



THE SOUFAN CENTER ANNUAL REPORT

2022



The Soufan Center is an independent non-profit center offering research, analysis, and strategic dialogue on global security challenges and foreign policy issues.

TABLE OF
CONTENTS

I.	LETTER FROM THE FOUNDER	4
II.	LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	6
III.	ABOUT THE CENTER	8
IV.	REFLECTING ON FIVE-YEARS OF TSC	10
V.	POLICY ENGAGEMENT: GLOBAL	16
VI.	POLICY ENGAGEMENT: IN THE UNITED STATES	20
VII.	ACADEMIC ENGAGEMENT	22
VIII.	RESEARCH AND INTEL BRIEFS	24
IX.	PROJECTS	28
X.	SECURING THE FUTURE INITIATIVE (SFI)	30
XI.	EVENTS	32
XIII.	IN THE NEWS	36
XIV.	TSC TEAM	38
XV.	TSC BOARD	39

LETTER FROM THE FOUNDER



Ali Soufan, Founder, The Soufan Center

Five years ago, I founded The Soufan Center (TSC). Over these last years, our team has produced 36 publications—including reports, articles, and briefings—and participated in hundreds of events, and engaged with thousands of individuals from across the world. We have worked with governments, multilateral organizations, and security agencies, as well as with the academic, policy, and human rights communities. I founded TSC to serve as the defining voice at the intersection of global security and human rights, knowing that the former must always be underpinned by the latter.

As our team reflects on this important five-year milestone, I am incredibly proud of our accomplishments. My hope was to see TSC's work at the forefront of analysis on a range of complex security issues and emerging threats. The domestic and international security challenges the United States must contend with today are complex and take place within the context of monumental shifts among great powers. And yet security continues to be defined by the legacy and aftermath of the tragic events of September 11, 2001.

My mission was for TSC to offer knowledge and understanding about contemporary security dynamics, as well as to contribute to developing credible, effective, and sustainable solutions. I believe we have achieved that.

Through the lens of counterterrorism, the international community—and Western nations in particular—have been almost uniquely focused on one threat for two decades. At TSC, however, we have traced the evolution of the global security landscape, where once two transnational terrorist movements dominated the scene and now a more diffused, decentralized, and diversified terrorism threat confronts many states. We have raised awareness about the terrorism and violent extremism challenges we face, which, more than ever, cut across the ideological spectrum. From its foundation, TSC's work has included rigorous research and analysis on violent far-right extremism and the threat posed by transnational white supremacy. Our team has offered testimony before Congressional hearings, as well as briefed leading national and international security agencies and multilateral bodies on this urgent, and evolving, threat.

Our work has continued to follow developments with global jihadist terrorism. In 2017, when I founded TSC, Islamic State (IS) still occupied territory in parts of Iraq and Syria. In the preceding years, this group committed horrific acts of violence internationally, all the while attracting tens of thousands of foreigners to join its cause. Our team has been committed to research and analysis on the need for durable solutions for managing populations formerly affiliated with IS. We have also been vocal about the need for justice and accountability for crimes committed by this group. Our experts have spoken before the United Nations, the European Union, the Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF), the Global Coalition to Defeat Daesh/ISIS, and other international bodies on the importance of addressing these enduring challenges all the while supporting victims and survivors.

We have also seen over the past years the evolution of the threat internationally, particularly in Western and Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, where the mix of conflict, governance deficits, and heavy-handed security approaches have created opportunities for terrorist groups to recruit support. Al-Qaeda has been able to entrench itself in local conflicts and even find a haven once more in Afghanistan. TSC has been able to contribute research to policymakers on what has allowed al-Qaeda to grow and evolve while reflecting on lessons learned and avenues for justice for victims and survivors.

Over TSC's five years, we have witnessed vast shifts in the international system. At the national level, priorities have shifted from counterterrorism to great power competition, though in many contexts the two remain interconnected. Our team has been monitoring developments in inter-state conflicts and dynamics in China and Russia that continue to shape the global security landscape. At the national and international levels, we have seen the worrying rise of conspiracy theories and disinformation campaigns give way to hate and violence among communities. Our team has opined in numerous journalistic outlets about the weaponization of information in the U.S. and around the globe.

In the five years since TSC was founded, the shifts in the global peace and security landscape have been vast. At every juncture, our team has been able to track the trends, present the facts, and weigh the options for an effective response. We have launched projects with partners from across the world, spoken with hundreds of journalists, and hosted thousands of guests at our annual Global Security Forum. Our team looks forward to continuing this journey with all those who have supported our work these past years.

Thank you for five years of trust, partnership, and friendship.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Ali Soufan'.

Ali Soufan
Founder
The Soufan Center

LETTER FROM THE

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Naureen Chowdhury Fink, Executive Director, The Soufan Center

The Soufan Center reached an exciting milestone in 2022. Together, we celebrated our five-year anniversary, reflecting on the important work that has been accomplished and the vision for building on that strong foundation in the years ahead. Through our projects, we organized workshops and consultations in New York, Washington, D.C., Brussels, London, Geneva, Dakar, and The Hague, and engaged over six hundred stakeholders from governments, the United Nations, academia, and civil society, whose contributions have deeply enriched our analyses and informed action-oriented recommendations for policymakers and practitioners. We welcomed several new Fellows to TSC, with expertise in counterterrorism, sanctions, terrorism financing, the Middle East, multilateral engagement, and the rule of law, and continue to build strong partnerships with international actors and experts. Through our 17 publications in 2022, along with dozens of briefings to policymakers, as well as numerous articles and commentary pieces in external media outlets, we have reached a wide global audience and brought TSC perspectives to new partners and networks.

As the global security landscape shifts, it remains critical to understand the intersections and connections between different threats, actors, and institutions. This is especially important in dynamic international forums where no single country – no matter how dominant – can achieve their desired strategic objectives alone. Cooperation, collaboration, and communication remain key ingredients to addressing the multiple crises facing the world today, from climate change to interstate conflict to skyrocketing humanitarian needs.

Our work at TSC has monitored these developments and the nuanced analysis and findings shared through our daily IntelBrief, which has covered topics from the war in Ukraine to the fallout of the Taliban takeover in Afghanistan and the assault on women’s rights; developments in China to emerging threats in Africa; the dangers of mis-, dis-, and mal- information (MDM) to conspiracy theories; from developments within jihadist groups to the emergence of transnational violent far-right threats, among others.

The year ahead is likely to bring many critical challenges to the fore, from the continued impact of war, particularly on civilians, to financial uncertainties and evolving political partnerships. At the same time, TSC continues to reaffirm the importance of accountability for terrorism and war crimes, and to ensure that the use of sexual violence, of wrongful detentions and hostage taking, and of deliberately attacking civilians, including non-combatants and children, is not met with impunity. As we continue to focus on growth and development, we look forward to continuing work with longtime partners but also reaching out to new networks and emerging experts, to ensure our work is infused with the insights and expertise of diverse contributors. I am incredibly proud that our team continues to receive requests for briefings and inputs, while also partnering with new voices whose work has deeply enriched our projects.

While we have had much to celebrate in 2022, we look forward to a busy and dynamic 2023. On behalf of the entire TSC team, I would like to thank you for your engagement and support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Naureen Fink', written in a cursive style.

Naureen Chowdhury Fink
Executive Director
The Soufan Center

ABOUT THE CENTER



The Soufan Center (TSC) is an independent non-profit organization offering research, analysis, and strategic dialogue on foreign policy challenges with a particular focus on global security, conflict prevention and resolution, and the rule of law. Our work is underpinned by an emphasis on prevention, mitigation, and a recognition that human rights and human security perspectives are critical to credible, effective, and sustainable solutions. As a bipartisan organization, TSC fills a niche role by producing objective and innovative analyses and recommendations that shape strategic policy and dialogue and equip governments, international organizations, the private sector, and civil society to act effectively.

OUR MISSION

The Soufan Center’s mission is to present key decisionmakers and stakeholders – governments, international organizations, the private sector, media, and civil society – with the critical information, analyses, and recommendations needed to prevent and respond to global security challenges.

OUR WORK

The Soufan Center undertakes research and initiatives that cover a broad spectrum of global security threats including armed conflict, terrorism, illicit actors, and geopolitical dynamics, including the impacts on civil society, humanitarian action, and the rule of law. Through our daily IntelBrief, TSC reaches a wide international audience of policymakers, academics, and practitioners with a nuanced and in-depth assessment of important stories that shape our security environment. In our Issue Briefs and longer research reports, we provide in-depth analysis and action-oriented recommendations for key actors making policy and on the ground. Our Events allow us to reach a unique global network and diverse audiences to drive changes in policy and practice. Each TSC project aims to amplify voices and perspectives from the field and build the capacities and networks critical to delivering comprehensive and effective responses to security challenges. Working closely with a wide range of Media, we are able to share our findings, analyses, and recommendations an unparalleled audience. Our unique channel, TSC Arabic, ensures critical research and analysis developed by The Soufan Center is made available to Arabic-speaking audiences across the globe.

OUR HISTORY

Founded in 2017 by former FBI special agent Ali Soufan, The Soufan Center is an independent, non-partisan, and registered 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Led by Executive Director Naureen Chowdhury Fink who brings nearly two decades of experiences in policy research, program development, and diplomacy, our Team is strengthened by diverse professional and cultural backgrounds, including experience in academia, federal, state, and local government; international organizations; law enforcement; and the military. The Soufan Center organizes the Global Security Forum, an annual international conference bringing together a dynamic group of high level government officials, senior experts, and prominent journalists for innovative exchanges on some of the most pressing international challenges and critical opportunities to prevent and resolve them.

