



<b>Contents</b>	
<b>PREFACE</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>SUMMARY OF CHAPTER 1</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>SUMMARY OF CHAPTER 2</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>SUMMARY OF CHAPTER 3</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>UPCOMING EVENTS</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>THE READING CORNER</b>	<b>8</b>

## Preface

Dear Readers,

Welcome to the 11<sup>th</sup> newsletter of the FP6-project on Transnational Terrorism Security and the Rule of Law (TTSRL).

The full text of the ten previous newsletters and a selection of research and policy papers can be found on our [website](#).

In this newsletter, we present the results of deliverable 5 (workpackage 3), entitled "*Concepts of Terrorism: Analysis of the rise, decline, trends and risk.*" This newsletter contains an abstract of the report's main conclusions. Given the broad scope of this deliverable, the final report is comprised of three parts or chapters. Chapter one examines the root and trigger causes of terrorism as well as the decline of terrorism and attempts to establish a connection between these factors. The second chapter investigates whether changes in terrorist trends have led to changes in the risk terrorist groups pose to societies. Drawing on Rapoport's wave theory of terrorism, trends are identified within the fourth (religious) wave and juxtaposed with a risk analysis based on conventional and CBRN terrorism.

The third chapter describes several significant European terrorist organizations in order to create an overview of the important factors that have shaped the climate on this issue in Europe.

The full text of this deliverable including literature annotations and complete bibliography can be found on our [website](#). As always the newsletter includes a 'reading corner' with selected books for further reading.

TTSRL aims to create a comprehensive final publication of the research findings, incorporating the conclusions and policy recommendations from various deliverables. Before the publication of the final report however, the consortium will organize a conference in Brussels on February 5-6, 2009 where contents of the project will be presented and discussed. We look forward to your comments on the newsletter and look forward to discussing our findings with you at the conference in Brussels.

On behalf of the entire TTSRL-consortium,

**Dirk Bijl de Vroe**

TTSRL Student-assistant

**Polyna Berlin**

Researcher TTSRL





## Summary of Workpackage 3, deliverable 5

### Chapter 1: Root and Trigger Causes and Factors of Decline

The first part of deliverable 5 is sub-divided into three main parts. The first part analyses factors relevant to the rise or increase of terrorism, the so-called root and trigger causes. Decline of terrorism is examined in part two and addresses the following questions: *are there general reasons why terrorism declines under certain circumstances? What are the ways to counter terrorism, and how can the threat of the phenomenon be reduced?* The relation between root and trigger causes, as well as the causes for decline is assessed in the final sections.

#### **Root and trigger causes**

A good explanation of the term 'root cause' is the definition of Martha Crenshaw from 1981, stating that 'root causes (or preconditions) are those factors that set the stage for terrorism over the long run.' According to the same author, 'trigger causes (or precipitants) are specific events that immediately precede the occurrence of terrorism.'

Studies specifically addressing the root and trigger causes of terrorism are rather scarce. Moreover, the relatively limited body of literature has not led to generally accepted paradigms of causal relationships. The deliverable illustrates that terrorism is a phenomenon of multi-causal factors, which results not only in different ways to research the causes of terrorism but also leads to different perceptions about approaches to the general analysis of the phenomenon. We discerned four categories in our research.

The first is the *Multi-Causal Approach* emphasizing the presence of multiple causal variables. It incorporates psychological considerations, economic, political, religious and sociological factors as contributors to understanding the causes of terrorism.

The second is the *Political or Structural Approach* that presupposes that the causes for terrorism can be found in environmental factors. It states that national and international arenas, as well as sub-national spheres like universities can be conducive to the rise of terrorism.

Another approach is the *Rational or Organizational Approach*. With a focus on terrorism as a rational strategic choice, this approach rests on the idea that organizations consciously make the decision to use the instrument of terrorism as the best option to attain certain political goals.

The fourth and last approach to be discerned is the *Psychological Approach*. This takes into account the motivation of individuals that resort to terrorism. It focuses on features and characteristics of the individual perpetrator or terrorist group.

In sum, it is clear that none of the individual approaches provide us with all the answers on the root and trigger causes of terrorism. Even though a lack of consensus on the interrelation of the different factors perseveres, we have been able to distil a top-5 of root and trigger causes, based on our literature research (see model 1 in annex I). The specific causes within each category – root and trigger causes – have been ranked from the most general or broad aspects to the more specific underlying factors.





