

VIOLENT NON-STATE ACTORS (VNSA)

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VNSA - General Info

- Primary, secondary, and tertiary conflict actors
- Intrastate, Interstate, and Non-state/Sub-state conflicts
- Violent Non-State Actors:
 - a) use violence to achieve their goals
 - b) are not integrated within formalized state structures
- Violence that involves violent non-state actors is often described as unconventional
- Violent non-state actors involved in a low-intensity conflict may prefer the status quo over negotiation and mediation because their power is much lower

Typology of War Participants

- 1. Members of the armed forces according to international law:
 - *Combatants* – members of regular or irregular armed forces
 - *Non-combatants* - not intended for combat duties (medics, clerics).
- 2. Civilians
- Real fighters in modern wars:
 - a) Conventional soldiers/army
 - b) Insurgents, guerrillas and rebels/partisans
 - c) Terrorists
 - d) Mercenaries, PSC/PMC
 - e) Foreign volunteers
 - f) Warlords
 - g) Child soldiers
 - h) Paramilitary units and death squads
 - i) Militias

Factors Affecting the Rise of VNSA

- End of Cold War and the emergence of a globalized world
- Socioeconomic factors and absence of goods
- Repressive politics
- Poverty and income inequality
- Weakness of security institutions
- State collapse
- Individual explanations (rural vs. urban, age, education, socio-economic status, unemployment, socio-psychological level)

VNSA Typology according to Williams

- Rebels/Insurgency
- Militia
- Paramilitary units
- Terrorist groups
- Warlords
- Criminal organizations and gangs
- Motivations and purpose
- Strength and scope
- Funding and access to resources
- Organizational structure
- Role of violence
- Relationship between VNSA and state
- Functions of VNSAs for members and supporters

VNSA Typology according to Ezrow

- Insurgencies
- Warlords and Marauders
- Paramilitary units
- Terrorist Organizations
- Private military companies
- Organized crime and gangs
- Motivation
- Strategy and tactics
- Funding and access to resources
- Organizational structure
- Scope and power
- Victims
- Legitimacy and popularity

Table III.1 Types of Violent Non-state Actors and their Key Characteristics

| Group | Motivation | Strategy and tactics | Key group threatened/victim | Organizational structure | Scope and power | Legitimacy and popularity |
|--|-----------------------------|--|--|---|--|----------------------------------|
| De facto state | Political: set up a state | Provide state services and armed defence; hold territory | State | Tightly organized; hierarchical | Very powerful; territorial control | High legitimacy |
| Political organizations with militant wings | Political: influence policy | Provide party platform and armed defence | State | Tightly organized; hierarchical | Somewhat powerful | High legitimacy; public support |
| Insurgency | Political: varies | Mostly armed conflict; hold territory | State and society | Somewhat tightly organized; somewhat hierarchical | Somewhat powerful; some territorial control | Some legitimacy |
| Terror organization | Political: varies | Engage the media; psychological warfare; kill civilians | Society | Tightly organized; somewhat hierarchical | Not powerful | Little legitimacy |
| Terror network | Political: amorphous | Engage the media; psychological warfare; kill civilians | Society | Cellular/loose; somewhat hierarchical | Not powerful | Little legitimacy |
| Marauding rebels | Economic/ opportunistic | Loot and pillage; kill civilians | Society (state may have already collapsed) | Loose | Not powerful; temporary control of some towns or villages | Little legitimacy |
| Warlord | Economic/ opportunistic | Loot and pillage; predation | Society (state may have already collapsed) | Somewhat organized around charismatic warlord | Somewhat powerful; some control over territory | Little legitimacy |
| Organized crime | Economic/ opportunistic | Corruption, crime and violence | State, society, individuals | Tightly organized; formerly hierarchical, now flatter hierarchy | Very powerful; some territorial sphere of influence; may control transactions and flows of goods | Little legitimacy |
| Gang | Economic/ opportunistic | Petty crime and violence | Individuals and society | Somewhat loose; somewhat hierarchical | Not powerful but becoming more dangerous | Little legitimacy |
| PSC | Economic/ opportunistic | Gun-for-hire; earn profit and maintain stability | State, other violent non-state actors | Tightly organized; hierarchical | Somewhat powerful but does not control territory | Little legitimacy |
| Paramilitary | Economic/ political | Armed conflict; possibly hold territory | State, other violent non-state actors, individuals | Tightly organized | Somewhat powerful; sometimes controls territory | Little legitimacy |

