

Legacies of the troubles: the links between organised crime and terrorism in Northern Ireland

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Legacies of the Troubles. The Links between Organised Crime and Terrorism in Northern Ireland

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Abstract

One of the most important legacies of the ‘Troubles’ in Northern Ireland and the ensuing twenty years post peace-process era, heralded by the 1998 Good Friday Agreement, is the rise of complex and diverse Republican and Loyalist paramilitary groups engaging in acts of terrorism and a wide range of organised criminal and cross-border activities. And yet, little scholarship has been dedicated to examining the nexus between terrorism and organised crime in Northern Ireland or to accurately understanding the role that paramilitaries play in organised crime and their dynamic interactions with organised criminal groups. Informed by empirical evidence and qualitative interviews with government agencies in Northern Ireland, it is this increasingly important gap in scholarship that this article aims to fill. It does so by developing a new terrorism-organised crime interaction theoretical model designed specifically for application to Northern Ireland in order to shed new light on the evolution and current complex linkages between terrorism and organised crime in Northern Ireland and beyond.

The Northern Ireland model, which both builds on and departs from crime-terror models in existing scholarship, reveals a vast array of domestic and transnational ‘activity assimilation’ and ‘alliances’, as well as other forms of interactions including ‘conflicts’ and different gradations of ‘transformation’. The article concludes that national terrorism-organised crime models, and the Northern Ireland model in particular, albeit with variations to its constituent components to accommodate local situations, are most appropriate for capturing intricate and dynamic interactions between these two phenomena across diverse environments rather than existing models that are abstract and designed for universal application. Northern Ireland presently faces a serious threat to its security and stability posed by the nexus between terrorism and organised crime, and numerous challenges need to be urgently addressed if it is to be combatted. Understanding the organised crime-terrorism nexus at the present moment could not be more vital. Indeed, Brexit and potential implications for the Irish border present by far the most important challenge to the Good Friday Agreement since its adoption and, as a corollary, ensuring that paramilitary groups do not utilise their capacity to re-engage in acts of terrorism. As part of the initial steps towards a solution to some of these challenges, the Northern Ireland model therefore represents a useful tool that could be harnessed, and built upon, by policy makers and government agencies for defining and mapping out the terrorism-organised crime nexus in Northern Ireland.

Introduction

One of the most important legacies of the ‘Troubles’¹ in Northern Ireland and the ensuing twenty years post peace-process era, heralded by the signing of the Good Friday Agreement in 1998,² is the rise and formation of a complex and diverse array of Republican and Loyalist paramilitary groups and approximately 230 organised criminal groups engaging in a wide range of criminal and cross-border activities.³ Northern Ireland is the current location of fourteen proscribed terrorist groups,⁴ the lineage of which can all be traced back to organisations that waged campaigns of political violence during the Troubles.⁵ Much like the emergence of the ‘new’ terrorism,⁶ epitomised by al Qaeda and its affiliates since the 1990s,⁷ many of these paramilitary groups are comprised of loose, autonomous and amorphous networks of individuals and operate transnationally.⁸ Yet, others maintain a centralised hierarchy and command structure and, similar to ISIS until its military defeat and the demise of the caliphate in Iraq and Syria in 2017,⁹ are geographically local with community roots, ideologically driven and act as a

¹ The Troubles refers to a violent thirty-year armed conflict in Northern Ireland involving on one side terrorist paramilitary groups fighting for the unification of Ireland (Republican) and on the other side those fighting for Northern Ireland to remain part of the UK (Loyalist).

² Agreement between the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Government of Ireland, April 10, 1998, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-belfast-agreement> (accessed March 6, 2019).

³ Interview. See also House of Commons Northern Ireland Affairs Committee, *The Financing of Terrorism in Northern Ireland*, Fourth Report of Session 2001-02, HC 978-1 (2002), paras. 3-4; Independent Monitoring Commission, *Third Report of the Independent Monitoring Commission* (HC 1218, London, The Stationery Office, November 4, 2004), paras. 5, 13.

⁴ Home Office, *Proscribed Terrorist Organisations*, March 1, 2019, https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/783067/proscribed-terrorist-organisations.pdf (accessed March 6, 2019).

⁵ Interview. According to government agencies within Northern Ireland, the designation of these fourteen groups as terrorist organizations is due to historical and political reasons. Legally, some remain designated as terrorist organizations but politically they are not treated as terrorist organizations as they have decommissioned and are committed to the peace process. However, these organizations are essentially the same in their organizational structure, *modi operandi* and capacity to commit terrorist violence as many of the other paramilitary groups that have not been designated as terrorist organizations. In the present article, terrorist and paramilitary groups are used interchangeably.

