SIGNIFICANT STEPS
TERRORIST GROUPS TAKE TO SHIFT INTO POLITICAL PARTIES

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Abstract

This research study, which examines the question, 'what are the significant steps terrorist groups take to shift into political parties,' asserts that every terrorist group transitioning into a political party proceeds through the same five steps:

1. The group must form, gather like-minded people, and have a goal. The group may also have established a political wing and/or politically-tied goals from the onset.

2. The group must be labeled a terrorist organization, accomplished through the proscription of the organization on at least one of the numerous globally-recognized terrorist lists.

3. The group has to meet a 'mutually hurting stalemate' with the host country. On its way towards the mutually hurting stalemate, the group may experience changes in leadership, increased utilization of nonviolent strategies, and reputation building amongst the citizens of the host country (and/or globally), all possibly signifying shifts in ideology towards one of peace. Additionally, events may occur that highlight the host country's inability to defeat the group militarily.

4. Trust and access have to be established between the group and the host country. An example of a significant event that highlights the presence of these traits is a properly-executed ceasefire.

5.   Negotiations towards a peace settlement take place and ultimately allow for the transition of the group into a political party. Peace talks may not be initially successful and/or may be given a strengthening factor due to spoiling events. Additionally, hardliners within the group may attempt to restart the conflict and may not adhere to the terms of the final peace agreement.

Utilizing foundational scholarly works and case studies on the Irish Republican Army (IRA), Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), and the Taliban, these five steps are given detail and examples, highlighting significant events that showcase a terrorist organization's transition and the transforming relationship it has with its host country.

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Introduction

How does a terrorist group end? Since the earliest examples of terrorism and terrorist groups, there have been several answers to this question, one being by transitioning into a legitimate political party. This transition demands that the group stops all violence and that law enforcement and global counterterrorism missions cease operations. The group can then voice its opinion openly with the aim to secure votes and representation within its host country's government. Making this transition is no easy task, as it demands a lot from both sides of the conflict. This research study examines the question, 'what are the significant steps terrorist groups take to shift into political parties?' Foundational scholarly works will be reviewed to create these steps, and case studies of two transitioned groups, the Irish Republican Army (IRA) and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), as well as one possibly transitioning group, the Taliban, will be analyzed in an attempt to detail the steps. With this information, policymakers and scholars alike will have a base of knowledge to help simplify this daunting process; sequential steps that capture and predict the dynamic shifts between a host country and a transitioning terrorist group will enable smoother engagements on the way towards peace.

Literature Review

The academic knowledge towards the research question is bountiful with examples of groups that have undergone the transition but significantly smaller when it comes to pinpointing significant, sequential, and constant events. There is, however, a sizable body of work focused on what these transition phases could be. Compiling the most widely agreed upon assertions, scholars maintain that, for a terrorist group to become a political party, these five sequential steps must be met:

1. The group must form, gather like-minded people, and have a goal.
2. The group must be labeled a terrorist organization, accomplished through the proscription of the organization on at least one of the numerous globally-recognized terrorist lists.
3. The group has to meet a 'mutually hurting stalemate' with the host country.
4. Trust and access have to be established between the group and the host country.

5. Negotiations towards a peace settlement take place and ultimately allow for the transition of the group into a political party.

The rest of the literature review will break down the academic work behind these five steps and then conclude with a short analysis on this foundation. But first, some definitions must be covered.

Definitions

The following terms need to be defined: terrorism, terrorist organization, proscription, armed groups, militants, host country, and political party. The definition for terrorism used here comes from Seth G. Jones and Martin C. Libicki, "terrorism involves the use of politically motivated violence against noncombatants to cause intimidation or fear among a target audience."[1] Something that will inherently set terrorist organizations (a collection of individuals belonging to a nonstate entity that uses terrorism to achieve its objectives) apart from armed groups is their proscription onto a globally-recognized terrorist blacklist.[2] Proscription is "the act of listing an armed group as a designated terrorist organization."[3] This often comes from a country or organization outside of the terrorist group's area of operations, highlighting its larger threat presence. Proscription is a step for transitioning groups, but it also serves as criterion for the groups that accurately fit the steps; those not proscribed fall outside the scope of the study. Armed groups are defined as non-state entities that "(1) challenge the state monopoly on coercive force; (2) operate outside effective state control; and/or (3) are capable of preventing, blocking or endangering humanitarian action or peace initiatives," as defined by R. Ricigliano and furthered by Sophie Haspeslagh.[4] Armed groups, militants (tagged as more "self-limiting" and able to hold "moral and ethical boundaries"), and other organizations could be labeled as terrorists if they meet the criteria for proscription; this is important to note when

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[1] Seth G. Jones and Martin C. Libicki, "How Terrorist Groups End: Lessons for Countering Al Qa'ida," *RAND*, (2008): 3.

[2] Jones and Libicki, "How Terrorist Groups End," 3-4.

[3] Sophie Haspeslagh, "Listing Terrorists: The Impact of Proscription on Third-Party Efforts to Engage Armed Groups in Peace Processes – A Practitioner's Perspective," *Critical Studies on Terrorism* 6, no. 1 (2013): 189, doi: 10.1080/17539153.2013.765706.

[4] R. Ricigliano, "Introduction: Engaging Armed Groups in Peace Processes," in *Choosing to Engage: Armed Groups and Peace Processes*, Accord 16, ed. R. Ricigliano (London: Conciliation Resources, 2005) 4-9, in Haspeslagh, "Listing Terrorists," 190-191.

conducting research for the significant steps in the transition of a terrorist group into a political party, as the groups could have different backgrounds and specific objectives, but, once labelled, they are terrorist organizations.[5] A host country is the state in which the terrorist group is located; it does not necessarily need to be where the group originated, but it does need to be the country on which it focuses its attacks and political objectives.

The definition of a political party needs to discern itself from the definition of a terrorist organization. Maurice Duverger, of Encyclopedia Britannica, defines a political party as a "group of persons organized to acquire and exercise political power," while Alan Ware specifies the party's attempt "to occupy political offices by putting forth candidates in electoral competitions."[6] With these broad definitions, a political party could be difficult to discern from a terrorist group that both creates violence and runs for office.[7] Therefore, a political party, for the purpose of this research study, is a group of persons organized to acquire and exercise political power, while also not conducting terroristic violence. There truly needs to be a full transition from violence to peace: no acquired arms and no straddling between terrorist group and political party.

Foundational Knowledge on Steps 1 and 2
1. The group must form, gather like-minded people, and have a goal.
2. The group must be labeled a terrorist organization, accomplished through the proscription of the organization on at least one of the numerous globally-recognized terrorist lists.