VNSA Typology according to Schneckener

Table 1: Types of Armed Non-State Actors

| | Change vs. Status Quo | Territorial vs. Non-Territorial | Physical vs. Psychological Use of Violence | Political/Ideological vs. Profit-Driven Motivation |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------|--|---|---|
| Rebels, Guerrillas | Change | Territorial | Physical | Political |
| Militias | Status quo | Territorial Non-territorial | Physical Psychological | Political |
| Clan Chiefs, Big Men | Status quo | Territorial | Physical | Political |
| Warlords | Status quo | Territorial | Physical Psychological | Profit-driven |
| Terrorists | Change | Non-territorial | Psychological | Political |
| Criminals, Mafia, Gangs | Status quo | Non-territorial | Psychological | Profit-driven |
| Mercenaries, PMCs/PSCs | Indifferent | Territorial | Physical | Profit-driven |
| Marauders, 'Sobels' | Indifferent | Non-territorial | Psychological | Profit-driven |

Insurgency

- The primary raison d'être of these groups is to achieve some political goal
- Territorial control
- Strategy - irregular attacks and war of attrition
- Hierarchical structure, in recent years there has been decentralization
- A threat to the legitimacy of the state
- Four basic types: **liberationist, separatist, reformist/revolutionary, and religious/traditional.**

Summary Points

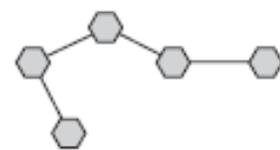
- Insurgencies have often been mistaken for terrorist groups.
- Insurgencies are much more powerful than terrorist groups, but they are also more constrained.
- Insurgencies often use terrorism as a tactic, but their primary strategy is to engage in armed struggle and to win over the hearts and minds of a constituency.
- Insurgencies have had to change how they fund themselves due to losses in state sponsorship.
- Insurgencies that want to secede from their host state and have control over a defined territory become de facto states.

Insurgency

| Insurgencies that commit acts of terrorism (hold territory) | Terrorist groups (do not hold territory) |
|--|---|
| Boko Haram (Nigeria) | ETA |
| IS (Syria and Iraq) | Baader-Meinhof Gang |
| FARC (Colombia) | Weather Underground |
| Al-Shabaab (Somalia) | Armed Forces of National Liberation (FALN) |
| Taliban (Afghanistan) | Red Brigades |
| PKK (Turkey) | Aum Shinrikyo |
| LTTE (Sri Lanka) | Abu Nidal Organization |
| Naxalites (India) | Abu Sayyaf |
| Haqqani Network (Afghanistan) | Jemaah Islamiyah |
| Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) (Philippines) | Japanese Red Army |
| Shining Path (Peru) | Egyptian Islamic Jihad |

Terrorist Organizations

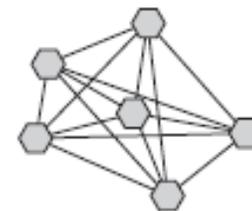
- A deliberate form of politically motivated violence
- Lack of territorial character
- Low threat to state legitimacy (very little public support)
- Strategy - psychological impact, shock a wide audience, attacks mainly on civilians
- Structure - currently mainly network
- Arquilla a Ronfeldt (2001) - Networks and Netwars: The Future of Terror, Crime, and Militancy
- Zelinsky a Shubik (2008) - hierarchy, franchise, venture capital, a brand