Reflecting on Five-Years of TSC

A COMMITMENT TO COMPREHENSIVE RESEARCH

In early 2017, The Soufan Center published its first report [Syria: The Humanitarian-Security Nexus](#). The report called on governments to recognize that humanitarian and security obligations are mutually reinforcing aspirations that can—and must—complement each other. The report laid the foundation for TSC’s vision to ensure that conversations about security issues do not take place independent of human rights and humanitarian considerations. In the five years since its foundation, TSC has gone on to cover a diverse range of topics underpinned by this core mission. Later that year, TSC published its seminal report [Beyond the Caliphate: Foreign Fighters and the Threat of Returnees](#), which provided one of the most important datasets on foreign nationals traveling to join the so-called Islamic State (IS) since the declaration of its territorial “caliphate.” Further, the report warned of the enduring threat posed by foreign fighters and the need for the international community to address the threat in a comprehensive and wholistic manner. To this day, thousands of individuals—including men, women, and children—are held in legal limbo in detention facilities in Syria while security and humanitarian conditions worsen. At the same time, prosecutions and accountability for IS crimes remain relatively low globally.

TSC research has offered timely and nuanced analysis on global security dynamics, including tracking evolving conflicts and risks in the Middle East and South Asia, for example. A 2018 report, [The Forgotten War: The Ongoing Disaster in Yemen](#), explored the deteriorating humanitarian and security catastrophe in the country as sectarian and violent groups gained a stronger foothold amidst the crisis. The following year, a report [Iran’s Playbook: Deconstructing Tehran’s Regional Strategy](#) explored that country’s distinct political “playbook” and strategy for regional domination. The report detailed how Iran’s overall grand strategy has succeeded, and in some instances frustrated counter-efforts by the United States and Israel to curb Iran’s ambitions. A follow-up report in 2021, [A Way Forward with Iran? Options for Crafting a U.S. Strategy](#), presented options for strengthening U.S. posture with Iran.

TSC maintained its focus on non-state armed groups. In 2019, an important TSC report, [Al-Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent \(AQIS\): The Nucleus of Jihad in South Asia](#), looked at al-Qaeda’s strategy to embed itself in local conflicts and dynamics in the Indian subcontinent. Noting the group’s encroachment into new territorial theatres, the report underscored the viability of al-Qaeda’s reach into South Asia and the need for counterterrorism circles to remain vigilant on multiple geographic fronts. A 2021 report [Terrorism and Counterterrorism in Southeast Asia: Emerging Trends and Dynamics](#) explored similar dynamics in Southeast Asia, exploring the rise of women as perpetrators of terrorist violence in the region. Reflecting on the 20th anniversary of 9/11, TSC published a report [Diminished, but not Defeated: The Evolution of al-Qaeda Since September 11, 2001](#), on the evolution of al-Qaeda against the backdrop of the unfolding crisis in Afghanistan and highlighted critical questions about the group’s relationship with the Taliban.



The Soufan Center reports, New York, NY.

TSC’s research has also explored important human security dynamics. A 2020 report [The Nexus Between Human Security and Preventing/Countering Violent Extremism](#), supported by the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, looked at the impacts of overly securitized approaches to countering violent extremism in three contexts: Bosnia & Herzegovina, Niger, and Tunisia. Primary research was undertaken in each of the three countries, including in-depth interviews of numerous stakeholders, to provide an analysis of how the burgeoning field of Preventing/Countering Violent Extremism was impacting nonprofits and beneficiaries on the ground. Adding to that body of work, a special report [The Decade of Defiance & Resistance: Reflections on Arab Revolutionary Uprisings and Responses From 2010 – 2020](#), authored by Rami Khouri in 2021, studied protest movements and civil society action in the Middle East and North Africa. The piece underscored the desire of populations in the region for citizen-driven, national self-determination and the end of militarized states and societies. On the importance of the research, TSC’s founder Ali Soufan concluded: “This report brings to the forefront the real picture of the hopes and aspirations of millions of women and men in the region: the demand for equal rights for citizens from all identities, regions, and income groups.”

TSC has endeavored to keep its readers informed on terrorism challenges across the ideological spectrum. Our team published a pivotal report in 2019 on the margins of the opening of the 74th session of the United Nations General Assembly. Building on years of research and assessments, the report [White Supremacy Extremism: The Transnational Rise of the Violent White Supremacist Movement](#) highlighted risks posed by an emboldened far-right movement and potential parallels between the rise of transnational white supremacy and the global jihadist movement. Subsequent reports in 2020 focused on specific groups within the movement: [The Atomwaffen Division: The Evolution of the White Supremacy Threat](#) and [Inside the Russian Imperial Movement: Practical Implications of U.S. Sanctions](#). A 2021 report [Quantifying the Q Conspiracy: A Data-Driven Approach to Understanding the Threat Posed by QAnon](#) studied the far-right QAnon movement as a force multiplier in the broader violent extremist milieu in the United States. The report also noted how the movement provided openings for America’s adversaries to sow discord and exert influence with domestic and international consequences. A subsequent report that year published with the support of the Airey Neave Trust (UK), [A Perfect Storm: Insurrection, Incitement, and the Violent Far-Right Movement](#), explored the trans-Atlantic impacts of the January 6, 2021, attack on the U.S. Capitol and the potential for the event to serve as a rallying cry for far-right violent extremists globally. As the war in Ukraine unfolded in 2022, TSC published [Foreign Fighters, Volunteers, and Mercenaries: Non-State Actors and Narratives in Ukraine](#), a report on non-state actors and extremist narratives.

To offer experts, practitioners, and policymakers crisp, timely, and action-oriented analysis and recommendations, TSC launched a new publication format, the Issue Brief. These new TSC Issue Briefs address a range of topics, including countering terrorist financing across the ideological spectrum and lessons learned in countering terrorist narratives supported by the Government of Germany; the road to the 9/11 attacks; the roles of cities in promoting democracy and resilience in Africa; bringing terrorists to justice and promoting accountability; and on targeting selections of violent far-right groups. A special Issue Brief series in 2022, [Deterrence and Denial: The Impact of Sanctions and Designations on Violent Far-Right Groups](#), also supported by the Airey Neave Trust (UK), provided an in-depth look at the current and future roles of sanctions and proscriptions in addressing violent far-right terrorism from the perspectives of several leading counter-terrorism researchers.

Launched on the 20-year anniversary of the September 11, 2001, attacks, TSC co-led the Securing the Future Initiative (SFI), a project co-led with the Fourth Freedom Forum. The SFI project and its final report, [Counterterrorism and the United Nations Security Council Since 9/11: Moving Beyond the 2001 Paradigm](#), examined the roles and impacts of the UN Security Council over two decades, offering a menu of recommendations for future actions and policy priorities. The SFI project, supported by the European Union, the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs included a series of 13 global and virtual consultations with over 500 stakeholders to inform the final report. As part of the SFI project, 10 individual research and policy briefs were commissioned, in addition to the final project report. TSC experts helped commission, review, edit, and produce this range of publications covering the Council’s activities in countering the financing of terrorism, state accountability on conflict-related sexual violence, the prosecution, reintegration, and rehabilitation of foreign terrorist fighters, among others.

Reflecting on Five-Years of TSC

ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT WITH KEY AUDIENCES



TSC GSF event during UNGA in New York, NY. From left: Sean Steinberg, Colin P. Clarke, Joseph Shelzi, Meredith Stricker, Naureen Chowdhury Fink, Ali Soufan, Karen Greenberg, Michaela Millender, Stephanie Foggett, Edmund Fitton-Brown.

In the five years since TSC was founded, our team has expanded active engagement with key stakeholders and audiences globally. The annual flagship [Global Security Forum \(GSF\)](#) convenes an international network of senior officials and experts, and has included heads of state, ministers, senior diplomats, heads of security agencies, and prominent experts, academics, and journalists, alongside thousands of attendees, in-person and online. The inaugural GSF in 2018 addressed the topic of returning foreign fighters and the need for states to work together in addressing the multi-prong and long-term humanitarian and security impacts of the challenge. Over subsequent years, the GSF has been organized around core themes of addressing modern disinformation, responding to geopolitical crisis and disorder in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, and cooperation and competition in the face of great power shifts. Over five years, the Global Security Forum has convened four gatherings, welcomed hundreds of speakers, and hosted thousands of guests. The findings and recommendations from these discussions have been presented before national and multilateral bodies and covered by hundreds of news and media organizations.

From our headquarters in New York to cities across the world, TSC has also hosted a range of events. Our team has collaborated with universities, research centers, think-tanks, and other organizations in support of opportunities to discuss our research, share diverse viewpoints, and offer solutions on contemporary challenges. Commencing in 2020, in the face of the global COVID-19 pandemic, our team pivoted to providing virtual events to continue engagement and collaboration with global audiences, with hybrid options where feasible. TSC has been successful in ensuring that research and findings have impact with key national and international stakeholders, especially lawmakers, diplomats, security practitioners, and among multilateral organizations.

In its first five years, TSC experts have participated in multiple hearings on Capitol Hill, as well as before British parliamentary bodies. Our team has spoken with governments across the Americas, Europe, the Middle East and North Africa, Sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, and Australia and Oceania. Among multilateral organizations and bodies, our experts have briefed and presented before the United Nations (UN), the European Union (EU), the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF), the Global Coalition to Defeat Daesh/ISIS, and the Financial Action Task Force (FATF)—among many others. Our experts have extensive professional and research networks with universities, research centers, and think-tanks across the world.

Another important pillar of TSC’s engagement is with national and international news media organizations. Our experts have given hundreds of interviews and authored hundreds of articles—our work and findings have appeared thousands of times in news articles and policy journals. Our extensive media presence allows our work at the intersection of security and human rights to be included in premier discussions on geopolitics, security, and current events. TSC has placed special importance on Arabic language media and products—translating daily briefings and reports, as well as the annual Global Security Forum, into Arabic for audiences in the Middle East and North Africa, as well as internationally.

