

SOF Roles in Crisis/CT Management Seminar

NATO Centre of Excellence Defence Against Terrorism

6-8 July 2022



Table of Contents

Executive Summary	3
A little about COE-DAT	5
A little about NATO SOF HQ	5
COE-DAT's Director Col. Oğuzhan PEHLİVAN Opening Remarks	6
NATO SOF HQ Senior Representative Lt. James Runchman Opening Remarks	7
Day 1: Comparison Case Study on Crisis Response in CT	8
Takeaways from Day One Breakout Sessions	9
Day 2: Lessons on Counterterrorism and Scenario Exercise	11
Exercise: Create a Crisis Response to an Unfolding Terrorist Incident	12
Takeaways from the Exercise	12
Day 3: AAR and Next Steps	14
Appendix A Planning Exercises	15
Appendix B Presenters	16

Executive Summary

The idea for the SOF Roles in Crisis/CT Management seminar began as a collaborative effort between NATO SOF Headquarters (NSHQ) in Brussels, Belgium, and the NATO Centre of Excellence Defence Against Terrorism (NATO COE DAT) in Ankara, Türkiye. These stakeholders, together with the U.S. Army War College's Strategic Study Institute, developed this workshop with three broad goals in mind:

1. To engage NATO SOF partner nations and emerging partner nations
2. To provide an opportunity for NATO SOF allies, partner nations, and emerging partner nations to network and build relationships
3. To share best practices in crisis responses to terrorist incidents and explore how SOF can help inform these responses, including the roles that SOF may—or may not—play in the actual response.

The three-day workshop was held in Ankara at NATO COE-DAT's headquarters from 6-8 July 2022, as the first fully in-person workshop since the Covid 19 pandemic. Twenty-five individuals from eleven countries—Algeria, Australia, Egypt, France, Hungary, India, Slovakia, Tunisia, Türkiye, United Kingdom, and the United States—attended the workshop, representing a range of military ranks and civilians focused on counter-terrorism (CT) at the tactical, operational, and strategic levels.

Day one of the workshop included a comparison case study between two attacks perpetrated by al-Shabaab and the crisis response—the 2013 Westgate Shopping Mall siege and the 2019 DusitD2 Complex attack—followed by breakout sessions to discuss lessons learned from these attacks. Day two began with a presentation on nine lessons learned in CT, and then moved to a scenario exercise in which participants had to formulate a response to a multi-pronged terrorist attack on a hotel, including building a crisis response team, discussing what actions should be taken, formulating a media response, and debating how to conduct an After Action Review (AAR) of the attack. Day three included summary points of lessons learned and a discussion on possible topics for the next iteration of the workshop.

Some of the key takeaways from the workshop include:

- The critical importance of coordination and achieving interoperability between security forces in crisis management—including equipment and particularly communications equipment—but also the need for training and doctrine; the creation of a coordinating structure, such as a fusion cell; intelligence sharing; and pre-crisis designation of who is in charge based on the type of crisis
- The need for a whole of government approach. CT is not just a law enforcement task or a military operation; it requires multiple departments, ministries, and agencies in a country to effectively deter and respond to terrorist attacks.

- Achieving coordination and interoperability are extremely difficult on an ad hoc basis; rather, pre-attack planning and training between stakeholders for a coordinated, whole of government approach is usually more successful. However, often the impetus for this planning is a failed CT crisis response, making preemption very difficult. Sharing best practices and learning from other countries' CT plans may be a way to address this dilemma, including through MSATs (Multinational SOF Advisory Teams)
- The importance of laws that delineate authorities, roles, responsibilities, and limits of various security forces in a domestic CT response, as well as who should be in charge and under which circumstances
- The importance of a whole of society approach to CT. This includes creating resilience in the population, including preparing the population for the possibility of attacks, leveraging the population for intelligence and help with CT ("If you see something, say something"); and possibly creating a form of Comprehensive Defense as a CT strategy and using SOF to coordinate these efforts. This is a whole of society approach
- The need to have a media strategy as part of the crisis response to inform the public and ensure that terrorists do not control the narrative
- The role that SOF Liaison Officers could play at the highest levels of government to help advise on CT matters.

Suggestions for the next iteration of the workshop include widening the scope of participants beyond the military to include law enforcement, government officials, media, and the private sector.