Chain network



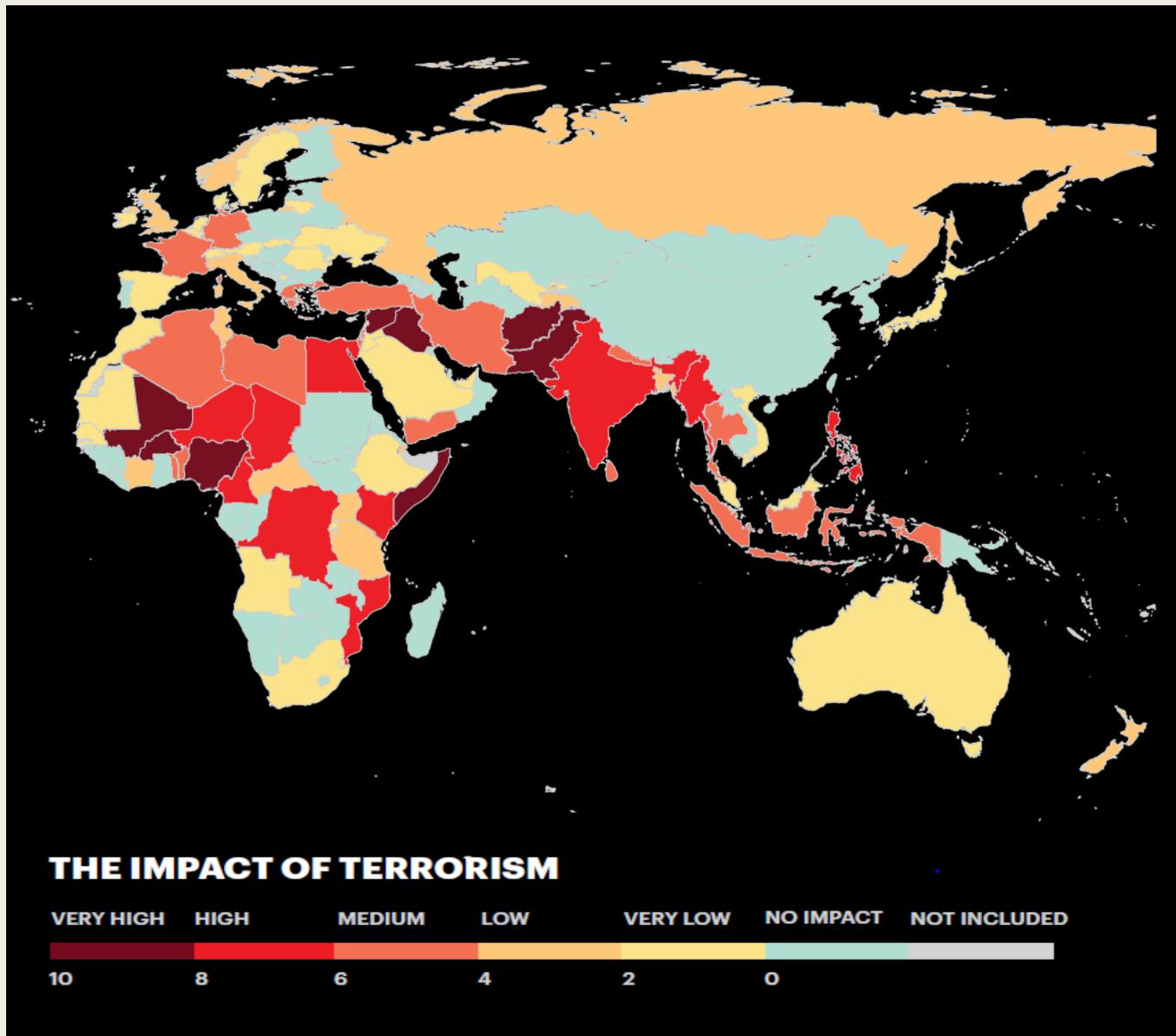
Star or hub network



All-channel network

