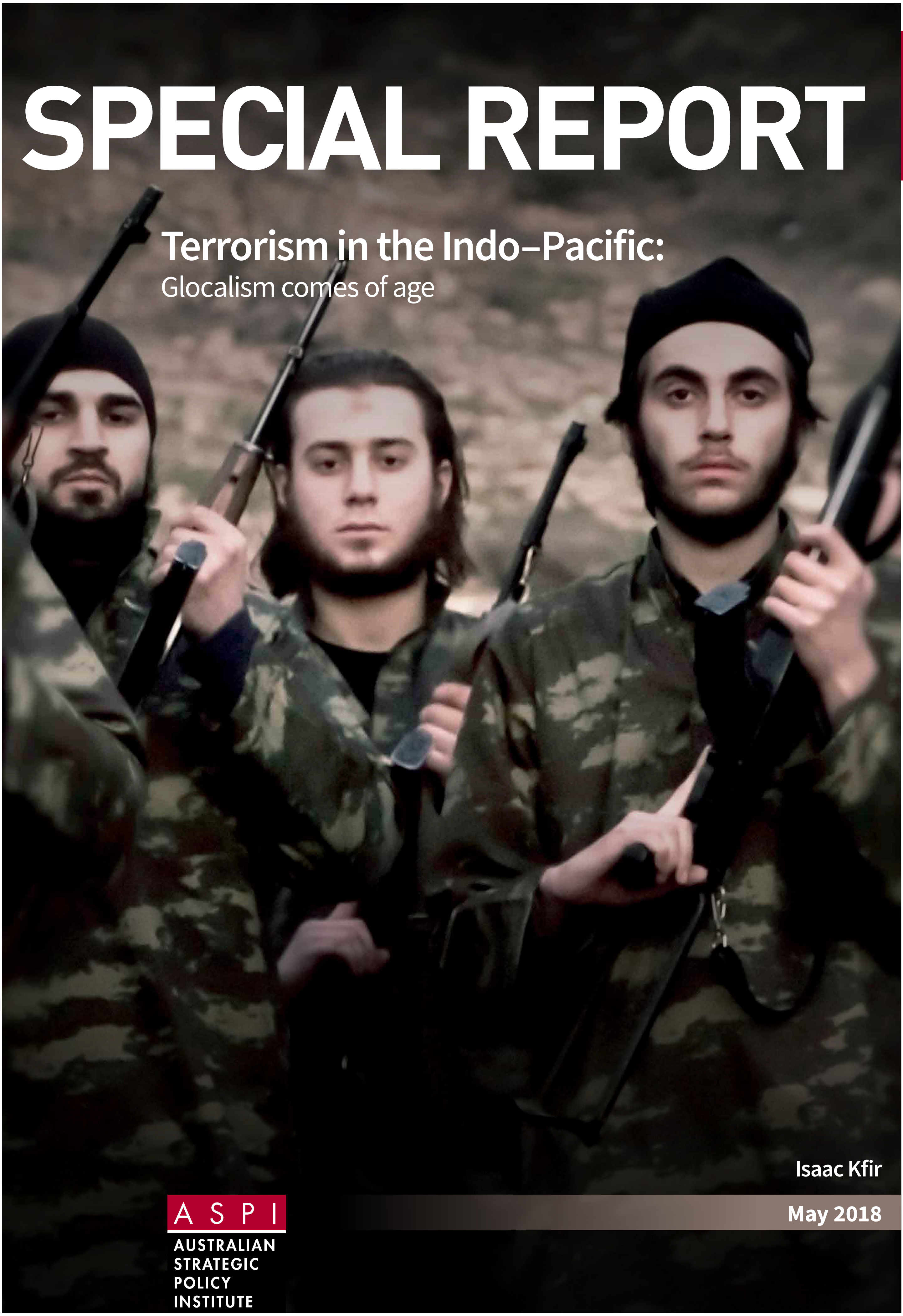

SPECIAL REPORT

Terrorism in the Indo–Pacific:

Glocalism comes of age

Isaac Kfir

May 2018

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Cover image: Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant propaganda photo showing ISIS militants with weapons on 19 November 2015. Photo: Handout/Alamy stock photo.

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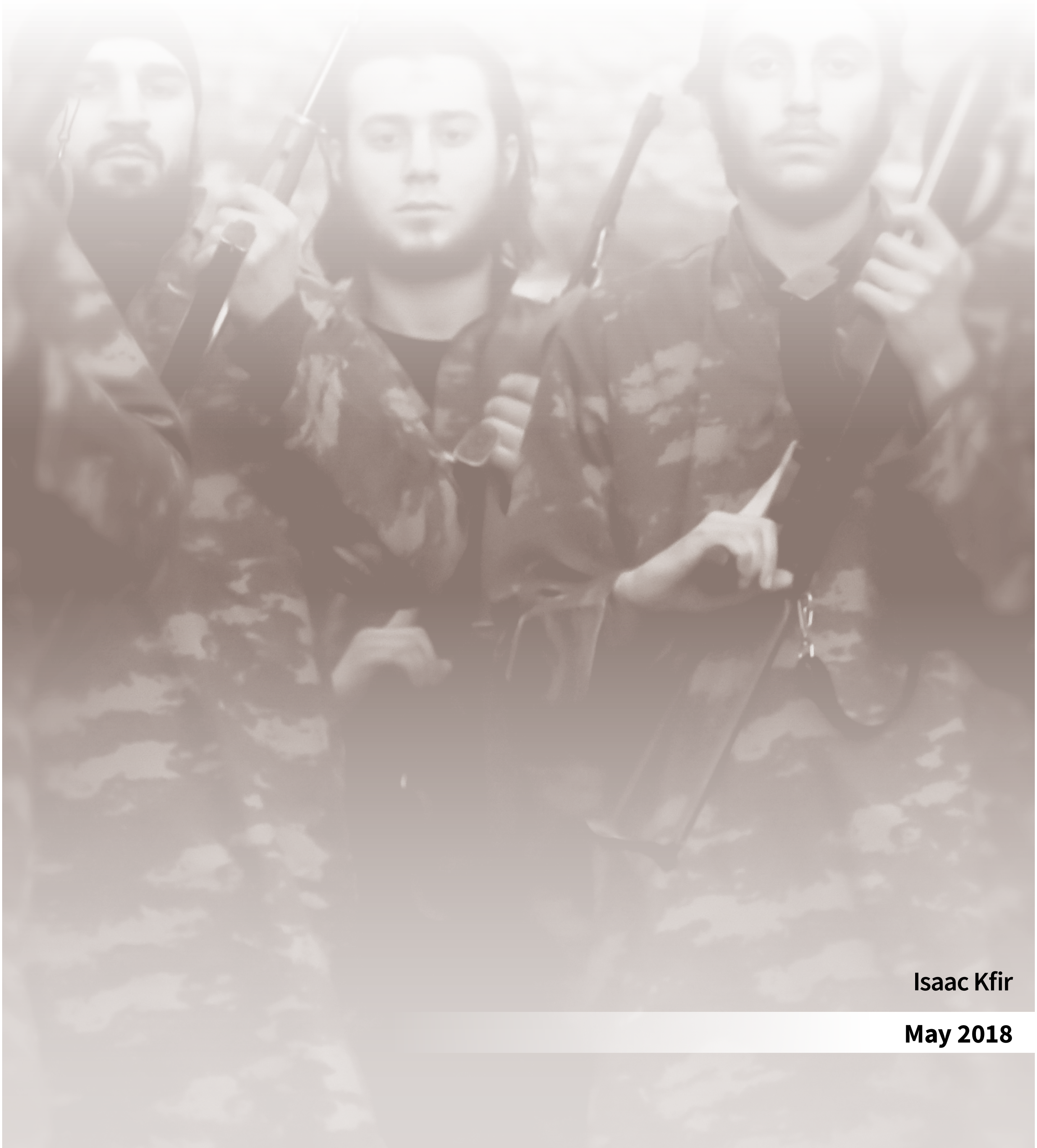

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INTRODUCTION

2017 was an important year in countering *Salafi-jihadi* terrorism. Midway through the year, the so-called caliphate collapsed as the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS, also known as the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant or Daesh[1]) lost its hold on Mosul, Raqqa and other territory.[2]

The sense of relief and joy didn't last very long, as the ideas of Daesh and its progenitor, al-Qaeda, (AQ)—the group established by Osama bin Laden in the late 1980s, now led by Ayman al-Zawahiri and Osama's son, Hamza bin Laden—persist and evolve.

