

## I†-† Understanding transnational criminal activity and what to do about it

Transnational threatening groups, "non military threats of strategic level" as we call them, we have to face now are more and more polymorphous, hybrid, protoplasmic and though very dangerous: they mix violent activities (criminal, political, ideological, religious), are more likely working on planetary patterns than on pyramidal chains of command and spread worldwide.

Their causes can be anything, from religious extremism to antiglobalization as well as sectarian beliefs or traditional organized crime. The means they use are very similar, usually the "low cost-high effect" we call terrorism.

The financing of these threatening entities is less and less state sponsored, with the exception of World's "gray areas" and more and more "private" or autonomous: laundered criminal money, "revolutionary tax" as well as donations turned in black money for criminal use.

At the end, these entities will alter our behavior and ruin what democratic societies have been trying to build for years.

The answer to these threats would be ñ†even if it's quite politically incorrect and against some of our principles†ñ intelligence based proactive actions: this is the price to pay to preserve our way of life and our freedom.

## II†-†Diverse hostage situations (in relation with terrorism)

Terrorism and hostage situations are linked from the beginning: it appears that through different means terror can be summed up to take hostages and to kill.

So, hostage situations can be divided in two main streams that are mixed together and coexist with killing actions.

One stream leads to explicit hostage situations: one person or a small group of persons is held in a confined situation as a lever to obtain something, money as well as a political move (reform or diplomatic change). It can last long or be short but always modifies the behaviour of those that face the situation.

The other stream is implicit hostage situation: an entire population is the hostage of terrorism (ie. terrorist group or a criminal group using terrorist methodsÖ) either directly or indirectly. Directly, it can be a national group (Kurds/PKK, Tamils/LTTEÖ) in a diaspora situation, or a sub-country in a revolutionary or civil war process (Basques/ETA, Northern Ireland before the truceÖ). Indirectly, it can be a whole country, even a group of countries facing a global terrorist threat (what we know now) where people live in fear and auto-restrain their freedom as well as the governing bodies that, with the rules they imagine to face the situation, reduce fundamental freedoms.

In all these cases, killing (individual or massive) can be as well an order or a punishment, but always the spring of the hostage situation: it triggers it or emphasizes it.

The only answer is to trust one's own people and fight back to eradicate the cause of the hostage situation.

## RESUME

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