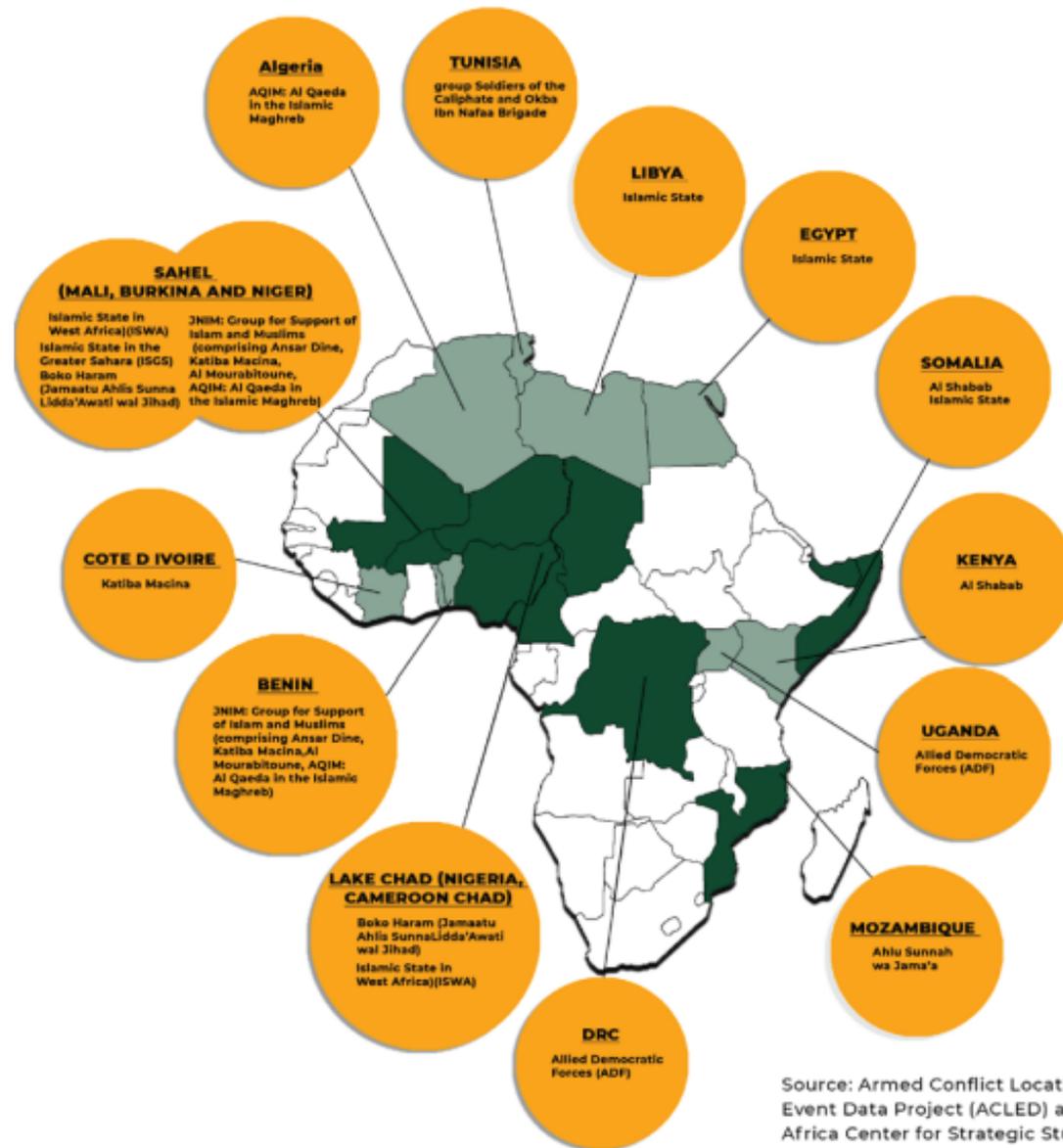
Figure 3.11 Basic types of networks (Arquilla and Ronfeldt).