History teaches that terrorists innovate in their tactics, strategy and organisation.[3] They must do so to survive, as most nation-states are committed to the eradication of terrorism. Nevertheless, for each successful terrorist attack there have been many that the security services have foiled.[4]

Over the past few years, AQ has moved away from terrorism's centrestage as most attention has been with Daesh. However, AQ has been working slowly to resurrect its network and establish footings on the Indian subcontinent through al-Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent (AQIS), in sub-Saharan Africa through al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, in the Middle East through al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, and in Southeast Asia.[5]

In a telling admission on *Al Jazeera* in 2015*,* Abu Mohammad al-Jolani, the leader of Jabhat al-Nusra ('Support Front for the People') gave an indication of how AQ has altered its strategy. Al-Jolani said that the group's mission is to topple the Assad regime and not to seek a fight with the West. He added that his group 'received clear orders not to use Syria as a launching pad to attack the US or Europe to not sabotage the true mission against the regime'.[6] Al-Jolani clearly abided by Zawahiri's strategy of refraining from mass-casualty attacks so as to rebuild AQ as a group and as a brand. By taking the longer, more patient view, AQ is shaping the conditions that would permit it to hold territory from which it could disseminate its ideology, indicating that the group is metamorphosing beyond a terrorist group into a political entity.[7]

Daesh poses a different challenge. Now that it has lost its caliphate, which was its territorial base, it's likely that the group will follow a similar pattern to that of AQ in seeking to rebuild itself. It will focus more on its presence online, which is where it's been very effective in recruiting and inspiring young men and women to embrace its ideology and commit acts of violence such as the May 2018 Surabaya church attacks. At the same time, Daesh will also search for new 'provinces' (*wilayats*) and affiliates, which is very much what AQ has been doing (the difference is likely to be a continued commitment to use violence, including mass-casualty attacks aimed at shock and awe, as part of al-Baghdadi's commitment to 'volcanoes of jihad').

Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi has shown himself to be a more pragmatic leader than bin Laden and Zawahiri. Daesh has had few qualms over who could become a member; it actively seeks individuals with criminal backgrounds and mental health issues, whereas bin Laden and Zawahiri were more purist in what they looked for in recruits. This is why AQ would reject individuals, which Daesh has not done.[8] Daesh's agenda is also different from AQ's because for al-Baghdadi the goals are to establish an Islamic state and to challenge with pure violence those who oppose Daesh. This is why, for example, al-Baghdadi was willing to accept the group's various name changes, saying 'the supreme legitimate necessity permits to cancel and replace it with others to be at the level of growth and sublimity.'[9]

Notwithstanding its territorial losses, Daesh is developing a narrative in which its military defeats are presented as a temporary setback and in which its adherents must make more sacrifices.[10] In other words, Daesh and its allies must double down on their efforts.

Daesh's strategy seems focused on encouraging its supporters to engage in two types of attacks: low-cost, low-tech operations, such as knife or vehicle attacks, and highly complex, high-impact operations such as the Sydney Airport plot. Both types of operation cause enormous physical and psychological damage in that they create fear and lead individuals to change their activities (for example, immediately after 9/11, many Americans preferred to travel by car). They also stimulate policy and legislative change based on the need for decision-makers to appear to be doing something, even without substantive threat modelling and assessments.[11]

Both AQ and Daesh increasingly operate in the Indo-Pacific,[12] where they're establishing roots and networks and seeking allies, sympathisers and supporters by exploiting local tensions and personal grievances to support their wider, global goals—'glocalism'. That is, the Indo-Pacific is an important sphere for the evolving *Salafi-jihadi* campaigns of AQ and Daesh, not so much because returning foreign terrorist fighters are slowly filtering back into the region, but because there are many local push and pull factors that create the conditions for such campaigns.

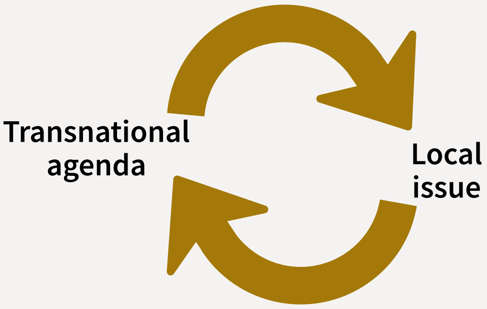
This special report reviews and assesses potential terrorism hotspots in the Indo-Pacific region and offers some policy recommendations for the Australian Government.

THE GLOCALISM OF TERRORISM IN THE INDO–PACIFIC

By operating as a ‘dune’ organisation[13] and seeking not to draw too much attention to itself, AQ has come to rely more on local actors. The key to the campaign is pursuing a glocalist agenda in which local grievances are exploited by *Salafi-jihadi* ideology. AQ promotes the ideology (al-Qaedaism),[14] while local issues create the conditions on the ground (grievances) that encourage people to identify with, embrace and promote al-Qaedaism.

Glocalism is a symbiotic relationship between local issues and the goal of advancing a transnational *Salafi-jihadi* agenda (promoting AQ’s version of Islam and engaging in a perpetual conflict aimed at establishing the House of Islam (*dar al-islam*) by using local grievances. Conversely, glocalism seeks to take local issues and elevate them into being part of a global conflict. (Figure 1) Consequently, abuses inflicted on Muslims in, say, Rakhine State in Myanmar aren’t seen simply as being between the Rohingya and the government of Myanmar but rather, from AQ’s point of view, as another indication of the harm inflicted on Muslims by non-Muslims.[15]

Figure 1: Glocalism



Another element of glocalism is that through the sharing of information about local abuses, young men and women are motivated to join local campaigns. For instance, the Myanmarese military campaign against the Rohingya has been used by the Indonesian-based Islamic Defenders Front to call for ‘jihadists’ to make the trip to Rakhine State to fight for the Rohingya because there is a duty to support other Muslims. The group’s spokesman, Slamet Maarif, declared that:

> we want to help in any way we can. We are even prepared to wage jihad there if need be. That is why one of the main requirements for our recruits is the willingness to die as a martyr … Muslims are being slaughtered there. Our volunteers will be facing armed military officers and civilians there. That is why we want young men who are willing to die for their religion.[16]

Another example of glocalism is AQ’s claim that the Chinese Government is committing all sorts of atrocities against the Uygur people such as preventing men from learning the Quran, observing Ramadan, etc. This has led AQ to advocate for violent action against the Chinese state.

Glocalism also explains some of the activities of groups such as the Turkistan Islamic Party, which has sent Uygurs to Syria and Afghanistan to gain combat experience, which they'll then bring back to Xinjiang Province in China. It further emphasises the link between Central Asia and the Middle East, as those men are effectively fighting for the 'World Islamic Front' announced in a 1998 fatwa and in defence of *dar al-Islam* (the territory of Islam).[17] Because it is seeking membership of the transnational *Salafi-jihadi* community it explains why the Turkistan Islamic Party was responsible for at least 13 suicide operations inside Syria between 2014 and 2017, as well as for the running of several training camps, including one that trained children.[18]

Glocalism supports Zawahiri's decision not to engage in mass-casualty operations that may harm Muslims, allowing AQ to reclaim the higher ground specifically against Daesh[19] but also against the West. A key feature of AQ's argument is that the West engages in moral relativism in which it either ignores the suffering of Muslims such as the Rohingya and the Uygurs or directly causes Muslim suffering while seeking to appear benevolent.[20]

In sum, by using local conflicts, tensions and divisions, Salafist-jihadists promote their ideology, which is used to explain oppression, repression or social harm and thereby win over recruits to their cause. Once they have enough support, they can initiate low-cost, low-tech operations that over time will lead to overreaction by governments, gaining the *jihadis* more recruits and creating a full-fledged insurgency.

The Philippines

The 'Battle for Marawi' (23 May – 23 October 2017),[21] began when Filipino security forces raided a house in Marawi City, the Philippines largest Muslim City. The operation has attracted tremendous interest because of the alleged role that the Daesh played in it. There are disputes as to whether the battle was a Daesh-operation or a Daesh-inspired operation.[22]

What's undisputed is that the battle, which featured in the June 2017 issue of *Rumiyah* under the headline 'The Jihad in East Asia', proved a useful propaganda tool for Daesh. Soon after, videos emerged showing Daesh-pledged militants fighting the Philippines military and exhorting foreign fighters to go to Marawi and fight under Isnilon Hapilon, who became the purported 'emir' of Islamic State—Eastern Region (*Daulah Islamiyah Wilayatul Mashriq*) after he pledged allegiance to Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi in 2014. It's alleged that militants from Chechnya, Indonesia, Malaysia and Saudi Arabia took up the call.[23]

After Hapilon moved from his stronghold on Basilan Island to Mindanao, he formed a relationship with Omar and Abdullah Maute, the leaders of the Maute Group, who were also to play a crucial role in the battle for Marawi.

In 2014, the Mautes pledged an oath of allegiance (*bay'ah*) to the ISIS leader, al-Baghdadi, after which they established and led two highly trained groups: Khilafah sa Jabal Uhod (Soldiers of the Caliphate in Mouth Uhod) and Khilafah sa Ranao (Soldiers of the Caliphate in Lanao). In February 2016, the Mautes allegedly beheaded a Filipino army officer in Butig, and a few months later they beheaded two Christian workers. The killings were done on behalf of Daesh.[24] The method of killing is significant, as it was Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, the former leader of Tawhid al-Jihad (Monotheism and Holy War), from which Daesh emerged, who popularised the use of beheading as a means to terrorise opponents and attract new recruits who seem to want to participate in such gruesome acts.