## ***Causes of Terrorism decline***

The event-driven nature of terrorism research results in a very limited amount of literature that assesses causes of decline. It seems on first hand puzzling how a lack of attention for causes for decline can persevere in a world where terrorism is perceived as one of the biggest threats to national and international security. An explanation could be that, in general, attention and funding is primarily given to research on the illusive subject of terrorism when an immediate sense of urgency is present. In such a situation, the object of attention tends to be the present threat and not the history of terrorism or past time experiences. Correspondingly, attention given to the subject of terrorism tends to decline when the sense of urgency declines.

The limited literature on the concept of terrorist decline notwithstanding, we have been able to create a top-5 model similar to model 1 (see annex I). This model was created using a similar research approach as the study on root and trigger causes. To understand the model, an explanation about two major distinctions within theories on the decline of terrorism is crucial.

First, general reasons for the decline of terrorism can be found in either external or internal factors or both. External factors are, amongst others, government action to restrict the terrorists' movement or financial possibilities, police action or the activities of intelligence services to actively try and marginalize a terrorist group. Internal factors are dynamics that evolve within a terrorist group that can cause a decline, such as diminishing support for the cause under members or active participants of the group. Many authors argue that the internal factors are more important than the external factors.

A distinction in government activity is made between 'stick' and 'carrot' methods. Stick methods are strong government action like police action or use of force and carrot methods refer to more diplomatic means. The models relating to this research are numbers 2 and 3 (see annex I).

One of our conclusions is the fact that either carrot or stick methods can only be used when state-legitimacy is high. When this is not the case, the use of violence against a terrorist group will result in a rise in support for the terrorist' cause. The same holds for the use of carrot methods. If a government decides to negotiate with terrorist groups and is willing to allow them breathing space when their own legitimacy or influence over the terrorist group is low, this could look like a sign of weakness.

## ***The relation between root causes, trigger causes and causes for decline***

Model 4 (see annex I) shows the relation between the various causes for the rise and decline of terrorism. It is clear that a relationship exists between root causes, trigger causes, terrorist and government activity and decline. The constant interaction of these factors demonstrates that they affect each other and form a continuous movement; sometimes moving away from violence, in other cases accelerating it. Therefore, the circular model has been chosen to represent the relationship between the various factors. The difficulties lie in the various moments, captured in the circle especially in the crossroads following "government activity" but also at "terrorist activity" and "decline", that present us with many alternative future dynamics.





The main point of focus in this respect is "government activity" since it could lead to a decline of terrorist activity, it could lead to new root causes that could create new trigger causes, it could maintain the status quo allowing the root cause and possible trigger causes to persist or it could lead directly to new trigger causes.

Another point of focus where the circle could be broken is "terrorist activity". Of course, it is important due to the fact that it evokes government activity which in turn has a great influence, as explained above, in the further proceedings of the circle. Another reason for the importance of this point is the consequences terrorist activity can have on decline. As we have seen in the case of the al-Qaida bombing in 2004 in Madrid, an attack of such magnitude can prompt other terrorists to openly distance themselves from this scale of destruction to achieve their means, as ETA did temporarily.

This brings us to a third focus point: decline itself can suddenly lead to a new root or trigger cause. Once again, the dynamics are too complicated and diverse to capture in a model, but the fact that there is a relation between decline and reemergence of terrorism can not be disregarded. Furthermore, decline can of course persist causing a terrorist organization to disappear.

Certainly if there was one apparent aspect of influencing the dynamics in order to assure decline, terrorism could be marginalized. However, a plethora of factors interact in a multitude of situation where terrorism can evolve. Therefore, acknowledging the interrelatedness of root and trigger causes and causes for decline is important, but emphasizing uniqueness should be given priority. The created model illustrating this concept thus points out that there is definitely a relation between the various causes for the emergence and decline of terrorism, but that this relation is constituted by an endless and incalculable amount of variables in the equation. Even though this conclusion will not help us solve terrorism, it does hint at where to look for answers: looking at the particularities and individual differences between cases of previous terrorist activities.

## Chapter 2: Analysis of Trends and Risk of Terrorism

This chapter seeks to analyse the correlation between trends in terrorism and the risk terrorist activities pose to civil society. Our analysis of the trends in terrorism draws heavily on Rappoport's wave theory. The theory establishes the four general ideological trends – or waves – that have been apparent in the last century. Beginning with the anarchist movement the waves progress to anti-colonial and new left, and finally to the present religious wave. According to Rappoport, within the ideological waves more specific trends can be identified; for example in the intended targets and methods or weapons used for the terrorist attack.

