

ment with such groups as al Qa'ida that advocate the establishment of a transnational caliphate across the Middle East. It is not possible for any single government to accede to this demand.

As noted in Chapter Two, the possibility of a political solution is linked to a key variable: terrorist goals. Most terrorist groups that end because of politics seek narrow policy goals, such as policy and territorial change. There are two distinct logics for why terrorist groups end because of politics.

First, the narrower the goals of terrorist organizations, the more likely the government and the terrorist group are able to find a mutually agreeable settlement. The reason is straightforward: The government may have less to lose when the terrorist group has narrow goals. Agreeing to change a policy is easier to accomplish—and may be easier to sell to a domestic population—than agreeing to overturn an entire social order. When a terrorist group's goals are minimal, there may be a middle ground in which to negotiate a compromise settlement. As Figure 4.1 highlights, terrorist goals can range from narrow ones (such as a policy change) to broader ones (such as changing a country's social order). The further right on the x-axis, the broader the goals and the lower the state's willingness to reach a settlement. Consequently, the possibility of a settlement is greater the further left on the x-axis. As will be discussed in more detail in the next section, the FMLN's goals were largely policy oriented. A number of factors can influence bargaining positions in the middle of negotiations. One is a change in structural conditions, such as outside support or a transition from authoritarianism to democracy. For example, a decline in outside support from major powers can cut off a key source of funding and increase a group's willingness to settle. Another factor is a military stalemate. The inability of either side—the government or the terrorist group—to defeat the other over a period of years may also increase the likelihood of a negotiated settlement. The financial and blood costs of continuing to fight a protracted, unwinnable war may be too high.

Second, the broader the goals of terrorist organizations—such as regime change, empire, or social revolution—the more likely the government will be resistant to change, and the more likely that terrorism will be viewed as the only option. And the narrower the goals, the