

A Phenomenological Analysis of Terrorism and Organized Crime from a Comparative Criminological Perspective

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Summary

An analysis of both criminological phenomena from a comparative criminological perspective so as to determine, having previously established descriptive and identifying indicators, the differences between each one of these manifestations as well as the hybridization phenomena that could take place, in order to establish a clear defining frame that allows for the separate identification of both phenomena and permits the development by the states of a variety of public initiatives, both preventive and reactive in their nature.

Keywords: Security, terrorism, organized crime, Criminology

1. Introduction

The identification and analysis of both variables and indicators from the point of view of organized crime and terrorism is currently both a challenge and a necessity to be able to respond from a preventive and reactive point of view to the threats that arise from these phenomena.

Remembering the changes that have taken place in the traditional conception of the application of security, we found that the state institutions that historically applied a reactive response had to restructure their objectives and functions to be able to manage both the risks and the threats to the security from a multidimensional level.

It is from this multidisciplinary knowledge that international coordination and cooperation became essential.

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Once the states have acknowledged the existence of border permeability in terms of their fight against these phenomena, the preventive and reactive work must be done on a double level: national and international. At the risk of sounding obvious, in several occasions conflicts and dissonances arise from multilateral positions or we even find differences when it comes to a common conceptual definition. Because of that, the proposal established in this study is transversality when it comes to the adoption of indicator identifying methodologies and their analysis, with the aim of creating empirical mechanisms that differentiate the identifying variables of organized crime phenomena from those of terrorism.

In this sense, and from the already mentioned transnationality of organized crime and terrorism, we establish a work hypothesis with a double dimension: On one hand, the viability of the implementation of the concept of Intelligent Security from a global level in which the states, through the consolidation of a Security Community, establish strategies, policies and interconnected and coordinated procedures to prevent these phenomena through their Intelligence Systems and to act against them through the state's security and armed forces.

Secondly, and following on from the above, the inclusion of Criminology on the preventive level as a complementary empirical tool in the identification of variables and indicators that support the information gathering methods used by the Intelligence Community at the strategic, tactical and operative levels.

The suitability, therefore, of the implementation of identifying methodologies from a criminological discipline leads to the establishment of two levels of indicator gathering. On one hand, through a group pattern, and on the other, through individual profiling. From a group pattern it would be carried out at the strategic level whereas the tactical and operative levels would focus on the individual patterns.

2. Terminological Conceptualization of the Organized Crime and Terrorism Phenomena from a Criminological Perspective

Before delving into the theoretical justification of the proposed objective of the study it is necessary to provide a brief conceptual clarification between the two phenomena. With regard to international organized crime, we can understand it as a union of traditional and contextual threats.

In an attempt to conceptualize the term, some authors like Pumpherey, try to provide a definition from a Clausewitzian paradigm stating that “organized crime is the continuation of business through criminal means” (Pumpherey 2000, 11). One of the aspects that define this concept is its structuring into an organized network with a defined hierarchy with three distinguishing features: a partnership for criminal purposes, based on corrupt practices and attitudes, that operates through the use of violence. The fact that it is an organization created for criminal purposes doesn't mean that it must have a big structure. There are small, perfectly coordinated organizations, with three being the minimum number of members.

Regarding the terrorist phenomenon it is worth noting the perspective of the EU that establishes a framework definition with respect to terrorist offenses. Thus, for the supranational organization terrorism implies the existence of “an objective element, as it involves a serious crime (murder, bodily harm, hostage-taking, extortion, arms manufacturing, terrorist attacks and also the threat to commit any of the above). And a subjective element to the extent that these acts are considered terrorist crimes when they have been committed with the aim of seriously intimidating a population, or unduly compelling a government or international organization to do, or abstain from doing, any act, or seriously destabilize or destroy the fundamental political, constitutional, economic or social structures of a country or an international organization.”

In the same way, the EU's mentioned framework defines in a textual way “a terrorist group as a structured organization comprised of more than two people, established during a certain period of time that acts in a concerted way. The direction of a terrorist group and participation in their activities should be considered, according to the decision, offenses relating to a terrorist group.”

Three concepts can be deduced from this. Firstly, terrorism as a phenomenon, secondly the concept of terrorist group and lastly, the concept of terrorist activity.

In this sense we can find individuals who commit an act that is considered terrorism but who does not belong to a group. And from this the following questions arise: can we consider so called “lone-wolves” (Gill 2013, 2) as individuals who have committed a terrorist crime?

