

TRANSNATIONAL SECURITY ISSUES

An Overview

Definition: The term 'transnational security', also referred to by some scholars as 'trans state security', has not attracted a clear and unambiguous definition as to its nature. Some scholars have gone as far as to suggest that the term 'transnational' should become redundant and replaced with what is considered a more accurate description: 'trans sovereign'. For these scholars, in view of the fact that the term 'nation' is not synonymous with the term 'sovereign state', the word 'transnational' is argued to simply add needless confusion to what is an already complicated idea. However a workable definition has been provided in a 1997 outline of the emerging field, Security Studies for the 21st Century, written by Richard Shultz, Roy Godson, and George Quester. In the text, the term 'Transnational security' was referred to as a *'paradigm for understanding the ways in which governments and non-state actors—functioning within and across state borders—interact and affect the defense of states and their citizens.'*

Scope: Conditions that allow transnational threats to develop and flourish are evident in many countries of the world. A mixture of local conditions and the forces of globalization challenge International Relations, i.e. existing governments and social structures. The spill-over of regional problems in a mobile society, exacerbated by globalized trade and fast-moving banking and financial services systems can amplify their effects internationally. The Transnational Security Concerns, Defense Modernization and Security Cooperation in international repercussions of this affect many aspects of people's lives, and extend to inter-state relations and beyond to military security.

Why transnational security issues: Transnational security issues, defined as non-military threats that cross borders and either threaten the political and social integrity of a nation or the health of that nation's inhabitants, are emerging as key security challenges for International Relations. Examples of key transnational threats include, among others, transnational crime, terrorism, arms trafficking, human trafficking, illegal drugs trafficking, internal displacement, infectious disease and

environmental degradation. It is important to emphasize that these threats do not necessarily pose direct challenges to 'territorial' sovereignty, but rather to 'state authority' and 'effective government'. There may be an exhaustive list of what so-called transnational threats to security are. Causes vary, such as uneven distribution of wealth, depletion of natural resources, boundary eroding, pan-ideology and politics of identity, and failing states. These all threaten distinct consequences for their primary targets, which could be individual safety, state authority (legitimacy), and/or (internationally recognized) territorial boundaries. More importantly, local security challenges can spread rapidly to acquire a regional or global reach. Since the late 1990s, the 'old global' security challenges, such as the massive, indiscriminate trade in arms, drug trafficking and international terrorism, have grown out of all proportion, and have also acquired global dimensions. Indeed, it may be concluded that technological development and globalization were the main impulse for such increases – apart from the magnifying effect of chaotic conditions in the region. Nevertheless, there could well be two more relevant causes. First, there is growing evidence that transnational threats are becoming increasingly enmeshed in the fabric of global organized crime. Uneven distribution of wealth and depletion of natural resources magnify the brutality and expand the scope of armed conflicts around the globe. Violent conflict and economic hardship boost largely uncontrolled migration, threatening both social and political stability in some countries. Second, official corruption at various levels of government, from customs officers to senior executives, compounds these problems. It is very likely that criminal organizations and terrorists use corruption to breach the sovereignty of many states and then continue to employ it to distort domestic and international affairs. There are regions of Burma, Thailand, Indonesia and the Philippines that are virtually ungovernable by the central government, and a number of groups, including terrorists, insurgents and mafias, have all but replaced state authority.

Environment: Environmental degradation, inequitable access to natural resources and the trans boundary movement of hazardous materials can lead to conflict and pose a risk to national security and human health.

Trans boundary pollution, for instance, can disrupt relations between neighboring states, which share a common resource base. Health risks and involuntary migration due to water scarcity, inequitable access to land resources, uncontrolled stocks of obsolete pesticides or other forms of radioactive waste and hazardous substances have been identified as threats to stability and peace.

However, common problems linked to the use of natural resources can also bring people to work together towards a common goal; thus, environmental co-operation can act as a powerful tool for preventing conflicts and promoting peace between communities and societies.

Terrorism:

- Defining the term terrorism and within that examine the disagreements academics and policymakers have regarding terrorism definitions.
- Examining various factors that are said to cause terrorism.
- Looking at what the academic literature says in regards to the questions of why terrorism occurs, how actors commit acts of terror, and what the effects of terrorism are.

In light of the global increase in the number and lethality of terrorist attacks, it has become imperative that nations, states, and private citizens become more involved in a strategic vision to recognize, prepare for, and — if possible — prevent such events.

Arms trade: The arms trade is a major cause of human rights abuses. Some governments spend more on military expenditure than on social development, communications infrastructure and health combined. While every nation has the right and the need to ensure its security, in these changing times, arms requirements and procurements may need to change too.

Each year, around \$45-60 billion worth of arms sales are agreed. Most of these sales (something like 75%) are to developing countries.

The 5 permanent members of the UN Security Council (US, Russia, France, United Kingdom and China), together with Germany and Italy account for around 85% of the arms sold between 2004 and 2011.