At the present moment, the current wave is identified as ideologically religious with suicide terrorism and the focus on soft (unprotected) targets comprising the more specific trends. It has been argued in the deliverable that this fourth wave has contributed to the increasing lethality of terrorist attacks and thus to the overall risk that terrorism poses.

Taking the research of Cragin and Daly as a start, we analysed the threat of conventional and CBRN (chemical biological radiological and nuclear) terrorism. The main findings establish that the threat of terrorism is a result of a combinations of factors. Categorizing the intentions and capabilities of terrorist





organizations according to Cragin and Daly's matrixes - designed by establishing thresholds and assigning a numeric value to each - we analysed how they can be combined with consequences of terrorism.

Together, the three variables, intentions, capabilities and consequences were then used to develop a three dimensional model (see annex II) which shows the affect of trends on the risk. Furthermore, the model illustrates how changes in trends relate to changes in risk. For example, suicide terrorism has been shown to be four times as lethal as other forms of terrorist attack. As such, the consequences of a suicide attack are also more severe. In the model, this dynamic relationship is illustrated by the movement of a terrorist organization along the x- and y- as well as z-axis (see annex II). In the deliverable, three Al-Qaida, FARC and ETA are used as examples to demonstrate the movement of terrorist organizations within the model.

### Chapter 3: Case studies

The objective of this chapter of the deliverable is to describe several terrorist organizations in some detail, in order to create an overview of the important factors that have shaped the climate on this issue in Europe. This deliverable is mainly descriptive.

This study is divided into several chapters, each discussing a cluster of terrorist organizations. While describing organizations we often refer to the theories on rise and decline of terrorism as described in deliverable 5a. We focus on some important representatives of each type: ethno-separatist organizations of which the IRA and the ETA are the most obvious examples, left-wing organizations such as the RAF and the Red Brigades, certain right-wing organizations and finally the religious organizations Hizb ut-Tahrir and the Hofstad Group.

Each chapter is built as follows: a short introduction on the nature of a particular form of terrorism precedes the case studies. Each case study starts with a fact sheet listing data on that particular organization followed by a brief historical overview. This overview includes, when applicable, an explanation of root causes, trigger causes and decline - a direct link to the theoretical framework of deliverable 5a. Using two databases, a third section shows a table and graphs on the frequency of attacks, as well as the number of deaths and injuries as a result of these attacks. This section is omitted in the cases of Hizb ut-Tahrir and the Hofstad Group due to the fact that few if any attacks have taken place. The final section contains a bibliography of each group that can guide the reader in further research. More detailed information on some of the organizations or trends profiled in this deliverable can be found in the contextual papers on the [publications](#) page of our website.

### Conclusion

In formulating counter measures to terrorism it is tempting to use the past as a guideline for the future. It is true that in the majority of the cases, the underlying sentiments, organizational structure or ideals of some terrorist groups are much the same or comparable to already existing ones. The tendency to emphasize similarities can also be seen in our categorization of terrorist





organizations. Categorization allows us to historically assess and group various forms of terrorism, making it easier to generalize and learn from specific cases. However, the most important lesson to be learned from the case studies is not the importance of similarities. Rather emphasis should be placed on the differences between them. Thus, while the root causes, trigger causes and causes for decline indicate that similarities within the various types of terrorism exist, it is usually the differences between them that are most important when formulating countermeasures.

In a similar vein, the convergence of risk and trends in terrorism is most prominent when threats are examined alongside consequences. Since consequences can be viewed as political, economic and social results of a terrorist attack, the risk terrorist groups pose to European societies should be assessed in terms of the current trends within the environment. Where religion and suicide terrorism are clearly rising trends, terrorist organizations that fit this profile can be said to pose a higher risk to European societies than those whose threat to consequences ratio is lower.





## Upcoming Events

**Event:** TTSRL final conference.  
**Date:** 5-6 february 2009  
**Location:** Brussels

The concluding conference for TTSRL will present the most important and thought-provoking research results of the project. Academics, journalists, and leading researchers in the field will come together for a two-day plenary and discussion sessions to share insights and further stimulate discussions on a variety of topics.

