousands of organized crime groups active in the world and their trajectories have never been studied in combination. But this type of convergence, which is also sometimes labeled *narco-terrorism*.²¹ is certainly disquieting.

¹⁹ Michele Zanini and Sean J.A. Edwards. The Networking of Terror in the Information Age. In: John Arquilla and David Ronfeldt, op. cit., p. 38.

²⁰ U.S. Says Many Drug Traffickers on Terrorist List. Reuters, 30 July 2002 10:20 Ashcroft added: Law enforcement has been aware for some time of significant linkages between terrorism and drug trafficking. But we have not had the tools to quantify the drug-terrorism nexus until now". Michael Chertoff, Assistant Attorney General for the Criminal Division of the U.S. Department of Justice added: "Drugs not only directly (threaten) the fabric of our society but they provide funding and support for terrorist organizations that take up arms and commit acts of violence. Drug traffickers have a symbiotic relationship with terrorists". – Such views were more recently echoed by the British Home Secretary, David Blunkett: "The funding generated by networks perpetrating organised crime are the same funds and same networks that have a direct relevance to the development of sales and support for terrorism. Therefore, there is a shared and common interest in tackling organised crime and terrorism". – Balkan Gangs More Organized than Police, says Blunkett. *PA News*, 25 November 2002 13:45.

²¹ The US Drug Enforcement Agency defines narco-terrorism as a subset of terrorism, in which terrorist groups, or associated individuals, participate directly or indirectly in the cultivation, manufacture, transportation, or distribution of controlled substances and the monies derived from these activities. Further, DEA uses the term to characterize the participation of groups or associated individuals in taxing, providing security, or otherwise aiding or abetting drug trafficking endeavours in an effort to further, or fund, terrorist activities. – U.S. Department of State. The Nexus Between Drug Trafficking and Terrorism. Fact Sheet. Washington, D.C., Bureau for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, 10 April 2002.

Depending on the level of analysis, and on the semantic load of the term convergence, convergence is more or less total: On the most general level it is, of course true that terrorist groups commit crimes and many of their serious crimes actually fall under the terms of the Convention against Transnational Organized Crime. To that extent, and on that level of analysis, there is already a large degree of convergence. Much, but not all terrorism, depends on crime as a means for generating income for political violence.²² Terrorist organizations have also, for more than one hundred years, been trying to engage criminals because of their skills, their propensity to take risks and their disregard for the norms of society.²³ Yet one also sees that criminal organizations which use extortion, corruption and intimidation as their main tools, also resort occasionally to the use of terror, which is an enhanced form of intimidation. Phil Williams and Ernesto Savona noted that Colombian drug cartels and the Italian Mafia were both using terrorist attacks against the state and its representatives for five different reasons (Table 6).

Table 8: Uses of Terror Tactics by Organized Crime Groups

- i) disrupt investigations;
- ii) deter the introduction or continuation of vigorous government policies;
- iii) to eliminate effective law enforcement officials,
- iv) to coerce judges into more lenient sentencing policies, and
- v) to create an environment more conducive to criminal activity.

Source: Phil Williams and Ernesto U. Savona. Introduction: Problems and Dangers Posed by Organized Crime in the Various Regions of the World. *Transnational Organized Crime*, Vol. 1, No. 3, Autumn 1995, p. 25.

Another example of organized crime groups using terrorist methods occurred in Dagestan when in November 1996 a bomb attack on border guards killed nearly 50 people. The attack was a reprisal for state intervention in their criminal caviar smuggling business.²⁴ While there is overlap in the sources of income as well as in some of their tactics between terrorist groups and organized crime groups, this does not necessarily mean amalgamation or fusion. Their relationship is in many cases only a pragmatic tactical alliance of sorts where each side keeps its own identity - a more political one in the case of terrorists and a more predatory one in the case of organized crime, at least in the early stages of development.²⁵ Organized crime has a number of partners in crime of which terrorist groups are but one. Their pragmatic alliances include domestic and foreign partners²⁶. The following table provides a non-exhaustive list of some links that have been empirically observed:

Table 9: Types of Links of Organized Crime with Non-Terrorist Entities

1. One organized crime group with another national org. crime group, at home or abroad, to expand respective geographic areas of operations or dividing territory (e.g. Sicilian Mafia – Colombian drug cartel)²⁷;

²² Statement by Hon. Batty Weerakoon, Minister of Justice, Sri Lanka, 13 Dec. 2000 on the occasion of the high-level political signing conference for the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime, Palermo, Italy.

