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ANNEX 3-22 FOREIGN INTERNAL DEFENSE

THREAT FORMS

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Subversion, insurgency, lawlessness, and terrorism manifest themselves in a variety of forms capable of seriously challenging the authority and survival of host nations. Below are examples of internal threats that may require Air Force [foreign internal defense](#) (FID) assistance. Strategic and operational level planning should address the degree to which each one of these forms manifests itself in the overall threat to [host nation](#) (HN) internal security.

Subversion

[Subversion](#) is an action designed to undermine the military, economic, psychological, or political strength or morale of a regime. At one end of the scale, subversion may take the form of a major drug cartel weakening government authority through extortion, bribery, and physical threats. In other cases, opponents of the government can foment widespread civil disorder eventually leading to political and economic crises, ethnic and religious confrontations, and armed disputes among rival political factions external to the government. Local dissident groups may use propaganda and terrorism against citizens and property, which are symbols of government authority, to dramatize political causes or to extort concessions from host governments. At the other end of the scale, certain forms of civil disorder and anarchy can produce widespread violence and social upheaval precipitating a host government's collapse. These situations can require military intervention and reinforcement of civil law enforcement agencies.

Insurgency

[Insurgency](#) is a complex, protracted form of subversion employing psychological pressure, armed force, and terror to force or prevent social, economic, and political changes within the host nation. Insurgencies often develop as a result of internal perceptions that a host government is unable or unwilling to solve important domestic, economic, or political problems. An insurgent's aim is attaining legitimacy derived from popular support. Popular support fuels the political mobilization required to generate workers, fighters, money, and weapons while denying the same to the government. Preemptively addressing critical economic and political issues by host governments is central to countering insurgencies and should generally take precedence over military

force. Insurgency often assumes an ideological foundation with social, economic, political, or religious components. The relationship of force application to the central issues underlying an insurgency warrants special consideration in planning. Insurgency dominates the direction of violent political change occurring in the world today. [Appendix A](#) discusses the principles of classic insurgency and counterinsurgency.

Insurgencies have individual characteristics that commanders should take into consideration when initiating FID operations. It is imperative that commanders understand as precisely as possible the nature of the conflict in which they are going to engage. The essential elements of information typically shift from empirical estimates (enemy strength, position, tactical posture, and direction of movement) to cultural and political identity and motivation. Standard insurgency-counterinsurgency paradigms may not work. A failure to apply critical analyses and recognize the insurgent conflict for its exact nature at the beginning of an internal confrontation can waste FID dollars and actually contribute to fueling rather than reducing the insurgency.

Lawlessness

In the FID context, lawlessness includes both subversion and insurgency, including terrorism and illicit narcotics production and trafficking. The term does not simply mean lack of public support or obedience to authority, which some governments label “lawlessness.” The term, as it applies to FID, carries the connotation of anarchy and revolt, indiscriminate killing of innocents by insurgents, narco-terrorists, gangs, and warlords, as well as rampant theft and destruction of property.

Lawlessness often occurs when a government has marginal or ineffective oversight and control over its population or territories. Lawlessness may also exist when the government lacks the mechanisms required to monitor and control the formation and activities of subversive organizations. Local dissident groups may use terrorism against government agencies, or against other ethnic or religious groups, to demonstrate and reinforce their claims to autonomy. The inability of a government to extend its administration and influence into outlying regions results typically in the emergence of “ungoverned territories.” This is often the result of not having the technological means to provide physical presence and persistence in forward areas. Airpower can help alleviate this deficiency.

Subversion, insurgency, illegal drug production, and narco-terrorism are all forms of lawlessness. Illicit drug production and trafficking can function subversively when international drug cartels seek permissive environments and resort to intimidation and violence to suppress government interference. “Partnerships” involving exchanges of drugs, weapons, and money between insurgents and drug cartels may also support subversive activities, terrorist organizations, and revolutionary movements. Terrorist organizations, insurgents, and drug cartels often share common infrastructures. In such cases, revolutionary or separatist claims may be fraudulently used to justify the cartel’s existence, as in the case of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC). Lawlessness is destabilizing to a legitimate regime and may also serve to promote

insurgent goals.

A potential shift in focus and required capabilities in irregular warfare stands at every corner of the FID landscape. Trained regional area specialists should be available to commanders and planners from the outset of any FID initiative to maximize the chances of proceeding effectively in foreign environments.

Terrorism

At the opening of the 21st Century, the most dangerous form of lawless violence threatening the internal security of free nations is terrorism of regional origin expanded into insurgency of global scope and impact. This type of terrorism now extends the threat of internal violence to virtually every country in the world.

Classically, [terrorism](#) is employed as a tactic of insurgency and guerrilla warfare. Terrorism uses intimidation and violence to achieve its aims, which are usually linked to a goal or cause. Terrorism carried out in pursuit of religious as well as political and ideological goals may be aimed at replacing governments and regimes that give in to, or encourage, forces of change and modernization that threaten to sweep away traditional religious orders and ways of life. In other cases, terrorism may be used to simply gain political or economic concessions from a host government.

Where political mobilization and legitimacy form the critical [centers of gravity](#), terrorism often demonstrates the inability of incumbent regimes to defend themselves and their population. Terrorism is generally considered a major component or tactical instrument of the whole threat array, not necessarily a separate, stand-alone phenomenon without ideological or political content and motivation. Even the suicide bombers, who blow themselves up, generally serve the political ends of a larger revolutionary movement dominated by ideological religious elites... who do not blow themselves up.

US security interests can be adversely affected when HN governments are threatened by terrorist violence. In some cases, the internal security efforts of foreign friends and allies may require US assistance through FID. In addition to helping other countries manage internal conflicts through training and advisory assistance, the Air Force can help with [intelligence surveillance and reconnaissance](#), [command and control](#), and certain forms of direct assistance.

In addition to threat considerations, selection of Air Force FID capabilities offered to the HN depends on the strength and capability of the host nations being assisted. The socio-economic and political stability of the host nation, prevailing local conditions, and the efficacy of the host nation's airpower capabilities are major determinants in planning Air Force FID operations.