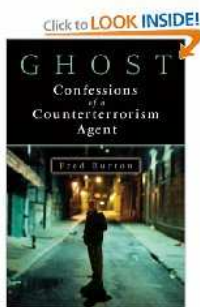
We are also pleased to announce that Alex P. Schmid, Director of the Centre for the Study of Terrorism and Political Violence, St. Andrews, will serve as the keynote speaker for this event.

A preliminary programme schedule is now available on our [website](#). If you are interested in joining us in Brussels, [contact us](#) by January 17, 2009 with your RSVP request.



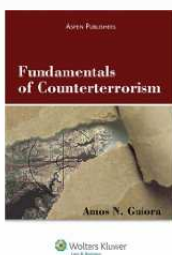


## The reading corner



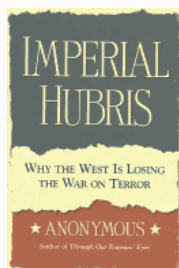
### **Ghost: Confessions of a Counterterrorism Agent by Fred Burton**

Former agent of the Diplomatic Security Service – one of the oldest and most overlooked U.S. intelligence agencies – Fred Burton details his personal involvement in investigations into terrorist acts dating as far back as the 1980s. Carefully narrating his experiences, Burton's shocking and history-revising memoir of more than a decade of hunting ghosts. The book is an interesting read offering a recount of aggressive actions taken to protect America's diplomats and offers insights debriefings of Hezbollah captives snatched from the streets of Beirut, investigation of the crash of the Presidential C-130 that killed President Zia-ul-Haq, ambassador Raphael, and Brigadier General Wassom (U.S. Army) in 1988 and the probing into the causes of Pan Am Flight 103's brea-up over Lockerbie, Scotland. Fred Burton left the Diplomatic Security Service and now serves as the vice president for Strategic Forecasting (STRATFOR).



### **Fundamentals of Counterterrorism by Amos N. Guiora**

For sterling analysis and concise coverage, you can't find a more current or authoritative source than Amos N. Guiora's Fundamentals of Counterterrorism. The book addresses the multiple issues surrounding counterterrorism from a legal and policy perspective and an international and comparative focus. This concise paperback is the perfect complement to courses that address international law, international criminal law, or national security.



### **Imperial Hubris: Why the West is Losing the War on Terror by Michael Scheuer**

According to the author, the greatest danger for Americans confronting the Islamist threat is to believe--at the urging of U.S. leaders--that Muslims attack us for what we are and what we think rather than for what we do.





## Annex I

### Model 1

No.	Root causes	Trigger causes
1	Rapid modernization and urbanization are strongly correlated with the emergence of ideological terrorism	Events that call for revenge or action (i.e. contested elections, police brutality, etc.)
2	Lack of Democracy, civil liberties and the rule of law is a precondition to many forms of domestic terrorism	Lack of opportunity for political participation
3	Historical antecedents of political violence	Concrete grievances among a subgroup of a larger population (articulated clearly by a leader figure)
4	Repression by foreign occupation or colonial powers	Importance of belonging to a strong group for development of personal identity
5	Perceived feelings of discrimination based on ethnic or religious origins	Peace talks