Potential future topics proposed include Maritime security and SOF; Critical Infrastructure at CT; Crisis Response to Hybrid Threats; Non-urban CT; and how different NATO countries have developed crisis response cells or teams.

A little about NATO COE-DAT

NATO COE-DAT provides key decision-makers with a comprehensive understanding to terrorism and CT challenges, in order to transform NATO and Nations of interest to meet future security challenges. This transformation is embedded into NATO's three declared core tasks of Collective Defence, Crisis Management, and Cooperative security.

As a strategic level think tank for the development of NATO DAT activities sitting outside the NATO Command Structure, COE-DAT supports NATO's Long-Term Military Transformation by anticipating and preparing for the ambiguous, complex, and rapidly changing future security environment. COE-DAT is able to interact with universities, think tanks, researchers, international organizations, and global partners with academic freedom to provide critical thought on the inherently sensitive topic of CT. COE-DAT strives to increase information sharing within NATO and with NATO's partners to ensure the retention and application of acquired experience and knowledge.

A little about NATO SOF HQ

NATO Special Forces Headquarters (NSHQ) is the primary point of development, coordination, and direction for all NATO Special Operations activities. Since its inception a decade ago, NSHQ has consistently supported NATO CT efforts. Its NATO SOF School (NSOS) continues to deliver over thirty different courses that include aspects of CT (serving both allies and partners), directly support execution of CT missions, or provide essential pre-deployment training for SOF missions. NSHQ capabilities include Mobile Training Teams (MTTs) through which it delivers training directly to whole-of-government teams, interagency groups or regional stakeholders. NSHQ has developed Multinational SOF Advisory Teams (MSATs), which allow nations to reduce redundancy by harmonizing bilateral SOF initiatives with NATO Partnership mechanisms, to include efforts focused on the Middle East, North Africa and the Sahel. Further, NSHQ's revisions to doctrine strengthen interoperability and guidance to national and NATO defence planning efforts.

Additionally, NSHQ continues to Develop Comprehensive Defence handbooks, courses, exercises and experiments (NSHQ is piloting products and courses tailored for SOF now; potential to expand and/or connect to ongoing larger NATO Counter Hybrid Threat, Comprehensive Defence and Resilience efforts). NSHQ has been working in collaboration with COE-DAT for over a year to enhance its CT efforts with the provision of a CT seminar.

SOF Roles in CT / Crisis Response Seminar 2022

Director's Opening Remarks

6th of July 2022

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen, Distinguished Participants; I am Colonel Oğuzhan PEHLIVAN, Turkish Army, Director of Center of Excellence – Defense Against Terrorism.

Good morning, I would like to welcome you to the first “SOF Roles in Counter Terrorism – Crisis Response Seminar.”

I would like to offer a special welcome to our friends from NATO Special Operations Headquarters, Colonel Taner Karabulut who could not be here with us, and Lt. Col. James Runchman. Without our partnership with them, this Seminar would not have been possible. I would also like to offer a special welcome to our Academic Advisor from the US Army War College, Dr. Heather Gregg. We are grateful for her expertise and advice that was instrumental in the planning for this event.

I greatly appreciate everyone being here in person today. Since the start of COVID-19, conducting face-to-face events has been challenging and risky. Today's Seminar marks the first time since the start of COVID-19 that COE-DAT has hosted this many people here in Ankara for an in-person activity. Conducting online events has some advantages, but I believe there is so many more opportunities to learn from each other, develop strategic relationships, and interact by being together in person.

Today as I would like to inform you about COE-DAT's activities to support and influence NATO's fight against terrorism. We are truly providing three functions to NATO CT:

- We are an education and training facility providing courses and mobile education targeting partner nations.
- We are the Department Head for Alliance counter-terrorism education and training to synchronize the ever-growing demand for counter-terrorism support and are leading the vanguard to develop a NATO counter-terrorism governance structure for partner nations CT E&T.
- We also serve as a think tank for to transform NATO's understanding of terrorism and counter-terrorism through the Analysis and Lessons Learned pillar, the Concept Development and Experimentation pillar, and the Doctrine Development and Standardization pillar through research projects, book development, lessons learned workshops, and conferences.

