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III: Countering transnational threats

It is important to note that transnational security threats cannot, in the same way that traditional security threats are unable to, ever be entirely eradicated. It is for that reason, as Waever suggests, that desecuritization—the shifting of these issues out of emergency mode and into the normal bargaining process of the political sphere, that should be the aim of nation states and collective organisations. The removing of the existential threat (if there is one that is) is therefore the primary aim. It is thus central for the government to acknowledge the fact that the larger areas of the globe are ungovernable and efforts to identify those sectors that "matter" and those that do not. Godson labels these areas as 'zones of influence' and suggests that they will resemble nineteenth century informal empires or spheres of influence.

In the late 1990s, Lawrence Freedman proposed that those trying to counter transstate security threats would inevitably face the 'free-rider problem' whereby some governments would essentially pursue a 'free ride' on the back of the countering activities of other sovereign states. Although some transnational security issues have, in recent times, been taken up more willingly. In the case of transnational terrorism, the United Nations Security Council's resolution 1373 requires all member states to actively counter terrorism on its own territory. In this instance, the events of September 11th, 2001 affected the political will and pressure on states to address the issue. Indeed, to effectively address transnational security issues there has to be firstly a securitization of the transnational issue, and political support for engagement. The difficulty arises with those countries that, for instance, gain from the continued existence of transnational threats in some way. This is arguably the case with states like Columbia whose economy is reliant on transnational exportation of drugs.

Scholars have called for the need to work towards 'international norm' development whereby common standards are created committing states to collective and consistent responses to transnational threats. With this in mind, the United Nations through its convening power has frequently been cited as a possible forum. However attempts to construct globalised conceptions of security diffusing reciprocity and international responsibility face difficulties. Globalised conceptions of security have been, and are likely to continue to be, very difficult to operationalize. Some states, for instance, have accused the US and to a lesser extent the EU of 'policy laundering'. This involves the use of foreign and international fora as an indirect means of pushing policies that are unlikely to have won approval through the domestic political process.

After effective securitisation of the relevant transnational security issues, the policy approaches for addressing transnational security issues can be divided into either state-centric or non-state-centric responses. Many traditional security tools can be effective, if properly adjusted

to engage non-traditional threats. Most scholars group the instruments of statecraft into three basic categories: Military Force, Diplomacy, and Cryptodiplomacy.

State military force can be harnessed to counter transnational security threats through shifting from an understanding and operational readiness for Clausewitzian trinitarian warfare with its decisive battles to one of low intensity conflicts involving small groups and non-decisive battles. For instance, Special Forces can be incredibly valuable in capturing well-defended drug-traffickers, impeding drug transits and dealing with transnational militants and terrorists. In these circumstances, non-traditional forms of combat are required: engaging militarily with a high degree of lethality against targeted combatants while simultaneously committing low levels of collateral damage. In many ways however such activities constitute reactions to the transnational symptoms that require strong and direct force. The military can however also be used to address the issue of ungovernability in some states, through contributing to peace-keeping missions, in countries which have the potential for breeding transnational threats. Indeed the strengthening of the social and political institutions is believed to provide the foundations for sustained civil peace.

Diplomacy can also be an effective tool in the countering of transnational security threats through foreign ministries interacting with transnational actors and sub-state actors. It has been found that in the process of international securitising transnational issues, diplomats can be extremely significant. The role of diplomacy is in many ways wide-ranging and can be both bi-lateral and multi-lateral. Destabilised states which are vulnerable to transnational security threats can be provided life-lines by diplomat's sensitive and knowledgeable generation of inexpensive loans and international political capital for external assistance. Diplomats can also be effective in providing technical and knowledge-based assistance in areas such as the political process, labour relations, agronomy and education.

Cryptodiplomacy is also widely considered to have a number of key uses within the transnational security paradigm. Indeed each of its main elements is potentially valuable. For instance, human intelligence is central for determining both intentions and capabilities of non-state actors; it is especially useful when dealing with drug cartels and terrorist networks. Intelligence can also be used in an international coalition-building capacity through using its apparatus for liaison. Stronger and stable states can be of security assistance to those states that do not possess the intelligence infrastructure. The use of outside intelligence can be effective destabilised states in preventing, for example, presidential candidates from assassinations and judges from bombings. The use of covert action within a larger comprehensive program can also be useful.

While traditional modes security tools can to some extent be effective, it is generally argued that a concerted effort to involve the support of non-state actors is crucial to the success of countering transnational threats. Scholars often criticise those policymakers which interpret non-traditional security threats through the traditional lens of inter-state cooperation and coercion. Cusimano, Hensman, and Rodrigues are eminent proponents of the increased importance of the private sector in the effective combating transnational problems. Generally the non-state-centric policy approach is considered desirable due to its ability to influence activities that largely fall in the social and economic sectors, where the arms of liberal, capitalist

states find it difficult to penetrate. Advocates of this approach argue that new responses and infrastructure should be encouraged to make good use of NGOs and MNCs. In recent years however the effects of "contracting out" to non-state actors have become evident. Alexander Cooley has challenged the widespread opinion that market-based institutions in the transnational arena increase efficiency and effectiveness, especially in the cases of INGOs. Indeed the environments in which these transnational actors have to operate contain constraints—for instance, the issue of renewable contracts by Western governments. In such cases, Cooley found that there is a tendency to underplay government subversion of economic reforms, restrict information on ineffective projects. Reliance on PMCs and private mercenaries has been similarly found to cause transnational security issues. In this instance, the lack of cross-border legal restrictions on these private companies must be sufficiently addressed and acted upon in the near future.

Whilst traditional state-craft has been proven to provide some assistance in countering non-traditional security threats, it is ultimately only through a multi-lateral approach that any substantial difference will be made. Katzenstein noted that the traditional divisions between internal and external security have become blurred through recognition of transnational threats. Security decisions now have to be taken outside the traditional purview of state sovereignty, through the undertaking of an 'intermestic' approach. A considerable amount of progress has been made in this area through the development of transnational organisations and institutions. For instance, Europe has founded institutions such as Interpol, TREVI and the Schengen Accord and continues to invest in transnational committees and policy consulting groups. However ongoing research has shown that traditional perspectives on national security remain deeply entrenched, intellectually and institutionally within government agencies which affect involvement and cooperation with these transnational agencies.

IV: Concluding Remarks

The term 'transnational security' has gained greater use in recent years. It is generally used to refer to the way in which governments and non-state actors interact across and within state boundaries and affect the security of the state and its citizens. Failed states represent the greatest transnational security issue today with their ability to affect the stability and security of the international system through acting a breeding ground for other transnational security threats. Transnational organised crime and transnational terrorism can also be considered significant threats. A multi-lateral approach that involves the whole international community is required to counter these non-traditional threats. Traditional state-centric responses however have not become redundant, rather their modification to take into account the nature of these new threats and the involvement of non-state actors can see them, when coordinated with international responses, retain use.