

## Conclusion

The good news about countering al Qaeda is that its probability of success in actually overthrowing any governments is close to zero. Al Qaeda's objectives are virtually unachievable, and it has succeeded in alienating most governments in Asia, Europe, North America, South America, the Middle East, and Africa. Nor does it have a firm base of support, as do such groups with welfare services, such as Hizballah and Hamas. As al Qaeda expert Peter Bergen concluded, "Making a world of enemies is never a winning strategy."<sup>41</sup>

But the bad news is that U.S. efforts against al Qaeda have not been successful. Despite some successes against al Qaeda, the United States has not significantly undermined its capabilities. Al Qaeda has been involved in more attacks in a wider geographical area since September 11, 2001, including in such European capitals as London, than it was before that date. Its organizational structure has also evolved. This means that the U.S. strategy in dealing with al Qaeda must change. A strategy based predominantly on military force has not been effective. Considering al Qaeda's organizational structure and modus operandi, only a strategy based primarily on careful police and intelligence work is likely to be effective.

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<sup>41</sup> Bergen (2008).