Reflecting on Five-Years of TSC

AMPLIFYING GLOBAL AND LOCAL PERSPECTIVES



Over TSC’s first five years, our organization has been proud to work on key projects with funders and partners from across the world. Through our projects, we seek to amplify voices and perspectives from the field and build capacities and responses to international challenges. Since our founding, we have launched 13 different projects addressing a range of issues at the intersection of peace and security, humanitarian affairs, human rights, and civil society engagement.

In 2018, TSC launched its collaborative event series with the support of the Carnegie Corporation of New York, ***The Soufan Center Salon Series***, which offered informed, collaborative, provocative, and exclusive discussions with key audiences to explore critical issues in the fields of international law, global and human security, human rights, political and religious violence, ideology and rhetoric, and more. In 2019, a research project supported by the Rockefeller Brothers Fund (RBF) and subsequent publication titled ***The Nexus Between Human Security and Preventing/Countering Violent Extremism*** employed a country-level analysis of three states that have been targeted by the international community for counter-terrorism and P/CVE efforts: Bosnia-Herzegovina, Tunisia, and Niger. Individual researchers conducted field and desk research in each of the three countries in support of the research project.

A common project theme for TSC over its first five-years was the importance of amplifying local voices when seeking to understand complex human and security dynamics. In 2020, and with the support of the United Nations Democracy Fund (UNDEF), TSC launched a project called ***Enabling Witnesses to Inform the World about Conflict in Iraq, Syria, Yemen***. With the help of expert consultants, TSC trained and provided a network to a cohort of 40 participants—amateur journalists, health workers, and aid workers—who were chosen from those three countries. The project was covered in a piece by [Vanity Fair](#) in 2022. The power of local storytelling was prominent in a project launched in 2020 and supported by the Carnegie Corporation of New York called ***Through the Lens of Crisis: Covid-19 and The People on the Frontlines of Conflict***. The project highlighted local stories and documented on-the-ground realities in conflict and crisis contexts in the Middle East against the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic. The project told powerful, local stories from Syria, Lebanon, Yemen, and Iraq. A similar project called ***Stories from the Field: Grappling with the Impact of COVID-19***, supported by Rockefeller Brothers Fund, created a platform for stories from journalists and researchers in the field on the unique challenges brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic in India and Turkey.



Workshop with African policymakers and practitioners, SFI project, Dakar, Senegal

TSC has worked with diverse partners on a range of projects addressing the rise of transnational far-right extremism. In 2021, our team launched **Mapping Insecurity: Tracking Domestic Violent Extremism**, a project with an interactive tracker allowing users to follow the law enforcement response to the January 6, 2021, insurrection at the Capitol, alongside a resource library of publications and briefings. A project launched in 2021 in partnership with the Airey Neave Trust (U.K.), **The Transnational Dimensions of Violent Far-Right Extremism in the United States, United Kingdom, and Beyond**, assessed the transnational dimensions of violent far-right and white supremacist extremism in both U.S. and U.K. contexts. Another project launched in 2022 with the Airey Neave Trust (U.K.) and subsequent publication, **Deterrence and Denial: The Impact of Sanctions and Designations on Violent Far-Right Groups**, explored the impact of sanctions and proscriptions on terrorist groups, with a focus on violent far-right actors. With the support of the German Mission to the United Nations, a project on **Extreme Right-Wing Violence and Terrorism: Transnational Networks and Narratives** developed a series of briefings on far-right terrorist narratives and financing.

TSC's projects have also focused on the global terrorism threat landscape. A special **9/11 Anniversary IntelBrief Series** marked the 20-year anniversary of the attacks of September 11, 2001, in the United States and the lasting impacts of the attacks around the world. In partnership with Nordic Safe Cities (NSC), a 2021 project, **Global Terrorism Threat Briefings**, covered news and trends in the global extremist landscape and best practices within the P/CVE space, including emerging technology and policy from around the world. In 2022, also with Nordic Safe Cities, a project **International Terrorism Trends and Identifying P/CVA Best Practices** offered a series of briefings and analytical products for NSC members and partners. In September 2021, TSC and the Fourth Freedom Forum launched the **Securing the Future Initiative (SFI)**, the first-ever independent assessment of the United Nations Security Council's counterterrorism activities which culminated in a flagship report and related research and policy briefings.

TSC'S REACH IN 2022

RESEARCH PUBLICATIONS 17

DAILY INTEL BRIEFS 244

EVENTS HOSTED 21

6 U.S. EVENTS & ROUNDTABLES
NYC AND D.C.

5 INTERNATIONAL EVENTS & ROUNDTABLES
BRUSSELS, DAKAR, GENEVA, LONDON, THE HAGUE

10 VIRTUAL EVENTS

POLICY ENGAGEMENT
GLOBAL

The Soufan Center offers research, analysis, and strategic dialogue on global security challenges and foreign policy issues. TSC continued to expand its global engagement in 2022, reaching diverse international stakeholders across the world. Our team was able to engage with governments, multilateral organizations, international nonprofits, and with research communities from across the world.

Based in New York, our team engages extensively with the United Nations community, including with UN staff, Permanent Missions, UN counterterrorism bodies, and with other civil society organizations working in support of the UN agenda. In 2022, TSC contributed to conversations addressing issues at the intersection of security and human rights, including at several high-level United Nations events supporting victims and survivors of terrorism. TSC’s Executive Director Naureen Chowdhury Fink participated in the UN High-Level International Conference on Human Rights, Civil Society and Counter Terrorism, organized by the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT) and the Kingdom of Spain, in Malaga, Spain. The conference focused on ‘For a Future Free From Terrorism: The Role of Human Rights, the Rule of Law and Civil Society Engagement in Effective Counter-Terrorism Efforts.’ Ms. Chowdhury Fink also moderated a panel at the 2022 UN Global Congress of Victims of Terrorism on ‘Terrorist attacks based on xenophobia, racism, and other forms of intolerance, or in the name of religion or belief (XIRIB).’ TSC’s work highlights the importance of human rights and the rule of law to the success of efforts to counter terrorism and violent extremism, alongside the importance of supporting victims and survivors and of holding perpetrators of terrorist crimes accountable.



Executive Director Naureen Chowdhury Fink (first R) at UN Human Rights and Counterterrorism conference in Malaga, Spain.



Executive Director Naureen Chowdhury Fink (third from R) meeting with U.S. State Department counterterrorism officials

TSC’s engagements in 2022 also supported important UN efforts strengthening gender equality and civil society cooperation within the context of global peace and security. TSC’s Executive Director Naureen Chowdhury Fink joined an expert panel discussion hosted by UN Women, the Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance, and the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights. The discussion highlighted barriers to integrating a gender perspective in policy and programming to prevent and counter violent extremism and terrorism. Members of our team also joined the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate’s (UNCTED) Global Research Network, of which TSC is a founding member, to discuss with other civil society organizations on countering the use of new and emerging technologies for terrorist purposes. Highlighting a TSC priority, the event focused on the impact of counter-terrorism responses on human rights, fundamental freedoms, and the civic space.

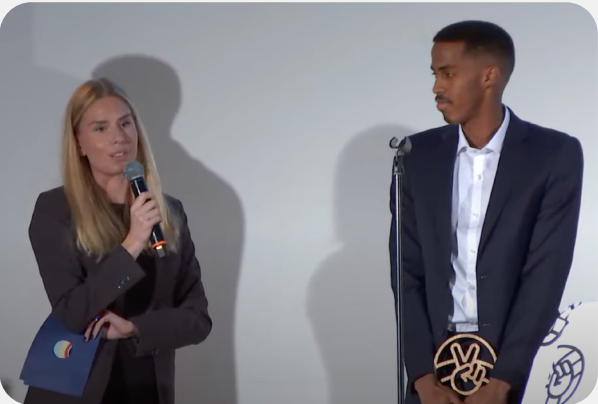
The TSC team contributed to important conversations taking place on the margins of the opening of the 77th UN General Assembly (UNGA). In addition to hosting our own side event during the opening of this year’s UNGA, our experts attended several meetings and events. TSC’s Executive Director Naureen Chowdhury Fink presented at a side event jointly hosted by the Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF) and the International Institute for Justice and Rule of Law (IIJ) focused on civil society actors’ role in preventing and countering racially or ethnically motivated violent extremism and participated in a GCTF event on gender and counterterrorism. Over the year, TSC experts also participated in briefings with various government missions to the UN, providing analysis on terrorist threats and emerging trends. TSC experts continued to engage with civil society networks based in New York, attending meetings and retreats with other organizations, such as Security Council Report, Crisis Group, and the Global Center on Cooperative Security, to discuss trends, implementation, and the role of civil society in counterterrorism issues.



Senior Research Fellow Susan Sim at a NATO COE-DAT event in Istanbul, Türkiye.

The TSC team was also proud to engage with other intergovernmental organizations and multilateral communities. Over 2022, TSC experts continued their engagement with NATO’s Centre of Excellence Defence Against Terrorism (COE-DAT). Research Fellow Stephanie Foggett delivered a lecture for an online course on ‘NATO Efficient Crisis Management to Mitigate the Effects of Terrorist Activities.’ The course addressed the principles of crisis management and assessed case studies to examine them in practice. “A global climate of upheaval and transition has ripened opportunities for violent actors to capitalize and expand their reach,” concluded Ms. Foggett. Senior Research Fellow Susan Sim spoke on port security at NATO COE-DAT’s ‘Good Practices in Counter Terrorism in the Maritime Domain’ seminar in Istanbul, Türkiye. Using Singapore as a case study, she discussed the challenges of balancing security with the economic imperative of facilitating global trade. Over a series of other lectures with NATO’s COE-DAT, Ms. Sim addressed defense against suicide attacks, media and terrorism, attack the network, and crisis management. TSC Research Fellow Mollie Saltskog presented at an event hosted by The Club of Venice, an informal group of senior communications professionals from the governments of European Union Member states and from European Institutions. She presented on the threat of disinformation to European states, as well as the key trends of Russian-backed/aligned and China-backed/aligned disinformation campaigns.

