

At the core of these concerns is confusion about which counterterrorism strategies are most likely to be effective. One major reason is that there has been little systematic analysis of how terrorist groups have ended in the past.

Definitions

While there is no broadly accepted definition of *terrorism*, this monograph argues that terrorism involves the use of politically motivated violence against noncombatants to cause intimidation or fear among a target audience.⁵ There are several fundamental aspects of terrorism. Terrorism has a political nature and involves the perpetration of acts designed to encourage political change. It involves the targeting of civilians. And it is restricted to organizations other than a national government. Although one could broaden the definition of terrorism to include the actions of a national government against its own or another population, adopting such a broad definition would distract attention from what policymakers would most like to know: how to combat the threat that violent substate groups pose. Further, it could also create analytic confusion. Terrorist organizations and state governments have different levels of resources, face different kinds of incentives, and are susceptible to different types of pressures. Accordingly, the determinants of their behavior are not likely to be the same and, thus, require separate theoretical investigations.⁶

A *terrorist group* is defined as a collection of individuals belonging to a nonstate entity that uses terrorism to achieve its objectives. Such an entity has at least some command and control apparatus that, no

⁵ There are many definitions of *terrorism*. See, for example, U.S. Department of State, Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism, *Country Reports on Terrorism 2005*, Washington, D.C., 2006, p. 9; Hoffman (2006, pp. 1–41); Pape (2005, p. 9); and Audrey Kurth Cronin, “Behind the Curve: Globalization and International Terrorism,” *International Security*, Vol. 27, No. 3, Winter 2002–2003, pp. 30–58, p. 33.

⁶ Robert A. Pape, “The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism,” *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 97, No. 3, August 2003, pp. 343–361.