²³ Isaac Cronin, in introduction to I. Cronin (Ed.) *Confronting Fear. A History of Terrorism*. New York, Thunder's Mouth Press, 2002, p.xii.

²⁴ James Morton. *Gangland International. The Mafia and Other Mobs in the Twentieth Century*. London, Warner Books, 1999, pp.848-849.

²⁵ See Appendix I: Stages of Organized Crime, by Peter Luphsa.

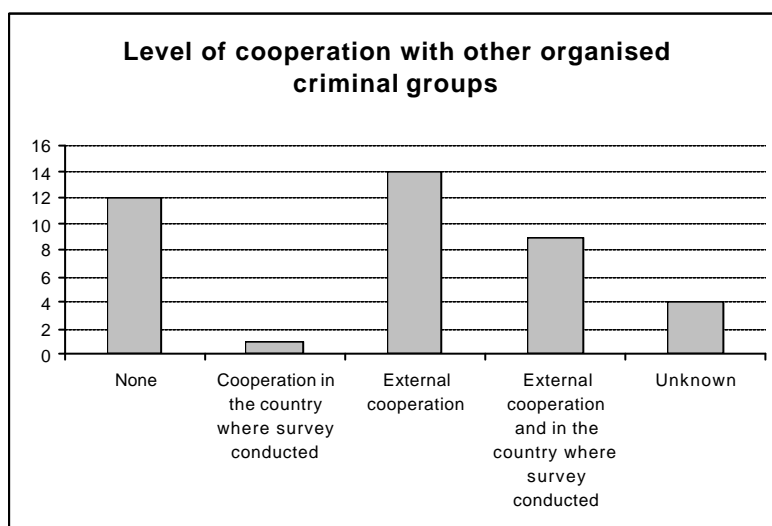
²⁶ For instance, there was a summit meeting in Beaune, France in 1994 attended by organized crime bosses from China, Russia, Colombia, Japan, Italy and the United States. This was followed by two further meetings on yachts in the Mediterranean. – Andrew Alderson and Carey Scott. 'Crime Kings meet to carve up Europe'. *The Sunday Times*, 29 March 1998; cit. James Morton. *Gangland International. The Mafia and Other Mobs in the Twentieth Century*. London, Warner Books, 1999, 856

²⁷ Europol. Threat Assessment. Europol First Situation Report. The Hague, Europol, 1999, pp. 14-15.

2. One national organized crime group with governing political party (e.g. in 1950s S. Vietnamese government and Bin Xuyen river pirates)²⁸;
3. One national organized crime group with a legal business group (allegedly Mafia with parts of the legal tobacco industry);
4. One national organized crime group with an ethnic immigrant group in host country (e.g. Italian organized crime and Albanian groups in Italy);
5. 'Rogue state' engaging in drug trafficking and other organized crime activities (Yugoslavia under Milosevic)²⁹

What is known about the frequency of such links? Louise Shelley, one of the foremost experts on transnational organized crime, holds that "The links between organized criminals and terrorists are much less frequent than the links between organized criminals and politicians".³⁰ This might be an 'educated guess' but is not based on hard data. Unfortunately, 'hard data' in this area are almost non-existent. They come only in small parcels.