Trends of Contemporary Terrorism



| RANK | COUNTRY | SCORE | RANK CHANGE |
|------|----------------------------------|-------|-------------|
| 1 | Afghanistan | 8.822 | ↔ |
| 2 | Burkina Faso | 8.564 | ↑ 2 |
| 3 | Somalia | 8.463 | ↔ |
| 4 | Mali | 8.412 | ↑ 3 |
| 5 | Syria | 8.161 | ↑ 1 |
| 6 | Pakistan | 8.160 | ↑ 3 |
| 7 | Iraq | 8.139 | ↓ 5 |
| 8 | Nigeria | 8.065 | ↓ 3 |
| 9 | Myanmar (Burma) | 7.977 | ↑ 1 |
| 10 | Niger | 7.616 | ↓ 2 |
| 11 | Cameroon | 7.347 | ↑ 1 |
| 12 | Mozambique | 7.330 | ↓ 1 |
| 13 | India | 7.175 | ↔ |
| 14 | Democratic Republic of the Congo | 6.872 | ↑ 2 |
| 15 | Colombia | 6.697 | ↓ 1 |
| 16 | Egypt | 6.632 | ↓ 1 |
| 17 | Chile | 6.619 | ↑ 1 |
| 18 | Philippines | 6.328 | ↓ 1 |
| 19 | Chad | 6.168 | ↔ |
| 20 | Kenya | 6.163 | ↔ |
| 21 | Iran | 5.688 | ↑ 5 |
| 22 | Yemen | 5.616 | ↓ 1 |
| 23 | Türkiye | 5.600 | ↔ |
| 24 | Indonesia | 5.502 | ↔ |
| 25 | Israel | 5.489 | ↑ 5 |
| 26 | Thailand | 5.430 | ↓ 4 |
| 27 | Togo | 4.915 | ↑ 49 |
| 28 | Benin | 4.840 | ↑ 23 |

Trends of Contemporary Terrorism - Africa



Warlordism

- Primarily economically motivated violence
- Strong territorial character
- Hierarchical structure - headed by a charismatic leader
- A threat especially to weak states
- Strategy - marauding terror, unpredictable and random violence

Summary Points

- Warlords and rebels emerge in states that are failing or have collapsed; they emerge in post-conflict zones.
- Warlords and rebels offer few political benefits and mostly prey on their populations.
- Warlords and rebels undermine state legitimacy but have no ability to administer.
- Warlords and rebels create tremendous security and instability though they claim to offer protection.
- Warlords and rebels have an interest in prolonging a low-intensity conflict to take advantage of the war economy.

Organized Crime and Gangs

- Economic motivation
- Often transnational
- Hierarchical and network structure
- Strategy - use of violence to achieve economic goals, attempt to avoid media attention, violence especially in times of uncertainty
- The effort to subvert the structures of the state - they do not want to completely destroy the state

Summary Points

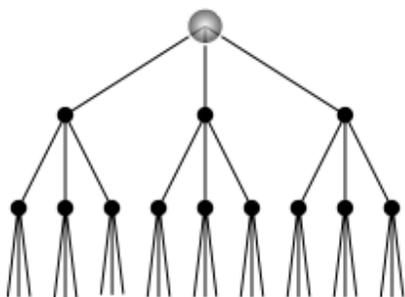
- Organized criminal groups are capable and complex organizations.
- Gangs have evolved and become much more violent and powerful, but they are not as sophisticated as organized criminal groups.
- While gang members are incredibly young and seek out gangs due to a need for camaraderie, organized criminals are often older and more skilled.

Organised Crime - Definition

- OCG defining characters according to Šmíd:
 - a) hierarchical structure/organisation
 - b) business continuity
 - c) corruption
 - d) violence
 - e) illegal activity
 - f) penetrating economic markets
 - g) membership exclusivity
 - h) non-ideological
- Mafia - type of OCG, arbitration of disputes/illicit agreements between criminals, political dimension.
- Gang - territorial character, less sophisticated methods and activities.
- Syndicate - illegal businesses on a larger, also international scale.