Scholars were very quick to highlight the first steps necessary for a terrorist organization to transition into a political party: a collective of people must organize and be labelled as a terrorist group. Though the steps outline what could be deemed simple criteria, these two steps set the foundation for what sets these transitioning groups apart from non-terrorist groups. The RAND study on the ending of 648 terrorist organizations, conducted

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5 Soliman M. Santos, "Counter-Terrorism and Peace Negotiations with Philippine Rebel Groups," *Critical Studies on Terrorism* 3, no. 1 (2010): 140.
6 Maurice Duverger, "Political Party," Encyclopedia Britannica, last modified March 1, 2019, https://www.britannica.com/topic/political-party; Alan Ware, *Political Parties and Party Systems* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 5, in Susanne Martin and Arie Perliger, "Turning to and from Terror: Deciphering the Conditions under Which Political Groups Choose Violent and Nonviolent Tactics," *Perspectives on Terrorism* 6, no. 4-5 (2012).
7 Martin and Perliger, "Turning to and from Terror."

by Jones and Libicki, claims that the "transition to the political is the most common way in which terrorist groups ended," with 43 percent in that category.[8] They hold that narrower political objectives within the terrorist group ultimately lead to a higher likelihood in transitioning towards politics.[9] Similarly, I. W. Zartman and G. O. Faure, further highlighted by Haspeslagh, stress that the creation of a political wing within the terrorist organization allowed for more negotiation opportunities and for these groups to be a part of the so-named "engageable terrorists."[10]

Regarding proscription, multiple countries and international organizations have created lists that contain foreign terrorist organizations (FTOs).[11] While proscription is a major step for a terrorist group's transition into a political party, the move onto an internationally-recognized blacklist comes with new challenges that will slow down the shift. According to the U.S. State Department, and further dissected by Haspeslagh, designation "stigmatizes and isolates designated terrorist organizations internationally…; heightens public awareness and knowledge of terrorist organizations; [and] signals to other governments our concern about named organizations."[12] The designation or even threat of designation could push groups to "desist from using terrorist practices," like Haspeslagh highlights in the case of the Abertzale Left from the Basque Country, which reduced its violent strategies when it was initially blamed for an al-Qaeda attack on Madrid, but it could also limit the amount of outside interaction third-party mediators, negotiation specialists, foreign dignitaries, and other outside individuals could have on dismantling the group's more deadly objectives and worldviews.[13] This proscription issue came into play for Sri Lanka and the Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), and showed some hypocrisy for the U.S. and European Union (EU), both of whom had proscribed the LTTE as a terrorist organization but pushed heavily for a peace deal between the group and its host country,

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[8] Jones and Libicki, "How Terrorist Groups End," xiii.
[9] Jones and Libicki, "How Terrorist Groups End," xiii.
[10] I.W. Zartman and G. O. Faure, "Why Engage, and Why Not?," in *Engaging Extremists: Trade-Offs, Timing, and Diplomacy*, ed. I.W. Zartman and G.O. Faure (Washington, DC:US Institute for Peace, 2011), 1-19, in Haspeslagh, "Listing Terrorists," 195.
[11] Haspeslagh, "Listing Terrorists," 191-192.
[12] U.S. State Department, "Foreign Terrorist Organizations," accessed November 29, 2012, http://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/other/des/123085.htm, in Haspeslagh, "Listing Terrorists," 192.
[13] Haspeslagh, "Listing Terrorists," 203.

despite the newly-formed legal issues with engagement.[14] Proscription can be an important tool to deal out justice but possibly delays peace if used rashly; "…when applied unwisely, terrorist lists might interfere with efforts to find a political solution to asymmetric intra-state conflicts."[15]

Foundational Knowledge on Step 3
  3. The group has to meet a 'mutually hurting stalemate' with the host country.

Once the terrorist group is proscribed, scholars hold that the next significant step in the group's transition into a political party is for it to meet a 'mutually hurting stalemate' with the host country, which Zartman, further elaborated by Veronique Dudouet, defines as "interparty material and perceptual (military, political, social, economic, symbolic, legal, etc.) asymmetry shifts, so that both adversaries recognize the other's ability to frustrate their chances of success."[16] Basically, both sides have to concede that the other side will continue to survive in some way, which can then allow for the possible moves towards negotiation and a peace settlement. The stalemate coincides with Hugh Miall, Oliver Ramsbotham, and Tom Woodhouse's concept, the 'ripe moment,' highlighted by Dudouet, which points toward the time, surrounding conditions, and leverage levels which both sides can deem as acceptable for talks.[17] Dudouet builds on this by claiming that the group will have more interest in negotiation when it has more leverage.[18] Leverage could come from various events and factors; Seden Akcinaroglu and Efe Tokdemir claim that some leverage could come from building the group's reputation within the host country,

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[14] Santos, "Counter-Terrorism and Peace Negotiations with Philippine Rebel Groups," 148.

[15] Veronique Dudouet, "Anti-Terrorism Legislation: Impediments to Conflict Transformation," *Berghof Conflict Research and Berghof Peace Support*, (2011): 1.

[16] I. William Zartman, *Elusive Peace: Negotiating an End to Civil Wars* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institute, 1996), in Veronique Dudouet, "Dynamics and Factors of Transition from Armed Struggle to Nonviolent Resistance," *Journal of Peace Research* 50, no. 401 (2013): 404-405, doi: 10.1177/0022343312469978.

[17] Hugh Miall, Oliver Ramsbotham, and Tom Woodhouse, *Contemporary Conflict Resolution: The Prevention, Management and Transformation of Deadly Conflict* (Cambridge: Polity, 2011), in Dudouet, "Dynamics and Factors of Transition from Armed Struggle to Nonviolent Resistance," 404-405.

[18] Dudouet, "Dynamics and Factors of Transition from Armed Struggle to Nonviolent Resistance," 404-405.

like terrorist organization Hamas did by "providing medical clinics, schools, charities, drug treatment centers, mosques, and youth and sports clubs" within the Palestinian territories.[19]

The push to the mutually hurting stalemate also demands that the terrorist organization be enticed to "revert to nonviolent means of struggle," which Dudouet expresses can be done through four methods: intragroup (internal changes like shifts in leadership and war fatigue), group-society (more integration with the group's surrounding society), group-state (the state increases in power), and group-international (the group loses foreign support).[20] Additionally, Philipp Lustenberger holds that "push factors" caused by the interaction of military, political, and economic dimensions of the conflict between the group and the host country will bring the terrorist organization to the mutually hurting stalemate, but the "way out" of negotiations will not be perceived as an acceptable path until the group believes the prosperous talks are a "legitimate and achievable alternative."[21] The group must sense the deadlock of violence it is in and seek the 'pull factors' towards the way out: a peace process "compatible with the group's worldview and interests," "basic confidence in the [host country] government as a negotiating partner," and "trust in the negotiation process."[22] If both sides acknowledge the mutually hurting stalemate and have been pushed and pulled to believe that negotiations are ideal, this ripe moment should set the stage for talks to start.[23]

Foundational Knowledge on Step 4

4. Trust and access have to be established between the group and the host country.

While the third step focuses on both sides moving towards the mutually hurting stalemate and internal perceptions within them that negotiation is a viable course, the fourth step deals with the two sides persuading the other to begin talks toward peace. Trust requires both sides believing the other is serious about compromising and working together toward peace; access focuses on the methods needed for interactions to actually take place

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[19] Seden Akcinaroglu and Efe Tokdemir, "To Instill Fear or Love: Terrorist Groups and the Strategy of Building Reputation," *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 35, no. 4 (2018): 356, doi: 10.1177/0738894216634292.

[20] Dudouet, "Dynamics and Factors of Transition from Armed Struggle to Nonviolent Resistance," 406.

[21] Philipp Lustenberg, "A Time to Fight, and a Time to Talk? Negotiability of Armed Groups," *Swisspeace*, (2012): 3.

[22] Lustenberg, "A Time to Fight, and a Time to Talk?," 3.

[23] Lustenberg, "A Time to Fight, and a Time to Talk?," 9.

and be productive. Contact between the sides can allow for "windows of opportunity for other types of engagement if and when they appear."[24] Dudouet claims that "engaging with non-state armed groups is an essential component of any peace process support strategy and a key ingredient to a peace agreement's implementation."[25] Trust that "the government is willing to negotiate in good faith and has the capacity to implement a possible agreement" is essential when trying to get these two conflicting sides to negotiate for peace.[26] Continued trust allows for both sides to reduce the aggressive operations against each other. Michael G. Findley and Joseph K. Young hold that "terrorism, a generally low intensity form of violence, can make civil war peace processes less likely to conclude in a peaceful, durable resolution."[27] That violence can become a "spoiler" of the negotiations, which scholars have argued both for and against with regards to its ability to halt negotiations.[28]

Foundational Knowledge on Step 5

5. Negotiations towards a peace settlement take place and ultimately allow for the transition of the group into a political party.