Table 10: Level of cooperation with other organized criminal groups



²⁸ R.T. Naylor noted: "Mature criminality [in the symbiotic stage – see appendix I, AS] is compatible with the continued existence of the formal state and can even be employed to defend it; mature insurgency threatens the overthrow of that formal state and, by definition, cannot comfortably coexist with it. This distinction was neatly summed up in South Vietnam in the 1950s when the government ceded control of the Saigon-Cholon vice rackets to the Binh Xuyen gang of river pirates in exchange for their keeping the city free of Communist guerrilla activity". – R.T. Naylor. *Wages of Crime. Black Markets, Illegal Finance, and the Underworld Economy*. Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 2002, p.55.

²⁹ The Serbian Interior Minister Dusan Mihajlovic in a TV program entitled "It is not Serbian to keep quiet" (BKTV, 11 Nov. 2002), commenting on arrests carried out in connection with the murder of former Belgrade police chief Bosko Buha, said: "The criminal heritage which I talk about can only be represented as a criminal pyramid at the top of which used to stand the highest tier of state and political officials that used to lead this country – then the chiefs [changes thought], individuals, not the institutions but individuals in the customs administration, state security service, this or that state institution – then those bosses who used to organize this business all the way down to the very bottom of the pyramid where we used to have drug dealers and hard currency dealers, murderers and racketeers in the street, all of which we are facing now. I repeat: this pyramid has two faces. One face is war crimes committed in our name and the other is organized crime". (BKTV, Belgrade, in Serbian 10:55, 11 Nov. 2002 BBC Monitoring European – Political, London.

³⁰ Louise Shelley (Professor and Director, Center for Transnational Crime and Corruption, American University. Identifying, Counting and Categorizing Transnational Criminal Organizations. Unpubl. Paper, n. d., p.9.

In answer to the question “How frequent is cooperation between organized crime groups at home and abroad?”, we have the findings of an ODC pilot study surveying 40 groups in 16 countries. It was found that in 35 per cent of the cases there was some level of cooperation with transnational organized crime groups outside of the country where the survey of the criminal group itself was conducted. In 22 percent of all cases both external and internal cooperation was recorded.³¹ Since the majority of organized crime groups are engaged in the smuggling of drugs which requires foreign partners, transnational cooperation is a necessary requirement. However, the data of the pilot study also indicate that in a surprisingly high number of cases - 30 percent - there was no evidence of cooperation with other criminal groups. And, as mentioned before, only ten percent of the groups took the form of ‘criminal networks’.³² The reason for this might be security considerations. Trust is indeed a rare commodity in the underworld of crime.

Let us now look at some types of links of terrorist groups with others groups.

Table 11: ‘Links’ and ‘Cross-overs’ between Terrorist Groups -Organized Crime Groups

1. One national organized crime group with a national terrorist group (e.g. Colombian drug cartels and FARC);
2. One organized crime group with foreign terrorist group abroad (Colombian drug traffickers with Sendero Luminoso in Peru)³³;
3. Foreign organized crime group in host country linking up with local terrorist group; (e.g. Triades with protestant paramilitaries in Northern Ireland)³⁴;
4. Foreign terrorist sleepers engaging in organized crime in host country (e.g. GIA in France);
5. Foreign terrorist group training local guerrilla/terrorist group (e.g. Provisional IRA – FARC in Colombia).
6. Organized crime group evolving into terrorist group – “felons turning fighters” (Zeljko Raznjatovic’s group become Arkan Tigers in Yugoslavia)³⁵
7. Declining/defeated terrorist group degenerating into pure organized criminality – “fighters turning felons”, “guns to gold” (Abu Sayyaf in the Philippines).

³¹ In 10 percent of the cases (four cases) it was not possible to establish a reliable response. – ODC. Crime Trends: Results of a Pilot Survey of 40 Selected Organized Criminal Groups in 16 Countries. Vienna, ODC, 2002 , p.30.