As NATO's hub for counter-terrorism, our wide network of military, government, and industry experts is vital to our success to stay up to date within the community of interest. All of you attending our Seminar this week will help COE-DAT and NATO SOF HQ continue to expand our network and develop new relationships that will undoubtedly help all of us in the fight against

terrorism. I look forward to meeting with you all more this evening at our Icebreaker social event in the Holiday Inn Hotel.

Thank you again for your attendance and support. Welcome!

Oğuzhan PEHLİVAN
Colonel (TUR A)
Director COE-DAT

NATO SOF Headquarters Opening Remarks

Ladies and Gentlemen, Distinguished Participants; as mentioned, I am Lt Col James RUNCHMAN, (GBR-A), Staff Officer and CT representative of the J9 Partnership Directorate of NSHQ.

I would also like to echo Colonel PEHLİVAN's welcoming comments to you all, for this inaugural "SOF Roles in Counter Terrorism – Crisis Response Seminar." I would like to thank Colonel PEHLİVAN, the COE DAT Team, and Dr Gregg for their work so far in facilitating this seminar, which I am sure will be a great success.

For a number of years, NSHQ have been seeking ways to do more in the CT realm, particularly with regard to partner nations. Noting that there is much that we can all learn from each other, the concept of establishing a CT Crisis Response focused seminar has been in consideration for over 2 years. This seminar is the culmination of this effort and aims to bring together partners and allies, in order to share our lessons in responses to CT incidents, ascertain whether SOF could or should be used in National responses to terrorist attacks and thus enhance the global SOF CT Network.

Thank you for your commitment in coming to Ankara this week and I look forward to hearing the presentations and your thoughts and ideas on this subject.

James RUNCHMAN
Lt Col (GBR-A)
NSHQ

Day 1: Comparison Case Study on Crisis Response in CT

The 2013 Westgate Shopping Mall and 2019 DusitD2 Complex Attacks, Nairobi, Kenya

Major (Ret) Dominic Troulan, British Royal Marines¹

On September 21, 2013, four armed men affiliated with al-Shabaab in Somalia stormed the Westgate luxury shopping mall in Nairobi, shooting indiscriminately at shoppers. Originally believed to be a robbery, Kenyan security forces were slow to respond. Once various forces arrived, devising a plan to stop the terrorists was confounded by lack of training, poor coordination, inadequate intelligence, and a dearth of proper equipment. Following the terrorists' siege, the mall was set on fire, allegedly by Kenyan security forces, which further hindered securing the building. Ultimately, the mall was not fully secured until September 24, nearly four days after the start of the attack and after the mall had been badly damaged and looted. At least 67 people were murdered along with the four gunmen and four Kenyan security forces.

Dominic "Dom" Troulan, a retired British Royal Marine officer who was living in Kenya at the time of the attack, rushed to the scene after receiving a call for help from inside the mall. Throughout the first day, he rescued numerous individuals from the mall while Kenyan security forces attempted to create a cordon and response operation. From his first-hand experience of the attack, Mr. Troulan identified five key lessons learned:

1. A mixture of military and civilian security forces arrived with no prior training or interoperability between the forces. These forces did not know each other and did not understand each other's capabilities, hindering their ability to operate as a team and counter the attack
2. Security forces had a lack of training and professionalism. They had not practiced CT responses, and their lack of professionalism created the conditions for looting after the attack
3. Security forces had challenges with equipment, including inappropriate shoes and lack of uniforms that confused and slowed the response. Critically, security forces lacked the equipment and ability to communicate with each other. Security Forces that did have equipment still could not communicate with one another, much less with other security forces. Mr. Troulan stressed the maxim "No comms. No Job" regarding this point
4. The response lacked a designated lead and command and control (C2). There was no designated Incident Command Post (ICP), which further hindered interoperability and an effective response

¹ See Appendix B for full biographies of presenters.

5. Lack of intelligence also hindered the response. It was unclear who the assailants were or their numbers, what their intentions were, or their capabilities. Lack of actionable intelligence prevented security forces from being able to counter the attackers and prosecute the wider network of terrorists after the attack

Mr. Troulan was also involved in the response to the 15 January 2019 DusitD2 Complex attack in Nairobi, where four al-Shabaab affiliated gunmen and one suicide bomber stormed the complex, ultimately murdering 22 people. Unlike in the 2013 Westgate Mall attack, Kenyan security forces arrived promptly, created a cordon, and engaged the assailants. Following the death of all five terrorists, Kenyan security forces continued to secure the compound and treat it as a crime scene, successfully tracing the assailants to accomplices, who were then arrested and prosecuted.