The final major step found within the scholarly work of a terrorist organization's transition into a political group is the creation and finalization of a peace agreement between the group and the host country. The talks can be of varying length and there can be any number of rounds.

The peace agreement is crucial and should be considered as such. Academics like Santos point out the short- and long-term importance of the peace process: short-term operations in terrorist organization-controlled/influenced areas can be worked in tandem with the host country government in the spirit of coordination and can build out long-term prosperity with the aim to address group grievances while also allowing peace to thrive.[29] Peace agreements allow for shared benefits between the two sides, not just the inclusion of

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[24] Haspeslagh, "Listing Terrorists," 199.
[25] Dudouet, "Anti-Terrorism Legislation," 3.
[26] Lustenberg, "A Time to Fight, and a Time to Talk?," 19.
[27] Michael G. Findley and Joseph K. Young, "Terrorism, Spoiling, and the Resolution of Civil Wars," *Journal of Politics* 77, no. 4 (2015): 1115, doi: 10.1086/682400.
[28] Findley and Young, "Terrorism, Spoiling, and the Resolution of Civil Wars," 1118.
[29] Santos, "Counter-Terrorism and Peace Negotiations with Philippine Rebel Groups," 147.

the terrorist group as a political party; Findley and Young highlight John Darby and Roger MacGinty's argument that "when combatants pursue a negotiated agreement, they are vying for a share in the outcome of peace accords, which include a variety of factors, such as property rights, electoral rules, disarmament, territory, and amnesty for political prisoners."[30] As examples of this, Jones and Libicki highlight El Salvador's 1992 Chapultepec Peace Accords, which led to the disarmament of the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) and "outlined reforming the armed forces and police into a legal political party," and the 1992 peace agreement in Mozambique with the Resistencia Nacional Mosambicana (RENAMO), which brought about a "cease-fire, disarmament and demobilization process, and multiparty elections."[31]

Gaps and Shortcomings

The academic body of knowledge points out that peace processes and political transitions are not the only possible conclusions for terrorist organizations; this may be a way out, but it is not the only end. Six alternate paths are constructed by Audrey Kurth Cronin and emphasized by Dudouet: "decapitation (through the capture or killing of the leadership), success (achieving the objective), failure (implosion, backlash, or marginalization), repression (through the use of force), negotiation (transition towards a legitimate political process) and, finally, a reorientation to other forms of violence (criminality, insurgency, major war)."[32] When Cronin's paths were reviewed by Maria Rasmussen, they were noted to be non-exclusive, and thus, not always the final ending path, but sometimes instead a shift or a sign of a reduction of violence within the terrorist organization.[33] Outside of these paths, Dudouet believes that groups have four paths that show a reduction in violence and transition: through a public decision to renounce violence, an adoption of "nonviolent methods as a primary strategy of struggle," creation of a

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[30] John Darby and Roger MacGinty, *The Management of Peace Processes* (Houndsmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2000), in Findley and Young, "Terrorism, Spoiling, and the Resolution of Civil Wars," 1119.

[31] Jones and Libicki, "How Terrorist Groups End," 23-24.

[32] Audrey Kurth Cronin, *How Terrorism Ends: Understanding the Decline and Demise of Terrorist Campaigns*, (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2009), in Dudouet, "Dynamics and Factors of Transition from Armed Struggle to Nonviolent Resistance," 404.

[33] Audrey Kurth Cronin, *How Terrorism Ends: Understanding the Decline and Demise of Terrorist Campaigns*, (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2009), in Maria Rasmussen, "Book Review of Audrey Kurth Cronin's How Terrorism Ends: Understanding the Decline and Demise of Terrorist Campaigns," *Political Science Quarterly*, (2009): 333.

"nonviolent resistance" after peace talks fail, and the launching of a nonviolent campaign.[34] Finally, Jones and Libicki assert that terrorist groups end by "policing, military force, splintering, politics, or victory."[35] Regardless of these many constructed paths, the only one to be focused on here will be tied to the five steps already outlined at the start of the literature review, but also flows through ideas such as Cronin's negotiation path, Dudouet's nonviolent resistance, and Jones and Libicki's politics path. What is important to note here is that what may seem like a completed transition may be another shift in the group's history, and may relate to one of the five steps not being completed.

The data found within the IRA, FARC, and Taliban case studies will aim to review notions such as Jones and Libicki's belief on narrower political goals and Haspeslagh's establishment of a political wing. Additionally, it will review the relationship between terrorist organization and host country, attempting to pinpoint events leading to the mutually hurting stalemate and ripe moment, which could overlap or contradict each other, as well as the importance of proper negotiations. The significant steps, as well as internal and external shifts, that show the transition of a terrorist group into a political party have not previously been specifically highlighted. The academic body of knowledge already available have put together a general framework and foundation, but more work can be done to enhance and add to the steps.

Hypotheses

Using the groundwork knowledge and five steps constructed from previous academic works, this section will display hypotheses for the comparison of the case studies on the Irish Republican Army (IRA), the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), and the Taliban. The null hypothesis is that the case studies are unable to find any validity with the earlier-established five steps, while the alternative hypothesis is that the case studies are able to find validity of some degree with the five steps.

Outside of that basic premise, six other hypotheses have been constructed that will be evaluated with the case studies in an effort to test the compiled steps. With their validity

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[34] Dudouet, "Dynamics and Factors of Transition from Armed Struggle to Nonviolent Resistance," 406.
[35] Jones and Libicki, "How Terrorist Groups End," 10.

or falsehoods, more knowledge can hopefully be gained on significant events that shape terrorist groups' transitions into political parties. The testing will also build implications for the steps' generalizability towards terrorist group cases outside of this research. At the least, testing these hypotheses will allow for greater understanding of the five steps and the creation of new ones.

1. The terrorist organizations will have shown politically-tied goals from the onset.
   a. This will be a check on a possible elaboration of step one, similar to Zartman, Faure, and Haspeslagh's belief that these terrorist organizations will have established political wings.[36]
2. There will be a change in leadership before the mutually hurting stalemate is achieved.
3. There will be observed events and/or announcements showing changes in the terrorist organization's strategies from violent ends to nonviolent ones. Tied to this, the group will have attempted to build its reputation amongst the population of the host country.
4. There will be events caused by the terrorist organization which will result in the host country's recognition of an impending mutually hurting stalemate.
   a. This is worded as such because it is unlikely that the host country will announce its inability to defeat the terrorist organization by other paths outside of negotiation.
5. At least one ceasefire will be requested by the host country and/or attempted by the terrorist organization with the aim to build trust between the two sides.
   a. This will be added as elaborative criteria for step four if found true.
6. If violence is exhibited while peace talks are ongoing, it will have some spoiling or strengthening effect on the negotiations.
   a. This will be a check on Findley and Young's notion of spoilers.[37]

To test the hypotheses, case studies on the IRA, FARC, and Taliban have been chosen. The IRA and FARC have specifically been chosen due to their long, and

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[36] Haspeslagh, "Listing Terrorists," 195.
[37] Findley and Young, "Terrorism, Spoiling, and the Resolution of Civil Wars," 1118.

seemingly complete, transitions, while the Taliban serves as a group without an apparent end. The groups' histories have been dissected using historical comparative analysis and case study analysis, highlighting events and sequences that point towards or away from the compiled steps and hypotheses.