³² The ODC pilot study defined ‘criminal networks’ by the activities of key individuals who engage in illicit activity in often shifting alliances. Such individuals may not regard themselves as being members of a criminal group, and may not be regarded as being a criminal group by outsiders. Nevertheless the coalesce around a series of criminal projects.(...)Networks usually consist of relatively manageable numbers of individuals, although in many cases different components of the network may not work closely with (or even know each other) but be connected through another individual or individuals. Personal loyalties and ties are essential to the maintenance of the network and are key determinants of relationships. It should be noted however that various individuals within the network do not carry the same weight and the network is generally formed around a key series of individuals (or nodal points) through which most of the network connections run. Of the 40 groups on which data base been collected, only four of these constitute criminal networks. It should be conceded that while these constitute only a small component of this survey, it is likely that criminal networks are more common, and indeed are a growing phenomenon”. – ODC. Towards a Monitoring System for Transnational Organized Crime Trends: Results of a Pilot Study of 40 Selected Organized Criminal Groups in 16 Countries. Vienna, ADC, 2002, p.44.

³³ Phil Williams and Ernesto U. Savona. Introduction: Problems and Dangers Posed by Organized Crime in the Various Regions of the World. *Transnational Organized Crime* , Vol. 1, No. 3, Autumn 1995, p.25.

³⁴ An example would be the unholy alliance between a Chinese Triad gang in Northern Ireland and the protestant loyalist Ulster Volunteer Force. The leader of a ‘Snakehead’ gang, a wealthy businessman who owns a Chinese restaurant in Belfast, used five masked paramilitaries UVF men as his enforcers to force Chinese illegal immigrants to pay up money they owed for the transport. He had, in turn, smuggled arms for the UVF into the country. – John Cassidy. Republic of Ireland: UVF Link to Triad Gang. RUC probe attack on Chinese immigrants. *Sunday Mirror*, 2 July 2000, p. 39.

³⁵ F. Bovenkerk. Misdaadprofielen. Amsterdam, Meulenhoff, 2001, p. 82

So far, I have tried to show some empirically observed 'links' between terrorist groups, organized criminal groups and some of their allies. Let me now turn to the issue of motives for such forms of cooperation.

Incentives and Disincentives for Cooperation between Terrorist and Organized Crime Groups

Why should terrorist groups and organized crime groups seek each other's company? For the terrorist groups one answer is money. Since the end of the Cold War state –sponsorship has declined and new sources of funding had to be sought.³⁶ As Frank Cilluffo, an American expert on terrorism, put it simply: "Involvement in the drug business is almost a guarantee of financial independence from a state sponsor".

³⁷ It is but one of a number of factors that make organized crime an interesting partner for terrorist groups.

Table 12: Factors encouraging 'links' from the point of view of terrorist organizations

- access to greater financial resources for terrorist attacks;
- independence from state sponsorship;
- possibility of building up economic power, compensating for lack of public support;
- access to specialist skills (e.g. forging travel documents);
- facilitation in cross-border movements (use of smuggling routes)³⁸
- substitute activity during armistices or at end of hostilities;
- coming into contact with a wider range of potential recruits, who are already outlaws.
- access to expertise in illicit transfer and laundering of money for foreign operations.

However, there are also factors standing in the way of closer cooperation. They are few, but they are powerful.

Table 13: Factors discouraging association/cooperation/links/cross-over from the point of view of terrorist organizations

- Danger of infiltration, treason;
- Danger of losing political credibility.

There might be a clash of cultures, a breach of security procedures that can jeopardize the survival of a group. One has to realize that cooperation is inherently risky because one side does not know whether the other side has been penetrated and whether therefore, cooperation will endanger one's own organization.

³⁶ However, while states might no longer support terrorist groups in order to use them as proxies, apparently some states paid terrorist groups 'protection money', to be free from attacks themselves. The line between voluntary support and extortion is often not clear for outside observers. – A US Senate Subcommittee Report entitled "The BCCI Affair" found that "terrorist organizations ...received payment at BCCI-London and other branches directly from Gulf-state patrons, and then transferred those funds wherever they wished without apparent scrutiny". - HYPERLINK

<http://www.wist.socrates.berkeley.edu/~pdscott/q4.html>

"http://www.wist.socrates.berkeley.edu/~pdscott/q4.html"

³⁷ Frank Cilluffo. The Threat Posed from the Convergence of Organized Crime, Drug Trafficking, and Terrorism. (Deputy Director, Global Organized Crime Program Director, Counterterrorism Task Force, Center for Strategic and International Studies, Washington D.C), before the U.S. House Committee on the Judiciary, Subcommittee on Crime, 13 December 2002.

