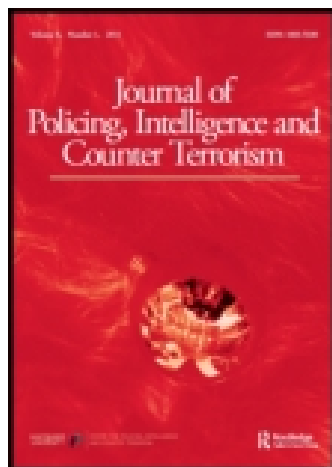


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Editorial for the CATR Special Edition

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Editorial for the CATR Special Edition

As the Director of PICT I have great pleasure in welcoming readers to a special edition of the *Journal of Policing, Intelligence and Counter Terrorism* that focuses on the work done by the Council for Asian Terrorism Research (CATR). Since 2005, CATR has functioned as a multilateral institutional forum dedicated to cultivating sustained dialogue and cooperative research on terrorism and political violence in Asia. In bringing together experts from across the region, including academics, journalists, policymakers, and military, intelligence, and law enforcement officials, CATR has functioned as both a platform for academic and policy discussion as well as an invaluable meeting place for individuals and groups often kept separated by the constraints of geography and time.

The papers included are all expanded and updated versions of outstanding presentations delivered at a series of highly successful and collegial CATR conferences held across the region over the past four years and, as such, they reflect the diverse range of perspectives and research conducted by its members. Together, they form a collection offering a valuable intra-Asian viewpoint on the major issues surrounding terrorism and counter terrorism studies today. I am certain that this special edition of the *Journal* will further the work of CATR by disseminating high quality research on the practical and theoretical aspects of terrorism studies in Asia that will add to current debates, both within the region and further afield.

I would like to thank the members of the editorial team for their efforts in bringing this edition of the *Journal* to fruition, and I would especially like to acknowledge Drs Caroline Ziemke and Kongdan Oh Hassig, of the Institute for Defence Analyses (IDA), for their invaluable support of CATR over the years. In particular, this edition of the *Journal* could not have been created without the guidance and assistance of Caroline Ziemke, who reviewed and chose the articles for inclusion while working with us at PICT in mid 2008.

The close relationship between the IDA and CATR, as well as the origins, history, work and ethos of the Council are presented in the introductory article that opens the *Journal*. In particular, it highlights the importance of the shared CATR vision of compatibility, rather than conformity, when analysing the localised and often disparate causes and character of terrorism throughout the CATR member states.

The succeeding five articles cover diverse but closely interrelated topics – an overview of the various state responses to terrorism in Southeast Asia and their varying levels of success, an examination of the historical and doctrinal links between the Kumpulan Mujahidin Malaysia and the Jemaah Islamiyah terrorist organisations, an exploration of the Philippine response to terrorism, an investigation of the use of the Media by the Rajah Solaiman Islamic Movement, and an account of the use of media communications by the government and Taliban in Afghanistan. Together they provide an overview of the current landscape of terrorism and security studies in South and Southeast Asia.

The article by Dr. Singh examines the variety of state responses to terrorism across Southeast Asia and argues that despite an initial unwillingness for some states to address the terrorist threat there have been substantial improvements in the fight against terrorism in recent years. Whereas a regional response under the aegis of forums such as ASEAN and APEC has been slow to develop and has focused largely on building state capacity, adopting best practices and reinforcing commitment, the bilateral and subregional cooperation between states has progressed substantially over the last six years, especially in the fields of intelligence exchange and the building of capacity to implement and follow through with counter terrorism programs. Indeed, forms of bilateral and trilateral security cooperation continue to be the most important and successful front in the fight against terrorism and this has been apparent in the striking cooperation between nations, such as between Indonesian and Australian police after the 2002 Bali Bombings, or between Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore to enhance security in the Straits of Malacca. These examples of cooperation, argues Singh, may be part of a gradual move towards a set of common counter terrorism strategies that include the need to counter extremist ideologies and a recognition of the importance of inter-faith dialogue.

Associate Professor Abdullah's article adds depth to an understanding of terrorism in Southeast Asia by exploring the historical, cultural and religious roots of terrorist ideology as well as the appeal of radicalised visions of Islam to local populations across the region. In it he analyses the links between the Kumpulan Mujahidin Malaysia (KMM) and the Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) in terms of the historical origins and development of both movements, their organisational structure and, especially, the often close personal connects that exist between the leaders of each movement, mainly through their shared involvement in *jihadi* missions in Afghanistan and Mindanao. Particularly, Abdullah traces the shared spiritual connection between each group and radical *Salafi* ideology, including the goal of creating a regional *Darul Islam* ('House of Islam'), connecting the nations of Southeast Asia under an strict and idealised Islamic state. Throughout, Abdullah argues that although the structural links between such terrorist organisations and their cells may be few, the personal and ideological connects lying beneath the surface are close and often inseparable.

General Aguirre continues the theme of the need for an integrated and interrelated approach to terrorism but from the perspective of an examination of the holistic response to terrorism adopted by the government of the Philippines. Throughout, he looks at the conditions that gave rise to terrorism, the government's strategies to confront it, and assess the future threat of terrorist activity. Aguirre contends that terrorism in the Philippines grew out of long running localised communist and secessionist insurgencies that were hijacked by foreign extremists with their own politico-religious agendas, and that it is only through combating the underlying conditions that foster insurgency that international terrorism can be effectively dealt with. It is heartening to read that in the Philippines substantial legal reforms and a willingness to engage with some localised terrorist organisations, initiate ceasefires and address the underlying causes of terrorism, including social and economic

development measures, is helping the state gain ground against local and international terrorist networks.

Continuing the examination of terrorism in the Philippines, Professor Banlaoi provides a thorough overview of the often symbiotic relationship between the media and terrorist organisations through an analysis of the Rajah Solaiman Islamic Movement (RSIM) and its use of the Fi Sabilillah Dawah and Media Foundation (FSDMFI) to propagate its message. Banlaoi explores the RSIM's use of the media as a legal front to disseminate Wahhabi interpretations of Islam in radio, television, print and web-based forums, often as part of an attempt to reconvert Philippine Christians back to Islam, and asks whether this use of the media aids or hinders the terrorist's cause. Banlaoi argues that it was elements of the media that provided renewed publicity, popularity and even protection to the RSIM after the SuperFerry 14 bombing in 2004.

Carrying on the important theme of the close links between terrorism and various forms of media, the Forum section of the *Journal* contains an article by Hekmat Karzai in which he presents an examination of how the Taliban in Afghanistan have used communications to further their cause. Karzai considers the strategic weaknesses of the strategies of communication used by both the Taliban and the Afghan government and offers some recommendations for how the Afghan government can improve the efficacy of its strategic communications. These recommendations include the need for close cooperation between the Afghan government and the international community, a renewed engagement with tribal elders in the countryside and a commitment to respond to the concerns of local communities.

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