The immediate roots of the battle for Marawi lie with the Philippines security services' decision to target Hapilon, the leader of a faction of the Abu Sayyaf Group in Basilan. Abu Sayyaf was formed in the early 1990s by Abdurajak Abubakar Janjalani, who had spent time in Afghanistan in the 1980s. Its operations were largely confined to the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, which covers some of the island of Mindanao as well as the outlying islands of Basilan and the Sulu archipelago. Janjalani wanted to merge *Salafi-jihadi* ideology with a nationalist, Moro-separatist agenda. In 1998, Janjalani was killed and the leadership passed to his brother, Khadaffy Janjalani, who was killed in 2006. Under the Janjalanis, Abu Sayyaf became known more for its criminal activities than for its religious or nationalist program. It's therefore possible that Hapilon was targeted because the security services wanted to remove someone affiliated with the drugs trade. Such actions are President Duterte's signature policy.

Nevertheless, evidence has emerged that Hapilon was connected to Jamaah Ansharut Daulah, an Indonesian group that emerged in 2015 following the amalgamation of around two dozen Indonesian extremist groups, including Al Mujahirun, East Indonesia Mujahidin and Jamaah Anshorut Tauhid, whose members pledged allegiance to Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi.[25] The link between the two was facilitated by a Filipina, Myrna Mabanza, who in January 2016 was involved in transferring up to $107,000 and connecting Hapilon to people in Syria. In April 2016, Mabanza helped a Jamaah Anshorut Daulah representative travel to Mindanao to meet Hapilon. The representative also purchased weapons for Daesh-aligned forces in Indonesia and established courses for pro-Daesh recruits from Indonesia with Hapilon's group.[26]

The Maute Group emerged in Butig, a rural town in the Mindanao province of Lanao del Sur. It was formed by Farhana Maute, the Maute clan's matriarch, who used it as her private army to engage in extortion and resist other clans, primarily the Pansar militia, which is linked to Butig politician Dimnatang Pansar.[27] In November 2016, almost a year before the Marawi battle, the Maute Group made headlines when it raised Daesh's black flag in the disused municipal hall of Butig, which led to a six-day battle against the Armed Forces of the Philippines that left 63 extremists and two soldiers dead.[28] The two brothers had allegedly studied in the Middle East, which is where it's assumed they formed ties with Salafist-jihadists. When they returned to Mindanao, Omar and Abdullah recruited faculty and students at Mindanao State University in Marawi.[29] Prior to the battle, the Mautes built a network of underground tunnels and placed military equipment around the city.

One reason for the conflict is the decades-long fight between the Philippines Government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front and the more secular Moro National Liberation Front over the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao. The conflict in the autonomous region can also be understood as historical, religious and ideological. Islam penetrated the region in the 14th century through Muslim traders, putting the people into dialectical opposition to later Spanish, American and other Christian influences, and was a rallying cry in the face of Spanish colonisation. The locals have a history of opposition to colonisers. They also believe that the Government of the Republic of the Philippines has adopted a discriminatory approach to the region and the Muslim community, not only encouraging Christians to migrate to the area but providing the migrants with benefits. Thus, the third layer of conflict is Moro marginalisation, which manifests itself in economic underdevelopment, poor political representation and weak governance.[30] Between 2010 and 2016, the Aquino administration and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front negotiated a peace accord, but the 2015 Mamasapano massacre, coupled with Aquino's replacement by Rodrigo Duterte, put a stop to the peace process. The parliament failed to adopt the Bangsamoro Basic Law, which was supposed to help create an autonomous Muslim-majority substate in the autonomous region.[31]

One reason for the conflict in Marawi was a local power struggle between the Maute Group and the Pansar militia. The tension between the two attracted the attention of Hapilon and the Abu Sayyaf Group, who probably saw an opportunity to expand their influence.

Before the battle, the Armed Forces of the Philippines described Hapilon and his supporters as 'ISIS wannabes', even though Hapilon had declared his allegiance to al-Baghdadi in a YouTube video in July 2014. In other words, there was no evidence that Hapilon and Abu Sayyaf were posing a serious security threat, as by all indications Abu Sayyaf had become largely a criminal enterprise, specialising in kidnap-for-ransom, although it was willing to use Islam to defend its actions.[32]

In 2016, *al-Naba*, a Daesh newspaper, recognised Hapilon and his group as a 'branch' of Daesh in Southeast Asia, designating him as the emir of Daesh in the region, although it remains unclear why or how (beyond Daesh's desire to claim that it has foothold in Southeast Asia). Daesh called on other militant groups, such as Ansar al-Shariah, Ma'rakah al-Ansar, Ansarul Khilafah Philippines and al-Harakatul al-Islamiyyah, to serve as battalions under Hapilon's command (there was no indication that Daesh could enforce this demand. The statement is reminiscent of al-Baghdadi's April 2013 unilateral announcement of a merger between his group the Islamic State of Iraq and Jabhat al-Nusra, creating the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant).[33] In August 2014, Ansarul Khilafah Philippines pledged to deploy suicide bombers in the Philippines and make the country a 'graveyard' for US soldiers.[34]

Mindanao is a unique case, in that the area is largely outside of government control (and the government is unlikely to assert control any time soon). Ali Fauzi, a former member of Jemaah Islamiyah, has said 'IS cannot do it (establish its own territory) in Malaysia and Indonesia … they have the greatest possibility of establishing its territory in the Philippines because weapons, arms and ammunition are widely circulated and easily available there.' Nasir Abas, a former leader of Jemaah Islamiyah, who had established a paramilitary training camp on Mount Kararao, which is near Marawi, points out that 'IS is targeting Marawi because it is a Muslim-majority city.'[35]

The battle for Marawi was significant for several reasons. First, for around five months a group of committed individuals withstood the onslaught of the Armed Forces of the Philippines. The insurgents were able to resist the army because in Marawi City, unlike in other provincial cities, private and commercial buildings are constructed of reinforced concrete, which helped the insurgents resist heavy fire.

Second, the Philippines Government greatly underestimated the Maute Group and its allies, which were using radio frequency scanners and second-hand non-military drones acquired from dealers in Hong Kong.[36] Terrorists innovate and imitate, so they'll pay close attention to what transpired in Marawi and seek to employ the same tactics in other places.

Third, as the conflict unfolded Daesh was able to send money and experienced fighters to support Hapilon and the Mautes.

Fourth, there's evidence that the battle inspired militants, mainly from Indonesia, Malaysia and Arab countries to travel to Marawi to participate in the campaign.[37] Although around 1,000 of the insurgents died, undoubtedly some survived to take what they learned on the battlefield to the various training camps that are strewn across the region.

Having tasted success in Mindanao, Islamist groups in the Philippines and elsewhere in the region may see value in continuing their operations. There are rumours of Daesh infiltration because of the lack of efficient security along the Sulu Sea coast and because of President Duterte's decision to terminate and not resume peace talks with the National Democratic Front.[38] The destruction wrought on the city and its people—it's as if the military had to destroy the town in order to save it—is likely to provide further evidence of the disconnect between the government and the people, which is why regional experts such as Professor Zachary Abuza note that with 'a city in rubble, and the majority of its 400,000 population still displaced, angry, and not confident in the government's ability to rebuild it and prevent future attacks, Moro grievances continue to grow'.[39]

Bangladesh

Bangladesh merits more attention from counterterrorism policymakers. Its 163 million disaffected, disenfranchised and discontented people must contend with poverty, corruption, modernisation, rising urbanisation and increased digitalisation.[40]

The push towards making Bangladesh into a more Islamic state has been evolving since the country gained its independence in 1971. That is, even though the Constitution highlights nationalism, socialism, democracy and secularism as principles of state policy, Islam-based political parties such as Jamaat-e-Islami are focused on encouraging more Islamic observance among Bangladeshis and also on making sure that the country is governed in line with Islamic law.[41]

There's evidence that both AQ and Daesh are looking to further their presence in the country (AQIS was formed in September 2014). Adam Yahiye Gadahn, a former spokesperson for AQ, claimed in 2015 that the only way to help Muslims who are persecuted in Bangladesh is through *dawah* (preaching) and jihad.[42] In emphasising the glocalist agenda, Zawahiri has claimed that there is a massacre of Muslims in Bangladesh by 'leading criminals in the [Indian] subcontinent and the West against the Prophet of Islam and the Islamic creed, so that they may turn you into slaves of a despotic and disbelieving system'.[43]

Since 2000, according to the Global Terrorism Database maintained by the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START), the country has experienced more than 900 terrorist attacks, of which around 110 were committed by confirmed Islamist groups, and that Islamic State and AQIS have assaulted religious and ethnic minorities as well as secular and liberal activists.[44] In 2016, Bangladeshi security arrested more than 5,000 Islamic radicals, as the government claimed that it was seeking to crack down on Islamic extremism within the country.[45] And yet, policymakers focus more on Afghanistan, Pakistan and India, which means that Bangladesh, a country that's undergoing major changes that could facilitate more *Salafi-jihadi* activity, is ignored.