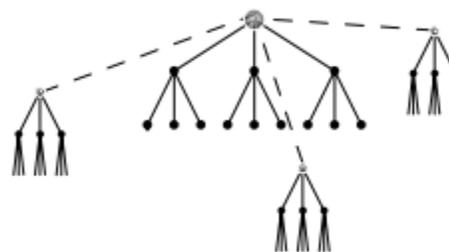
Typology of Organized Crime Groups

- **UNODC defining features:** structure, size, activities, level of transborder operations, identity, level of violence, use of corruption, political influence, penetration into the legitimate economy and level of cooperation with other organizations.
- **A) Standard Hierarchy**



- Single leader
- Clearly defined hierarchy
- Strong systems of internal discipline
- Known by a specific name
- Often strong social or ethnic identity
- Violence essential to activities
- Often have clear influence or control over defined territory

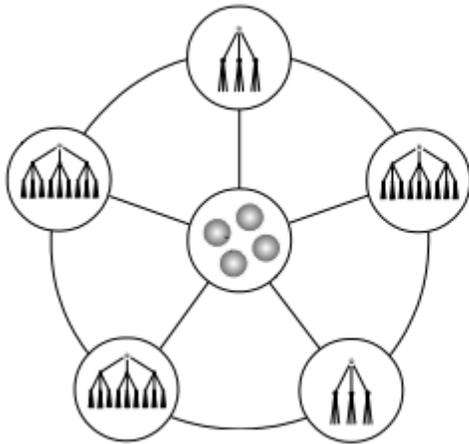
B) Regional hierarchy



- Single leadership structure
- Line of command from centre
- Degree of autonomy at regional level
- Geographic/regional distribution
- Multiple activities
- Often strong social or ethnic identity
- Violence essential to activities

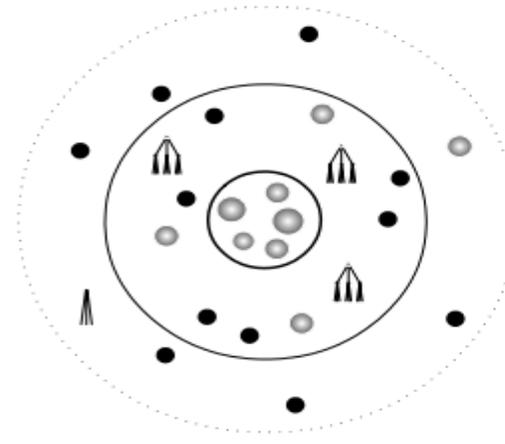
Typology of Organized Crime Groups

■ C) Clustered Hierarchy



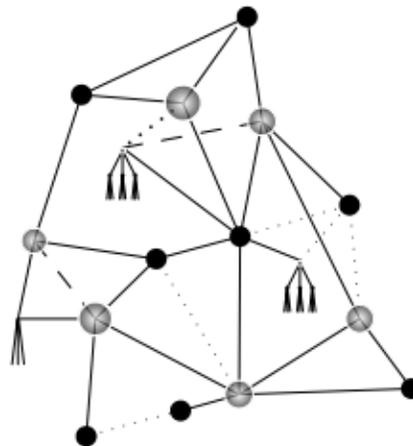
- Consists of a number of criminal groups
- Governing arrangement for the groups present
- Cluster has stronger identity than constituent groups
- Degree of autonomy for constituent groups
- Formation strongly linked to social/historical context
- Relatively rare

D) Core group



- Core group surrounded by a loose network
- Limited number of individuals
- Tightly organized flat structure
- Small size maintains internal discipline
- Seldom has social or ethnic identity
- Only in a limited number of cases known by a specific name