Comparing the 2013 Westgate attack to the 2019 DusitD2 Complex attack, Mr. Troulan identified the following improvements:

1. Better training of Kenyan security forces, specifically in Tactics, Techniques and Procedures (TTPs) useful for CT
2. The ability to quickly devise a plan for engaging the terrorists, including designating a lead and C2 within and between security forces
3. Better equipment, including uniforms, appropriate weapons, and communications equipment. Forces also had special equipment designed to breach buildings, such as a truck that could provide ramp access to a building's first and second floors
4. Improved professionalized soldiers that did not loot or engage in other unlawful behavior
5. Better intelligence gathering capabilities, including security cameras and an offsite monitoring location as well as the ability to act on intelligence to improve operations.

In conclusion, Mr. Troulan made the important observation that, while the 2019 DusitD2 attack had several visible CT improvements over the 2013 Westgate Shopping Mall attack, 22 lives were still lost. This demonstrates how difficult effective CT operations can be, how success should be defined, and the need for constant assessment and training to get ahead of the threat.

Takeaways from Day One Breakout Sessions

In the afternoon, participants broke out into small groups to discuss the case studies with the goal of considering key takeaways and lessons learned. These groups identified ten broad points:

1. The critical importance of coordination and achieving interoperability in crisis management—including equipment and particularly communications equipment—but

- also the need for training and doctrine; the creation of a coordinating structure, such as a fusion cell; and pre-crisis designation of who is in charge based on the type of crisis
2. The need to harmonize efforts between military units and between civilian police and the military, including the need for laws that allow for the use of military forces in a domestic response as well as being sensitive to a country's norms and the population's expectations for who should respond and how. A crisis CT response should also be cognizant of the role that ego and "saving face" plays between security forces and how to get beyond this impediment
 3. The importance of intelligence to both defend against terrorist attacks and to respond to them. Intelligence requires its own coordination and particular attention should be paid to developing actionable intelligence that security forces can use
 4. The foundational need for a whole of government approach. CT is not just a law enforcement task or a military operation; it requires multiple departments, ministries, and agencies in a country to effectively deter and respond to terrorist attacks
 5. The importance of a whole of society approach, including creating resilience in the population, including preparing the population for the possibility of attacks, leveraging the population for intelligence and help with CT ("If you see something, say something"); and possibly creating a form of Comprehensive Defense as a CT strategy and using SOF to coordinate these efforts
 6. Private companies and enterprises are also key allies in CT and may have capabilities, such as surveillance, that are better than what local and federal authorities have.
 7. Ultimately, CT is a whole of nation or a whole of society approach, not just a whole of government approach
 8. The important role that a SOF Liaison Officer could play at the highest levels of government to help advise on CT matters
 9. The need to share lessons learned in CT across countries, within NATO and between NATO partner nations and emerging partner nations. Individual countries have important lessons from their own CT experiences and we should identify mechanisms to share these lessons learned
 10. The role that MSAT (Multinational SOF Advisory Team) could play in CT along with other security concerns. MSATs could be a vehicle for lessons learned and sharing TTPs, best practices, and so on.

Day 2: Lessons on Counterterrorism and Scenario Exercise

“Nine Lessons Learned on Counterterrorism”

Mr. Saikat Datta²

Saikat Datta, an expert on Indian Special Forces and counterterrorism, began the day by providing nine lessons that he has identified from years of studying CT. He began his presentation with a key observation, that CT is always looking back but terrorists are always looking forward; we need to be looking forward in order to counter terrorists’ next move.