AQ and Daesh have different strategies when it comes to Bangladesh. AQ is looking to build support in the country, which means that it has opted not to carry out mass-casualty operations there but to focus on promoting its ideology, using some selective targeting. For instance, AQ was implicated in the killing of Avijit Roy, an important author and activist, and in the killing of Professor Shafiul Islam, who had opposed women wearing the burqa in educational institutions. In September 2014, AQ supported the merging of several groups under the umbrella of AQIS, which follows the same pattern that it promoted for the formation of Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb and Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula.[46]

Daesh's approach to Bangladesh has centred on pursuing a violent campaign mainly against secularists, atheists and those who it determines are promoting a Western agenda. It claimed responsibility for the deaths of Cesare Tavella, an Italian aid worker, and 22 people who were killed when Daesh militants stormed the Holey Artisan Bakery in July 2016. The group has also launched attacks against Ahmadis and Shia.[47] The goal is to emphasise that Daesh is present in the subcontinent, which is becoming more important as its ability to operate in the Middle East becomes more restricted.

Several factors could encourage ordinary Bangladeshis to support *Salafi-jihadi* activities in Bangladesh and beyond. The first is the persistent claim by groups such as Jamaat-e-Islami and others that the Bangladesh state is insufficiently Muslim, as it allows bloggers and secularists to disseminate their non-Muslim ideas, which may explain why those individuals have been targeted by Salafist-jihadists (in 2013, Salafi-jihadists published a 'hit list' of secularist bloggers, five of whom were killed in 2015).[48] Infused in that narrative is the growing unhappiness of many Bangladeshis with modernisation, which is drastically changing Bangladesh (for example, by allowing bloggers to challenge traditional norms) as the country's economy grows.

A second and probably more significant factor is the Bangladesh Government's increasing use of the threat of terrorism to clamp down on dissent and as a means to discredit the opposition.[49] The Awami League, the country's ruling party, has over the past few years systematically dismantled many of Bangladesh's democratic institutions. In 2013, Jamaat-e-Islami was deregistered as a political party, which means that it can't contest elections. In addition, many of its leaders have been put on trial for their role in the 1971 war of independence, when the party opposed independence because it opposed the secular, socialist stance that Sheikh Mujibur Rahman promoted. In 2014, the Bangladesh Nationalist Party and the rest of the opposition boycotted the national elections, which facilitated the emergence of a one-party state.[50] By narrowing the marketplace of ideas and using the security establishment (particularly the Rapid Reaction Force) to deal with dissent, the government is laying the foundation for an opposition that's likely to coalesce around the banner of Islam.

A third factor behind the growing presence of Salafi-jihadism in Bangladesh is the Rohingya question (see below).

Since 1971, when East Pakistan broke away from West Pakistan to become an independent state, the Bangladeshi political system has jockeyed between two political parties: the Awami League, led by Sheikh Hasina (the current prime minister), and the Bangladesh Nationalist Party, led by Khaleda Zia. The Bangladesh Nationalist Party is an ally of Jamaat-e-Islami, which has done much to rehabilitate its reputation after its decision not to support independence in 1971.

The Islamist architecture in Bangladesh is complex and is structured along several lines, which are often based on partnerships between different stakeholders who operate through different groups but have the same general goal, which is ensuring that Bangladesh is governed according to sharia law. An example of this is the difference between

Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen Bangladesh (Party of the Mujahideen) and Harkat-ul-Jihad-al-Islami Bangladesh (Movement of Islamic Holy War, Bangladesh). The former, which was established in 1998 by Shaikh Abdur Rahman, draws on the Wahhabi-inspired Ahl-e Hadith movement, which is associated with the Hanbali Islamist school of jurisprudence and is seen as existing in the Salafist orbit, explaining its virulent opposition to the presence of Ahmadis, Sufis, Buddhists, Hindus and Shia.

The group's goal is the establishment of Islamic rule in Bangladesh, and most of its attacks are against government offices and the judicial system. Jamaatul Mujahideen Amir Shaikh Salahuddin had made it clear that the group wants to 'establish the law of Allah in God's earth, by overthrowing *shirk* [the sin of practicing idolatry or polytheism' through the *qital* [physical or jihad by the sword] and armed warfare.' He adds that his group would engage in *dawah* and military action, although it also recognises that it needs patience, as it's fighting not only the Bangladesh Government but the government's international allies.[51]

Despite Rahman's focus on Bangladesh, the group has ties to the Pakistani group Lashkar-e-Taiba, which was responsible for the 2008 Mumbai attack.[52] It also has ties to Jamaat-e-Islami and, according to Christine Fair and Seth Oldmixon, 'Islamist terrorism flourished' when Khalida Zia and the Bangladesh Nationalist Party were in government, as Zia couldn't clamp down on Jamaat-e-Islami activity because she relied on the party to maintain a majority in parliament.[53]

Harkat-ul-Jihad, formed in 1992 under the leadership of Sheikh Abdus Salam, has a more Deobandi orientation, drawing its inspiration from Hefazat-e-Islam (the Protector of Islam), which is an umbrella group composed of Islamic scholars associated with privately operated traditional Islamic seminaries (*qwami madrassahs*). Harkat's recruits tend to come from privately run religious schools (madrasas).[54] A third group is Ansar ul-Islam, which began as an online community inspired by the preaching of Anwar al-Awlaki, a US national who had joined Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, leading Ansar ul-Islam to be increasingly identified as the Bangladeshi branch of AQ.[55]

In 2016, Daesh established its own branch (Soldiers of Khilafah in Bengal) in the country under the leadership of Sheikh Abu Ibrahim al-Hanafi, and it's reported that several Bangladeshi nationals pledged allegiance to al-Baghdadi in August 2014. In September 2015, gunmen linked to the men killed an Italian aid worker in Dhaka, and in July 2016 Daesh took responsibility for the Holey Artisan Bakery attack.[56] According to al-Hanafi, Daesh's goal was to facilitate 'guerilla [*sic*] attacks inside India simultaneously from both sides and facilitate creating a condition of *tawahhush* [management of savagery] in India along with the help of the existing local mujahidin there'.[57]

Due to the size and spread of the Bengali diaspora, many of whom live in Western countries, we must consider the role that it could play in promoting the goals of Salafist-jihadism. It's evident that many Bangladeshi men and women are either promoting the ideology or carrying out terrorist activities.[58]

Bangladesh faces a multitude of structural problems, making it highly attractive to AQ and Daesh, both of which have sought to exploit those problems. These factors are coalescing to create a perfect storm of *Salafi-jihadi* activity. The ideology is likely to become more visible in Bangladesh and among the Bangladeshi diaspora, whose members are increasingly showing their opposition to what the government is doing by adopting not only an Islamist agenda, as advocated by mainstream groups such as the Bangladesh Nationalist Party or even Jamaat-e-Islami, but also Salafist-jihadism.

The Rohingya

A million Muslim Rohingya refugees have fled to Bangladesh from Rakhine State in Myanmar, and both Daesh and AQ are targeting this vulnerable community.

Myanmarese opposition to the Rohingya can be traced to 1784, when King Bodawpaya of Burma conquered the coastal Arakan region, which became Rakhine State.

In the 1960s, the military junta under General Ne Win adopted a policy of Myanmarisation—an ultra-nationalist ideology based on the racial purity of the ethnic Myanmarese and on their Buddhist faith.

Rohingya began to cross over from Myanmar to Bangladesh in the late 1970s as the Myanmarese army undertook Operation Naga Min (‘Dragon King’). Around 300,000 Rohingya sought refuge, leading to the formation of large refugee camps in Cox’s Bazar, one of Bangladesh’s poorest districts.

Since 1978, the Myanmar military has sought to control the Rohingya through a systematic policy of violence and intimidation that every so often culminates in a massive military operation that drives hundreds of thousands across the border.

In 1982, the Myanmar Government adopted a new Citizenship Law that robbed the Rohingya of their citizenship, effectively making them stateless in their own country.

In 1991, the army launched Operation Pyi Thaya (‘Clean and Beautiful Nation’), which drove 200,000 Rohingya into Bangladesh.[59]

The current wave of refugees began in October 2016, after insurgent attacks on Myanmarese security personnel.

