

information to penetrate and disrupt terrorist organizations than do such institutions as the military. They are the primary arm of the government focused on internal security matters. Local police and intelligence agencies usually have a permanent presence in cities, towns, and villages; a better understanding of the threat environment in these areas; and better human intelligence.

Other reasons are less common. For example, in 10 percent of the cases, terrorist groups ended because their goals were achieved, and military force led to the end of terrorist groups in 7 percent of the cases. Militaries tended to be most effective when used against terrorist groups engaged in an insurgency in which the groups were large, well armed, and well organized. Insurgent groups have been among the most capable and lethal terrorist groups, and military force has usually been a necessary component in such cases. Against most terrorist groups, however, military force is usually too blunt an instrument. Military tools have increased in precision and lethality, especially with the growing use of precision standoff weapons and imagery to monitor terrorist movement. But even precision weapons have been of limited use against terrorist groups. The use of substantial U.S. military power against terrorist groups also runs a significant risk of turning the local population against the government by killing civilians.

Our quantitative analysis looked at groups that have ended since 1968 or are still active. It yielded several other interesting findings:

- Religious terrorist groups take longer to eliminate than other groups. Approximately 62 percent of all terrorist groups have ended since 1968, but only 32 percent of religious terrorist groups have ended.
- Religious groups rarely achieve their objectives. No religious group that has ended achieved victory since 1968.
- Size is a significant determinant of a group's fate. Big groups of more than 10,000 members have been victorious more than 25 percent of the time, while victory is rare when groups are smaller than 1,000 members.
- There is no statistical correlation between the duration of a terrorist group and ideological motivation, economic conditions,