Regionally, TSC continued its engagement with entities working in support of communities building resilience against hate and polarization in Scandinavia. Ms. Saltskog served as a juror for the 2022 Nordic Pioneer Prize. At an event in September 2022 in Copenhagen, Denmark, Ms. Saltskog awarded one of the youth prizes while noting in her remarks, “Human security and the rule of law is the key to developing a safer society and a safer world.” In October, Ms. Chowdhury Fink joined the Nordic Safe Cities Summit in Copenhagen, where she spoke in a ‘fireside chat’ style interview on the global state of counterterrorism and preventing and countering violent extremism (P/CVE), as well as the threat of mis-, dis, and mal-information (MDM). She also presented on potential solutions for these issues by civil society, governments, and the private sector. In 2022, TSC continued its partnership with Nordic Safe Cities to offer a series of briefings and analytical products for NSC members and partners.



Research Fellow Mollie Saltskog (L) at the 2022 Nordic Pioneer Prize in Copenhagen, Denmark.

Over 2022, TSC experts also collaborated with various stakeholders in the United Kingdom. TSC founder Ali Soufan delivered the second annual Royal Ulster Constabulary George Cross Foundation lecture at Queen’s University Belfast. The event marked the centenary of policing in Northern Ireland and the discussion addressed today’s increasingly complex global security landscape. The TSC team was also proud to support several UK parliamentary inquiries on international security matters. TSC contributed written evidence to an inquiry by the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Trafficked Britons in Syria, a cross-party group of Members of Parliament and peers seeking a resolution to the cases of people from the UK who remain in detention facilities in Syria. TSC’s written submission noted that “UK nationals trafficked to Syria should be afforded every legal, psycho-social, and practical support possible, and emphasis should be placed on bringing facilitators to justice.” Later that year, Senior Research Fellow Jason Blazakis provided written evidence and witness testimony before a



Senior Research Fellow Jason Blazakis speaking before the UK’s Foreign Affairs Committee.

UK Foreign Affairs Committee hearing on ‘The Wagner Group and beyond: proxy Private Military Companies.’ The inquiry explored the challenge posed by private military companies and focused particularly on Russia’s Wagner Group. Ms. Chowdhury Fink spoke on gender and security at the launch for Dr. Jessica White’s new book ‘Gender Mainstreaming in Counterterrorism Policy,’ hosted by the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI), which also partnered with TSC for the Securing the Future Initiative event in London. A common thread throughout was the importance of justice and accountability in peace and security efforts.

Our experts continued to engage with various stakeholders more broadly at the European level. During the course of 2022, Senior Research Fellow Colin P. Clarke had several meetings in Europe, including in Berlin and The Hague, to brief German and Dutch government officials, respectively, on the terrorism threat landscape, both globally, but also domestically in the United States. Dr. Clarke also briefed the Dutch National Police on the rising tide of anti-government and far-right extremism, as well as travelling to Berlin, Germany to participate in a workshop led by the United Nations Investigative Team to promote accountability for crimes committed by Da’esh/Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (UNITAD) focusing on ‘Investigating Financial Dimensions of War Crimes, Crimes Against Humanity, and Genocide: International Legal and Regulatory Framework.’ Dr. Clarke delivered a presentation to the Small Arms Survey, based in Geneva, Switzerland, looking at the challenge of containing small arms and light weapons smuggling and trafficking coming out of Afghanistan. He also briefed the Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN) at a workshop in Brussels, Belgium, discussing terrorist propaganda and its impact on modern conflict. Ms. Chowdhury Fink was invited to speak at a plenary session of the International Centre for Counter-Terrorism’s (ICCT) Annual Conference in The Hague, highlighting the UN’s role in countering terrorism against a backdrop of great power rivalry, and opportunities for international action in complex security scenarios

Looking to Asia, our team spoke at various events addressing regional security dynamics in Southeast Asia. Senior Research Fellow Susan Sim participated in a roundtable event in Jakarta, Indonesia, on international cooperation in building resilience against violent extremism. Organized by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) in cooperation with the Indonesian National Counterterrorism Agency, the discussion assessed the implementation of the country’s National Action Plan for the Prevention and Combating of Violent Extremism and the involvement of civil society organizations and international partners. Dr. Clarke presented TSC research on the evolving terrorist threat to Southeast Asia in a forum operated by the International Institute of Justice (IIJ), based in Malta.



Executive Director Naureen Chowdhury Fink (L) at the Nordic Safe Cities Summit in Copenhagen, Denmark.

POLICY ENGAGEMENT

IMPACTS IN THE UNITED STATES

TSC experts continued to engage with national stakeholders on a wide range of national security challenges, including the threat posed by domestic extremism. In February, the House Committee on Homeland Security held a hearing on ‘The Nonprofit Security Grant Program and Protecting Houses of Worship.’ Michael Masters, President of the Board at TSC, offered testimony on the threat faced by faith-based communities, in particular the Jewish community in America. In June, the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs held a hearing on ‘Domestic Extremism in America: Examining White Supremacist Violence in the Wake of Recent Attacks.’ In his witness testimony, Ambassador Nathan Sales, Senior Fellow at The Soufan Center, said: “From Christchurch to Buffalo, from El Paso to Oslo and beyond, the world has seen a dramatic spike in white supremacist terrorism in recent years.” TSC experts continue their nonpartisan engagement with U.S. lawmakers and experts on critical domestic security challenges.

Our team engages with a range of governmental bodies working on domestic and national security matters. Our experts briefed various U.S. government agencies and organizations in 2022, including the U.S. Department of State Counterterrorism Bureau, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Office of Counterterrorism and Threat Prevention, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) Defense Capabilities and Management Office, United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM), and the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) Defense Combating Terrorism Center. The topics included foreign fighters in Ukraine, Russia’s use of mercenaries and other violent non-state actors in Ukraine, and the challenge of conducting ‘over-the-horizon’ counterterrorism in Afghanistan, among other domestic and transnational security challenges. TSC’s Executive Director Naureen Chowdhury Fink joined other civil society actors in New York for a meeting with the U.S. Department of State Bureau of Counterterrorism at the U.S. Mission to the UN to discuss how counterterrorism and countering violent extremism activities can promote both security and human rights.

In 2022, our team continued to support important work in support of Americans held hostage abroad. Both state and non-state actors have been engaged in the practice of detaining Americans overseas and TSC has supported efforts to discuss hostage recovery efforts in a shifting geopolitical landscape. In September 2022, TSC hosted a webinar with Joshua Geltzer, Deputy Assistant to the President and Deputy Homeland Security Advisor at the White House, and Ambassador Roger D. Carstens, the Special Presidential Envoy for Hostage Affairs (SPEHA) at the U.S. Department of State. The discussion, moderated by MSNBC’s Ali Velshi, addressed policy shifts and priorities from a U.S. perspective, especially as the last years have seen state actors surpass non-state actors as the leading entities holding U.S. nationals abroad. Also in September, TSC’s founder Ali Soufan joined the James W. Foley Legacy Foundation and New America to discuss today’s U.S. hostage and detainee landscape. His remarks touched upon the importance of continuing to work with allies and partners for a multilateral response, as well as with the private sector and trusted third parties. Mr. Soufan’s remarks recognized the immense work of hostage families in advocating for justice and accountability for Americans held hostage abroad.



Senior Fellow Nathan Sales before the U.S. Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

Our experts also engage with foreign embassies and missions working in the United States. In May, Research Fellow Mollie Saltskog participated in a panel discussion hosted at the House of Sweden in Washington D.C. The event addressed the threat posed by disinformation to democratic societies, lessons learned from the war in Ukraine, and emerging trends in the malign influence operation space of relevance to policy-makers, the private sector, academia, and civil society. Representatives from several Embassies also joined a TSC roundtable discussion on the use and impacts of sanctions and proscriptions of violent far-right groups, as part of the TSC project [Deterrence and Denial: The Impact of Sanctions and Designations on Violent Far-Right Groups](#). Our team often meets with foreign governments and overseas experts to discuss domestic security challenges, and Ms. Chowdhury Fink maintains a regular and close dialogue with states’ representatives in New York on issues relating to international security, counterterrorism, and multilateral responses.



Roundtable on sanctions and violent far-right groups, Washington, D.C. From left: Jason Blazakis, Naureen Chowdhury Fink, Mollie Saltskog, Amanda Schmitt, Colin P. Clarke.

Thematically, TSC experts continued to address the topic of disinformation with domestic audiences. Senior Research Fellow Jason Blazakis presented at the National Conference of The Council of State Governments, a nonpartisan organization serving all three branches of state elected and appointed officials. Mr. Blazakis presented on the impacts of disinformation and the role state leaders can play in addressing the nationwide challenge it poses. Senior Research Fellow Colin P. Clarke delivered presentations to Tech Against Terrorism and the Global Internet Forum to Counter Terrorism (GIFCT), focusing on trends in terrorist and violent extremist use of the internet. Research Fellow Mollie Saltskog, an expert on contemporary disinformation, delivered a range of briefings to both private and public sector actors on trends and trajectories in the field.