Can an individual who has committed a “serious criminal offence” such as murder and as a result causes great social alarm because of the type of victim, be considered a terrorist?

The aim of this study is not to establish a definition of what is considered by some doctrinal currents as individual terrorism (Gill 2013, 2), but rather to provide a criminological approach to preventive identification.

In spite of all the above, the most belligerent and pernicious controversy revolves around the inclusion or not of terrorism as a manifestation of organized criminality.

The purpose of both phenomena constitutes the key at issue in this discussion, since the other defining characteristics are virtually shared (Zuñiga 2009, 60)

In line with the international perspective adopted originally in this study, both for the UN and the EU, terrorism remains outside of this concept. The main international doctrine also follows this line of differentiated conceptualization. Organized crime should be distinguished from other organizations that use similar methods but that are ideologically driven and whose goals are fundamentally different (Bassiouni and Vetere 1998:27).

In Spain, the subject has a certain relevance due to the incidence of terrorism in our territory (Zuñiga, 2009:134). The majority of national studies on organized crime include terrorism as a form of organized crime (Fabian Caparròs, 1997:178). This inclusion is not universally shared (Gomez de Liaño Fonseca-Herrero, 2004:57-58, Choclàn Montalvo, 2000:8; Sansò-Rubert, 2004:27-35), as they understand that, despite the undisputed common elements, those elements that are not common have enough differentiating entity to make it possible to work with both manifestations separately. Not surprisingly, organized crime represents a qualitatively different challenge in that it does not intend to subvert the established order, it rather seeks to put it at its service.

In short, the conceptual distinction between terrorism and organized crime, allows us to recognize when a criminal organization uses terrorist methods and also when terrorist organizations become or operate as criminal organizations.

The growing links between transnational organized crime and terrorism seem to take precedence. In contrast with a limited analysis of this relationship, constrained to ad hoc exchanges with a purely utilitarian purpose as happens in most cases, the outlook is toward a greater interaction between both. Especially the adoption on the part of terrorist organizations of activities, mechanisms and criminal tools to achieve their goals, whether it is for survival, finance or destabilization. Similarly, criminal organizations find it profitable to employ terrorist methods to achieve their ends. Recouping the dividends of terror reaps huge benefits for these organizations (Sansó-Rubert, 2008:236)

2.1. Criminology, Intelligence and Security: Contributions

At first glance, it might seem that Criminology as a discipline could be outside the realm of traditional studies about intelligence and security. However, this empirical and interdisciplinary science can provide, without a doubt, extremely valuable tools for the analysis of risk factors and indicators especially on objects of its own study such as terrorism, organized crime and the possible links and relationships that can be established between them.

Of all the panoply of things that are repeatedly presented as new emerging threats and risks of an asymmetric nature, organized crime and terrorism stand out due to the potential large scale and extreme harmfulness of its activities (Sansó-Rubert, 2005). Criminology, in this context, provides to the intelligence indispensable scientific knowledge for the development of analysis for consumers, whether political decision makers or agencies responsible for the prosecution of crime or terrorism, so that they have sufficient knowledge to adopt the right decisions. Consequently, to reduce the inherent risks in any action or decision for the implementation of criminal policy and efficient security, while testing the effectiveness of objective measures. To know what has happened on the scene subject to analysis, what is happening and why, and what is most likely to happen in the future (Sansó-Rubert, 2010 and 2012).

The criminological contribution as a fundamental pillar for the development of intelligence and for the drawing up of indicators is due to criminology's ability, through its theoretical development and analysis capability, to gain a deep empirical knowledge about the etiology of organized crime and terrorism, as well as its phenomenology.

Criminological research in general and research about the terrorist phenomenon in particular, constitute a high-value knowledge background for the elaboration and enrichment of intelligence. It is applicable to both basic intelligence, characterized by its generality and relative permanence, and also to current intelligence (to update basic intelligence with new data and respond quickly and accurately to information requests about a current matter) and estimative intelligence that is designed to determine, given a particular situation and the consumer's request, the possible evolution of the situation and the performance variables of the elements involved in it from the data available, as well as its operational, tactical and strategic aspects.