### Model 2

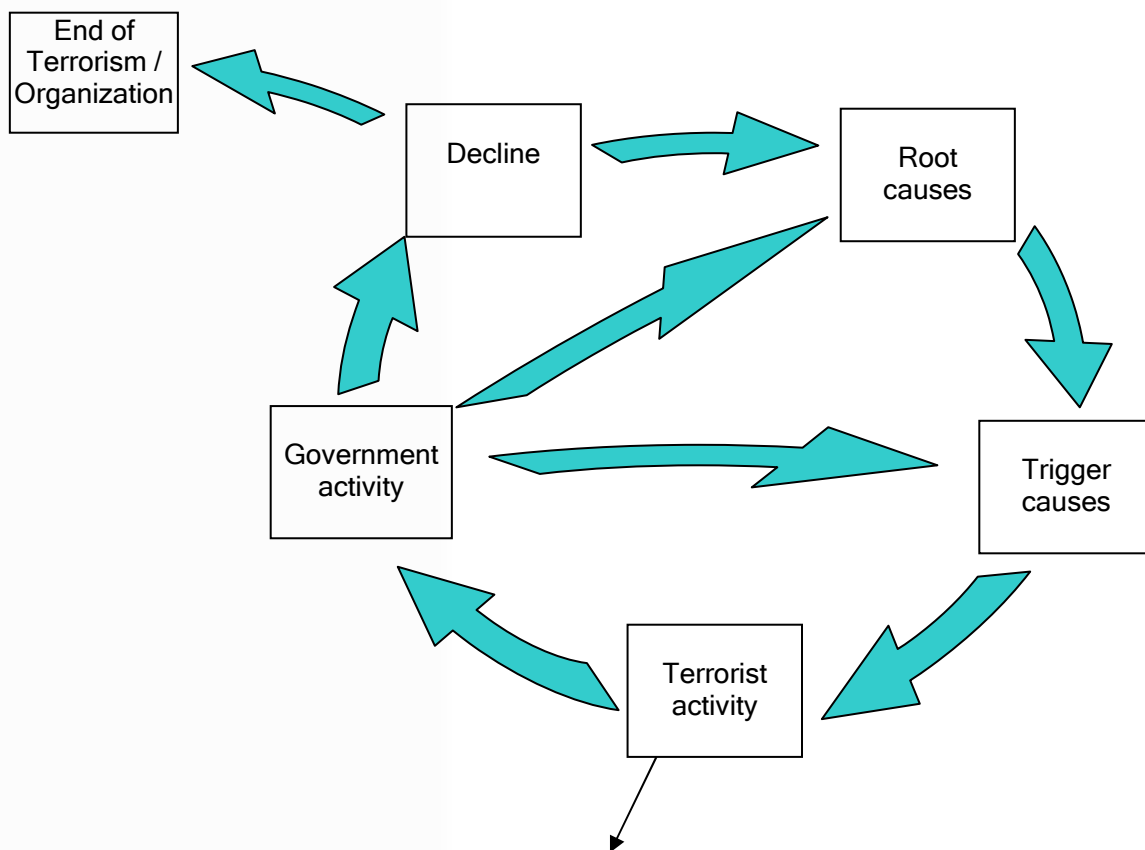
No.	Internal	External
1	Burn-out: loss of commitment by members	Preemption: capturing or killing of active terrorists
2	Backlash: loss of popular support	Deterrence: elevating costs and lowering rewards for terrorists and supporters
3	Decision by the group	Nature of grievances changes
4	Organizational disintegration of the group: splitting up, death of leaders	Achievement of the cause
5	Unsuccessful generational transition	Repression



### Model 3

No.	Carrot	Stick
1	Accommodation/Cooptation of terrorists in political process	Imprisonment of terrorists, splitting of the group by isolating members
2	Softer sentences for old crimes in exchange for information	Killing of terrorists
3	Dialogue with terrorist group or associated political party	Blocking of terrorist funds
4	Peace or demilitarization processes	Destruction of terrorist safe havens/training camps
5	Public outreach in the form of media and social projects countering radicalization and polarization	Repression in general: suspending certain civil liberties, legal requirements, etc.

### Model 4



As described, Terrorist activity itself can also lead to decline, creating a new, similar, circle as a result.