Data

      This section will give brief overviews on various facets of the terrorist groups that hold importance towards assessing the research question. This section will not contain all-inclusive histories of these groups but instead will aim to cover those events and concepts which can then be analyzed and give weight or inconclusion to the hypotheses.

IRA

      The Irish Republican Army (IRA) and its aligned political organization, Sinn Fein, grew out of the Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB) in 1919.[38] The IRA was opposed to British control of Northern Ireland and the Anglo-Irish Treaty.[39] The group, operating under the 1916 Proclamation of the Republic of Easter, did not believe that the current governmental structure cared for Irish independence and aimed to force the British to evacuate and the government to adapt.[40]

      The IRA, founded by Michael Collins, and Sinn Fein, initially headed by Eamon de Valera, went through several transformations as its true objectives took shape.[41] Various opinions on Sinn Fein's future created divisions in the organization throughout the 1920s and 1930s, allowing for some semblance of separation from the IRA, until Sinn Fein swore allegiance to the IRA in 1948 and became the "official political voice of the Republican

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[38] Timothy D. Hoyt, "'Like a Phoenix from the Ashes': The IRA as a Multi-Generational Movement and Its Relevance for the War on Terror," *At the Interface / Probing the Boundaries*, no. 80 (2012): 197-198.
[39] Hoyt, "'Like a Phoenix from the Ashes,'" 197-198; John Horgan, "Arms Dumps and the IRA, 1923-32," History Today, no. 48 (1998): 11.
[40] Sophie Whiting, "Mainstream Revolutionaries: Sinn Fein as a "Normal" Political Party?," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 28, no. 3 (2016): 541, doi: 10.1080/09546553.2016.1155936.
[41] Tom Bowden, "The IRA and the Changing Tactics of Terrorism," *Political Quarterly* 47, no. 4 (1976): 427, doi: 1111/j.1467-923X.1976.tb02203.x; Horgan, "Arms Dumps and the IRA, 1923-32," *History Today*, no. 48 (1998): 11.

movement."[42] This change also allowed for the publication of General Order #8, which claimed that the IRA was only focusing its violent efforts in the "'occupied territory' of Northern Ireland" and "provided a means of political activism" within the Irish government.[43] Early political success for Sinn Fein was marginal at best, with its small cluster of support allowing for participation in the 1957, 1969, and 1986 elections for the Irish Dail government.[44] Sinn Fein became "increasingly involved in local politics" during the 1970s and 1980s, climbed to new fame in 1981 with electoral success, and allowed for the 'bullet and ballot box' policy, which pushed for a continued armed campaign amidst campaigning for the Irish Parliament.[45] This change, coming from IRA Army Council leaders Gerald "Gerry" Adams and Martin McGuinness, caused another split in the IRA/Sinn Fein and allowed for more moderate objectives.[46] This also shifted Sinn Fein from subordinate organization to partner.[47]

The IRA was seen as a violent terrorist organization because of its many attacks throughout the 20th century. John Horgan claimed that between 700 and 2,000 people had been killed by the IRA in the early 1920s.[48] The group had conducted a series of bombings in 1939 and 1940, and arm raids in the early 1950s "aimed expressly at Northern Ireland," but it is most notorious for the violence enacted between 1969 and 1999, known as the Troubles, when the IRA made one last attempt to force the British occupiers out of Northern Ireland, killing about 1,500 people.[49] By 1970, the IRA and its splinter groups were labeled as terrorist organizations by the British Home Office.[50] The 1987 Remembrance Day parade bombing and several "high-profile bomb attacks in London" in

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[42] Horgan, "Arms Dumps and the IRA, 1923-32," *History Today*, no. 48 (1998): 12; Timothy M. O'Neil, "Waging the Economic War: The IRA, Fianna Fail, and the Boycott British Campaign, 1932-33," *New Hibernia Review* 21, no. 2 (2017): 44. doi: 10.1353/nhr.2017.0014; Hoyt, "'Like a Phoenix from the Ashes,'" 197-198, 201.

[43] Hoyt, "'Like a Phoenix from the Ashes,'" 201.

[44] Hoyt, "'Like a Phoenix from the Ashes,'" 197-198, 201-202.

[45] Hoyt, "'Like a Phoenix from the Ashes,'" 206.

[46] Hoyt, "'Like a Phoenix from the Ashes,'" 206.

[47] Whiting, "Mainstream Revolutionaries," 543.

[48] Horgan, "Arms Dumps and the IRA, 1923-32," *History Today*, no. 48 (1998): 11.

[49] Hoyt, "'Like a Phoenix from the Ashes,'" 201-202.

[50] Kathryn Gregory, "Provisional Irish Republican Army (IRA) (aka. PIRA, "The Provos," Oglaigh na hEireann) (UK Separatists)," Council on Foreign Relations, last modified March 16, 2010, https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/provisional-irish-republican-army-ira-aka-pira-provos-oglaigh-na-heireann-uk.

the 1990s "inflicted huge financial costs" as the IRA continued to push for leverage in their favor during the time of the peace negotiations.[51] These attacks did not put them in good political standing, but they did put pressure on the British Government.

Ceasefires were put into effect at least four times during the IRA's run. An initial ceasefire started in 1923 and had some holding power while World War II became the higher interest.[52] After the 1969 split of the IRA into the Official and Provisional IRAs, the Official IRA called a ceasefire in 1972 and became mostly a political entity.[53] The Provisional IRA (PIRA), with Sinn Fein as its "mouthpiece," continued its armed campaign until a ceasefire was called in 1975, but Naill O'Dochartaigh believes this was a ploy to prepare for the IRA's 1976 "'long war' strategy," "aimed at pressuring the British government to re-engage in negotiations with the Provisionals," as the PIRA was looking for ways to negotiate with proper leverage.[54] This was also suggesting that the IRA understood a military victory could not be achieved, but a settlement could be found.[55] A final ceasefire was called in 1994.[56]

Initial talks for peace began in 1972 after the British dissolved the Stormont Parliament, but the PIRA, unwilling to compromise on anything but British withdrawal, caused this first attempt to fail.[57] Talks did not truly restart until 1989, when Northern Ireland Secretary of State Peter Brooke, under the council of British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, reached out to the PIRA and Sinn Fein for peace.[58] Pressure for peace was also coming from the Irish Government, the Social Democratic and Labour Party, and the United States.[59] Against peace was the Real IRA, a splinter group that aimed to end the

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[51] Hoyt, "'Like a Phoenix from the Ashes,'" 207; Naill O'Dochartaigh, "The Longest Negotiation: British Policy, IRA Strategy and the Making of the Northern Ireland Settlement," *Political Studies*, no. 63 (2015): 210, doi: 10.1111/1467-9248.12091.
[52] Horgan, "Arms Dumps and the IRA, 1923-32," *History Today*, no. 48 (1998): 11; Hoyt, "'Like a Phoenix from the Ashes,'" 200-201.
[53] Hoyt, "'Like a Phoenix from the Ashes,'" 205.
[54] Whiting, "Mainstream Revolutionaries," 542; O'Dochartaigh, "The Longest Negotiation," 204-206.
[55] O'Dochartaigh, "The Longest Negotiation," 214, 216.
[56] Hoyt, "'Like a Phoenix from the Ashes,'" 207.
[57] Hoyt, "'Like a Phoenix from the Ashes,'" 206.
[58] O'Dochartaigh, "The Longest Negotiation," 209-210.
[59] Hoyt, "'Like a Phoenix from the Ashes,'" 207.