Another important topic for TSC’s experts was domestic extremism and hate in America. Several TSC experts joined the 2022 Eradicate Hate Global Summit, an annual gathering borne out of the October 2018 massacre at Pittsburgh’s Tree of Life Synagogue. The event fosters unified action to combat hate and violent extremism. Senior Research Fellow Colin P. Clarke joined a session addressing the issues around the lack of consensus on terminology in the anti-hate field as well as a session on the threat posed by violent misogynists known as ‘Incels.’ Senior Research Fellow Jason Blazakis moderated panels on civil litigation as a tool against violent hate and another on the use of cutting-edge technology within the anti-extremism profession. In another event addressing domestic extremism, Senior Research Fellow Colin P. Clarke joined the RAND Corporation and The Museum of Public Relations for a discussion on the extremist



Research Fellow Mollie Saltskog (second from right).

ACADEMIC ENGAGEMENT

Our team engages with global academic communities looking at issues of security practice and human rights. In 2022, TSC was pleased to welcome Dr. Karen Greenberg, the Director of the Center on National Security (CNS) at Fordham Law, as a Senior Visiting Fellow focusing on national security, terrorism and legal issues, including a focus on accountability and the rule of law in counterterrorism. Over the year, TSC engaged with CNS staff and students on several events. TSC’s founder Ali Soufan joined John Brennan, former Director of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), in conversation to discuss key security issues from a U.S. perspective and emerging geopolitical crises. In September, on the margins of the opening of the 77th UN General Assembly, TSC and CNS co-hosted an event focused on ‘Reshaping the Global Order: Conflict, Crises, and Cooperation.’ The conversation convened speakers from the New York Police Department (NYPD), the U.S. Department of State, the European Union, alongside TSC experts to address issues ranging from conflict to terrorism, and from the impacts of the global pandemic to great power competition. The event was hosted under the auspices of the Global Security Forum, TSC’s flagship international security and policy gathering.



Senior Research Fellow Karen Greenberg (L) at TSC side-event during UNGA.

Over 2022, our team continued to engage with university communities in the United States. TSC’s founder Ali Soufan participated in an event on ‘The Impact of 9/11 on International Law: Counterterrorism & Human Rights.’ Hosted by the University of Michigan Law School, Professor Karima Bennoune convened a conversation with students on the legal and human rights questions which still linger regarding justice and accountability following the tragic events of September 11, 2001. Over 2022, Mr. Soufan also supported several events and initiatives in cooperation with the McCain Institute, a think-tank affiliated with Arizona State University.



TSC Founder Ali Soufan joins a virtual event with the University of Michigan Law School.

In his capacity as a member of the McCain Global Leaders Program advisory council, Mr. Soufan has supported 25 diverse leaders from around the world who are working to advance democracy, human rights and freedom. Noting the importance of youth leadership in addressing today’s global challenges, Mr. Soufan stated: “Your skills, your perspectives, your character could not be more in demand today.” Senior Research Fellow Colin P. Clarke delivered a briefing on terrorism and counterterrorism to a group of Foreign Area Officers (FAOs) as part of the Regional Skill Sustainment Initiative program directed by the George Washington University.



TSC Founder Ali Soufan speaks at Queen’s University Belfast in Belfast, United Kingdom.



Senior Research Fellow Colin P. Clarke presents at the George C. Marshall Center.

The TSC team also remains active with student and alumni networks. Michaela Millender, Program and Communications Officer at The Soufan Center, joined an event with the Center for Global Affairs at New York University’s (NYU) School of Professional Studies. She participated in a virtual panel conversation preparing students for careers in international affairs, with a focus on data analytics in the public policy space. She also shared how TSC utilizes data in our analyses and research products. TSC’s staff also engaged, through briefings and events, with domestic academic and professional military and security institutes. TSC Research Fellow Mollie Saltskog delivered a presentation on the ‘Current State of Play of al-Qaeda and the Islamic State’ with the Naval War College. Dr. Colin P. Clarke participated in a workshop hosted by the George C. Marshall Center and the Program on Terrorism and Security Studies (PTSS), presenting on counterterrorism priorities and considerations in Afghanistan. Experts on the TSC team also regularly advise students and classes working on issues relating to TSC, including on capstone projects, career development, and individual initiatives.

The TSC team also had the privilege of engaging with global academic communities. Dr. Clarke spent a week in Barcelona, Spain, delivering a series of lectures on terrorism and counterterrorism at the Institut Barcelona d’Estudis Internacionals (IBEI), which is part of Universitat Pompeu Fabra. Dr. Clarke also traveled to Ottawa, Canada, to present research on terrorism financing at the Terrorism, Security, and Society (TSAS) conference at the University of Waterloo. Through the SFI project, TSC’s Executive Director Naureen Fink and Senior Visiting Fellow Eric Rosand partnered with the RESOLVE Network at the US Institute of Peace to engage a global network of researchers and analysts and bring fresh perspectives to the project through a series of briefs examining regional and thematic dimensions of international counterterrorism efforts and related webinars bringing together researchers from Africa, Asia, Europe, and the U.S. TSC’s founder Ali Soufan delivered a lecture at Queen’s University Belfast and engaged with faculty and students on the topic of global trends in international security.

TSC published 244 daily IntelBriefs in 2022, focused on the major themes in global security, in parallel with our broader research and analysis agenda. The most viewed IntelBrief, with over 10,000 views was published just hours after Russia's invasion of Ukraine, focusing on the role that the private military contractor the Wagner Group would likely play in the conflict as well as the international impacts of the invasion. Ukraine-related IntelBriefs throughout 2022 focused on various aspects of the war, from the role of mis- and dis-information to security cooperation, cyber warfare, and the role played by NATO countries in supporting Kyiv against Moscow, and also highlighted issues like conflict related sexual violence and international legislation. Other IntelBriefs on Ukraine looked at the ramifications of a protracted insurgency; the importance of unmanned aerial systems; and the impact of the conflict on the international order.

Energy security was another frequently discussed topic, especially with respect to the Eastern Mediterranean and how geopolitics have impacted energy and trade deals. TSC experts also analyzed the war in Yemen, the challenge of climate change, lingering instability in Afghanistan and Pakistan, the tension between counterterrorism and great power competition, and a host of other top-tier issues, such as transnational far-right extremism, Iranian proxy warfare, and Chinese foreign and security policy.

Domestic violent extremism in the United States—in all its manifestations—was a regularly occurring theme of IntelBriefs in 2022, as was the U.S. role as an exporter of anti-government extremist ideology, which had a direct impact on democracies such as Brazil, Canada, and Germany. The use of disinformation by both states and non-state actors was another common topic, with IntelBriefs that incorporated data collection and analysis of myriad themes and narratives analyzed and evaluated.

IntelBriefs continued to closely assess the current terrorism landscape, detailing the shift in the center of gravity for global jihad from the Middle East to sub-Saharan Africa. Al-Qaeda and Islamic State affiliates, including al-Shabaab and Islamic State Khorasan (ISK), were featured often, as well as the impacts of terrorism and counterterrorism in the regions where they have historically drawn support and recruits. IntelBriefs focusing on the death of longtime al-Qaeda leader Ayman al-Zawahiri and the implications for al-Qaeda in the long-term provided expert insight to our audience.

The IntelBriefs have regularly offered nuanced multidimensional aspects of global security challenges, integrating human security and human rights considerations; multilateral aspects, including the role of the United Nations and other international and regional

organizations including NATO, the EU, and the African Union, for example. IntelBriefs have highlighted powerful domestic protest movements against horrific violations of human rights in Iran, Afghanistan, and Myanmar; the use of sexual violence in conflict and the importance of accountability in Ukraine, Syria, and Iraq; the use of sanctions and their impacts on humanitarian actions; political developments in the UN Security Council; and the impacts of small arms and light weapons and the use of guns, for example.

A new addition to TSC outputs was the regular Infographics, which have unpacked complex dynamics and nuances for easy reference by policymakers and practitioners.

Our IntelBriefs were cited or quoted by world-leading publications, such as the Washington Post, AFP, AP, NBC News, Voice of America, ABC News, Vice News, the Straits Times, Al-Monitor, and others, with an increasingly wide engagement with our infographics.



FEBRUARY 24, 2022

The Role of the Wagner Group in Russia's Full-Scale War with Ukraine



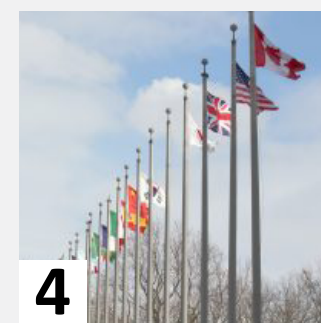
MAY 06, 2022

Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA) Presents Unique Threat to Pakistan



FEBRUARY 09, 2022

Yemen War Expands, Impacting U.S. Forces in the Region



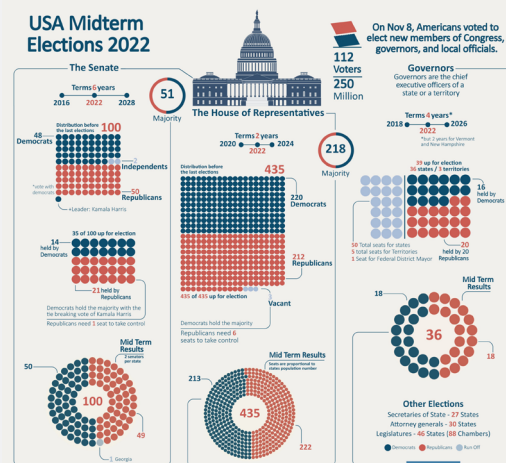
JANUARY 03, 2022

Geopolitical Trends to Watch in 2022



SEPTEMBER 28, 2022

Instability in Syria Returns as Russia Draws Down



PROJECTS

The Soufan Center’s 2022 projects strove to address a range of complex security issues, to include: deepening the understanding about the impact of sanctions and proscriptions on terrorist groups; assessing 20 years of the United Nations Security Council’s counterterrorism activities; tracking U.S. domestic violent extremism; analyzing international terrorism trends; and identifying best practices in preventing and countering violent extremism. TSC looks forward to continuing to work on many of these themes through 2023.