Given this observation, Mr. Datta identified the following lessons learned:

1. The critical importance of the right intelligence. Be aware of the dynamic between the producer and the consumer: Is the producer listening to what the consumer needs? Is the producer creating intelligence that is useful and can be acted upon?
2. The role of using scenario building and training exercises to anticipate terrorists’ next move. Within this effort, it is critical to identify key stakeholders and bring them together. Scenarios and training exercises should improve coordination through practice
3. The need for “Preventative Direct Action (DA)”³—using the military and other security forces to hit terrorists before they have a chance to strike—and take other preventative measures Preventative DA requires the right intelligence and scenario building (lessons one and two). The military needs to be able to accurately say: where will the threat come from? Can you get out ahead of it? Can you take military action to prevent an attack on the homeland?
4. The need for crisis management and the importance of having a plan in place before a terrorist event occurs. Again, scenario building should identify the key stakeholders to include in a crisis and their roles in crisis management. Additionally key stakeholders should address gaps between local and federal authorities, and between the military and domestic security forces. SOF has a critical role to plan in crisis management and, at a minimum, should be advisors in this process
5. The importance of identifying force deployment before an attack. Specifically, what kind of forces do you need? Where should they be based or housed? How long does it take to deploy them, given their location? Critically, force deployment should also include private security because they play a critical role in personnel and infrastructure protection. Within all of this, security forces should create a Security Operations Center (SOC) to manage force deployment and provide C2.

²See Appendix B for full biographies of presenters.

³ NATO defines DA as: “A short-duration strike or other small scale offensive action by special operations forces to seize, destroy, capture, recover or inflict damage to achieve specific, well-defined and often time-sensitive results.”

6. The criticality of identifying and addressing tensions between military and domestic security forces, including police. How should these forces be integrated? How can they best collaborate? Who should be in the lead and why?
7. The need to identify and address tensions between SOF and Conventional Forces in a range of CT activities, including who is in charge and why. Within this process, it is important to be aware of egos and “rice bowls,” or who gets what resources, and how a CT response might inadvertently threaten both. Typically, SOF tends to have better training and equipment and therefore may be better equipped to respond, especially in CT efforts outside a country, like Preventative DA
8. The importance of integrating and innovating a CT response, including the need to predict the next moves of terrorists, who are constantly innovating. Within this process, various forces may fear integration because of various tensions, egos, and rice bowl issues. Therefore, time and effort should be taken to consider how best to integrate, including at the NATO level
9. The need to formulate a media response. The media cannot and should not be ignored or left out of a CT response. Not engaging the media will create a vacuum, which terrorists will use to their advantage. A CT response needs to consider how to leverage the media for operational effect and how to turn it to the local and federal governments’ advantage.

Exercise: Create a Crisis Response to an Unfolding Terrorist Incident⁴

Following Mr. Datta’s presentation, participants were divided into three groups and given a scenario exercise in which participants had to formulate a response to a multi-pronged terrorist attack on a hotel, including building a crisis response team, discussing what actions should be taken, formulating a media response, and debating how to conduct an AAR of the attack.

Takeaways from the exercise

A summary of the groups’ responses to the scenario exercise identified ten broad considerations:

1. The importance of knowing what the mission is and what CT “success” should look like. While this may seem obvious, there are important considerations when defining the mission and success. For example, is preventing the loss of life the priority? What might the tradeoffs be with regard to preventing loss of life and upholding laws, or preservation of key infrastructure, or trying to take terrorists alive? Should the CT response include efforts to preserve the crime scene for prosecution, and to what extent should this be done relative to other tradeoffs, like gleaning actionable intelligence and preventing loss of life?

⁴ See Appendix A for the scenario exercise.

2. The critical importance of getting quick and actionable intelligence on various aspects of the terrorist attack that are not known. Security forces and other stakeholders should think of quick and creative ways to do this, such as speaking to the cleaning staff or the building manager to get a schema of the building. SOF could be used as reconnaissance in this effort to get quick and actionable intelligence, if a country's laws allow that
3. The need for enemy analysis in a CT response, including what the ideology of the terrorist is, which could help inform both the goals of the terrorists and how to respond
4. The importance of casting a wide net to include multiple stakeholders, including local and federal government, civilian police, military units (where legal and applicable), fire departments including search and rescue, emergency and medical services, the owner of the building or facility, embassies of individuals involved, the media and the general population. Leaving key stakeholders out of the decision-making and information process could hinder and confound the response
5. The criticality of building a response capability "left of boom," including an appropriate structure and clearly naming who is in charge and why; identifying key capabilities needed for specific scenarios, such as negotiators, EOD, etc.; identifying and sourcing key equipment, including relevant technology; and conforming to national laws and norms
6. The need to have a plan for interacting not just with the media but also with the public and with affected families. If foreign nationals are present, their embassies should be involved. Community leaders could also be useful for helping interact with affected families. Family members that feel like they are being sidelined or ignored could negatively impact a media strategy
7. The need to include a social media response, in addition to interfacing with reporters and the traditional media, and the critical importance of having a "single voice" formulating the narrative
8. The critical role that time plays in formulating a response. It is important consider the tradeoff between the time taken to formulating a response and the risks associating with taking action (or not taking action)
9. The need to consider ethical considerations with regard to negotiating with terrorists, calling their bluff with regard to killing hostages, and taking too much time to formulate a response. All of these points feed back into defining the mission and success in a CT operation
10. When conducting an AAR and formulating lessons learned, identifying key sticking points or problems is not enough nor is making "paper" changes, such as policy, doctrine, or published procedures. These lessons learned need to be trained and tested before the next crisis. In this regard, exercises are essential.