It provides *per se*, a specialized and structured knowledge about the phenomena being studied. It is an important force multiplier especially when investigating terrorism or organized crime is an arduous and complex task from any perspective. In fact, despite the breadth and richness of doctrinal contributions, both concepts remain covered in an abstract image that is not exempt from doctrinal controversy. Ultimately, its multidisciplinary character provides its academic products with an added value, facilitating the overall grasp of the threat in the context of safety and continuous polymorphic transformation.

In short, it provides the contribution of an intellectually serious scientific discipline and not just one that is professionally respectable (Taylor, Walton and Young, 2007), to the growing analytical needs generated in the current scenario of intelligence and international security.

The emergence of a flourishing diversity of transnational criminal activities and the impact of terrorist acts, coupled with the growing number of conflicts fuelled by both non-state armed actors with an international projection, have been crucial to reformulate the problem of transnational crime and terrorism and to dilucidate to what extent they converge or develop links with each other. A slow and serious reflection around this phenomenon allows us to explain with solid arguments the high profile of both phenomena, elevating them to the level of an international security problem, acquiring therefore an eminent role in the security agendas.

2.2. Levels of Intelligence and Indicator Identification through Criminological Theories

From the point of view of proactive prevention, the role of the Intelligence Systems is a key element. Traditionally, one of the cataloging typologies of the risks and threats has been their geographical location, with the competences of the state security institutions being assigned according to this classification. As we have mentioned, currently the permeability and transnationality of these phenomena have been consolidated, therefore the restructuring of the capabilities and needs of the Intelligence Communities (Sims and Gerber 2005,14) has been one of the main objectives to be able to act according to the evolution of the threat.

But we cannot establish a watertight compartment between the preventive stage and the reactive and/or coercive response of the security forces. They must be complimentary phases. In this sense, the correct identification of criminogenic indicators for either the phenomenon of organized crime or terrorism provides, at a later stage, the tools for an adequate response.

The identification of subjects classified in the spectrum of risk and threat by measuring the willingness to commit criminal acts in the already mentioned phenomena, used to be established according to the subject's membership to a criminal collective, ignoring behavior patterns favored by the subject's environment or by structural imbalances of a social nature.

The proposal to combine the three levels of intelligence (strategic, tactical and operational) with the criminological identifying criteria is underpinned by way of theoretical justification.

2.2.1. Strategic Intelligence and Sociological Theories in Criminology

Quoting Prof. Gill, we can define strategic intelligence as that whose objectives are "to know the weaknesses and potential of other states, in time of peace or war" (Gill 1994,28). In general, the Intelligence Services are those that are responsible for developing it, looking for clues through prospective analysis of what may pose a threat or risk to national security.

We must not forget the role that military intelligence has at the strategic level, especially in the new missions of anti/counter terrorism scenarios that take place.

Our country's insistence in the last few decades on boosting the use of technology in military tactical and operative intelligence, has been unfavorable to the current role of military strategic intelligence (Esteban Navarro Coord. 2007, 92).

Returning to the concept of the predictive nature of strategic intelligence, the identification of criminogenic or potentially threatening indicators is a part of the information gathering phase of the intelligence cycle. In many cases, the identification of these variables is considered an independent phase, probably because of the conceptual confusion as regards the understanding of the methods used to obtain information (Herman 1996,62)

From this viewpoint, the sociological theories of the criminological discipline help us to comprehend from a strategic level the criminogenic potential of individuals.

While the "risk-country" analysis is one of the most widely used methodologies by the Intelligence Services on a strategic level, in very few occasions has the criminological theoretical rationale been used to explain potential behavior models.

This is so due to the traditional direct applicability of these theories to criminal phenomena. The theoretical transposition in the identification of potential indicators of terrorists is something new. In this sense, the combination of analytical methodologies in strategic intelligence coupled with the application of these theories help us to understand and establish behavior patterns.

One of the classic methodologies in the identification of warning indicators on the strategic level is that used by the PEST method (Matilla 2011,80) (The identification of political, economic, social and technological variables) that combines multidisciplinary knowledge in the international, political, economic and social areas, but does not include Criminology as an empirical discipline.

This method has a double-pronged approach: First, it establishes the identifiable criteria and second, it also establishes the analytical methodology.

With regard to the indicators, we place them in the following criteria (Matilla 2011,80): Security (Responsibility, foreign defense, civic-military relations, internal stability); Government (Civil participation, legal system and institutions, local government, political efficiency, political legitimacy); Justice (Police impartiality, Human Rights, judicial independence, extrajudicial resolution mechanisms, legal mechanisms); Economy (Inflation and unemployment rate, macroeconomic stability, poverty rate and the existence of a “black” economy, competition and commerce); Welfare (Demography, migrations, education, health and social tensions), and finally, cross-cutting issues (International influence, structural inequalities, environment and natural resources). In each of them we establish the variables that once analyzed, will give us a clear picture of the strategic situation of a given state.

