

The Taliban and Organized Crime*

Gretchen Peters

Gretchen Peters covered Pakistan and Afghanistan for more than a decade, first for The Associated Press and later as a reporter for ABC News. A Harvard graduate, Peters was nominated for an Emmy for her coverage of the 2007 assassination of Benazir Bhutto, and won the SAJA Journalism Award for a Nightline segment on the former Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf. She spent five years traveling the border areas between Pakistan and Afghanistan to research and write "Seeds of Terror: How Drugs, Thugs and Crime are Reshaping the Afghan War", published by Picador in April 2010.

Resumo

Os Taliban e o Crime Organizado

Desde 2001 que o crime organizado tem tido um papel importante na desestabilização do Afeganistão. Este artigo analisa a participação dos Taliban afegãos (denominados por *Quetta Shura Taliban – QST*) em atividades criminais no sul e sudoeste do país, descrevendo a forma como este envolvimento está a ser aprofundado e como o grupo interage com organizações independentes de contrabandistas.

Mais recentemente começámos a assistir a uma erupção da rivalidade associada a disputas por uma maior fatia dos lucros, o que gerou vulnerabilidades estruturais profundas nos e entre os grupos de insurgentes e de terroristas na zona de conflito. A exploração destas rivalidades e o fomentar das desconfianças pode ser maximizada com vista a degradar o nível de cooperação dos militantes limitando seriamente os fundos obtidos por estes. No entanto, esta estratégia é arriscada pois poderá potenciar o eclodir de uma maior violência entre os grupos, aumentando o número de baixas civis.

Abstract

Organized crime has played an important destabilizing role in post-2001 Afghanistan. This article will mainly focus on how the Afghan Taliban, commonly referred to as the Quetta Shura Taliban (QST), engage in criminal activity in the south and southwest, track how their involvement in crime is deepening and look at how the group interacts with autonomous smuggling organizations.

More recently we saw an eruption of rivalries over criminal profits which appear to have created deep structural weaknesses within and between insurgent and terror groups in the conflict zone. Exploiting those rivalries and breeding distrust could serve to degrade levels of militant cooperation and disrupt funds reaching militant coffers. This strategy is risky, however, to the extent that it could spark internecine violence and contribute to an increase in civilian casualties.

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