³⁸ R.T. Naylor provides the following example: "in the border areas between Albania, Kosovo, and Serbia, the Kosovo Liberation Army (UCK) presides over a smugglers' nest. It collects taxes in cash and in service – the smugglers assist by moving weapons. And individual members run their own rackets, trafficking in refugees, prostitutes bound for European brothels, drugs, and cigarettes". - R.T. Naylor. Wages of Crime. Black Markets, Illegal Finance, and the Underworld Economy. Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 2002, p. 66.

For the same reason, cooperation between two terrorist groups is more the exception than the rule. One has, however, to distinguish between different forms of cooperation – logistical cooperation, financial cooperation and operational cooperation. It is the latter that is rare and the observation from Martha Crenshaw from 1975 still holds, though probably less so than a quarter of a century ago:

*“ Limited operational collaboration among terrorist organizations has taken place, but transnational relations among them are generally not active, formal, institutionalized or overt”.*³⁹

Logistical cooperation – whether in the form of training or supply of arms - however, is less risky and more frequent.

Table 14: Types of Cooperation among Terrorist Organizations

1. Financial support (e.g. sharing of ransom money);
2. Training (e.g. use of training camps, transfer of know-how on bomb-making);
3. Weapons;
3. Organizational (e.g. forged documents, communication and propaganda support)
4. Operational (proxy attacks, coordinated attacks and joint operations).

Source: Y. Alexander and Robert A. Kilmark International Network of Terrorist Movements. In: Y. Alexander and R.A. Kilmark (Eds.). Political Terrorism and Business: The Threat and Response. New York, Praeger, 1979, pp. 40-51; cit. K.L. Oots. A Political Organization Approach to Transnational Terrorism. Westport, Conn., Greenwood Press, 1986, p. 43.

How difficult cooperation is, has been empirically tested on the basis of a large dataset. Based on the ITERATE (International Terrorism: Attributes of Terrorist Events) dataset on international terrorism, Kent L. Oots tested a number of hypothesis and came to the following findings:

Table 15: Findings with regard to Terrorist Coalition Characteristics, 1968 – 1977

1. Participants are more likely to be wounded during coalitional acts than during single group acts;
2. The average numbers of deaths and injuries are higher for coalitions than for single groups;
3. Coalitions are more likely to engage in difficult acts of terrorism than are single groups;
4. Coalitions are relatively rare and account for only 5.6 percent of all terrorist acts;
5. Coalitions usually do not last very long. Nearly three-fourth of all coalitions disband after only one act.

Source K. L. Oots. A Political Organization Approach to Transnational; Terrorism. Westport, Conn., Greenwood Press, 1986, p. 106.

It must be added that these data are not recent. However, if cooperation has increased, it has increased from a very low level of only 5.6 percent among terrorist groups. If cooperation between like-minded terrorist groups is already difficult, how more difficult is cooperation between terrorist and organized crime groups? Naylor has argued, and it is an argument that applies especially to the traditional anti-capitalist leftist groups, that

“.... whatever short-term alliances of convenience may occasionally emerge between well-entrenched criminals and anti-regime guerrillas, in the long run the two groups usually end up

³⁹ Martha Crenshaw Hutchinson. Transnational Terrorism and World Politics. *The Jerusalem Journal of International Relations*, Vol. 1, No.2, Winter 1975, p.111; cit. K. L. Oots, op. cit., p. 41. - Walter Reich. Understanding Terrorist Behavior. In: Isaac Cronin (Ed.) Confronting Fear. A History of Terrorism. New York, Thunder’s Mouth Press, 2002, p. 530.