One of the challenges that arise in intelligence is to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the intelligence cycle. In this regard, reducing the time taken to achieve the cycle and reducing the threshold of uncertainty (Friedman and Zeckhauser 2012, 824-847) including information gathering and analysis methodologies that are complementary to each other, is the ultimate objective of all Intelligence Systems.

The application of the theories of the Chicago School penned by Clifford Shaw (Crutchfield, Bridges and Weis 1997, 138-165) to explain the criminal conversion of individuals based on the influences of their environment and their neighborhood, are some of the theoretical models on which we can implement identification and analytical methodologies at the strategic level. The Chicago School has subsequently led to numerous variations in structural-functionalist theories (Redondo and Garrido 2013, 270-284)

The main difference is the linkage of the Chicago School with urban sociology and human ecology, while models based on the structural-functionalist current, focus on the deviant behavior understood as a social, normal and structural phenomenon (Redondo and Garrido 2013, 270-284)

If in the ecological theories crime is related to the environment and the city, in the latter, the criminal act is linked to the social structure as a whole.

Within the structural-functional theories, it is necessary to highlight the theory of anomie (lack of rules or standards) whose main exponent was Durkheim, and later, Robert Merton (Merton 1980, 236).

Centralizing the regulatory vacuum is the dominant tone of this theoretical model. Therefore, the lack of rules or standards in society will be the generator of certain deviant behaviors in some individuals.

The theory of anomie explains, in a way, the emergence of certain violent groups that can lead to the formation of terrorist groups or encourage deviant behaviors that give rise to individual terrorists in states that have a lack of coercive structures like the so called "failed states". Establishing therefore a methodology at the strategic level, we place ourselves at the state level to find meaning in collective and individual behaviors.

As a theoretical complement to the theory of anomie we can mention the studies by Edwin Sutherland in the field of social learning models (Sutherland, Cressey and Luckenbill 1992, 170-172), in which he explains how the interaction of the individual and the assimilation of crime takes place through social learning processes. Everything is learned.

According to this author, "criminal behavior stems from the learning of criminal values in any type of culture" (Sutherland, Cressey and Luckenbill 1992, 170-172).

These theories that Sutherland applied to explain "white-collar crime" (Sutherland 1993, 20), can be transferred to the field of terrorism. In this sense, we can explain certain deviations induced by radicals in the primary socialization processes to recruit youths.

2.2.2. Tactical and Operational Intelligence and the Biological Behavioral Models

We place tactical and operational intelligence at the second and third level of military intelligence (Esteban Navarro 2007,29). This doesn't mean that they are independent of each other, rather that they should be interconnected and complementary for the correct preventive development and as a support to the military command's decision making process.

These levels of intelligence are developed in the theatre of operations so the immediacy of the information and its subsequent analysis becomes imperative.

In this sense, knowledge is not only necessary from a strategic point of view, but should be merged with the intelligence obtained at the tactical and operational levels.

Knowledge of the behavioral patterns is necessary to identify warning indicators about individuals or collectives on the ground.

This biological-behavioral studies conform to these requirements. We highlight the model of personality traits (Garcia-Pablos 2008, 45) which establishes stable traits and characteristics in the potential criminal personality of an individual. It is a tremendously complex model that analyzes various variables, but in general we can emphasize that it is all about differentiating between subgroups of criminals and not about differentiating those that are criminals from those that are not (Garcia-Pablos 2008, 45)

In this regard, the elaboration by specialists in Psychology and Psychiatry, included in multidisciplinary groups, of a traits-type catalogue depending on where we may find possible terrorist cells, can increase the efficiency in the field.

One problem that arises with the implementation of this model as a means of identifying behavioral indicators is the need to increase the capacities and information gathering means through HUMINT (the gathering of information through human means). This is at present a vulnerability in tactical and operational military intelligence, due to the lack of specific training in knowledge of terrorist networks, languages, local cultural characteristics, etc. Therefore, a certain complementarity with the strategic level is essential.