Day 3: AAR and Next Steps

The workshop ended with a quick review of the presentations and exercise, an AAR of the workshop, and proposed topics for the next iteration.

Participants found the case studies and discussions helpful and were particularly appreciative of the wide array of participants from diverse backgrounds and different countries, and how this diversity enriched and enlivened discussions.

Several participants noted the need for greater consideration of the strategic level of crisis response in CT for the next iteration of the workshop. One participant also suggested looking at CT in a country where NATO forces are deployed and how a team of NATO operators could formulate a response. Similarly, another noted the utility of thinking about how MSATs could include training and advising on a CT response to partner nations and emerging partner nations. One participant suggested creating an organization chart of NATO SOF equities.

Finally, several participants advocated for including a wider array of participants for the next iteration of the workshop, including government officials, domestic police, media, the private sector, first responders, intelligence, and other key stakeholders. One participant also suggested harmonizing CT efforts with SOCEUR, including its recent exercise Trojan Footprint.

With regard to topics, participants encouraged a workshop on critical infrastructure and CT; maritime security and SOF; hybrid threats and how to counter; non-urban operations and CT, such as Mexico and how it does counternarcotics; and how different NATO countries coordinate CT efforts, including the creation of fusion cells, and who is included.

Appendix A

Planning exercise

Scenario

On November 13, 2022, six individuals storm a luxury hotel in your capital city, killing the hotel's guards, securing the building, and taking everyone inside hostage. The individuals demand that all twenty members of their movement be released from prison within one hour in exchange for the safe release of the hotel guests. For each additional hour that the government does not release the prisoners, a hotel guest will be executed and the execution will be live streamed on social media.

Simultaneously, an estimated 10-12 individuals from the movement are positioned outside the hotel in nearby buildings and in cars, threatening to kill first responders with sniper fire and/or vehicle-borne IEDs and person-borne IEDs.

Exercise

Your team is tasked to do the following:

- Build a crisis response team:
 - Who are the stakeholders and why?
 - Which types security forces should be included in the response and why?
 - Should SOF be included? If so, in what capacity? What do the laws and norms of your country allow?
 - Who should be in charge of the response and why?
- Roughly sketch what the response should look like:
 - What type of forces will be deployed?
 - What are considerations for equipment?
 - What should C2 look like and why?
 - What are some ethical considerations in the response? Is there anything you can do but choose not to?
 - What are some possible problems to avoid?
- Roughly sketch out a media response:
 - Who should be in charge and why?
 - Who should interact with the media, how and why?
 - What are some potential challenges with engaging the media?
- After the attack is over
 - Who will conduct lessons learned and how?

Appendix B

Presenters

Dominic Troulan **Retired Special Forces Officer** **GC, QGM, QCVS**



Dominic Troulan (Dom) is a decorated former British Army officer and former Royal Marine Commando who served from 1979-2009 on operations around the globe, including twenty years with UK Special Forces, retiring as a Major.

In September 2013, whilst residing in Kenya, Mr. Troulan responded to a call that led him to help with a rescue mission to Westgate Shopping Mall, which was under attack from terrorists. He was also involved in repelling the Dusit Hotel attack in January 2019.