*on opposite sides of the barricades, and inevitably so if the guerrilla groups' ideology is anticapitalist. For the guerrilla group, the underground economy and the treasures it yields are tools that will enable the group to carry out a political agenda; for the criminal organization, the riches of the black market are an end in themselves".*⁴⁰

However, this argument is less convincing for non-leftist groups or when there is some strong quid pro quo exchange opportunity that makes short-term tactical cooperation worthwhile for both sides.⁴¹ Let us look how the picture looks like from the less ideological and more pragmatic organized crime side:

Table 16: Factors Encouraging 'links'/cross-over/cooperation from the point of view of organized crime group

- Drug traffickers benefit from terrorists' military skills and obtain protection for illicit drug cultivation or trafficking in areas under guerrilla/terrorist control.
- terrorist destabilization of political and economic structures may create favourable environment for organized crime activities;
- Law enforcement preoccupation with countering terrorism may divert attention from organized crime activities.
- Political-terrorist label provides extra degree of 'intimidation'⁴²;

Yet again, there are also a few, but decisive, arguments which speak against close links:

Table 17: Factors discouraging association/cooperation/links/cross-over from the point of view of organized crime group

- Terrorist group may extort drug-trafficking organizations;
- Terrorist group might take over 'business' from organized crime group.

Examples of this danger can be found in Colombia where the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), 'stole' a good deal of business from organized crime.

⁴⁰ R.T. Naylor. Wages of Crime. Black Markets, Illegal Finance, and the Underworld Economy. Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 2002, p. 56.

⁴¹ E.D. Mickolus, Combating International Terrorism: A Quantitative Analysis. New Haven, Yale University, PhD Thesis 1981, p.5.69-5.70; cit. K.L. Oots, op. cit., p. 49. - A reason why coalitions are the exception rather than the rule lies in the heterogeneity of terrorist groups. In this regard, Walter Reich notes: "Certainly, a number of themes and characteristics are shared by many of the terrorist groups and movements mentioned in this short history; the goals of achieving terror and publicity for the cause are shared by nearly all of them But one searches with difficulty, and probably in vain, for psychological qualities that are shared by all or nearly all of the terrorists and terrorist groups mentioned here.(...)Moreover, the terrorist groups themselves shift in character. Some terrorist groups that were once on the right have ended up on the left, and vice versa; and most are, in fact, mixtures of types, such as leftist nationalists, rightist nationalists, religious nationalists, and so on. In terrorism, there are many mixed and borderline conditions. The lesson that the psychological researcher must draw from the long history of the terrorist enterprise, and especially from its variety and complexity, applies not only to the study of individual terrorists but also to the study of the terrorist groups themselves. Like individual terrorists, the groups to which they belong, and ultimately the communities from which those groups arise, are not necessarily alike in their psychological characteristics, even if they share certain goals or orientations". - Walter Reich. Understanding Terrorist Behaviour. In: Isaac Cronin (Ed.) Confronting Fear. A History of Terrorism. New York, Thunder's Mouth Press, 2002, pp. 523-524.

⁴² Naylor reports that Argentinean criminal kidnappers used to claim to be guerrillas because guerrilla groups, with better infrastructure, could hold victims longer and therefore could command a higher ransom. He also noted the use of the 'terrorist image in the case of criminals in Northern Ireland and the Philippines. - R.T. Naylor. Wages of Crime. Black Markets, Illegal Finance, and the Underworld Economy. Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 2002', p. 56.

How strong these pro- and contra- arguments weight in the minds of terrorist leaders and bosses of organized crime is hard to say. However, most of them are rational actors capable of cost-benefit analysis.

Conclusion

Let me summarize briefly our findings:

- To begin with, there is ample evidence that organized crime groups cooperate with each other⁴³.
- Second, there is also, especially since the emergence of Al Qaeda, considerable evidence of cooperation between like-minded terrorist groups.
- Third, there is also some evidence of some terrorist groups making money from organized crime activities and
- Forth, there is evidence that some organized crime groups also use tactics of terror.
- Finally, there is also evidence of a degree of cooperation between some organized crime groups and some terrorist groups.