Finally, we must not forget the model established by Lawrence Kohlbert (Kohlbert 1982, 35-51), that develops its thesis based on Piaget's theory of moral and cognitive development (Kohlbert 1982, 35-51). This author identified six different stages involving the formation of an individual's moral reasoning. It is at these stages where the individual begins to focus his value judgements about what is right and wrong and also about morality (Kohlbert 1982, 35-51)

He tries to classify offenders at different stages of moral development stating that "individuals who obey the law to avoid punishment or those who only think about their own satisfaction, are more prone to crime than those who understand that the law is a tool for the good of all. Dangerous offenders have a different moral orientation than that of law-abiding citizens; they have become stuck in some primitive stage of the moral evolutionary process" (Kohlbert 1982, 35-51). In this sense, it is an arduous academic effort to establish what is considered moral or not for a civilization. The west, the heir to the Judeo-Christian religion, considers murder an immoral act. We can find in other civilizations practices that are abhorrent to the West, but customary and traditional for them.

Therefore, the adaption with certain groups from an empathic position can facilitate the understanding of concrete actions and thus it enables us to have a competitive advantage in the preventive responses to these actions.

2.2.3. A Special Reference to the Criminological Model of Rational Choice

The Rational Choice Theory is an appropriate explanatory framework, but not limited as we shall see, under which to circumscribe the relationships and connections that the scholarly literature recognizes occur between global terrorism and organized crime. The basic argument is that both phenomena when they manifest themselves as organizations (criminal and terrorist), can establish connections (of a varied nature and intensity) as long as these connections or links promote the increase of their capabilities, facilitating the achievement of their respective goals, when independently they wouldn't be able to achieve them. Basically, a purely utilitarian vision can be identified in which the convenience factors that concur toward predetermined objects can be exploited at their convenience.

Assuming that a diversity of relationships can be implemented under this umbrella of opportunity is far from asserting that there is a global trend toward the convergence between terrorism and organized crime and that because of it they must be studied together as a whole. The hypothesis put forward in this analysis is that once the indicators of each one of the phenomena under scrutiny (terrorism and organized crime) have been identified, conceptually they must be addressed differently, identifying a varied typology of relationships with their different intensities and length in time, and in any case identifying the hybridization between both phenomena as an exception that is generated under very specific relevant conditions.

Obviously, this approach leads us to assume that organized crime and global terrorism are phenomena where rationality takes precedence, when in reality this wouldn't be purely the case. However it can be presumed, according to the information available, that the leaders of the terrorist organizations as well as those of organized crime are self-interested rational actors (Shelley, Picarelliet. Al, 2005). These organizations can be viewed as rational actors if we focus exclusively on the groups as a whole and on the decisions taken by their respective leaderships. In this analytical context, the rationality of the other members of the group is excluded as they are not the decision makers within the organization. It is assumed that decisions taken to interact with other groups to participate in certain activities, or in general, decisions affecting the organization as a whole, will be taken at the highest level of the leadership.

Consequently, the mainstream variant of the Rational Choice Theory "assumes that all individuals have the rational capacity, time and necessary emotional detachment to choose the best course of action in a given situation (Marsh and Stoker, 1995; Laegreid, 2004; Anderton and Carter, 2005; Williams, 2006): the maximization of profit or an obtainable advantage.

3. Forms of Convergence between Organized Crime and Global Terrorism

As agreed on the previous paragraph, specialized academic literature has recognized the existence of relationships and links that take place between global terrorism and organized crime; these links can produce positive cases of convergence between the two. Following Prof. Luis de la Corte (De la Corte, 2013), these situations are not governed by a single pattern, on the contrary they allow us to identify various alternative forms of convergence. The variability of terrorist-criminal cases of convergence can be resumed through a taxonomy consisting of three distinct categories.

3.1. Confluence: Involvement in other Criminal Activities

It could also be called "convergence through appropriation of methods". It occurs when terrorist groups or organizations get involved in activities that are typical of organized crime: essentially criminal activities of various kinds, designed to meet logistical or financial needs.

3.2 Hybridization and Transformation: from Terrorism to Organized Crime

When the involvement of terrorist organizations in illegal business activities becomes recurrent or systematic and produces substantial revenues, the possibility arises that these organizations will realize the high value of these illegal practices, to the point of adopting the economic motivation that characterizes organized crime. This change may be conducted at two levels: the first involves the evolution of the group or organization to a hybrid structure, halfway between terrorism and organized crime. The second, however, involves the transformation of a terrorist network into a mere criminal organization, preferably oriented toward the accumulation of profits. The pattern followed in this second option usually involves keeping the original ideological façade, which makes it very difficult to distinguish these cases from the previous ones (De la Corte, 2013).