Launch workshop at the Greentree estate, SFI project, New York.

SFI

Securing the Future Initiative

Recalibrating Counterterrorism in the Security Council Two Decades after 9/11

SECURING THE FUTURE INITIATIVE (SFI)

A joint project of the Fourth Freedom Forum and The Soufan Center

In September 2021, TSC and the Fourth Freedom Forum launched the first-ever independent assessment of the United Nations Security Council’s counterterrorism activities, under the leadership of TSC’s Executive Director Naureen Chowdhury Fink, President of the Fourth Freedom Forum Alistair Millar, and TSC Senior Visiting Fellow Eric Rosand. During 2022, the Securing the Future Initiative (SFI) convened several stakeholder consultations, interviews, and international roundtables, culminating in the flagship report [Counterterrorism and the United Nations Security Council Since 9/11: Moving Beyond the 2001 Paradigm](#). Released on the margins of the opening of the 77th United Nations General Assembly, the report analyzes the last 20 years of UN counterterrorism architecture and policies and offers recommendations for how the Security Council can enhance its impact and effectiveness in its counterterrorism activities.

DETERRENCE AND DENIAL: THE IMPACT OF SANCTIONS AND DESIGNATIONS ON VIOLENT FAR-RIGHT GROUPS

Supported by the Airey Neave Trust

TSC developed a research project to deepen the understanding about the impact of sanctions and proscriptions on terrorist groups, with a focus on violent far-right actors. The project produced four related Issue Briefs as a series. [Deterrence and Denial: The Impact of Sanctions and Designations on Violent Far-Right Groups](#) examines key trends in the violent far-right movement and consider the applicability of sanctions; examines lessons learned from global sanctions regimes targeting al-Qaeda and ISIS; and reviews lessons learned to date from measures taken by states against far-right terrorism, primarily in the United States, United Kingdom, Canada, New Zealand, and Australia. Each brief contributes to informing a wider question on whether sanctions are an appropriate tool for the transnational dimensions of far-right terrorist groups, and whether there is a role for international actors like the U.N. in responding to these developments. Through the project, TSC also hosted an in-person roundtable discussion in Washington D.C. and a webinar roundtable discussion in May and June 2022. This project builds on our project in 2021, supported by Airey Neave Trust, that led to the development of the October 2021 research report, [A Perfect Storm: Insurrection, Incitement, and the Violent Far-Right Movement](#). The project was generously supported by the Airey Neave Trust (UK).



Airey Neave Trust



INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM TRENDS AND IDENTIFYING P/CVE BEST PRACTICES

Supported by Nordic Safe Cities

TSC developed a research project to assess transnational dimensions of violent far-right extremism, with a particular focus on the United States and the United Kingdom. Our research indicated that the U.S. Capitol insurrection has the potential to serve as inspiration for violent far-right extremists in Europe, the U.K., and globally. Through this project, TSC produced the report, "A Perfect Storm: Insurrection, Incitement, And The Violent Far-Right Movement," and hosted two related webinars in June and October 2021. The project was generously supported by the Airey Neave Trust (UK).



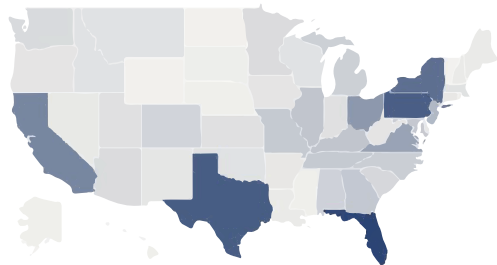
ENABLING WITNESSES TO INFORM THE WORLD ABOUT CONFLICT IN IRAQ, SYRIA, AND YEMEN

Supported by United Nations Democracy Fund (UNDEF):

In 2020, The Soufan Center received a grant from the United Nations Democracy Fund (UNDEF) for a project called *Enabling Witnesses to Inform the World about Conflict in Iraq, Syria, Yemen*. We were drawn to the topic of reporting on conflict after the death of Jamal Khashoggi highlighted just how dangerous both being a dissenter and a journalist – or someone who as a doctor, aid worker, or simply a witness tells the story of conflict – continues to be, globally. The project concluded in 2022.

Our work at The Soufan Center reaffirms every day that the work of accurately reporting on conflict is essential. The stories of war must also be told with sensitivity and respect to present a full narrative; too often, they are not, with potentially serious consequences. Told correctly, stories have the power to influence policy and create actual shifts in thinking. In the past, victims’ stories weren’t told until well after a conflict had ceased. That has changed with the advancement of technology; the full scope of events, and the actions committed by governments, non-state actors or others in the course of the conflict, can now be documented and relayed in real-time.

With the help of expert consultants, we designed a project that trained and provided a network to a cohort of 40 participants –amateur journalists, health workers, and aid workers—who were chosen from those three countries (some are now living as refugees outside of those countries). In addition to ongoing engagement and coaching, TSC hosted two virtual training sessions in 2021. The project was covered in a piece by [Vanity Fair](#) in 2022.



MAPPING INSECURITY: TRACKING VIOLENT DOMESTIC EXTREMISM

In response to the January 6, 2021, U.S. Capitol insurrection, TSC developed the Mapping Insecurity project, which includes: i) an interactive map of the arrests following the law enforcement response to the insurrection; and ii) a resource library on domestic violent extremism in the U.S. and transnational violent far-right extremism.

SECURING THE FUTURE INITIATIVE (SFI)

OVERVIEW

In recognition of the 20th anniversary of the attacks of September 11, 2001, TSC launched the Securing the Future Initiative (SFI) in partnership with the Fourth Freedom Forum to assess and recalibrate the expansive counterterrorism regime developed by the UN Security Council in the years since the attacks. In a crowded counterterrorism research space, the SFI’s groundbreaking work set itself apart by scrutinizing the oft-overlooked role of the Security Council in the global response to terrorism. Aided by the insights garnered from 13 virtual and in-person events, workshops, and roundtables around the globe attended by 450 relevant stakeholders, the SFI released its final report – [Counterterrorism and the United Nations Security Council Since 9/11: Moving Beyond the 2001 Paradigm](#) – on the margins of the opening of the 77th UN General Assembly in September 2022. It also published a series of external research briefs on sub-topics touched upon in the Council’s counterterrorism agenda. To conclude a busy year of international travel, research, and consultations, the SFI co-leads presented the report recommendations to current and incoming members of the UN Security Council in December.

EVENTS

The SFI was launched in 2021 at the Greentree Foundation in Manhasset, NY, with a retreat bringing together UN member states including the United Kingdom, United States, Switzerland, Netherlands, Germany, Mexico, Kenya, as well as civil society organizations. In less than a month, the SFI completed three consultative sessions, including a roundtable at the Permanent Mission of Germany to the UN in New York City and a virtual roundtable co-hosted with the U.S. Institute for Peace’s RESOLVE Network.

In 2022, the project entered an international phase, hosting five international meetings on three continents, each with its own distinct thematic focus. Flying across the Atlantic in the spring, SFI collaborated with the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI) to bring UK-based government officials, NGOs, and researchers together in London in order to examine UK perspectives on the terrorist threat and the impacts of the Council. On the margins of a meeting of the European Union’s Counterterrorism Working Group (COTER) in Brussels, the SFI shifted focus to the EU as it engaged counterterrorism experts hailing from several European capitals as well as representatives from the African Union. SFI then partnered with the Geneva Center for Security Policy and the Swiss Federal Government to bring together diplomats, UN and government officials, and researchers to examine perspectives from the UN community in Geneva, with its policy focus on human rights and humanitarian law.

In light of the continent’s frontline role in the fight against terrorism, the SFI next set off for West Africa, organizing a two-day workshop in Dakar for African stakeholders in partnership with the African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism. Here, government officials, representatives of UN entities in the field such as the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and UN Women, discussed how the Council might better tailor its counterterrorism agenda and activities to local African contexts and partner with regional and subregional organizations, with a particular focus on addressing some of the structural drivers of terrorism.



Roundtable with UN Security Council members, SFI project, New York



Delegates at the Securing the Future Initiative (SFI) roundtable co-hosted with the Missions of Indonesia and Tunisia for member states of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, New York

Following the public launch of the SFI report alongside the opening of the 77th UN General Assembly in New York, the SFI returned to Europe for a two-day workshop in the capital of international humanitarian law, as participants in the Hague discussed how to operationalize the recommendations in the final report and shape the future trajectory of the Council, with a focus on the intersections of international law, sanctions, and counterterrorism; the International Center for Counter-Terrorism (ICCT) helped support the meeting which was attended by representatives from several previous, current, and aspiring Security Council member states; the Dutch Foreign Ministry; the International Criminal Court; the UN al-Qaida/ISIL sanctions Monitoring Team; the Human Security Collective; the African Union; and a diverse range of experts and civil society organizations.

Bolstered by the insights of these extensive consultations, the SFI concluded the year back in New York by hosting current and incoming members of the UN Security Council. During this roundtable discussion, the SFI team delivered its findings and policy proposals, offering an opportunity for outgoing Security Council members to share their lessons learned and insights, and to inform the future deliberations of current and incoming members.