With regard to the last point, Marc Galeotti, Director of the Organised Russian and Eurasian Crime Research Unit at Keele University, recently said: “Until now, fears of international alliances between terrorists and criminals have proved to be exaggerated”.⁴⁴

Perhaps he is right. The disquieting thing is that we do not know for sure. There is not enough empirical evidence to support or falsify such a statement. The truth is that while there exists a considerable body of knowledge about terrorist groups and a somewhat smaller body of knowledge about organized crime groups, we know too little about the logistical and operational ‘links’ between them to discover emerging patterns and trends. What makes this conclusion even more depressing is that fifteen years ago, Grant Wardlaw, an outstanding Australian criminologist, when presenting paper on “Linkages between the Illegal Drug Traffic and Terrorism” he came to much the same conclusion. He wrote:

*“what this analysis has shown is how little we know in detail about the linkages and what they mean. Clearly the drug-terrorism nexus is an important one, in some cases a critical determinant of the direction a terrorist movement will take.(...)Only with first-rate intelligence will we be able to approach the problems with the degree of sophistication which is required if we are to have any hope of making any impact at all....”*⁴⁵

Those in government who often have first-rate intelligence on organized crime and terrorism often do not have the inclination to analyse it fully. Those in academia who would be willing and able to apply a scientific approach to reliable and up-to-date information on terrorism and organized crime, only rarely have full access to such data for their research. The challenge is to bring the two camps a bit closer together.

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⁴³ An example would be the strategic alliance between the Sicilian Mafia and the Cali Cartel. The mafia helped the Cali cartel to break into the New York heroin market in return for franchise arrangements for cocaine in Europe. – Phil Williams and Ernesto Savona, op. cit., p. 31.

⁴⁴ Marc Galeotti. Crime Pays. *The World Today*, (London), August/September 2002.

⁴⁵ Grant Wardlaw. Linkages between the Illegal Drug Traffic and Terrorism. Paper prepared for the Conference on International Drugs: Threat and Response. Washington, D. C., Defense Intelligence College, 2-3 June 1987, p. 32.

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APPENDIX I: Stages of Organized Crime

One can categorize organized crime 's relationship with the wider economic and political context in which it operates. A phase or stage model to this effect has been proposed by Peter A. Lupsha, explaining the rise of organized crime in the United States since the mid-19th century. This evolutionary model is probably also applicable to many other countries. The model involves predatory, parasitical, and symbiotic stages described below:

Table: Stages of Organize Crime (P. Lupsha)

1. ***Predatory Stage***: criminal group is basically a street gang or group rooted in a particular area, neighbourhood or territory. In this phase, its criminal violence is most frequently ~~o~~ffensive, to maintain dominance over territory, to eliminate enemies, and to create a monopoly over the illicit use of force. Once neighbourhood, territorial or ethnic enclave dominance is established, the predatory gang gains recognition among legitimate power brokers, local political notables and economic influential who can use the gangs' organization and skills at impersonal violence for their own ends, such as debt collection, turning out the vote, or eliminating political rivals or economic competitors.
2. ***Parasitical Stage***: There needs to be a 'window of opportunity' such as war, conflict to create large-scale black market opportunities with the help of legitimate power sectors. Political corruption provides the essential glue binding together the legitimate sectors of the community and the underworld criminal organization. Increasingly, organize crime extends its influence over entire cities and regions and becomes an equal of, rather than servant to, the state.
3. ***The Symbiotic State***: the separate but equal parasitical bond between organized crime and the political system becomes one of mutuality The host, the legitimate political system, now becomes dependent upon the parasite, the monopolies and networks of organized crime to sustain itself. The traditional tools of the state to enforce law will no longer work, for organized crime has become part of the state; a state within the state.

Source: Peter A. Lupsha. Transnational Organized Crime versus the Nation-State. Transnational Organized Crime, Vol. 2, Spring 1996, pp. 31-32.