3.3 Cooperation with Groups and Criminal Organizations

Collaboration between groups or terrorist organizations and organized crime supports two different forms and levels. One occurs when a criminal group or organization decides to support a terrorist organization for reasons of ideological or religious affinity. It is an abstract choice, with few empirical illustrations. The closest case may correspond to the D-Company, an Indian Muslim militant criminal organization, whose leader Dawood Ibrahim was for many years the highest crime boss in Bombay, with an intense involvement in the trafficking of drugs, weapons, human beings, racketeering and money laundering activities (De la Corte, 2013)

The second form of collaboration stems from purely practical interests and involves some material trade or economic transaction. The purchase of weapons, explosives or fake documents from criminal groups is a resource that terrorists may use when they lack the skills or opportunities to obtain them by other means.

Despite all this panoply of interactions appealing to pragmatism between the organized crime and global terrorism phenomena, the fact is that neither can be said to occur regularly. In most documented cases exchanges are limited, sporadic or specific and are determined by an urgent need or to take advantage of a particularly attractive transaction. However, it cannot be denied that sometimes the initial collaboration may lead to the strengthening of ties and the formalization of partnerships with a longer duration and scope (of a strategic nature).

The clues for this (criminal-terrorist relations) are full of a variety of assumptions, many of them even diametrically opposed.

Like any other criminal practice, terrorism and organized crime activities are dependent on context. They are not suited to all environments and each specific moment can modulate their development, generating various patterns and expressions (De la Corte, 2013). Therefore, the possibilities and forms of interaction are varied in nature. The levels of interaction depend exclusively on the rational decisions of the leadership and what they consider further benefits their group.

Finally, there is an option that involves the establishment of links between organized crime and terrorist organizations that can be considered rather *"sui generis"* in that no real interaction takes place between them. It occurs when one organization adopts another organization's *modus operandi* and methodologies, reproducing them almost to perfection. This "borrowing" or "appropriation" (Shelley, Picarelliet. Al., 2005) merely recognizes the validity or the success of certain forms of action in relation to the activities undertaken. Thus, terrorist organizations emulate criminal organizations especially in the application of formulas for money-laundering and for the procurement of logistics, whereas criminal organizations are choosing to reap benefits from the use of violence and terror.

4. Conclusions

In the last decade, the literature on possible links and connections between criminal and terrorist organizations, especially in the transnational sphere, has grown significantly, opening up a new space of investigation. In this novel framework of analysis, a number of experts from various disciplines attempt to explain through their contributions such relationships and their early stages of development, especially when the analysis of the relationship between these groups can help governments and security/defense agencies address the threats of global terrorism and organized crime.

Criminology doesn't remain and should not remain indifferent to this field of research, especially when the phenomena of organized crime and global terrorism represent two separate objects of study.

As revealed by the various existing criminological theories and explanatory models, above all the Rational Choice Theory, it is feasible to approach the phenomenological analysis of terrorism and organized crime from a comparative perspective.

While the link between global terrorism and organized crime should not be taken for granted, it constitutes a *"de facto"* real, and increasingly disturbing trend progression that demands a preferential treatment and attention from Criminology. Especially the factors and circumstances that lead to the phenomenon of hybridization, characterized by its uniqueness.

On the other hand, an exercise in responsibility embodied in the assessment of the most critical scenarios that could be faced (preventive security), requires specific intervention from those agencies and national/multinational agencies in the fields of security, defense and intelligence, so as to achieve a greater coordination and collaboration given the challenges that they must face.

The fact that, despite their differences in motivations and methods, terrorism and organized crime can converge in various ways, as in fact has already happened, is not an obstacle to conclude, as some analysts suggest, that both types of threat can no longer continue to be studied as isolated phenomena (Laqueur, 1999). Certainly the conceptual border between them has become increasingly blurred, but there are still sufficient arguments to make the abolition of the distinction between them unviable. It is the duty of Criminology, among other disciplines, to deepen the knowledge on convergence between terrorism and organized crime so that academia contributes with explanatory arguments about the relationship and possible typologies that could be established. Not surprisingly, the connections between international terrorism and transnational organized crime are a major threat, covered in most recent strategic documents.

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