peace talks in 1998 with a bombing; instead, the IRA's claimed separation from the organization aided in bringing the deal closer to its conclusion.[60]

The PIRA, along with its political wing, Sinn Fein, signed the Good Friday Agreement in April 1998. Sinn Fein's lead negotiator, McGuinness, had helped transition the terrorist organization into what, as of 2020, has become a substantial political party.[61]

FARC

The FARC was founded in 1964 by scorned peasants, two being Manuel Marulanda Velez and Jacobo Arenas, who had emerged from revolts held against large landowners throughout the 1920s and 1930s, and felt repressed by the Colombian Government; the group also consisted of liberal guerillas and communists who also felt political exclusion.[62] Operation Marquetalia in the same year served as the platform to develop the group's first objectives, a "call for agrarian reform" and "political participation for rural and marginalized populations in Colombia," and created the political strategy that Alexandra Phelan claims it mostly maintained throughout its tenure.[63] The FARC's ability to connect with and fight for various forms of struggle and oppressed people framed the organization's military and political strategies.[64] It was these ideals that pushed the group to become an insurgency and challenge the Colombian Government.[65]

The FARC announced in 1983 that there was a need for the group to participate in Colombia's elections.[66] Its first political party attempt, the Union Patriotica (UP), was

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[60] Findley and Young, "Terrorism, Spoiling, and the Resolution of Civil Wars," 1116; Rasmussen, "Book Review of Audrey Kurth Cronin's How Terrorism Ends," 333.

[61] Sophie Elmhirst, "On the Campaign Trail to Become President of Ireland, a Smiling Martin McGuinness Cannot Escape His Past: 'I'd have been Ashamed Not to Join the IRA,'" *New Statesman*, no. 140 (2011): 34; Whiting, "Mainstream Revolutionaries," 545.

[62] Alfredo Molano, "The Evolution of the FARC: A Guerrilla Group's Long History," *North American Congress on Latin America (NACLA)* 32, no. 2 (2000): 279, 281, doi: 10.1080/10714839.2018.1525054; Emma Montoya, "The Cocaine Trade and the Transformation of the FARC," *Journal of Undergraduate International Studies*, no. 19 (2015): 29; Thomas E. Flores and Juan F. Vargas, "Colombia: Democracy, Violence, and the Peacebuilding Challenge," *Conflict Management and Peace Science*, no. 36 (2018): 583, doi: 10.1177/0738894218787786.

[63] Alexandra Phelan, "Engaging Insurgency: The Impact of the 2016 Colombian Peace Agreement on FARC's Political Participation," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 42, no. 9 (2019): 837, 839-840, doi: 10.1080/1057610X.2018.1432027.

[64] Phelan, "Engaging Insurgency," 840.

[65] Montoya, "The Cocaine Trade and the Transformation of the FARC," 29.

[66] Phelan, "Engaging Insurgency," 842.

created in 1984 and gained "significant parliamentary representation" in 1986.[67] The victory was short-lived, however, as the UP was all but destroyed as many of its members were killed by the guerillas within the United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (AUC).[68] After that, the FARC "believed participation in Colombian politics would be impossible" and turned more towards "narco-trafficking."[69] The leadership of the FARC decentralized around 1998, which further repressed the group's political goals in favor of economic and military ones.[70] Despite those shifts, the FARC in 2000 created the Clandestine Colombian Party (PCCC) and the Bolivarian Movement for the New Colombia (MBNC) to solicit favor from neighboring urban areas and build support for its cause.[71] Within the areas the FARC controlled, the organization acted as a "replacement of the Colombian government" by "providing services;" "ensuring protection;" "educating;" "providing food, healthcare, and security;" and by "establishing police and judicial systems."[72] The organization created its own system of order and had the means to finance it, too.

The "FARC was established on political grievances, but became greedy and predatory over time because of links to drug trafficking activities;" the shift towards narcotics emphasized challenges within the organization and weariness from facing obstacles to the FARC's goals.[73] Susan Virginia Norman claims that the FARC shifted towards drugs over three distinct periods, from "an initial reluctance to tolerate drug market activities (1977-1981), to a purely regulatory approach (1982-1990), and finally to vertical integration into drug markets (1991-2014)."[74] Whether it be due to a shift in priorities or because the decentralized FARC allowed for lower-status members to venture into the economic opportunity, "profit-seeking eclipsed political goals."[75] Getting out of the drug

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[67] Molano, "The Evolution of the FARC," 280-281.

[68] Montoya, "The Cocaine Trade and the Transformation of the FARC," 32; Susan Virginia Norman, "Narcotization as Security Dilemma: The FARC and Drug Trade in Colombia," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 41, no. 8 (2018): 648.

[69] Montoya, "The Cocaine Trade and the Transformation of the FARC," 32.

[70] Phelan, "Engaging Insurgency," 843.

[71] Montoya, "The Cocaine Trade and the Transformation of the FARC," 32.

[72] Montoya, "The Cocaine Trade and the Transformation of the FARC," 33-34.

[73] Norman, "Narcotization as Security Dilemma," 642-643.

[74] Norman, "Narcotization as Security Dilemma," 653.

[75] Norman, "Narcotization as Security Dilemma," 653.

business was challenging for the FARC, which was able to establish an exit during its peace talks in May 2014.[76]

The FARC was also notorious for kidnappings and killings of Colombian Government personnel. Colombian President Santos announced in 2010 that about 460 soldiers and police members had been killed, and over 2,000 wounded, in skirmishes with the FARC just that year.[77] This combination and continuation of clashes with armed personnel and a vastly growing drug enterprise placed the FARC on the U.S. State Department's list of Foreign Terrorist Organizations on 8 October, 1997.[78]

On the journey towards a peace agreement, the FARC entered into at least two ceasefires. As a part of the 1984 Uribe Accord between the FARC and Colombian President Betancur, the FARC renounced their use of kidnapping and agreed to a ceasefire, which lasted until 1986.[79] It broke because of the attacks by the AUC on the UP.[80] The FARC entered into a final ceasefire in June 2016.[81]

The FARC's earliest round of peace talks began in 1982 with Colombian President Betancur's Peace Commission; the short-lived deal ended as their ceasefire did in 1986.[82] Interest in further peace talks did not occur until 1994, when the FARC placed conditions it wanted met by the Colombian President Samper administration.[83] Samper would accept some of those terms, but peace talks did not resume until 1998, with Colombian President Pastrana conducting negotiations with the FARC.[84] These rounds of talks also did not last long as shifts in public support towards the group clashed with an increase in military

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[76] Norman, "Narcotization as Security Dilemma," 638.
[77] "Santos revela que unos 460 militares y policías han muerto en combate en 2010." El Espectador, last modified December 20, 2010, https://www.elespectador.com/noticias/judicial/santos-revela-que-unos-460-militares-y-policias-han-muerto-en-combate-en-2010/.
[78] U.S. State Department Bureau of Counterterrorism, "Foreign Terrorist Organizations," accessed June 18, 2020, https://www.state.gov/foreign-terrorist-organizations/.
[79] Norman, "Narcotization as Security Dilemma," 648; Molano, "The Evolution of the FARC," 280-281.
[80] Montoya, "The Cocaine Trade and the Transformation of the FARC," 32; Norman, "Narcotization as Security Dilemma," 648.
[81] Flores and Vargas, "Colombia," 582.
[82] Molano, "The Evolution of the FARC," 280-281.
[83] Molano, "The Evolution of the FARC," 283.
[84] Molano, "The Evolution of the FARC," 283; Norman, "Narcotization as Security Dilemma," 652-653.

