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Convergence: Illicit Networks and National Security in the Age of Globalization - Money Laundering, Threat Finance, Narcotics, Transnational Organized Crime, Sex Traffic, Black Market, Urbanization

U.S. Government, U.S. Military, Department of Defense (DoD)

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Professionally converted for accurate flowing-text e-book format reproduction, this book provides a comprehensive overview of all aspects of illicit networks and national security in the modern "globalized" world.

From human trafficking in Eastern Europe to drug smuggling in East Asia, to the illicit arms trade in Africa, to terrorist cells in East Asia and insurgents in the Caucasus, transnational illicit networks have tentacles that reach everywhere. The trade in illegal narcotics is perhaps most worrisome, but of growing concern is the illicit trafficking of counterfeit items, weapons, natural resources, money, cultural property, and even people by shrewd, well-resourced, and nefarious adversaries.

These networks have taken advantage of modern advances in communications and transportation to globalize. Narcotraffickers in the Andean Ridge, for instance, have expanded operations as far as their markets in the United States and Europe. Illegal arms merchants have expanded their operations around the world. Human smugglers have moved their slaves from underdeveloped countries to sex operations throughout the developed world. And, of course, we have all seen the global reach of modern transnational terrorism. No one is immune from this insidious threat.

It will take a combination of initiatives to defeat the threats created by illicit criminal networks. These transnational organizations are a large part of the hybrid threat that forms the nexus of illicit drug trafficking—including routes, profits, and corruptive influences—and terrorism, both home grown as well as imported Islamic terrorism. With the latest wave of globalization allowing for even more movement of people, goods, and information, these actors have spread their tentacles wider and deeper, breaking new ground. At the same time, they have demonstrated an ability to adapt, diversify, and converge. This has allowed them to obtain vast resources and to continuously reorganize themselves to stay ahead of efforts to combat them. They have achieved a degree of globalized outreach and collaboration via networks, as well as horizontal diversification.

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