Daesh has indicated its intention to use refugees in Bangladesh as a base from which to launch attacks on the Myanmar Government. Both Daesh and AQ are using the plight of the Rohingya as a rallying cry to potential recruits. In September 2017, a group of Malaysians reportedly travelled to Myanmar via Bangladesh and Thailand. The Malaysian police in Kelantan State, which shares a border with Thailand, have identified more than 100 ‘rat trails’ used for smuggling, and in May 2017 they busted a Daesh cell that was smuggling weapons into Malaysia from southern Thailand and preparing to launch an attack in Malaysia.[60] AQ has also called for Muslims to wage jihad against the Myanmar Army and has spoken of the need to liberate Rakhine State. For example, Muhammad Miqdaad, an AQ fighter, noted in a document titled ‘Adopt the call of Allah; say “no” to Jahiliyyah!’:

> the genocide, and the oppression on Arakanese Muslims … the demolishment of their dwellings … the assaults on their women … and then their attempts to enter Bangladesh or Malaysia for asylum … and then at the same time, the Bangladeshi and Malaysian Muslims’ adoption of the identity of Jahiliyyah while forgetting their real identity … thus rejecting and abandoning their own people by identifying them as Rohingya or Burmese.[61]

China

In 2001, the US and its allies in Afghanistan encountered Uygur jihadists operating under the banner of the East Turkestan Islamic Movement (TIP). Since then, Uygur jihadism has gathered momentum as the Global War on Terror has evolved. There’s now evidence of Uygur jihadists operating not only in China’s Xinjiang Province but in Syria, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Thailand and Indonesia.

China’s approach to Uygur separatism is bifurcated. On the one hand, Beijing presents the matter as an internal issue to be dealt with without any foreign intervention, so little information about what’s occurring in Xinjiang leaks out; on the other, it uses the threat of Uygur jihadism to demand action and support from the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation and to defend some of its repressive policies in Xinjiang.

Uygur insurgent activity could be understood as an ethno-nationalist movement battling the Han-based Chinese Government. At the same time, it's also possible to see it as part of the global jihadist movement, as East Turkestan Islamic Movement members are part of the TIP, the current leader of which, Abdul Shakoor al-Turkistani, is part of the AQ shura, or leaders' council.[62]

The current tension in Xinjiang has historical precedents. Since the Han dynasty succeeded the Qin dynasty in 206 BCE, Chinese rulers have looked westward, seeking to establish a presence in such areas as Xinjiang (which translates from Chinese as 'New Frontier'). The province makes up 18% of modern China's territory and has been fought over by the Huns, Uzbeks, Tibetans, Uygurs, Arabs and Mongols as well as the Hans. In 1881, the Qing dynasty officially incorporated Xinjiang as part of its empire, although Chinese control over the area remained limited until 1955, when it became the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region and the region's resources (oil and natural gas deposits) became evident. At that time, the Uygurs, who are of Turkic stock, constituted around 76% of the population. By the 2000s, due to Chinese Han immigration, the balance had changed radically and almost half the population was Han.[63]

Over that period, three factors turned Uygur dissent into political activism that has increasingly has included the use of violence. First, Deng Xiaoping's 'Open Door' policy put China on the path towards a massive industrialisation program that facilitated unprecedented movement within China. For Xinjiang, it meant that many ethnic Hans moved to the province as part of the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps, which later became the Xinjiang New Construction Corporation. The corporation controls almost half the province's land and is a major vehicle for its development.[64] In other words, one way to view the root causes of Uygur separatism is as a rejection of the infusion of ethnic Hans to the province. The Han migration has diluted the province's distinctiveness, which stems from its Turkic background and the fact that in the 1860s and 1870s and again in the 1930s there were various attempts to establish a Turkic republic. The digital revolution has furthered Uygur distinctiveness, creating connections and associations promoting an 'East Turkmenistan' identity.[65]

Second, the collapse of the Soviet Union brought about a wave of independence movements across Central Asia and rekindled interest in religions, particularly Islam, which resonated with many people in Xinjiang.[66] Li Peng, China's premier in the mid-1990s, recognised the potential for trouble and quickly engaged with his counterparts in Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan (which, with China, were to constitute the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation in June 2001) on the issue of Uygur separatist violence, making it clear that China wouldn't tolerate support for independence.[67]

Third, since the 1989 Tiananmen Square protests, the Chinese Government has been determined to 'strike first' and 'strike hard' at any form of dissent.[68] The government sees any opposition to China's pursuit of social–economic–cultural–political engineering designed to create a national (Sino) identity as an existential threat.

In the 1990s, seeing what was happening in Central Asia, the government opted to adopt such measures as the Regulations for Religious Personnel and Regulations on Religious Activities, which restricted religious activity in the province. In the mid-1990s, the Politburo Standing Committee introduced a set of policies aimed at further controlling religious activities, reinforcing military and security preparedness, and accepting greater cooperation with China's neighbours to curtail what it saw as US-led policies that were destabilising the region.[69] It seems that those measures came about in part because of an armed uprising that took place at the Uygur town of Baren in April 1990 and a similar incident in Yining/Ghulja in 1997. The government clamped down on underground religious schools and demanded better regulation of mosques.[70]

Evidently, both Daesh and AQ (mainly through its subsidiary, the TIP) are interested in exploiting Uygur anger; in 2017, both groups issued videos targeting the Uygur community.[71] AQ's interest in Xinjiang became clear in 2014, when *as-Sahab*, its media and propaganda outlet, ran an article in its *Resurgence* magazine referring to Xinjiang as East Turkistan. The article claimed that the province has been colonised by the Hans, asserting that in 1943, 93% of the inhabitants were Uygur, whereas by 2014 the balance had shifted to 45% of the population being Chinese. It also claimed that the Communist Party murdered more than 4 million Muslims in Xinjiang in 1949, has conducted more than 30 nuclear weapons tests in the province (leading to the deaths of around 200,000 Muslims from radioactive waste), forbade men under the age of 20 to learn the Quran, and prohibited women from wearing the hijab.[72]

China's response to rising Uygur separatist violence has been structured along two lines. First, it has beefed up his unilateral activities vis-à-vis Uygur separatism. The Chinese Government portrays any dissent as amounting to terrorist activity. The government has also taken more repressive measures, including freezing ethnic Uygurs out of jobs in the region's thriving gas and oil industry, airports and other sectors, and preventing ethnic Uygurs from having licences to haul fuel due to a concern that oil and gas tankers could easily be turned into weapons.[73]

The Chinese have also moved into the multilateral space, seeking support from partner states and organisations such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation. One of that organisation's first acts was to adopt the Shanghai Covenant on the Suppression of Terrorism, Separatism and Religious Extremism as a core goal to counter the threat of radical Islam. Since 9/11, the Chinese Government has used the Global War on Terror to further promote an activist counterterrorism narrative and activities that have included the establishment of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation's 'Regional Anti-Terrorism' centre in Tashkent (Uzbekistan) and joint annual military exercises. It has demonstrated its zero-tolerance approach to revolutions in opposing the 2005 'Tulip Revolution' in Kyrgyzstan and glossing over the abuses committed by the Uzbek Government in the Andijan incident in the same year.[74] China was also a firm supporter of the American-led Global War on Terror, opting to not oppose US-sponsored anti-terrorism Security Council resolutions, freezing the bank accounts of suspected terrorists and providing intelligence on terrorist networks and activities, which may explain why in 2002 the US proscribed the East Turkestan Islamic Movement as a foreign terrorist organisation.[75]

The 'strike first' and 'strike hard' approach appeared to encourage terrorist activity in 2013 and 2014, including the Kunming station attack in which 29 people died following a stabbing spree by five individuals. There were also a bombing at the Beijing Airport, a car attack and explosion in front of Tiananmen Gate, a bombing outside the Communist Party headquarters in Shanxi Province, and an attack on a police station in Xinjiang.[76]

Clearly, there's evidence that something is stirring in Xinjiang Province. Beijing's heavy-handed approach to dissent, coupled with the local Muslim Uygur community's growing sense that it's being marginalised, is encouraging AQ and Daesh to reach out to Uygurs. In the case of AQ, its invitation to the head of the TIP to sit in the AQ shura highlights the value that Zawahiri places on Xinjiang and the suffering of the Uygurs.

CHALLENGES

There are four main counterterrorism challenges in the Indo-Pacific.

Wars and terrorism go together

Conflicts in Afghanistan, Algeria, Chechnya, Iraq, Lebanon, Somalia, Syria and Yemen have all ‘pulled’ young people (primarily men) to become part of a greater cause. Clearly, not all civil wars in the Muslim world produce large jihadist movements, but the risk of a new war doing so is considerable.[77] In these spaces, individuals could see themselves as would-be freedom fighters rather than as terrorists, or they could simply engage in the senseless violence that occurs in such conflicts, in which individuals have considerable freedom of action. The civil war in Syria has enabled Daesh to take territory in areas where the Syrian regime was weak or absent, using the void in governance to establish itself as an alternative, while also using the conflict to attract potential recruits committed to forming its caliphate.

