

Abstract

Military's Roles in Counter-terrorism

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Terrorism is violence that targets the entire society through direct victims, intends to have political appeal and attaches more importance to psychological damage rather than physical damage. Success or failure of a terrorist campaign depends upon the reaction of the society and the government. A society should try to manage terrorism without overreaction. Under any circumstances human rights abuse and neglect of democratic values are not allowed. Caution is required when the military deals with terrorism. Use of the military in counter-terrorism often results in unnecessary use of force on citizens which can backfire on the authorities' efforts or, excessive influence of the military on politics which threatens democracy. The lead-agency in counter-terrorism activities should be a law-enforcement agency or the police. The military may support the police in this role but the military should be accountable to the police. However, the fact that the military is not the lead-agency does not mean that military's roles at counter-terrorism are peripheral. It should be remembered that there are certain roles that the military has to perform. Disaster rescue operations are military's most important role in counter-terrorism activities.

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