



ESEM
ESCUELA DE SEGURIDAD
MULTIDIMENSIONAL-USP

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Course on

ILLICIT MARKETS AND ORGANIZED CRIME IN THE AMERICAS



MINISTÉRIO DA
JUSTIÇA E
SEGURANÇA PÚBLICA



Eurofront

Class

Organized Crime and Terrorism

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Introduction

Students will address the **characteristics of the crime-terrorism nexus** and the main regional differences, in addition to learning about the **cycle of terrorist activity**, and the interactions between crime and terrorism at each stage of the cycle. In this way, they will also learn about the **conceptual evolution of the crime-terrorism nexus** from its initial classification: cooperation, transformation and convergence to the current characterization: transactional nexus and organizational nexus, and finally the aspects that favor the nexus between crime and terrorism.



Concepts

Terrorism: According to the UN, acts of violence directed against civilians seeking political or ideological objectives are commonly understood as terrorism.

Terrorist attacks: These are the product of a long chain of actions and precise planning.

Transactional nexus: It implies the union of a criminal and a terrorist group to execute specific operational needs.

Organizational nexus: It is when criminal and terrorist activities occupy the same space and time.

Black hole syndrome: It is associated with a defined geographic area that lacks governance and security, where territorial dominance is generally assumed by groups that control the economy and illicit individuals.

Black hole: The convergence of crime and terror helps perpetuate conditions of extreme insecurity in a region where groups compete for control of economic and/or political power through the spread of violence and a series of criminal activities.

Institutions

United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI): It is a United Nations entity established in 1967 to support countries around the world in preventing crime and facilitating criminal justice.

Global Counter-Terrorism Forum (GCTF): The Global Counter-Terrorism Forum is an international meeting point for experts to reduce the vulnerability of peoples to the phenomenon of terrorism.



Class Content

The fall of the Soviet Union and the birth of the Information Age represented the beginning of the intersection between crime and terrorism.

The end of the Cold War and the consequent decline in state-sponsored terrorism opened the way for the emergence of alternative sources of terrorist financing, many of them criminal, such as drug trafficking, smuggling, extortion, and others.

Modern terrorists saw the need to diversify their funding sources to avoid relying on a single source of income. They recognized that relying on a single stream of funding, such as sponsorship from a state or charities, would leave their organization financially disadvantaged if that channel were eventually shut down by the authorities, so terrorists use various criminal modalities to advance their ideological goals.

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Any attack is preceded by a series of interconnected activities that form the backbone of any terrorist attack, such as: recruitment, radicalization, financing, training, logistics and planning, etc. The terrorist attack is not the end of the actions, the terrorists get involved in other activities after the attack, such as: evasion, escape, exploitation of the attack through disclosure in the media, etc.



Examples of the crime-terrorism nexus in the stages of the terrorist activity cycle:

- **Recruitment and radicalization:** the recruitment of adolescents, apology for crime, an apology for terrorism.
- **Financing:** drug trafficking, arms trafficking, money laundering.
- **Training:** illegal possession and carrying of weapons, apology for terrorism.
- **Logistics:** ideological falsification, forgery of travel documents, fraud.
- **Planning:** fraud, corruption, illegal migration.
- **Attack:** damage, homicide, bodily injury.
- **Evasion:** illegal migration, ideological falsehood, corruption.
- **Media exploitation:** misinformation, apology for terrorism.

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Since the 1980s, the relationship between terrorism and crime has emerged primarily as a matter of financing terrorist groups.

At the beginning of the 21st century, scholars in the field of terrorism classified the crossovers between the two into three different elements: cooperation, transformation, and convergence.



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- **Cooperation:** Situation in which criminal and terrorist groups develop alliances. These alliances can be informal, short-term and limited as a single transaction, or more complex, with the parties involved becoming long-term partners.
- **Transformation:** Situation in which a terrorist group first conceals its political objectives with criminal practices gradually, in which little by little the economic motivation supersedes the political one. Then comes the next step, which occurs when the profit becomes the only goal.
- **Convergence:** A situation in which a terrorist group sees distinct advantages and opportunities in operating as a mixed organization, in which both terrorism and crime play a central role.

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Suggested new concepts/categorizations that were introduced in 2019 through the **"Nexus Policy Toolkit"**, a document published and researched jointly by the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI) and the Global Counter-Terrorism Forum (GCTF), called the "Nexus Initiative".

This initiative categorized the interactions between crime and terrorism as: **transactional nexus and organizational nexus**.



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Transactional nexus

- **Alliances**, which would be the search for efficiency: each group begins to outsource services such as counterfeiting or the manufacture of bombs.T
- The **appropriation** of tactics: terrorist groups and criminals can imitate each other's methods.

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Nexo organizacional

- **Integration:** two forms, first an **alliance** between the groups that evolves and begins to collaborate more regularly and share objectives and methods; or second, that it is a targeted recruitment towards a terrorist cell, through the integration of a radicalized group of experienced criminals.
- The **Hybrid:** The group's crime and terror activities become equally important to the group and central to its existence.
- The **transformation:** this happens when the objectives and fundamental motivations of the group change to such an extent that the original "raison d'être" ceases to exist. That is, a terrorist group becomes criminal, or vice versa.

Class Summary

- Conceptual evolution of the crime-terrorism nexus
- The cycle of terrorist activity
- Nexus between crime and terrorism



Reference

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