Session 3: How Terrorism Ends in the Horn of Africa

Dr. Amy Pate
Overview

• Geopolitical context
• Terrorism trends in CJTF-HoA area of operations
• Theorized pathways out of terrorism with historical exemplars
• Policy levers for influencing pathways
• Application to CJTF-HoA area of operations
Defining Aspects of Geopolitical Context

• Newly democratizing states, weakly institutionalized democracies, and weak authoritarians
  • Lack of avenues for peaceful expression of dissent
  • History of mass protests and violence
  • State repression
• Weak and fragile states
  • Don’t necessarily control hinterlands or borders
  • High levels of corruption
  • Informal governance in many areas
• Youth bulges and high youth unemployment
• Large populations of displaced and refugees
• Internal politics along ethnic, tribal and clan divisions
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How Terrorism Ends

• Successful repression
  • Leader(s) captured/killed
  • Organization defeated
• Terrorism succeeds
• Transition to peaceful process
• Membership dies out
• Loss of popular support
• Transition to other illegal movements
  • Organized criminality
  • Insurgency
Examples of Successful Repression

• Shining Path (but later had resurgence)
• Kurdistan Worker’s Party (but currently has a resurgence)
• Real Irish Republican Army (still low-level activity)
• Aum Shinrikyo
• Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam
Examples of Terrorism Success

• Irgun
• African National Congress (although leadership of organization had renounced violence prior to success)
Examples of Unsuccessful Generational Transition

• Red Brigades
• Aryan Resistance Army
• Weather Underground
• (Virtually all the leftist movements in developed democracies from the 1960s/70s)
Examples of Loss of Popular Support

• Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia
• Justice Commandos of the Armenian Genocide
Transition to Other Forms of Illegality

• Khmer Rouge (transition to insurgency and then revolutionary government)
• FARC (in transition to primarily criminal organization)
Approaches to Influencing Violent Extremist Organizations

• Coerce: The use or threat of violence
• Deter: Increase costs of attacks and/or reduce benefits
• Coopt: “Buy off” leaders (or potential leaders) or influential members of violent groups
• Alleviate grievances: Make concessions or improve conditions for recruitment communities
• Delegitimize: Undercut support for violent extremists by highlighting flaws or shortcomings
• Incentivize: Decrease costs and or increase benefits of nonviolent pathways to change
• No action
Examples

- **Deterrence**: Israeli government publication of lists of Palestinian extremists targeted for capture or extrajudicial killing
- **Co-potation**: Russian policy of “Chechenization”
- **Grievance alleviation**: Fujimori’s micro-development initiatives
- **Delegitimization**: U.S. counter-messaging targeting Islamic State support
- **Incentivization**: Young Arab Voices
Discussion: Connecting Policy Approaches to Desistance Pathways

• Which influence strategies are more likely to lead to:
  • Defeat?
  • Terrorist success?
  • Transition to nonviolent paths?
  • Loss of membership?
  • Loss of popular support?
  • Evolution to other forms of illegality?

• How may the geopolitical context influence what influence strategy options are available?

• How may the same influence strategies lead to different outcomes in different contexts?
Case 1: Lord’s Resistance Army

• Coercion
  • Military offensives and more targeted operations

• Deterrence
  • Hardening targets in Northern Uganda/increasing capacity of local communities

• Grievance alleviation
  • Development assistance to communities in Northern Uganda

• Incentivization
  • Amnesty offers, negotiations
Outcomes

• LRA still active, but attacks (in terms of number and lethality) have lessened
• Number of active forces substantially reduced, with defections and/or capture of multiple leaders
Discussion: Future Scenarios

• Which of the pathways are most likely and most enduring?
• Given the geopolitical environment, what policy levers are possible?
• Of these, what policy approaches are more likely to lead to specific outcomes? And are these desirable or not?
• Where and to what degree can United States and CJTF-HoA influence the approach taken towards LRA?
Case 2: Al-Shabaab

- **Coercion:**
  - Multiple and continuous military interventions result in loss of territory and feed delegitimization

- **Deterrence**
  - Hardening of key assets/targets

- **Delegitimization**
  - Loss of territory counters al-Shabaab’s image as a successful organization
  - Use of counter-messaging to prevent foreign support
Outcomes

• Loss of territory, but al-Shabaab still firmly entrenched in rural spaces
• Diffusion of attacks in region, in particular into Kenya
Discussion: Future Scenarios

• Which of the pathways are most likely and most enduring?
• Given the geopolitical environment, what policy levers are possible?
• Of these, what policy approaches are more likely to lead to specific outcomes? And are these desirable or not?
• Where and to what degree can United States and CJTF-HoA influence the approach taken towards al-Shabaab?