APPENDIX II: Links between terrorist groups and illicit narcotic drugs

Terrorist groups involved in drugs in	Heroin	Cocaine	Cannabis/Marijuana/Kat	Ecstasy and Amphetamines
Afghanistan (Talib., Al Qaeda)	X			
Albania/Kosovo/Macedonia	X			
Burma/Myanmar (United Wa State Army)	X			X
Colombia (FARC, AUC)		X		
Lebanon (Hizbollah)			X	
Nepal (Maoists)			X	
Philippines (Abu Sayyaf)			X	
Somalia (Warlords)			X	
Sri Lanka (LTTE)	X			
Turkey (PKK)	X			
Uzbekistan (IMU)	X			

Other countries: Peru, Mexico, India, Azerbaijan/Armenia, Russia/Chechnya, Georgia/Adjara, Abkhazia, North Ireland, Algeria, Egypt, Sudan, Senegal/Casamance, Guinea Bissau, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Democratic Republic of Congo, Congo Brazzaville, Chad, Uganda, Rwanda, Angola, Comoros/Anjouan.

Source: Geopolitical Drug Watch. Drug, Conflicts and Organized Crime, Paris, DGW, 1999; Berndt Georg Thamm. Terrorismus. Ein Handbuch ueber Taeter und Opfer. Hilden/Rhld, Verlag Deutsch Polizeiliteratur, 2002.

APPENDIX III: UN Definition of Terrorism (UN Ad Hoc Committee on Terrorism: Informal Texts of Art. 2 and 2 bis of the draft Comprehensive Convention, prepared by the Coordinator²).

Article 2

1. Any person commits an offence within the meaning of this Convention if that person, by any means, unlawfully and intentionally, causes:

- (a) Death or serious bodily injury to any person; or
- (b) Serious damage to public or private property, including a place of public use, a State or government facility, a public transportation system, an infrastructure facility or the environment; or
- (c) Damage to property, places, facilities, or systems referred to in paragraph 1 (b) of this article, resulting or likely to result in major economic loss, when the purpose of the conduct, by its nature or context, is to intimidate a population, or to compel a Government or an international organization to do or abstain from doing any act.³

2. Any person also commits an offence if that person makes a credible and serious threat to commit an offence as set forth in paragraph 1 of this article.

3. Any person also commits an offence if that person attempts to commit an offence as set forth in paragraph 1 of this article.

4. Any person also commits an offence if that person:

- (a) Participates as an accomplice in an offence as set forth in paragraph 1, 2 or 3 of this article;
- (b) Organizes or directs others to commit an offence as set forth in paragraph 1, 2, or 3 of this article; or
- (c) Contributes to the commission of one or more offences as set forth in paragraph 1, 2, or 3 of this article by a group of persons acting with a common purpose. Such contribution shall be intentional and shall either:
 - (i) Be made with the aim of furthering the criminal activity or criminal purpose of the group, where such activity or purpose involves the commission of an offence as set forth in paragraph 1 of this article; or
 - (ii) Be made in the knowledge of the intention of the group to commit an offence as set forth in paragraph 1 of this article.

² Reproduced from document A/C.6/56/L.9, annex I.B. These texts represent the stage of consideration reached at the 2001 session of the Working Group of the Sixth Committee. It is understood that further consideration will be given to these texts in future discussions, including on outstanding issues. – A/57/37 Annex II.

APPENDIX IV: UN Definition of “Organized criminal group”

Resolution by the General Assembly, United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, Fifty-fifth Session, A/RES/55/25, Agenda item 105, Article 2, Use of terms:

For the purposes of this Convention:

- (a) “Organized criminal group” shall mean a structured group of three or more persons, existing for a period of time and acting in concert with the aim of committing one or more serious crimes or offences established in accordance with this Convention, in order to obtain, directly or indirectly, a financial or other material benefit;
- (b) “Serious crime” shall mean conduct constituting an offence punishable by a maximum deprivation of liberty of at least four years or a more serious penalty;
- (c) “Structured group” shall mean a group that is not randomly formed for the immediate commission of an offence and that does not need to have formally defined roles for its members, continuity of its membership or a developed structure.