PUBLICATIONS

The SFI’s flagship report – [Counterterrorism and the United Nations Security Council Since 9/11: Moving Beyond the 2001 Paradigm](#) – breaks down the current state of the Council’s global counterterrorism architecture, illustrates how the modern terrorism landscape has transformed since 9/11, and offers solutions to make the Council’s conduct and impact in this space more effective, efficient, and just. The report describes the Security Council’s counterterrorism apparatus as an exceptional creation of the UN system, birthed in a hurried bid to demonstrate international resolve in the face of tragedy and fear. Since then, the Council has since adopted nearly 50 additional resolutions, compelling states to adjust their domestic legal frameworks and build up their capacities to prevent and respond to this threat. However, the Council’s speedy response also left numerous gaps and challenges, not least of which is the absence of a universally agreed definition of terrorism, creating space for the misappropriation of counterterrorism measures by oppressive governments against critics and political adversaries.

The SFI report also discusses how the threat and its perception have both changed over the last 20 years, and how terrorism has shifted geographically, ideologically, and strategically during that time. This against the backdrop of growing fears about climate change, global pandemics, and great power competition which have crowded it off the top of the list of security priorities for many nations. It also reckons with a reality far apart from September 2001, in which the cure to terrorism is now perceived by some as worse than the disease itself. To recalibrate, the report presents recommendations for “right sizing” the Council’s approach to today’s threat, while making the system more accountable and responsible.

Beyond the final report, the SFI also created a platform for partners from academia, civil society, the private sector, and the UN system to further explore specific ramifications of the Council’s counterterrorism framework. By publishing nine commissioned research briefs, the SFI gave subject matter-experts room to explore issues like terrorist financing and sanctions, prosecution and legal frameworks, sexual violence and the institutionalization of gender agendas, and peacebuilding and conflict prevention.

To learn more about the Securing the Future Initiative, visit www.sfi-ct.org



Roundtable co-hosted with ICCT, SFI Project, The Hague

EVENTS

The Soufan Center was proud to host and co-host 21 virtual and in-person events throughout 2022. Through these events, TSC facilitated discussions on a range of pressing global security issues and engaged with a wide range of global stakeholders and audiences both online and in-person. Our events reached thousands of participants representing governments, international organizations, think tanks, the private sector, and the media. TSC delivered a series of virtual and in-person SFI events, further described in the project section.

ECHOES OF JANUARY 6TH: LASTING IMPACTS FOR TRANSNATIONAL FAR-RIGHT VIOLENT EXTREMISM

January 25, 2022

As the United States marked the one-year anniversary of the Capitol insurrection that took place on January 6, 2021, TSC hosted a webinar assessing projections for the evolution of far-right violent extremism internationally. Speakers examined how U.S. domestic violent extremism may act as a catalyst for far-right extremist networks globally, both online and offline. With the proliferation of neo-Nazi ideology and strengthening transnational linkages, panelists also explored the potential lasting impacts of January 6th on the transnational far-right violent extremist threat and the evolution of the movement. Speakers included: Colin P. Clarke, Senior Research Fellow at The Soufan Center; Elizabeth Neumann, Chief Strategy Officer of Moonshot and Former U.S. Department of Homeland Security Assistant Secretary for Counterterrorism and Threat Prevention; Tom O'Connor, retired FBI Special Agent and Principal Consultant at FEDSquared Consulting LLC; and, Lenita Törning, researcher at the Swedish Centre for Preventing Violent Extremism (CVE).



TSC virtual event on violent far-right movements. From top-L, clockwise: Lenita Törning, Colin P. Clarke, Elizabeth Neumann, Thomas O'Connor.



TSC virtual event on the roles of cities in P/CVE. From top-L, clockwise: Eric Rosand, Jeppe Albers, Emerita Torres, Naureen Chowdhury Fink.

THE ROLES OF CITIES: STRENGTHENING RESILIENCE, GOVERNANCE, AND SECURITY

March 2, 2022

On March 2, 2022, TSC hosted a webinar exploring the roles of cities in countering complex security and governance challenges, including preventing and countering violent extremism. The discussion expounded on analysis from the Issue Brief, [Promoting Democracy and Security in Africa: Don't Forget Cities](#), by Eric Rosand and Daniel Hooton. The brief focuses on the work of local government and cities in Africa in strengthening democratic governance and countering violent extremism, as well as TSC's work with Nordic Safe Cities. Panelists reflected on the achievements and potential

of cities in different contexts, identifying common challenges and opportunities as well as important context-specific dynamics and opportunities. Speakers included: Jeppe Albers, Executive Director of Nordic Safe Cities; Naureen Chowdhury Fink, Executive Director of The Soufan Center; Eric Rosand, Visiting Senior Fellow at The Soufan Center and Executive Director of the Strong Cities Network; and, Emerita Torres, Senior Research Fellow at The Soufan Center and Democratic state committee member for the 85th District (Bronx, NY).



TSC virtual event on non-state actors and the war in Ukraine. From top-L, clockwise: Colin P. Clarke, Stephanie Foggett, Vera Mironova, Naureen Chowdhury Fink, Daniel Byman.

human security risks of the conflict. Speakers included: Daniel Byman, Senior Fellow in the Center for Middle East Policy at the Brookings Institution, and professor in the Georgetown University Walsh School of Foreign Service's Security Studies Program; Colin P. Clarke, Senior Research Fellow at The Soufan Center; Naureen Chowdhury Fink, Executive Director of The Soufan Center; Stephanie Foggett, Resident Fellow, The Soufan Center; and, Vera Mironova, reporting from Ukraine, Visiting Research Fellow at Harvard University, and Non-Resident Scholar at the Middle East Institute. This event was a precursor to the TSC Special Report, [Foreign Fighters, Volunteers, and Mercenaries: Non-State Actors and Narratives in Ukraine](#).

FOREIGN FIGHTERS, VOLUNTEERS, AND MERCENARIES: PARSING NON-STATE ACTORS IN THE UKRAINE-RUSSIA CONFLICT

March 29, 2022

One month after the Russian invasion of Ukraine, TSC hosted a webinar exploring the complex challenges posed by the increasing number of non-state actors engaging the conflict – including foreign, fighters, volunteers, and mercenaries. Beyond many volunteers' moral and humanitarian rationales for engagement, several legal and practical issues – such as conduct of war and the eventual return of combatants to their home countries – may arise. With dynamics on the ground continuing to evolve, speakers emphasized that states should take steps to prepare their citizens traveling to Ukraine and consider the long-term implications on their return. The presence of private military contractors, such as the Wagner Group, and other potential proxy actors heightens the



Visiting Senior Fellow Jessica Davis (L) and Jason Blazakis (R) at an event in Washington D.C.

THE IMPACT OF SANCTIONS AND PROSCRIPTIONS ON FAR-RIGHT GROUPS

May 24, 2022, and June 29, 2022

As part of a TSC project supported by the Airey Neave Trust (U.K.), The Soufan Center hosted an in-person roundtable discussion in Washington, D.C. at the National Press Club in May, as well as a virtual event in June on responding to violent far-right groups through sanctions and proscriptions. Both roundtable discussions were held to share initial findings of the project and draft policy recommendations for discussion and feedback from participants. These discussions informed the analyses and recommendations in the Issue Brief series, [Deterrence and Denial: The Impact of Sanctions and Designations on Violent Far-Right Groups](#).



TSC virtual event on sanctions and the far-right. From top-L, clockwise: Hugh Tilney, Jason Blazakis, Mollie Saltskog, Jessica Davis, Naureen Chowdhury Fink, Colin P. Clarke.

PROJECT REPORT LAUNCH: ‘DETERRENCE AND DENIAL: THE IMPACT OF SANCTIONS AND DESIGNATIONS ON VIOLENT FAR-RIGHT GROUPS’

July 28, 2022

To mark the launch of our series of publications, [Deterrence and Denial: The Impact of Sanctions and Designations on Violent Far-Right Groups](#), TSC hosted a webinar focused on the current and potential roles of sanctions and proscriptions in addressing the threat of extreme right-wing terrorism and included briefings from the Issue Brief authors. The event was the culmination of a TSC project, generously supported by the Airey Neave Trust, which conducted research, interviews, and consultations with key stakeholders to examine whether and how the measures taken by several states – in particular, the U.K., Canada, the U.S., Australia, and New Zealand – have had their desired impacts. The project also drew on lessons learned from other countries with similar experiences to explore whether sanctions and proscriptions are an appropriate tool to address far-right terrorism. The event’s speakers included: Jason Blazakis, Senior Research Fellow at The Soufan Center; Colin P. Clarke, Senior Research Fellow at The Soufan Center; Jessica M. Davis, Senior Visiting Fellow and Project Advisor at The Soufan Center; Naureen Chowdhury Fink, Executive Director at The Soufan Center; and, Mollie Saltskog, Research Fellow at The Soufan Center.



TSC virtual event on hostages and wrongful detainees. From top-L, clockwise: Ali Velshi, Joshua Geltzer, Ambassador Roger Carstens, Naureen Chowdhury Fink.

NATIONAL AND MULTILATERAL APPROACHES IN SUPPORT OF HOSTAGES, WRONGFUL DETAINEES, AND VICTIMS OF TERRORISM AND SECURITY

September 13, 2022

With increasing global attention to the phenomenon of hostage-taking, TSC hosted a webinar highlighting the challenges facing hostages and wrongful detainees, many who have been victims and survivors of terrorist groups as well as state actors. While hostage-taking by nonstate actors has more frequently garnered attention in the past, recent events exemplify a growing risk posed by state actors engaging in wrongful or unlawful detention of foreign nationals. Following on

President Biden’s recent Executive Order on Bolstering Efforts to Bring Hostages and Wrongfully Detained United States Nationals Home and the United National Global Congress of Victims of Terrorism in September 2022, this webinar presented an overview of the trend, as well as policy shifts and priorities today from a U.S. perspective. Speakers also reflected on policy responses, multilateral action, and ways to enhance support for those impacted by this phenomenon. Speakers included: Ambassador Roger D. Carstens, the Special Presidential Envoy for Hostage Affairs and the U.S. Department of State; Naureen Chowdhury Fink, Executive Director of The Soufan Center; Joshua Geltzer, Deputy Assistant to the President and Deputy Homeland Security Advisor; and Ali Velshi, Host and Business Correspondent for NBC News and MSNBC.