The ongoing crisis of the Rohingya is of tremendous importance and has attracted the attention of both Daesh and AQ. There are currently around 800,000 Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh, and we know from experiences in Pakistan, Somalia and Yemen that refugee camps become security challenges because both criminals (specifically, human traffickers and smugglers) and extremists exploit the horrid conditions in the camps with promises of a better future. For example, *Resurgence*, AQ’s new magazine, has run what can be described as a one-page advertisement declaring ‘More than 20,000 Muslims killed … Hundreds of mosques burned … 180,000 people displaced … Burma’s transition to democracy …’ (the ellipses are in the ad).[78]

As shown above, both AQ and Daesh have focused on the suffering of the Rohingya and the Uygurs in their global radicalisation campaigns. The policies of the Myanmar Government and of the Chinese are used as pull factors by highlighting how Muslims are being targeted and the West is doing little to stop the suffering. The mantra of the *Salafi-jihadis* is that it’s time to take action to end the suffering of Muslims and restore their honour and pride.[79]

Returning foreign terrorist fighters

The key concern with foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs) is the ‘devoted actors’—individuals who are deontic agents. These people are committed to a set of sacred values from which they won’t deviate, and they’ll do all that they can to live by those values or to create a society that will uphold them.[80] Reportedly, it was a family of six who had spent time in Syria that committed the attack on three churches in May 2018 in Surabaya (the mother and her two daughters carried out one attack, the father carried out a second, and two sons a third).[81]

It’s suggested that, between 2011 and September 2016, FTFs who travelled to Syria to fight on the side of the *Salafi-jihadis* included more than 8,000 from the former Soviet republics, around 7,000 from elsewhere in the Middle East, almost 6,000 from Western Europe, 5,000 from the Maghreb and around 1,800 from South and Southeast Asia.[82] It’s estimated that between 2013 and 2017, from 600 to 900 people travelled from Southeast Asia to Syria and Iraq with the intention of joining the fight. By December 2015, Turkey had deported around 215 Indonesians (60%

of whom were women and children). A 2017 study drawing on information from 79 countries indicates that nearly 7,000 FTFs had died in Iraq and Syria. The study further asserted that around 14,900 had left the conflict zone, of whom 36% (5,395) were imprisoned, and 46% had returned to their countries of origin without facing any criminal penalties.[83] In 2017, Syria's ambassador to China made a startling claim that up to 5,000 ethnic Uygurs were in his country fighting for different *Salafi-jihadi* groups.[84] As of January 2017, official figures stated that 90 Malaysians had travelled to Syria, of whom eight had returned and 24 had died. Malaysian authorities have arrested 260 Islamic State sympathisers and prevented 10 Islamic State-linked plots.[85] In 2016, Indonesian police operating in central Sulawesi killed two men who they claimed were ethnic Uygurs, which supports the claim that the East Turkestan Islamic Movement has a presence in Indonesia (in 2015, Indonesia jailed four Uygur men for attempting to join a Sulawesi-based militant group).[86]

FTFs pose ongoing risks to states because they might mount operations in their countries of origin or residence, act as trainers, planners and inciters, or try to establish a branch in their home country. It's unclear how many individuals from the Indo-Pacific have travelled to the caliphate, as not all the information is openly available and there's also some confusion about how one determines whether a person is an FTF (the term was defined only in 2014, in UN Security Council Resolution 2178[87]). Moreover, the Western world tends to focus less on foreign fighters who aren't Western, leading to a major gap in our knowledge, especially as it's become clear that many FTFs are seeking sanctuary in the non-Western world.

States have responded to the FTF phenomenon by seeking to balance two policies: criminalisation at one end and rehabilitation and reintegration at the other. In the West, decisions on how to respond to FTFs depend on the returnees, who generally fall into five categories that aren't mutually exclusive:

- individuals who left the caliphate quickly or after only a short stay and didn't fully become part of the Daesh clique
- people who stayed longer, but didn't agree with or support everything that Daesh was doing
- those who accepted their role within Daesh or embraced Daesh tactics and strategy, but opted to move on
- those who were fully committed to Daesh but, due to circumstances such as the loss of territory or capture, had to return to their countries of origins
- people whom Daesh sent to fight for the caliphate elsewhere.[88]

This typology has led Western governments to design programs to address the FTF problem, but many non-Western governments don't seem to have such programs, possibly because they lack resources or the knowledge. Indonesia is a case in point. The country has a large prison population (around 254,000 inmates held in 477 prisons), which means that its prisons hold twice the number of inmates that they should (there is on average one guard for every 55 prisoners). Additionally, the concept of radicalisation is understood to mean 'everything that happens before the bomb goes off', instead of seeing radicalisation as a nuanced process in which there have been examples of successful intervention.[89]

It's also important to note the presence of women and children among the returnees. This group is exceptionally diverse: some of the women opted to travel to Iraq and Syria with the specific purpose of becoming wives and mothers, while others are Iraqis and Syrians who married FTFs and had children by them.[90] Consequently, no coherent policy has emerged to address this group, possibly because one doesn't know where to begin such an intervention.

The internet and online radicalisation

The cybersphere presents a multitude of challenges and opportunities for the Indo-Pacific because of increases in internet access and growing economic and social tensions caused by globalisation and populist leaders. Despite its obvious benefits, the internet has become a vital tool for the dissemination of extremist views aimed at provoking negative sentiments, inciting violence, glorifying actions, creating virtual communities of like-minded individuals, providing religious or legal justifications for proposed actions, and communicating with and grooming recruits.

Max Hill, the UK's Independent Reviewer of Terrorism Legislation, has noted that the internet has enabled Daesh to engage in 'remote radicalisation', whereby an individual is radicalised by what they read and see online.[91]

Clearly, terrorists have become more sophisticated in their use of online platforms because of encryption and their recognition that states are paying more attention to their online presence (in 2007, AQ released an encryption tool called 'Mujahedeen Secrets' and a year later it provided an updated version, which Anwar al-Awlaki used to communicate with some people). Moreover, mobile phones are increasingly difficult to break into (the FBI allegedly paid $1 million to break into the iPhone of Syed Rizwan Farook, the San Bernardino terrorist); or individuals simply use 'burner' phones (before launching their attack on the Bataclan music hall in November 2015, the three gunmen sent messages to one another through Telegram and sent unencrypted messages to co-conspirators on burner phones).[92]

There are two schools of thought about the internet and online radicalisation. Some argue that, with the destruction of the caliphate, the likelihood of an increased online presence by Daesh, its allies and sympathisers will grow, as this is a space that the group has experience in.[93] Others argue that, despite the demise of the caliphate, the group will continue to engage in face-to-face radicalisation.[94]

The debate about online radicalisation and internet access is intimately linked to discussions about free speech, specifically about what is free speech and how we can protect the free flow of information and the expression of ideas at a time of growing intolerance and violence. In the West, there's a push to demand that tech companies introduce mainly algorithm-based measures that would detect and block 'extremist content'. The challenge, however, is that insufficient attention is given to how complex such an operation is. For example, Google can and does remove videos on how to assemble bombs, only to have the same videos uploaded by someone else on a different server or site or under different titles.[95] Concomitantly, it's doubtful that one could teach a machine to understand concepts as nuanced and subjective as 'radical' or 'extremist', which means that the solution to online radicalisation is more challenging than is often presented, especially because of the advances that have been made in messaging applications and encryption technology in general. [96]

Developing and promoting counter-narratives

A key issue in the campaign against terrorism is the need to engage in a counter-narrative discourse to challenge the message promoted by AQ and Daesh. Infused in the discourse are the questions of power and truth: Who presents the counter-narrative? What amounts to a 'true' representation of the narrative? Clarity is needed because both Daesh and AQ are presenting a narrative in which they seek to reject the way Islam has evolved and to argue that the *umma* (the Muslim community) is under siege.

An effective counter-narrative to the AQ–Daesh message requires engagement in a cosmological–theological debate in which relenting on any point, even a minor one, may undermine the effectiveness of the counter-narrative. The extremist agenda is uncompromising and unrelenting; it's aimed at identifying who is a 'true' Muslim and who isn't, giving individuals a binary choice of either being good Muslims or not. The significance of *takfir* (the accusation that a supposed Muslim is really an unbeliever), is that those who aren't true Muslims can and should be killed. This is also where concepts such as *Hukm al-Tatarrus* (the law on using human shields) are important, as they defend the killing of Muslims by AQ and Daesh.[97] It also means that non-Muslims living in Muslim lands may be given a binary option of converting to Islam or dying, as were many Yazidis in Iraq.[98]

The discourse on counter-narratives is challenging because the continuous Western demand for a Muslim-based counter-narrative strategy has come to be seen as a demand that Islamic belief systems and adherents must co-exist with 'Western' values and ethics. Consequently, a fissure is emerging between Muslim and non-Muslim communities, as well as within the *umma*.[99] The division is also occurring along generational lines. Some parents are promoters of extremism because they reject elements of modernity and demand that their children do the same, creating confusion and intercultural tensions.[100] Alternatively, children with poor coping skills or who face social, cultural and political pressure may opt to embrace extremist views because those beliefs provide them with a grounding as, after all, extremist ideology is binary and rejects any shades of grey.[101]

AUSTRALIA AND COUNTERTERRORISM IN THE INDO–PACIFIC

The 2016 Defense White Paper and the 2017 Foreign Policy White Paper both underlined the importance that Australia attaches to the Indo-Pacific. The Australian Government is using multilateralism and bilateralism to develop closer relations with the countries of the region specifically on the issue of security.