Some of the arms sold go to regimes where human rights violations will occur. Corruption often accompanies arms sales due to the large sums of money involved.

Human trafficking: Trafficking in persons has gained recognition in recent decades as an issue of serious international concern. But while the problem is increasingly acknowledged by the global community, there is still significant confusion about its risks and how it should be dealt with. In other words, what are the security implications of human trafficking, and how can they best be addressed?

- Introduction and abstract.
- The major issues related to human trafficking, IR theories, and human security: emphasizing the female gendered, child, and sexual exploitation orient of human trafficking; globalization has led to increased economic opportunities that have created pathways to security previously inaccessible to women and children; differentiating between voluntary and involuntary attributes of human trafficking.
- Possible recommendations and solutions to the problems: The four principles of Human Security; shaping the global civil society by abandoning historical and cultural perceptions of women as inferior objects; states must recognize that human trafficking poses a threat to national and international security.

Drug trafficking: International drug trafficking is an often discussed global issue, and is a major problem in international relations. In this article, we shall examine drug trafficking as it relates to transnational crime. We shall discuss what is drug trafficking, the different types of drug that are trafficked throughout the world, as well as look at domestic politics of countries such as Afghanistan and Mexico with regards to drug trafficking. We shall also discuss different arguments as to stopping the

drug trade and drug trafficking. Then, we will list a number of scholarly books and academic references on the topic of drug trafficking.

- What is drug trafficking: Global illicit trade involving the cultivation, manufacture, distribution and sale of substances which are subject to drug prohibition laws.
- Discuss drug trafficking with regards to heroin, cocaine, and marijuana.
- Ways to stop drug trafficking: Reducing the supply and demand for drugs.

Cyber Security Threats: Everyone knows that the Internet has changed how we interact, do business, and share information. The Internet can be an “innovation engine,” but the same engine of innovation drives cyber threats to change faster than cyber defenses can react. Cyber threats are complex, dynamic, and network defenses have trouble keeping up with them.

The Internet’s original design focused on reliable connectivity, not security. This has not really changed. A quick recap of the situation is that the most devices connected to the Internet are vulnerable, many existing approaches to network security—“black listing,” signature-based defenses—are becoming outdated, and most cyber security strategies are inadequate. There is a widening gap between offensive and defensive capabilities. Security has not kept up with the threat.

Cyber security is becoming an ever-important component to national security in the twenty-first century. Issues covered include cyber warfare, encryption, military cyber capacity, hacking, financial terrorism, and more.

Refugee crisis: There are now more refugees and displaced people around the world than at any time since the Second World War. As the conflict in Syria forces record numbers to flee and the crisis on Europe's borders grows. 86% of internally- and externally displaced persons are in developing countries. Recent events have awakened governments in

Europe, the Americas, and Asia to the crisis but not all have yet accepted responsibility for accepting refugees fleeing war, terror and abject poverty.

- Introduction: A global migration crisis.
- Examining the humanitarian and policy challenges facing the international community.
- Whither migration and international relations?
- Securitizing Migration: Migration or refugee policy (i.e., rules of entry and exit) is a matter of national security, and states will open or close their borders when it is in their national interest to do so (i.e., when it will enhance their power and position in the international system).
- Strategies for regulating global migration.
- An emerging "migration state".

Health and security: After decades of neglect, infectious diseases have re-emerged as a field of inquiry in the areas of public health, science, and politics. Increasingly, the world has come to comprehend the threat of emerging infectious diseases. This renewed concern about infectious diseases has been expressed in both provocative scientific discourse and popular culture. Among the many themes in the growing literature on emerging infectious diseases are the recognition of the global scope of these problems, and the need for international cooperation to address them.

In the closing decade of the 20th century the myriad challenges posed by infectious disease in a globalized environment began to be re-conceptualized as threats to national and human security. The most widely applied model for identifying and responding to such threats is securitization theory.

- Analyze ways by which Asian states and international organizations have identified health challenges as security threats.

- Draw upon the securitization model as a way of understanding the full extent to which these states and international organizations have responded to the health threat.
- Identify areas where the theory might be strengthened so as to provide greater analytical clarity in areas of health security.

To conclude: The term 'transnational security' has gained greater use in recent years. It is generally used to refer to the way in which governments and non-state actors interact across and within state boundaries and affect the security of the state and its citizens. Failed states represent the greatest transnational security issue today with their ability to affect the stability and security of the international system through acting a breeding ground for other transnational security threats. Transnational organized crime and transnational terrorism can also be considered significant threats. A multi-lateral approach that involves the whole international community is required to counter these non-traditional threats. Traditional state-centric responses however have not become redundant, rather their modification to take into account the nature of these new threats and the involvement of non-state actors can see them, when coordinated with international responses, retain use. Long-term policies are needed to neutralize the primary cause of non-traditional threats to security. Unlike traditional security challenges, transnational threats emerge slowly and often do not elicit a focused or timely policy response. And transnational security issues straddle both domestic and foreign spheres.