For these repeated acts of gallantry, Mr. Troulan receive the United Kingdom's highest civilian award for bravery - the George Cross - in the Queen's Birthday Honours List 2017. The George Cross joins the awards he received during his service with UK Special Forces, which includes the Queen's Gallantry Medal and the Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service.

Mr. Troulan lived in East Africa until very recently, where he built an impressive client base for his core skills in safeguarding assets and people in unstable environments. He has a strong track record in community engagement, hostage negotiation and release, anti-piracy strategies, and crisis management. Since 2017, Mr. Troulan has offered his services as an inspirational speaker to local and international organisations.

Saikat Datta

**Designated & Founding Partner, DeepStrat
Strategic Adviser to Nullcon and The Dialogue**



Saikat Datta has worked at the intersection of public policy, journalism and security in a career spanning over two decades. During his work as an editor and an investigative journalist his work was awarded the International Press Institute award (2007), the Jagan Phadnis Memorial award for investigative journalism (2007) and the National RTI award for journalism (2010).

As a public policy professional, he has been associated with Nullcon – Asia’s biggest cybersecurity conference and hub; The Dialogue – a think tank on technology and policy in India; and a Policy Director with the Centre for Internet and Society (CIS). He was also the lead researcher on a cybersecurity project for the New Delhi-based Internet Democracy Project.

He was the Vice President & Head, De-risking Strategies, of Reliance Global Corporate Security (RGCS) specialising in counterterrorism and cybersecurity projects. He was also a consultant to the National Critical Information Infrastructure Protection Centre, a body created under India’s Information Technology Act (amended) 2008 as the designated national agency for all cyberthreats to critical information infrastructure (CII).

He has been the South Asia Editor for Asia Times, Resident Editor of DNA, the National Security Editor of Hindustan Times, Assistant Editor with the Outlook magazine and the Security and Strategic Affairs correspondent with The Indian Express.

He has co-authored a book on India’s special operations capabilities – ‘India’s Special Forces – The History & Future of Special Forces’. His research papers on India’s intelligence and counterterrorism capabilities have been published by The Stimson Centre, the US Army War College, SAIS, Johns Hopkins University, the Centre for Land Warfare Studies (CLAWS) and the Centre for Air Power Studies (CAPS).

Saikat’s work covers public policy, security, intelligence, military power, cybersecurity, communication, technology and sustainability among others. As a Designated and Founding Partner at DeepStrat LLP, he brings years of experience and networks in government, security, academia and civil society.

Heather S. Gregg, PhD
Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College
Academic Advisor to the Seminar



Heather S. Gregg is a professor at the U.S. Army War College in the Strategic Studies Institute.

Dr. Gregg's academic focus is on religiously motivated violence, causes of extremism, irregular warfare, and leveraging culture in population centric conflicts, including repairing communities and national unity in the wake of war and political instability.

Prior to joining the U.S. Army War College, Dr. Gregg was an associate professor at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California, where she worked primarily with Special Operations Forces. She is the 2017 recipient of the NPS school-wide Hamming Award for excellence in teaching.

Dr. Gregg was also an associate political scientist at the RAND Corporation from 2003-2006. She has conducted research for USASOC, OSD, TRADOC, BIMA, NCTC, Department of State, and JIEDDO.

Dr. Gregg earned her PhD in Political Science in 2003 from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. She also holds a Master's degree from Harvard Divinity School, where she studied Islam, and a Bachelor's degree in Cultural Anthropology, with honors, from the University of California, Santa Cruz.

In addition to academic experience, Dr. Gregg has spent time in several regions of conflict including Palestine/West Bank and the former Yugoslavia, in addition to working in Qatar and Japan, and studying in Hungary. From 2013-2015, she was part of teaching and engagement teams in Tajikistan. In 2016, she taught at the Indonesian Defense University on subjects relating to asymmetric warfare.

Dr. Gregg has published extensively on religiously motivated conflict, extremism, and population centric warfare, including: *Religious Terrorism* (Cambridge University Press, 2020); "Religiously Motivated Violence" (Oxford University Press 2016); *Building the Nation: Missed Opportunities in Iraq and Afghanistan* (University of Nebraska 2018); *The Path to Salvation: Religious Violence from the Crusades to Jihad* (University of Nebraska 2014); and co-editor of *The Three Circles of War: Understanding the Dynamics of Modern War in Iraq* (Potomac, 2010).