In February 2017, the government allocated around $40 million for the Australia–Indonesia Partnership for Justice Phase II, under which the two countries agreed that Australia will continue to provide advice and support to Indonesia on judicial reform, building its capacity to prosecute money laundering and confiscate criminal assets, and developing the investigative capacity of the Indonesian Corruption Eradication Commission.[102]

Another example of Australia working bilaterally and multilaterally to address emerging security concerns, particularly as they pertain to counterterrorism, was the November 2017 announcement of the formation of the South East Asia Counter Terrorism Financing Working Group. The group will aim at disrupting the funding of terrorist groups by countering extortion and the exploitation of economic assets, resources and the regional population; denying regional groups funding from outside Southeast Asia; and preventing local groups from providing financial or material support to Daesh and other terrorist organisations.[103]

In March 2018, Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull hosted the ASEAN–Australia Special Summit, which included a special summit on counterterrorism that resulted in a Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation to Counter International Terrorism. At the summit, Australia and its ASEAN partners agreed that Australia will provide technical assistance for the development and implementation of counterterrorism legislation that meets international standards and is in line with best practice.

Clearly, Australia has supported a plethora of counterterrorism measures in Southeast Asia, and its partners in the region have looked to Australia to help develop and support their counterterrorism policies. There's less evidence that the government is paying attention to what's taking place in Xinjiang and in Bangladesh. It's understandable why there has been limited engagement on Xinjiang, but Bangladesh is a pressing case that one can't ignore. Bangladesh is going through major social, economic, political, cultural and religious changes, and it's a space that both Daesh and AQ have identified as being of interest. There's justified concern that the ruling Awami League is feeding the Islamist narrative by adopting repressive policies and by trying to control the way Islam is taught, promulgated and preached through its 'model mosque' project.[104]

Much counterterrorism work focuses on what Western states are doing to combat the scourge of Salafist-jihadism, but insufficient attention is given to what Bangladesh is doing. For instance, one must wonder what the Bangladesh Government is doing to address online radicalisation in Bangladesh and how the government is combating the presence of extremist groups in the Rohingya refugee camps. Just as Australia has helped its Southeast Asian partners develop their counterterrorism policies, it can offer Bangladesh similar support, especially in addressing the Bangladesh prison population.[105] Since 2016, the government has jailed more than 3,000 Islamists, and questions ultimately rise about what's being done to prevent those individuals from proselytising in prisons.

CONCLUSION

The demise of the so-called caliphate and the death of Osama bin Laden have led to an element of triumphalism that has encouraged many to ignore the prospect of *Salafi-jihadi* terrorism in the Indo-Pacific because until now Daesh's focus has been mainly on the fight in Syria and Iraq and AQ has been engaged in a program to rebuilding. However, this research has sought to draw attention to flashpoints in the Indo-Pacific where we're seeing increased *Salafi-jihadi* activity and where both AQ and Daesh are attracting recruits and are seeking to cement their influence. It's becoming clear that the two groups are linking local issues to their transnational ideology. Their message feeds into an ongoing process of religious revivalism that emerged in the 1980s, that encouraged people to make their religion a mark of identity, and that's infused with salvific messaging emphasising that the horridness of the now can and will change if one is willing to make sacrifices.[106]

One reason why extremism appeals to many young people is that it simplifies life. Being an extremist means two things: first, that one has picked a side; second, that there's a clear enemy. As Adam Deen, a former member of the Islamist organisation Al-Muhajiroun notes:

> When I first encountered this organisation, its Islamist narrative quickly gave me a sense of purpose into which I could fuel my personal and societal grievances. Extremism is an exploitative process; religious, not religious, political or apolitical, it will find a way to give you clarity amid complexity. The feeling is powerful and all-encompassing.[107]

It's incumbent on the Indo-Pacific nations to come together and develop a strategy to address the factors that are drawing jihadists to the region. This needs to begin with the recognition, first, that the region has a problem and, second, that solutions to terrorism can't depend solely on hard power, as there's a need to use soft power. This includes recognising that many people in the region haven't benefited from modernisation and globalisation and that many young men and women lack the coping mechanisms needed to deal with those challenges.

NOTES

1 Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, '"Good News to the Believers": the Declaration of the Islamic State in Iraq and Al-Sham', 9 April 2013, online.

2 There's a major debate on whether it's appropriate to use the term 'Islamic State' when referring to the group, as it's argued that using that term gives the group legitimacy and credibility. The group has also been referred to as the 'Islamic State in Iraq and Syria', the 'Islamic State in Iraq and al-Sham' (ISIS) or as the 'Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant' (ISIL). Others use the term 'Daesh' (or 'Da'ish'), which is an acronym formed from the initial letters of the group's previous name in Arabic—*al-Dawla al-Islamiya fil Iraq wa al-Sham*. Reportedly, members of Daesh dislike the term. Richard Barrett, *The Islamic State*, The Soufan Group, November 2014, online; Faisal Irshaid, 'Isis, Isil, IS or Daesh? One group, many names', *BBC News*, 2 December 2015, online.

3 Terrorism studies, in which scholars tend to focus on specific issues, such as the relationship between technology and counterterrorism, have largely neglected this issue. Paul Wilkinson, *Terrorism and technology*, Frank Cass, London, 1993; Leonard Weinberg, 'two neglected areas of terrorism research: careers after terrorism and how terrorists innovate', *Perspectives on Terrorism*, 2008, 2(9), online; Assaf Moghadam, *Nexus of global jihad: understanding cooperation among terrorist actors*, Columbia University Press, New York, 2017; Calvert Jones, 'Al-Qaeda's innovative improvisers: learning in a diffuse transnational network', *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, 2006, 19(4):555–569, doi: doi.org/10.1080/09557570601003205.

4 Following the Westminster Bridge terrorist attack in March 2017, British authorities revealed that they had thwarted 13 attacks since 2013. Matthew Weaver, 'UK police have thwarted Paris-style terror plots, top officer says', *The Guardian*, 6 March 2017, online.

5 Bruce Hoffman, *Al-Qaeda's resurrection*, Council on Foreign Relations, 6 March 2018, online; Bruce Hoffman, 'The resurgence of Al-Qaeda', *The Interpreter*, 13 March 2018, online.

6 'Nusra leader: our mission is to defeat Syrian regime', *Al Jazeera*, 29 May 2015, online.

7 Bruce Hoffman, 'Al Qaeda: quietly and patiently rebuilding', *The Cipher Brief*, 30 December 2016, online.

8 Daniel Byman noted that joining AQ was a complex process mainly because AQ doesn't seek total allegiance. For example, Ayman al-Zawahiri for over a decade remained committed to Egyptian Islamic Jihad, even though he was part of AQ and was bin Laden's deputy. Daniel L Byman, 'Al Qaeda's M&A strategy', *Brookings*, 7 December 2010, online.

9 al-Baghdadi, '"Good News to the Believers": the Declaration of the Islamic State in Iraq and Al-Sham'.

10 Nadine Awadalla, Eric Knecht, 'Islamic State's Baghdadi, in undated audio, urges militants to keep fighting', *Reuters*, 28 September 2017, online.

11 A good example of this is the government's decision soon after the 2017 Barcelona terrorist attack to issue its Strategy for Protecting Crowded Places from Terrorism, the efficacy and value of which are doubtful. Isaac Kfir, 'Australia's strategy for protecting crowded places: will it work?', *The Strategist*, 28 August 2017, online.

12 The term 'Indo-Pacific' emphasises the centrality of Southeast Asia and the Indian Ocean in this maritime region. The assessment is based on economic and security connections that link the US and Canada in the east across Asia to the western coast of India and the Persian Gulf, effectively leading to the emergence of a single supra-strategic region. The Indo-Pacific region isn't solely maritime, as it has a substantial land component that extends through Eurasia, underlining Halford Mackinder's famed 'heartland theory': whoever rules Eurasia, the 'World Island', commands the globe. Rory Medcalf, 'In defence of the Indo-Pacific: Australia's new strategic map', *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, 2014, 68(4):470–483, doi: 10.1080/10357718.2014.911814; Erin Zimmerman, 'Security cooperation in the Indo-Pacific: non-traditional security as a catalyst', *Journal of the Indian Ocean Region*, 2014, 10(2):150–165, doi: 10.1080/19480881.2014.922325; Department of Defence, *Defence White Paper 2013*, Australian Government, Canberra, 3 May 2013, online; Halford Mackinder, 'The round world and the winning of the peace', *Foreign Affairs*, 1943, 21(4):595–605, doi: 10.2307/20029780,

13 Shaul Mishal, Maoz Rosenthal, 'Al Qaeda as a dune organization: toward a typology of Islamic terrorist organizations', *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 2005, 28(4):275-293, online.

