

UNITED STATES COAST GUARD WESTERN HEMISPHERE STRATEGY, 2014

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Summary

- The crime and conflict nexus must be a focus as Transnational Criminal Organizations (TCOs) adapt to utilize the abilities of criminal organization, terror groups, and insurgents.
- This strategy demonstrates that in the 21st century and as TOC's tactics evolve, the Coast Guard must prioritize combatting networks, securing borders, and safeguard commerce.

Understanding Social Networks and Halting Lootables

- This strategy conveys the changing nature of the crime and conflict nexus as the criminal organizations, terror groups, and insurgent groups begin to form alliances and borrow best practices (Makarenko 2004).
- In the presence of increasing globalization and technological innovation, TOCs in the western hemisphere are gaining influence.
- Climate change can displace large island populations, which can cause grievances sparked by territorial loss in various ethnic populations.
 - Due to social embeddedness of crime, this can lead to increase in the amount of TOCs in the western hemisphere (Van de Bunt, Siegel, and Zaitch 2013).
- This strategy states that Coast Guard must begin taking an offensive position by identifying, understanding, and targeting TOC networks.
 - TOCs that rely on kinship or formal organization networks are stronger than those that do not and therefore, understanding these relationships allows the Coast Guard to learn how to dismantle these groups (Malm, Bichler, and Van de Walle 2008).
- The second priority focuses on securing borders against incoming threat but fails to mention the need to halt the flow of illicit materials.
 - The movement of illicit good must be stopped because as the reach of the crime and conflict nexus expands, illicit materials, such as drugs and weapons, are now financing terrorist activities (Sanderson 2004).

Background

- This strategy lists adaptive TOCs, climate change, globalization, and technological advancements as the greatest threats to maritime safety.
- The goal of the strategy is to address and prepare for the evolving threats to the maritime safety that the United States is facing in the coming decade.
- This strategy was written in 2014, under the Obama Administration with the guidance of other government agencies.