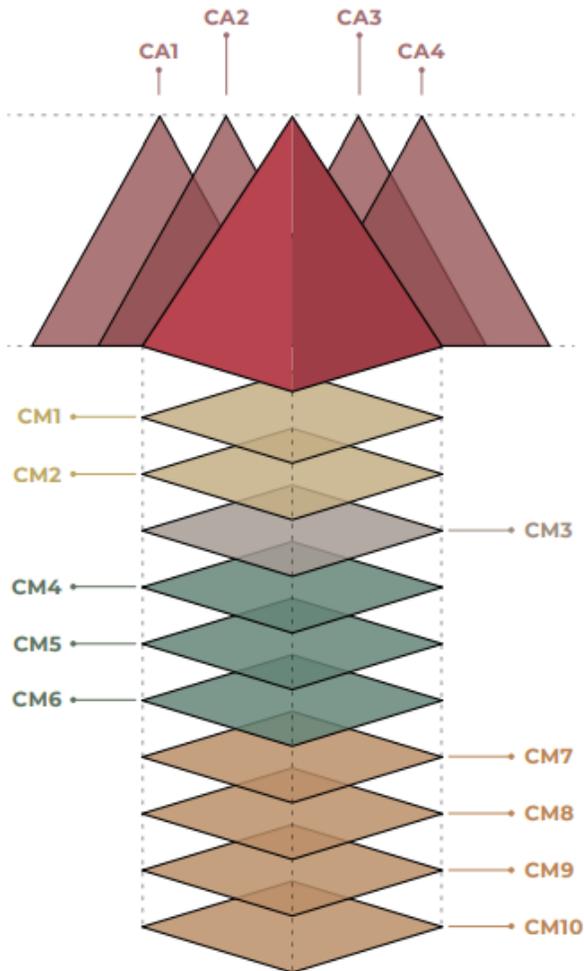
■ E) Criminal network



- Defined by activities of key individuals
- Prominence in network determined by contacts/skills
- Personal loyalties/ties more important than social/ethnic identities
- Network connections endure, coalescing around series of criminal projects
- Low public profile – seldom known by any name
- Network reforms after exit of key individuals

Global Organized Crime Index – Measurement and Typology

FIGURE 1.1
Criminality indicators



Criminal Actors

- ▲ CA1. Mafia-style groups
- ▲ CA2. Criminal networks
- ▲ CA3. State-embedded actors
- ▲ CA4. Foreign actors

Criminal Markets

- ◆ CM1. Human trafficking
- ◆ CM2. Human smuggling
- ◆ CM3. Arms trafficking
- ◆ CM4. Flora crimes
- ◆ CM5. Fauna crimes
- ◆ CM6. Non-renewable resource crimes
- ◆ CM7. Heroin trade
- ◆ CM8. Cocaine trade
- ◆ CM9. Cannabis trade
- ◆ CM10. Synthetic drug trade

Scoring thresholds – criminality

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
|----------------------------------|---|---|--------------------|---|-----------------------|---|------------------|---|----|
| NON-EXISTENT TO LITTLE INFLUENCE | | | MODERATE INFLUENCE | | SIGNIFICANT INFLUENCE | | SEVERE INFLUENCE | | |

Private Military Companies

- Economic motivation
- Territoriality is related to the type of task/contract
- Hierarchical structure
- Strategy - they do not have long-term strategies, it always depends on the contract
- Can threaten the state's monopoly on the use of violence, ineffective as a long-term solution
- Executive Outcomes, Blackwaters/Academi, Wagner Group
- United Nations Mercenary Convention 2001 (The convention extends on the Geneva Conventions Protocol I which in Article 47(1) states that a mercenary cannot be a lawful combatant or prisoner of war)
- Mercenaries: foreigner, independence – not a member of the army, economic motivation, obscure recruitment, short-term/ad hoc tasks, engaged in combat
- Military Providing Firms, Military Consulting Firms, Military Supporting Firms

Paramilitary units vs. Pro-government militia

- Typology of Pro-government militias: Competition, Provider and Emergency.

| | Paramilitary Forces | PGMs |
|------------------------|---|------------------------------------|
| Government link | Official | Semi-Official, Informal |
| Functions | Regular and Irregular Activities | Rather Irregular Activities |
| Autonomy | Low | High |
| Example | National Gendarmerie, France | Janjaweed, Sudan |

Thank you for your
attention