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Terrorism Financing and State Responses A Comparative Perspective

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<http://hdl.handle.net/10945/43092>



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Terrorism Financing and State Responses A Comparative Perspective

Edited by Jeanne K. Giraldo and Harold A. Trinkunas

"This is the best book I have read on contemporary terrorist finance."

—Rohan Gunaratna,

Head, International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research Institute of
Defense and Strategic Studies, Singapore, and author of *Inside Al Qaeda: Global
Network of Terror*

"This is an excellent work, and the authors ought to be commended for addressing such a
difficult topic in so many interesting ways."

—John Horgan,

University of St. Andrews

A rash of terrorist attacks in the 1990s, all designed to cause mass casualties—the
February 1993 bombing of the World Trade Center, the March 1995 sarin gas attack in
the Tokyo subway, the April 1995 bombing of the Federal building in Oklahoma City—
seemed to signal the arrival on the scene of a new and more deadly kind of terrorism.
This was confirmed six years later in the September 11 attacks in New York,
Philadelphia and Washington, DC.

A new book by experts in public policy, national security, and criminal justice, *Terrorism
Financing and State Responses* (forthcoming from Stanford University Press in March)
explores how terrorist groups such as Al Qaeda, Hezbollah, Jemaah Islamiyah, and the
Taliban organize to raise, transfer, and spend their funds. It conducts a comparative
survey of terrorist financing and government responses to the problem in the regions
most targeted by global *jihadi* organizations, which include East Africa, Europe, Latin

America, the Middle East, and Southeast Asia. The authors discover that few governments have been able to effectively prepare for the shifting nature of the terrorist threat due to the transnational and increasingly fragmented nature of these organizations, such as the self-organizing Al Qaeda-inspired cells that have recently surfaced in Europe and Iraq.

The authors contend that financial and material resources are the life-blood of terrorist operations, and governments have correctly determined that fighting the financial infrastructure of terrorist organizations is the key to their defeat. Since the attacks of September 11, 2001, a good deal has been learned about sources and mechanisms used to finance the “new terrorist” organizations such as al Qaeda, who find themselves increasingly able to operate free from state or societal support, turning instead to diaspora communities and the drug, diamond and commodities trade. Globalization has allowed terrorist organizations to take full advantage of a highly integrated international financial system, the ease of moving personnel, and the use of the internet, cell phone, and satellite communication.

However, globalization poses challenges for the terrorists as well. The fact that terrorists raise a great deal of their funds through illegal activity means that they are also at risk of being either detected by police or being robbed by other criminal entities. And the international nature of terrorist organizations means that power becomes decentralized and it can be difficult to control the movement and activity of its members.

Since the 9/11 attacks on the United States, new policies have been devised to combat terrorism, and existing policies have been enacted with greater vigor than ever before, but all countries have not responded equally. The authors of this volume argue that each nation’s commitment to eradicating terrorist financing is driven by its own experience with terrorist attacks, but it is also constrained by the interests of its domestic constituencies most affected by the broad reach of new policies. The transnational nature of terrorist finance means that countries must work together to develop a common policy, yet sustaining international cooperation to implement such measures has proven difficult. They suggest that major powers should address the uneven implementation of counter-terrorism financing policies across the globe by deepening their own efforts while supporting and providing funds and training to countries lacking in resources.

Contributors include Jeanne Giraldo, Harold Trinkunas, Daniel Barlow, Anne L. Clunan, Victor Comras, Aurel Croissant, Thomas Johnson, John Lombardi, Matthew Levitt, Loretta Napoleoni, Nikos Passas, Raphael Perl, John Picarelli, Jessica Piombo, Moyara de Moraes Ruehsen, David Sanchez, Jacob Shapiro, Louise Shelley, and Phil Williams.

March 2007

384 pp.

\$24.95 (paper) 978-0-8047-5566-5

\$65.00 (cloth) 978-0-8047-5565-8

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