oppression on the group.[85] Emma Montoya claims that the supporters who had cheered for the FARC in 1996 had turned against the group by 2000 and marched against the FARC in 2008.[86] With more leverage lost on the FARC's side, in 2012, the final series of peace talks began between the FARC and the Colombian Government.[87] FARC leader Rodrigo Londono Echeverri, a.k.a. Timochenko, who had replaced Alfonso Cano after his death in 2011, pushed for talks; Timochenko had written to Colombian President Santos expressing the group's interest in peace negotiations.[88] The negotiations went fairly smoothly, but the FARC did kill about seven Colombian soldiers and wound five more in Southern Colombia while the peace talks were continuing in 2013.[89] An agreement to leave behind the drug trade was made in 2014 and the FARC's Tenth Conference in 2016 re-emphasized the group's goal to push for the rights of oppressed people and transition into a political party.[90]

The Final Accord for the Termination of the Conflict and the Construction of a Stable and Durable Peace was signed by the FARC and the Colombian Government in November 2016.[91] An earlier deal had been rejected in October.[92] The FARC became the Common Alternative Revolutionary Force (still FARC) in August 2017, a political party that was "guaranteed representation in Congress for two periods."[93] Despite a small attempted uprising in August 2019 by some of the FARC's members, the organization's fighting force and support network, about 13,000 people, was demobilized.[94]

Taliban

The Taliban held power in its host country, Afghanistan, between 1996 and 2001 before being ousted by a U.S.-led coalition.[95] The group traces its roots to Pakistan in the

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[85] Montoya, "The Cocaine Trade and the Transformation of the FARC," 34; Phelan, "Engaging Insurgency," 843.
[86] Montoya, "The Cocaine Trade and the Transformation of the FARC," 34.
[87] Flores and Vargas, "Colombia," 582.
[88] "Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC)," *Activist Groups & Political Organizations*, (2014): 1.
[89] Associated Press, "Colombia: Soldiers Die in Rebel Fight," New York Times, last modified February 13, 2013, https://www.nytimes.com/2013/02/14/world/americas/colombia-soldiers-die-in-rebel-fight.html.
[90] Norman, "Narcotization as Security Dilemma," 638; Phelan, "Engaging Insurgency," 836-837.
[91] Phelan, "Engaging Insurgency," 836-837.
[92] Flores and Vargas, "Colombia," 582.
[93] Phelan, "Engaging Insurgency," 836-837; Flores and Vargas, "Colombia," 581-582.
[94] Enzo Nussio, "The Colombian Trap: Another Partial Peace," *CSS Analyses in Security Policy*, no. 258 (2020): 2; Nussio, "The Colombian Trap," 1.
[95] Ashley Jackson, "The Taliban's Fight for Hearts and Minds," *Foreign Policy*, (2018): 44; "Who are the Taliban?," BBC, last modified 27 February 2020, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-south-asia-11451718.

1990s.[96] The Taliban, embracing a strict and more punitive version of Sharia law, used the withdrawal of Soviet Union troops to claim control of Afghan territory.[97] In 1996, Afghan President Rabbani was overthrown and the Taliban built up their control over the country.[98] Though strict, the Taliban were also known for "stamping out corruption, curbing lawlessness and making the roads and the areas under their control safe for commerce to flourish." Once the Taliban was accused of harboring Osama Bin Laden after al-Qaeda's attack on the World Trade Center in 2001, the U.S.-led coalition removed the group from power in a number of months.[99] Since then, the Taliban has aimed to regain some semblance of power back in the country while removing the perceived "puppet regime" government, which maintains strong collaboration with the U.S. and gained authority after the Taliban's removal.[100] The Taliban is aiming to become a "legitimate political movement" for Afghanistan, "able to administer services and govern the country."[101]

Outside of the Taliban's governing of Afghanistan in the late 1990s, another event that emphasized the group's interest in rejoining the political environment was its 2011 opening of an office in Doha, Qatar, with the intention to use it as a hub for external collaboration and as a negotiation space.[102] The Taliban was also building its influence over Afghanistan internally, transforming from an insurgency into a "shadow state."[103] Its change in strategy may have also been seen in its leadership, starting with Mullah Mohammad Omar heading the Taliban until his death in 2013, which was concealed by Mullah Mohammad Mansour until 2015, at which point Mullah Mohammad Mansour

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[96] BBC, "Who are the Taliban?"

[97] BBC, "Who are the Taliban?"

[98] BBC, "Who are the Taliban?"

[99] BBC, "Who are the Taliban?"

[100] Khalid Iqbal, "Competing Influences over Afghan Peace Process: Challenges and the Way Forward," *Defence Journal*, (2019): 68.

[101] Jackson, "The Taliban's Fight for Hearts and Minds," 44.

[102] Jackson, "The Taliban's Fight for Hearts and Minds," 44; Ashok Behuria, Yaqoob Ul Hassan, and Sanya Saroha, "US-Taliban Talks for Afghan Peace: Complexities Galore," *Strategic Analysis*, no. 43 (2019): 129, doi: 10.1080/09700161.2019.1595483.

[103] Jackson, "The Taliban's Fight for Hearts and Minds," 45.

became the Taliban's emir, until his death in 2016.[104] After that, Mawlawi Hibatullah Akhundzada took charge over the group.[105]

The United Nations (UN), because of the Taliban's links to terrorism, beginning first with its takeover of Afghanistan throughout the 1990s and building with its connection and support to al-Qaeda, placed initial sanctions on the Taliban in 1999, two years before it was pushed out of political power.[106] As the conflict continued and the group remained entrenched against the Afghan Government and the U.S.-led coalition, the UN made separate resolutions highlighting the Taliban's individual ties to terrorism in 2000, 2002, and 2011.[107]

Regarding peace talks, the first iteration between the Taliban and the Afghan Government was in 2005; Afghan President Karzai held a Peace and Reconciliation Commission, which aimed to get Taliban members to "surrender and reintegrate into society," but the talks did not take and ended by 2007 with an understanding that the Taliban felt only negotiations with the U.S. were warranted, instead of the perceived "illegitimate 'puppet regime'" in Afghanistan.[108] The war between the Taliban and the Afghan coalition raged on as the U.S. sent in 33,000 more troops in 2009 in an attempt to achieve victory over the terrorist organization.[109]

A shift was seen in the war effort when the U.S. made attempts to establish a "line of communication with the Taliban" in 2011 and the Taliban built their Doha office.[110] Unofficial talks began in 2015 through Pugwash and larger meetings started in 2016, allowing the Quadrilateral Coordination Group (QCG), consisting of Pakistan, Afghanistan, China, and the U.S., to begin a "dialogue for resolving the Afghan

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[104] Jackson, "The Taliban's Fight for Hearts and Minds," 45.
[105] "Afghan Taliban Announce Successor to Mullah Mansour," BBC, last modified May 25, 2016, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-36375975.
[106] United Nations Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, "2020 Facts Sheets," United Nations Security Council, last modified February 10, 2020, https://www.un.org/securitycouncil/sites/www.un.org.securitycouncil/files/subsidiary_organs_factsheets .pdf; BBC, "Who are the Taliban?"
[107] United Nations Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, "2020 Facts Sheets."
[108] Behuria, Hassan, and Saroha, "US-Taliban Talks for Afghan Peace," 129.
[109] Jackson, "The Taliban's Fight for Hearts and Minds," 45.
[110] Behuria, Hassan, and Saroha, "US-Taliban Talks for Afghan Peace," 129.

conflict."[111] These talks, however, halted in 2017 after the Taliban and Pakistan expressed no interest in further negotiations.[112]