14 Al-Qaedaism, which is the ideology of AQ, is based on four pillars: educating Muslims about the greatness of Islam by ensuring that Islam is practised as it was during the 7th century; identifying the source of the decline of the Muslim community (the *umma*); promoting a transnational consciousness that demands an appreciation of shared grievances; and offering a program of action. Developed from Assaf Moghadam, 'The Salafi jihad as a religious ideology', *CTC Sentinel*, 2008, 1(3):14–16, online; Assaf Moghadam, Brian Fishman, 'Debates and divisions within and around AlQa'ida', in Assaf Moghadam, Brian Fishman (eds), *Selfinflicted wounds: debates and divisions within Al Qa'ida and its periphery*, Harmony Project, 16 December 2010, 3, online.

15 Byman, 'Al Qaeda's M&A strategy'.

16 Francis Chan, 'ISIS, Al-Qaeda drawn to crisis in Rakhine state', *The Straits Times*, 20 September 2017, online; Amanda Hodge, Nivell Rayda, 'Indonesian Islamists recruiting volunteers for Rohingya jihad', *The Australian*, 5 September 2017, online.

17 The 1998 fatwa was issued under the guise of the World Islamic Front, which was a reference to five men: Osama bin Laden; Ayman al-Zawahiri, the head of the Jihad Group in Egypt; Abu-Yasir Rifa'i Ahmad Taha, the leader of Egyptian Islamic Jihad; Mir Hamzah, secretary of the Jamiat-ul-Ulema-e-Pakistan; and Fazlur Rahman, the leader of the Jihad Movement in Bangladesh.

18 Caleb Weiss, 'Suicide bombings detail Turkistan Islamic Party's role in Syria', *The Long War Journal*, 3 May 2017 , online; David Volodzko, 'China's new headache: Uyghur militants in Syria', *The Diplomat*, 8 March 2016, online (paywall); Nodirbek Soliev, 'How serious is the Islamic State threat to China?', *The Diplomat*, 14 March 2017, online.

19 Bruce Hoffman, *Al-Qaeda's resurrection*; Bruce Hoffman, 'The resurgence of Al-Qaeda'.

20 Isaac Kfir, 'Al-Qaeda 3.0: turning to face the near enemy', *The Strategist*, 22 March 2018, online.

21 On 15 April, the Abu Sayyaf Group attempted to launch an attack in and around Bohol, in the central Visayas, which the security services foiled. It appears that the group's attempt wasn't motivated by ideology but by money. *Marawi, the 'East Asia Wilayah' and Indonesia*, IPAC report no. 38, Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict, 21 July 2017, online.

22 *Marawi, the 'East Asia Wilayah' and Indonesia*.

23 Joseph Franco, *Marawi: winning the war after the battle*, ICCT: International Centre for Counter-Terrorism—The Hague, 29 November 2017, online; 'Mosul in Mindanao; Banyan', *The Economist*, 22 July 2017, 32.

24 Franco, *Marawi: winning the war after the battle*; Rommel C Banlaoi, 'The Maute Group and rise of family terrorism', *The Rappler*, 15 June 2017, online.

25 'State Department terrorist designation of Jamaah Ansharut Daulah', Bureau of Counterterrorism and Countering Violent Extremism, US State Department, 10 January 2017, online.

26 'Treasury sanctions ISIS–Philippines facilitator for terror support', US Department of the Treasury, 30 April 2018, online.

27 Joseph Franco, *The battle for Marawi: urban warfare lessons for the AFP*, SRI: Security Reform Initiative, 4 October 2017, online; Joseph Franco, Francis Domingo, Kathline Anne Tolosa, *Maute Group: what you need to know*, SRI: Security Reform Initiative, 2 June 2017, online.

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Acronyms and abbreviations

AQ	al-Qaeda
AQIS	Al-Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
Daesh	al Dawla al Islamiya fi al Iraq wa al Sham
EU	European Union
FTF	foreign terrorist fighter
FTO	foreign terrorist organisation
ICT	information and communication technology
IS	Islamic State
ISIS	Islamic State of Iraq and Sham
TIP	Turkestan Islamic Party
UN	United Nations

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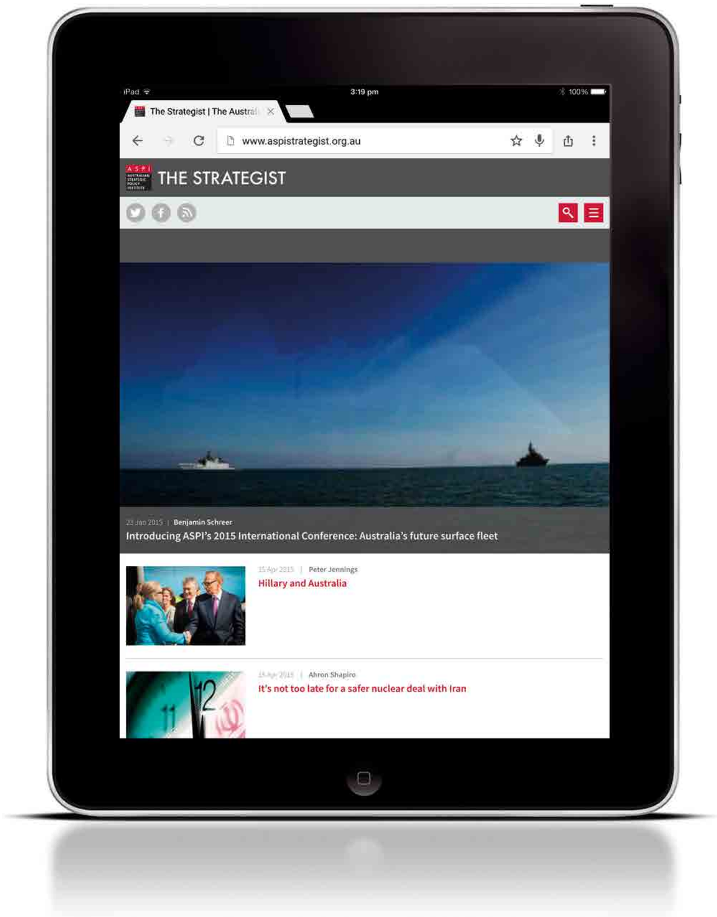
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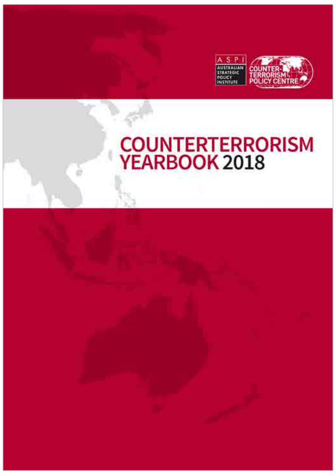

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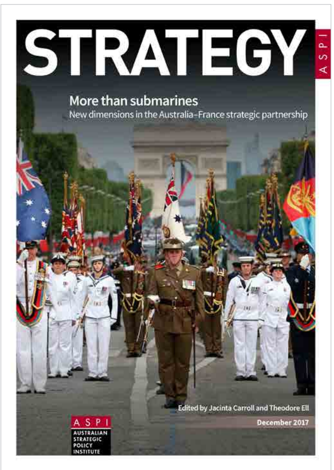

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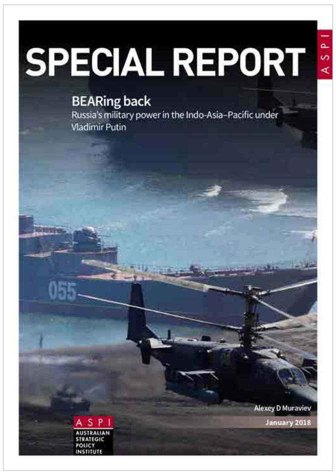

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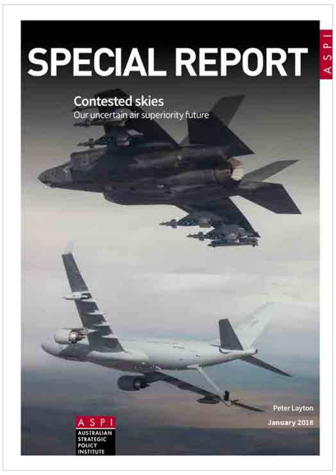

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