TSC Senior Visiting Fellow Karen J. Greenberg with Ilka Salmi (EU Counter-Terrorism Coordinator) and Ian Moss (U.S. State Department)

RESHAPING THE GLOBAL ORDER: CONFLICT, CRISES, AND COOPERATION

September 13, 2022

On the margins of the opening of the 77th United Nations General Assembly, TSC organized a Global Security Forum (GSF) event focused on ‘Reshaping the Global Order: Conflict, Crises, and Cooperation,’ in partnership with the Center on National Security at Fordham University Law School. The in-person event at the Yale Club of New York City brought together leaders in government, intergovernmental organizations, law enforcement, academia, civil society, and media for an interactive discussion on pressing security and policy challenges, from conflict to

terrorism, pandemic to great power competition. During a fireside chat between John Miller, Chief Law Enforcement and Intelligence Analyst at CNN, and Rebecca Weiner, Assistant Commissioner for Intelligence Analysis at the NYPD, the discussion highlighted the increasing participation of youth in the violent terrorist landscape, the speed of radicalization and the proliferation of conspiracy theories connected to political violence.

The fireside chat was followed by a panel discussion including Ian Moss, Deputy Coordinator for Countering Violent Extremism and Terrorist Detentions in the State Department’s Bureau of Counterterrorism, and Ilkka Salmi, Counter-Terrorism Coordinator for the European Union, and, moderated by Karen Greenberg, Director of the Center for National Security at Fordham University and Senior Visiting Fellow at The Soufan Center. The panelists discussed the continued threat posed by ISIS, the use of emerging technologies by terrorist networks, and the rise of far-right and racially and ethnically motivated violent extremism (REMVE).



African experts and practitioners discuss UN Security Council counterterrorism efforts, SFI project, Dakar, Senegal.

SECURING THE FUTURE EVENTS AND ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS

July 28, 2022

As part of the Securing the Future Initiative (SFI), TSC co-hosted 13 virtual events, roundtable discussions, and a report launch event. In 2022, the SFI co-hosted with the U.S. Institute for Peace’s RESOLVE Network a virtual roundtable and two virtual events to launch commissioned research briefs. Engaging with a hybrid audience both online and in-person in Washington, D.C., the SFI co-hosted a roundtable discussion with Notre Dame’s Keough School of Global Affairs. With representatives from the United Nations’ (UN) Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact, SFI also hosted a roundtable discussion about how policy and activities carried out by the UN Security Council impacts their own work from HQ down into the field. The SFI hosted two in-person roundtables in New York, engaging with UN missions, governments, and UN agencies. Throughout the year, the SFI also hosted five international roundtable discussions, in Brussels, London, Geneva, Dakar, and The Hague, gathering a diverse set of stakeholders including governments, civil society, UN agencies, researchers, and other experts. At the opening of the 77th UN General Assembly, the SFI hosted an event to launch their report, [Counterterrorism and the United Nations Security Council Since 9/11: Moving Beyond the 2001 Paradigm](#), and a final roundtable with current and incoming UN Security Council members in December 2022.

IN THE NEWS

Each year, The Soufan Center team connects with media outlets from across the world. Our experts share commentary and expertise with an extensive network of domestic and international journalists. In 2022, our work was featured in top-tier media coverage, to include by *the New York Times*, *the Washington Post*, *CNN*, *BBC*, *AFP*, *the Guardian*, *Al-Jazeera English*, *NPR*, *Defense One*, *Foreign Policy*, and *Politico*—among many others. Our experts shared knowledge and expertise across print, video, audio, and other media formats.



Senior Research Fellow Jason Blazakis (L) with MSNBC.



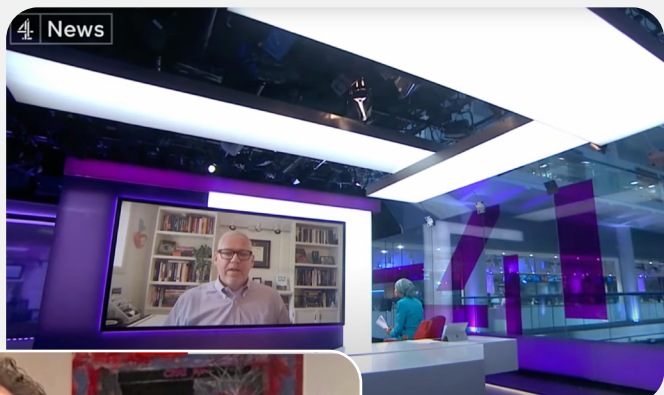
Senior Research Fellow Colin P. Clarke (R) with MSNBC.

VIDEO & TELEVISION

Over the year, our experts joined news outlets from across the world for a range of video and television interviews. Our experts joined breaking news coverage on major events over the year, including Russia’s invasion of Ukraine and the killing of al-Qaeda leader Ayman al-Zawahri in the Afghan capital Kabul. Our experts also joined media organizations in-studio, on location, and virtually over the year.



Research Fellow Mollie Saltskog with CNBC.



Senior Research Fellow Colin P. Clarke with Channel 4 News.

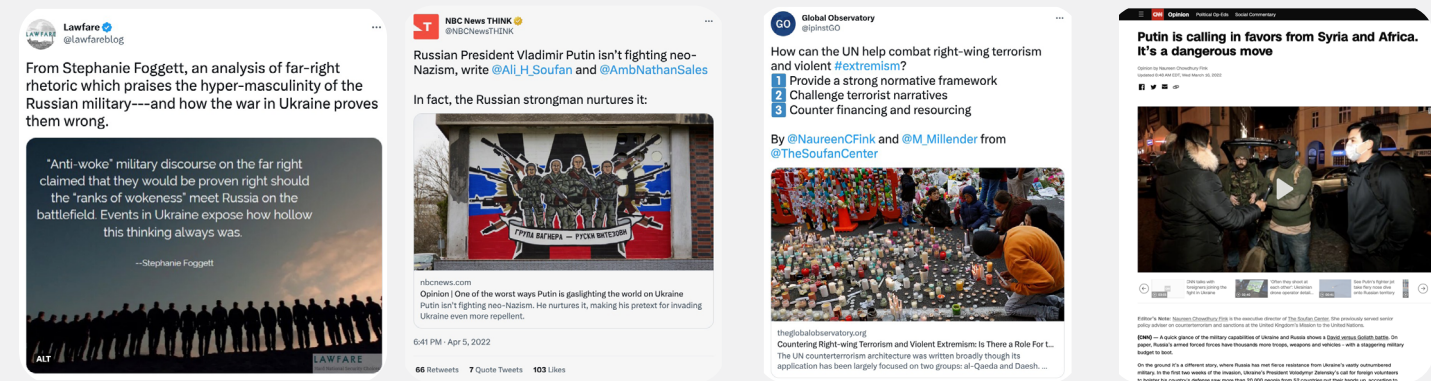


Former US ambassador for counter-terrorism Ambassador Nathan Sales

Senior Fellow Nathan Sales with Sky News.

OPINION & COMMENTARY

Our experts authored think pieces for a range of national and international newspapers, magazines, and policy publications. A common topic in 2022 was commentary on the impacts of Russia’s invasion of Ukraine. Within this context, TSC experts addressed topics ranging from non-state actors entering the battlefield in Ukraine, extremist narratives and far-right support online, and the impact of sanctions



PODCASTS & RADIO

Commentary and expertise about our research and on topical events was also shared via podcast and audio interviews. TSC experts joined a range of audio interviews, including Tech Against Terrorism, SpyTalk, Back Story with Dana Lewis, among others. Our team additionally participated in segments on the BBC, NPR, and Times Radio—among others.



TSC TEAM



RICHARD BARRETT
SENIOR FELLOW



JASON BLAZAKIS
SENIOR RESEARCH FELLOW



COLIN P. CLARKE
SENIOR RESEARCH FELLOW



JESSICA DAVIS
SENIOR VISITING FELLOW



CARLOS FERNANDEZ
SENIOR FELLOW



**NAUREEN
CHOWDHURY FINK**
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



EDMUND FITTON-BROWN
SENIOR VISITING FELLOW



STEPHANIE FOGGETT
RESEARCH FELLOW



RICHARD M. FRANKEL
SENIOR FELLOW



KAREN J. GREENBERG
SENIOR VISITING FELLOW



KENNETH KATZMAN
SENIOR FELLOW



MICHAEL G. MASTERS
PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD



MICHAELA MILLENDER
PROGRAM OFFICER



ERIC ROSAND
SENIOR VISITING FELLOW



NATHAN SALES
SENIOR FELLOW



MOLLIE SALTSGOG
RESEARCH FELLOW



Susan Sim
SENIOR RESEARCH FELLOW



ALI SOUFAN
FOUNDER



SEAN STEINBERG
PROGRAM OFFICER



MEREDITH STRICKER
SENIOR FELLOW



EMERITA TORRES
SENIOR RESEARCH FELLOW

TSC BOARD



MICHAEL MASTERS
PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD



ALI SOUFAN
DIRECTOR



LORI WACHS
DIRECTOR



EDWARD STROZ
DIRECTOR



CARLOS FERNANDEZ
DIRECTOR



HEIDI FINK
TREASURER



STEPHANIE FOGGETT
SECRETARY