## Annex II

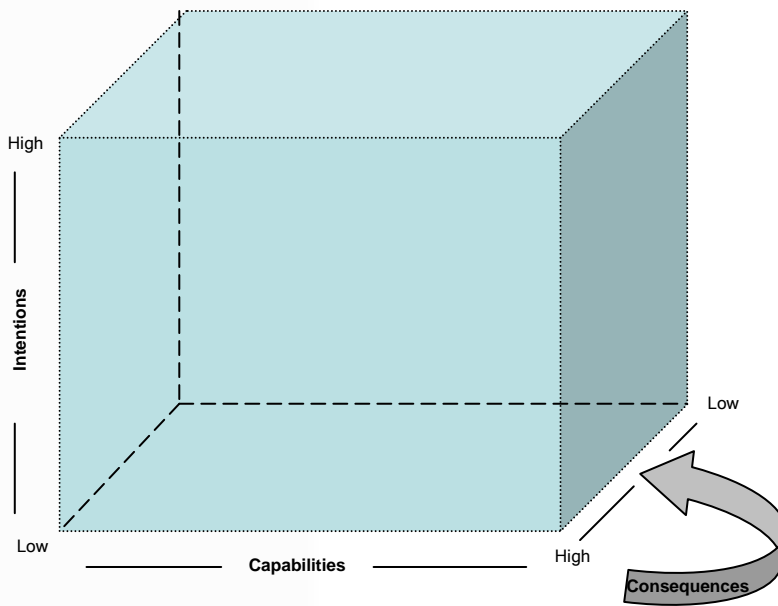


Figure 4: Understanding Characteristics of Risk

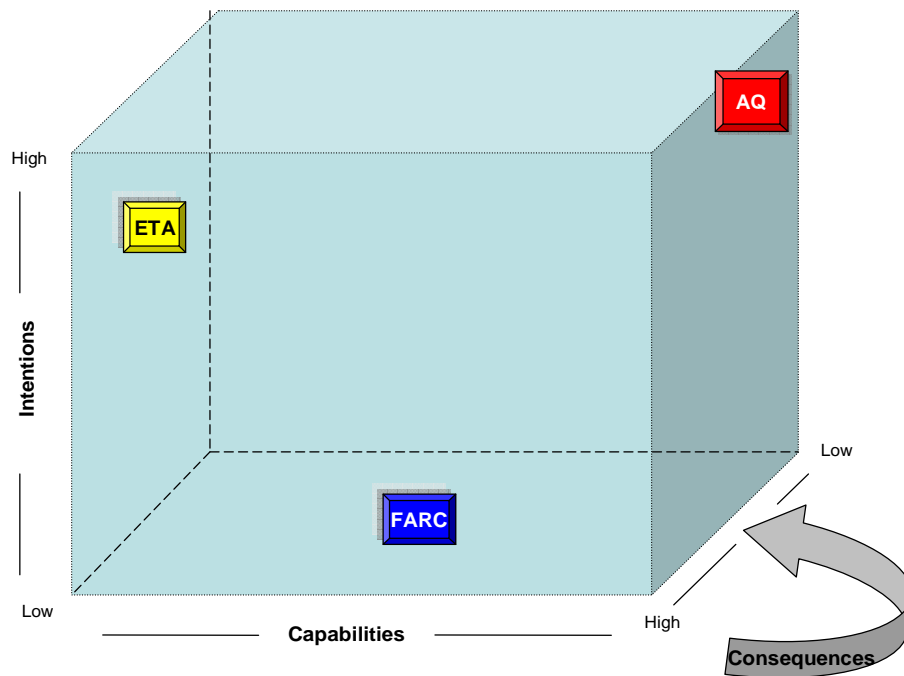


Figure 5: Position of Terrorist Groups

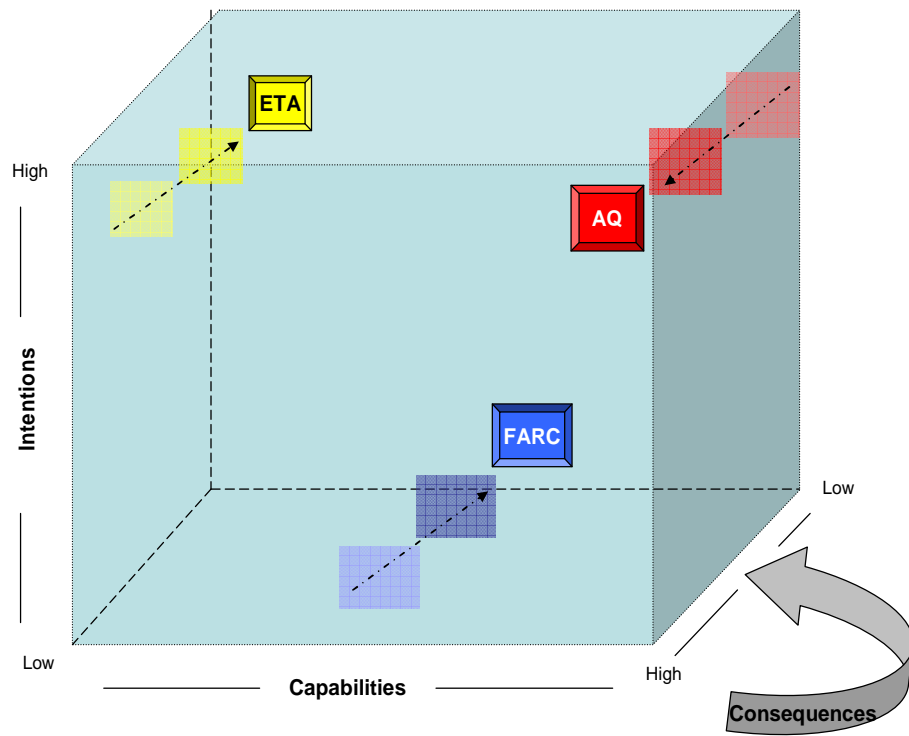


Figure 6 : Dynamic Movement of Terrorist Groups