Before the most recent series of negotiations, as of mid-2020, could begin, the first ceasefire was conducted by the Taliban, in 2018, showing the group's intention to reduce their offensives against Afghan citizens, but also its aim to continue challenging foreign forces.[113] A few months after the ceasefire was announced, U.S. President Trump "announced his decision to withdraw U.S. troops from Afghanistan."[114] Seizing the opportunity, the Taliban joined the U.S. and others for several talks; at first, only verbal agreement that the Taliban "would not allow any anti-U.S. group to operate in the areas under their control" and that the Taliban would "stop attacking foreign troops" was given.[115] The process was slow, but talks continued between Zalmay Khalilzad, the U.S.'s special envoy, and a newly-released (since 2018) Mullah Abdul Ghani Barader, a co-founder of the Taliban.[116] The talks proved to be challenging because each side was looking for something different; the Taliban, aiming to gain international legitimacy through the negotiations, wanted nothing more than the withdrawal of foreign troops, and would not budge or move forward with an intra-Afghan peace deal until that was settled.[117] Talks continued in February and March 2019 but stopped when the Taliban claimed to have killed 61 combatants.[118] Despite this attack and the Taliban's unwavering spirit, intra-Afghan negotiations were held in July 2019.[119]

As of June 2020, the Taliban's transition is not complete. Talks continue as the two sides work towards a compromise worthy of ending the conflict. The Taliban has shown its ability to help the U.S. by coordinating attacks on the Islamic State of Iraq and ash-

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[111] Behuria, Hassan, and Saroha, "US-Taliban Talks for Afghan Peace," 129.

[112] Behuria, Hassan, and Saroha, "US-Taliban Talks for Afghan Peace," 129.

[113] "Afghan Taliban Agree Three-Day Ceasefire – Their First," BBC, last modified June 9, 2018, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-44423032.

[114] Dr. Hamid Hussain, "Afghanistan at Another Crossroad," *Defence Journal*, no. 22 (2020): 40.

[115] Hussain, "Afghanistan at Another Crossroad," 40.

[116] Hussain, "Afghanistan at Another Crossroad," 40; Iqbal, "Competing Influences over Afghan Peace Process," 68.

[117] Hussain, "Afghanistan at Another Crossroad," 40; Behuria, Hassan, and Saroha, "US-Taliban Talks for Afghan Peace," 127-128; Cosmin Marian Potolinca, "The Clash of Stakeholders' Interests in the Afghan Peace Process," *Strategic Impact*, no. 3 (2019): 32.

[118] Behuria, Hassan, and Saroha, "US-Taliban Talks for Afghan Peace," 127.

[119] Potolinca, "The Clash of Stakeholders' Interests in the Afghan Peace Process," 32.

Sham-Khorasan (ISIS-K), but the intra-Afghan talks have yet to be thoroughly conducted.[120] Some of these movements have been at a halt due to the conclusion of the Afghan presidential elections, which placed both incumbent President Ghani and Abdullah Abdullah as heads of state, and the coronavirus global pandemic.[121] A sign of progress was seen in March 2020, as the U.S. and Taliban signed a four-page agreement stating that foreign troop removal and intra-Afghan dialogue is all forthcoming.[122]

Discussion

The case studies above, when studied against the initial null and alternative hypotheses, prove that the alternative holds weight. The IRA and FARC had transitions from terrorist organizations into political parties along the lines of the five steps. The Taliban, in comparison, has not gone through its full transition and can only be confirmed through step two, but has shown evidence that aligns with steps three concluding and step four progressing. Because of this, review of the other hypotheses will be most important when assessed against the IRA and FARC. The Taliban case will provide interesting commentary on a group in transition, as some insight can be found regarding the hypotheses, and can signal to what sorts of events could be seen from the Taliban and Afghanistan in the near future.

IRA

Looking first at the IRA and the weight it gives to the five steps, the group shows total accuracy when compared to steps one and two. The organization was formed with like-minded people and it was labelled a terrorist organization by 1970 by the British Home Office. An addition of note is that Sinn Fein, its mostly-connected political wing, was created at the same time as the IRA, providing some truth to the belief that terrorist groups that will ultimately transition into political parties contain a politically-focused cell within it. It is difficult to interpret how proscription affected the host country's strategy against the IRA, but it does seem like there was more international interest and pressure on the

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[120] Hussain, "Afghanistan at Another Crossroad," 40.
[121] Hussain, "Afghanistan at Another Crossroad," 41.
[122] Mehmood Ul Hassan Khan, "Taliban-US Peace Deal: Critical Analysis & Regional Realignments," *Defence Journal*, no. 22 (2020): 15-16.

situation as the final series of negotiations were started. Regarding step three, the IRA and its host country (a combination of Ireland and Britain) met a 'mutually hurting stalemate' through constant violence and death over the group's 79-year span. Additionally, the IRA faced its own hardships and splintered a few times due to changes in ideology and external challenges. Trust and access between the two sides is difficult to quantify, but the brokering of various ceasefires seems to point towards the building of both of those traits, as well as the agreements worked between the host country and both the Official IRA and Provisional IRA. Finally, step five is an easy one to highlight: the IRA and Britain went through negotiations, with several rounds of leverage shifting and honing of negotiation skills, established the Good Friday Agreement, and allowed for Sinn Fein to become a full-fledged non-violent political party. The IRA holds truth to the five steps created from the foundational academic works that detail how a terrorist organization will transition into a political party.

Outside of the five steps, the IRA's transition process also highlights aspects which tie into the other hypotheses. The IRA held politically-tied goals from the onset and was created with a political wing tied to it. Leadership changed hands over the group's many years of existence, splintering, and finding of its truest objectives; as men like Michael Collins and Eamon de Valera helped start the organization, the IRA Army Council continued to change hands, and leaders like Martin McGuinness helped transition it into a political party. Regarding the third hypothesis, there is clearly evidence that shows the IRA's attempts to move towards nonviolent strategies, but violence continued just about until its final round of peace talks. The IRA's use of violence seemed to be a major motivator for peace talks to continue until an agreement could be reached. This violence also seemed to hurt any good reputation the group may have been building through its local politics. These statements, though they seem to invalidate the third hypothesis, also help the fourth hypothesis, as they provide evidence towards violent acts that would push the host country to believe it was heading towards the mutually hurting stalemate and want for peace negotiations to begin. Regarding the hypothesis on ceasefires, the IRA and its host country had and ended several, with the last one occurring in 1994. During that ceasefire, the IRA itself did not make any attempts at spoiling, but the Real IRA's bombing in 1998

attempted to end the peace talks; the IRA's claimed separation from the splinter group strengthened the truth behind the Good Friday Agreement and weakened the Real IRA.

FARC

The FARC, like the IRA, easily met the criteria for the first two steps; this time, however, there was no political wing at the onset. The FARC's designation and proscription onto a terrorist list happened in 1997. The FARC and its host country's (Colombia) mutually hurting stalemate came after the terrorist organization had shown its violent side and had become entrenched in the drug trade. The Colombian Government in turn had pushed its military against the group and both sides attempted to sway the public in their favor. Regarding trust and access, it seems as though both traits were in good supply during the Uribe Accord, then lost after the UP was attacked, and had to be slowly built back up before the final round of negotiations. Finally, step five is easily shown evidence for, as the FARC terrorist organization became the FARC political party after the 2016 peace accord was signed between the group and the Colombian Government.

Outside of the five steps, the FARC also provides some insight into the level of validity towards the other hypotheses. The FARC has expressed its political motivations from the beginning and those motivations are seen in one way or another throughout the group's transition. Changes in leadership, sometimes due to the death of the former leader, allowed for changes in perspective towards the FARC's future. Regarding a shift to nonviolence and reputation building, some connection could be made with the group's change in focus towards the drug trade, but it does not necessarily highlight an effort to stop its violent strategies. Additionally, the FARC's attempts to grow its base and build out its support network show its aim to convert the public towards its cause and gain more dependencies on it than on the Colombian Government; the reputation did not seem to stay as peace drew nearer, but the effort was there. Regarding hypothesis four, it seems that the FARC's violence and political stance pushed the host country to the negotiating table first, then the terrorist organization's exponentially-growing drug enterprise brought the two sides to talk again. Additionally, the military pressure on the FARC and UN/global pressure against both the Colombian Government and the FARC helped here, too. On ceasefires, the FARC entered into at least two, with the final one starting in 2016. Finally, the FARC did experience some spoilers during the rounds of peace talks. The killing of UP members

uprooted one of the first attempts for peace, but everything else could be considered events meant to shift the leverage balance between the two sides until the final peace agreement was signed. It is important to note that the small 2019 uprising showed that, even amidst peace, there can still be separatist hardliners aiming to restart the conflict.

Taliban

The Taliban is unique in that it held power in the host country before being ousted. Also, the UN's proscription and sanctioning of the group occurred just before it was ousted. There was no political wing, per say, but there is truth in the first two steps. Regarding steps three through five, as the final negotiations have not taken place yet, only so much can be said here; there are some aspects of the Taliban and its host country's (Afghanistan) relationship that deserve review now, but the most significant events tied to these steps may not yet have materialized. The mutually hurting stalemate might have been brought upon the two sides, with acknowledgments towards the want for peace, but the Taliban's transition is not finalized. Access has been steadily growing between the Taliban and its host country, with the opening of the Doha office and a number of other venues becoming available for peace talks. Trust, however, is difficult to measure, especially considering little ceasefire data and the Taliban's continued claim that the Afghan Government is illegitimate and undeserving of its position. Step five has not been realized in its entirety, but the four-page agreement between the U.S. and the Taliban make it seem like a forthcoming event.

Moving to how the Taliban gives weight to the other hypotheses, the group's politically-tied goals further the understanding that this first hypothesis will likely be true for all transitioning terrorist organizations, since terrorism inherently, among its many definitions, is linked with an intent to create political change. However, there still could be groups that do not show these intents when first building their collective. Leadership changes have been seen in the Taliban, largely because the previous leader was killed, but, as the mutually hurting stalemate has not yet been achieved, it is difficult to claim that one is leading to the other. Regarding hypothesis three, there have been shifts towards nonviolent strategies, such as the creation of the Doha office and continued talks with the U.S., but there has not necessarily been a shift away from violent strategies. The reputation building seems to be only in small pockets of Taliban-controlled territory. Hypotheses four

and six demand for the terrorist organization's transition to be a little further than it is for the Taliban, but, going off of what has been seen with the IRA and FARC, there is likely to be some evidence for both of these hypotheses if and when peace talks start finalizing. Finally, at least one ceasefire has been carried out by the Taliban but with limited focus; it is a start towards significant shifts in strategy and final objectives, but history will show if the path currently seen will foretell expected results.

The Five Steps

Now that each case study has been reviewed individually against the hypotheses, what does this mean for the durability and generalizability of the five steps?

Step 1: The group must form, gather like-minded people, and have a goal.

Hypothesis 1: The terrorist organizations will have shown politically-tied goals from the onset.

Looking first at step one and hypothesis one, having a group form and creating a goal are solid traits in this step that should remain true for any other transitioned terrorist organization tested. Having a political wing, however, was not always the case, and, though each case study exhibited politically-tied goals from the onset, this may not always be the case.

Step 2: The group must be labeled a terrorist organization, accomplished through the proscription of the organization on at least one of the numerous globally-recognized terrorist lists.

Step 3: The group has to meet a 'mutually hurting stalemate' with the host country.

Hypothesis 2: There will be a change in leadership before the mutually hurting stalemate is achieved.

Hypothesis 3: There will be observed events and/or announcements showing changes in the terrorist organization's strategies from violent ends to nonviolent ones. Tied to this, the group will have attempted to build its reputation amongst the population of the host country.

Hypothesis 4: There will be events caused by the terrorist organization which will result in the host country's recognition of an impending mutually hurting stalemate.

Focusing next on steps two and three, and hypotheses two, three, and four, step two was shown to always be true, and does not need any further review. Hypotheses two through four, connected to step three, attempted to give clarity towards the events that could be found leading up to a mutually hurting stalemate. All of these sorts of events were seen in some fashion in the case studies, but there does not seem to be enough to prove them as generalizable events significant enough to be true for every case study going forward. They are worth mentioning as examples, but not as absolutes.

Step 4: Trust and access have to be established between the group and the host country.

Hypothesis 5: At least one ceasefire will be requested by the host country and/or attempted by the terrorist organization with the aim to build trust between the two sides.

Regarding step four and hypothesis five, both trust and access were seen in the case studies as elements required if negotiations were to be held and executed properly. Ceasefires were seen in every case study and can be seen as a significant and likely-generalizable event for other transitioning terrorist organizations' case studies. Similar to other previous points, however, ceasefires cannot be deemed an absolute step but can amplify this step.

Step 5: Negotiations towards a peace settlement take place and ultimately allow for the transition of the group into a political party.

Hypothesis 6: If violence is exhibited while peace talks are ongoing, it will have some spoiling or strengthening effect on the negotiations.

Finally, comparing step five and hypothesis six shows that, within the case studies, negotiations were needed to finalize peace agreements and allow for the transitions of the terrorist organizations into political parties. For these case studies, the IRA, FARC, and Taliban have all had several attempts at peace talks that have fallen through and/or were strengthened through some spoiling factor. Additionally, the IRA and FARC case studies show that, though a peace agreement may be in the works or completed, remnants of the group may attempt to restart the conflict and may not adhere to the terms of the peace agreement.

With all that, the five steps remain but can now be elaborated on as such:

1. The group must form, gather like-minded people, and have a goal. The group may also have established a political wing and/or politically-tied goals from the onset.

2. The group must be labeled a terrorist organization, accomplished through the proscription of the organization on at least one of the numerous globally-recognized terrorist lists.

3. The group has to meet a 'mutually hurting stalemate' with the host country. On its way towards the mutually hurting stalemate, the group may experience changes in leadership, increased utilization of nonviolent strategies, and reputation building amongst the citizens of the host country (and/or globally), all possibly signifying shifts in ideology towards one of peace. Additionally, events may occur that highlight the host country's inability to defeat the group militarily.

4. Trust and access have to be established between the group and the host country. An example of a significant event that highlights the presence of these traits is a properly-executed ceasefire.

5. Negotiations towards a peace settlement take place and ultimately allow for the transition of the group into a political party. Peace talks may not be initially successful and/or may be given a strengthening factor due to spoiling events. Additionally, hardliners within the group may attempt to restart the conflict and may not adhere to the terms of the final peace agreement.

Conclusion

This research study attempted to utilize previous scholarly works and case studies to construct five steps showing the significant events of a terrorist group's transition into a political party. These steps are meant to capture the sequence of events for transitioned groups and should allow for the thorough study of terrorist organizations, past, present, and future. Though these steps may encapsulate the majority of similar cases, further studies of transitioned and transitioning terrorist organizations will allow for the continued construction of complete and absolute steps. This, in turn, will grant policymakers and scholars alike a solid base of knowledge when challenging and learning of conflicts

between terrorist groups and host countries, and may even simplify the peace process between the two.

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