⁶ Peter Neumann, *Old and New Terrorism* (Cambridge, Polity Press, 2009); Bruce Hoffmann, “Rethinking Terrorism and Counterterrorism Since 9/11,” *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 25(5) (2002): 303–316, doi: 10.1080/105761002901223; Paul Wilkinson, (2005). “International Terrorism: The Changing Threat and the EU’s Response” (Chaillot Paper No. 84, Institute for Security Studies, European Union, Paris, October 2005).

⁷ Rohan Gunaratna and Aviv Oreg, “Al Qaeda’s Organizational Structure and its Evolution”, *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 33, no. 12 (2010): 1043–1078, doi: 10.1080/1057610X.2010.523860; Johnathon Stevenson, “Al-Qaeda’s Evolution Since 9/11”, *Strategic Comments* 23(8) (2017): vii–viii, doi: 10.1080/13567888.2017.1385982.

⁸ Interview.

⁹ The military defeat of the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (Da’esh) in 2017 has forced the group to evolve and transform from a hierarchically organised group, concentrating on conquering and holding territory, to a covert, networked group with a flat hierarchy and cells and affiliates increasingly acting autonomously. Despite many Islamic State fighters and commanders being killed, members of the group have fled to neighbouring States seeking refuge, while 20,000-30,000 members are hiding out in sympathetic communities in Iraq and Syria. ISIS members have established in Libya, Algeria, Morocco as well as Asia, including Bangladesh and the Philippines. It is therefore likely that an Islamic State group core will survive for the foreseeable future. Letter dated 17 January 2018 from the Chair of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011), and 2253 (2015) concerning Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Da’esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities addressed to the President of the Security Council, U.N. Doc. S/2018/14/Rev.1, February 27, 2018; Letter dated 16 July 2018 from the Chair of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015) concerning Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Da’esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities addressed to the President of the Security Council, U.N. Doc. S/2018/705, July 27, 2018; Phill Hynes, “As ISIS Winds Down In Syria and Iraq, a New Hotbed of Terror Is Created — In Asia,” *Frontera*, August 2, 2016.

quasi-state by exerting coercive ‘control’ and ‘influence’ over territory and local communities where they operate.¹⁰ All of the more prominent paramilitary organisations operating during the Troubles remain in existence, some of which continue to recruit new members, acquire money, weapons and explosives, and retain and even develop their capacity for resuming violent campaigns in the future should they consider it desirable, despite being on ceasefire and ostensibly committed to peace.¹¹ Dissident Republican groups, that reject the 1998 Agreement, pose a significant threat to Northern Ireland’s stability and security.¹² In the ten years to 2018, there were 610 shooting incidents and 499 bombing incidents related to paramilitarism, including attacks directed at PSNI officers.¹³ Moreover, 2016 and 2017 witnessed eight national security attacks¹⁴ and between 2016 and 2018 313 individuals were arrested and 31 charged for offences related to terrorism.¹⁵ The result is that Northern Ireland has established itself as not only the most concentrated area of terrorist activity but also the centrepiece of convergence between ‘terrorism’ and ‘organised crime’ in Europe.¹⁶

¹⁰ Until its military defeat, Da’esh had an Islamist caliphate in the heart of the Middle East and exerted control over an estimated 90,000 square kilometres of territory and a taxable population of seven to eight million people, as well as oilfields and refineries, vast grain stores, lucrative smuggling routes and vast stockpiles of arms and ammunition, making it the strongest, best resourced and most ideologically potent terrorist quasi-State of the post-9/11 era. At the same time, Da’esh was transnational in nature by attracting tens of thousands of foreign fighters from over 100 countries and creating the necessary infrastructure to carry out significant external terrorist attacks. Jason Burke, “Rise and Fall of Isis: Its Dream of a Caliphate is Over, so What Now?,” *The Guardian*, October 21, 2017.

¹¹ The UVF, UDA and INLA are reported to still be recruiting new members. Paramilitary Groups in Northern Ireland, “An Assessment Commissioned by the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland on the Structure, Role and Purpose of Paramilitary Groups Focusing on those which Declared Ceasefires in Order to Support and Facilitate the Political Process,” October 19, 2015, para. 2. House of Commons Northern Ireland Affairs Committee, The Financing of Terrorism in Northern Ireland, Fourth Report of Session 2001-02, HC 978-1 (2002), para. 68.

¹² Since the signing of the Good Friday Agreement in 1998, the Republican paramilitary dominance of the PIRA has been replaced by the violent dissident Republicans (VDR), a set of groups whose aim is to maintain the paramilitary conflict in the pursuit of a united Ireland. They reject the legitimacy of the peace process and believe that Sinn Fein and the PIRA have sold out the Republican community through their engagement in the politics of normalisation. See John Horgan and John Morrison, “Here to Stay? The Rising Threat of Violent Dissident Republicanism in Northern Ireland,” *Terrorism and Political Violence* 23(4) (2011), p. 642–669, doi: 10.1080/09546553.2011.594924.

¹³ PSNI Statistics Branch, “Police Recorded Security Situation Statistics 1 September 2017 to 31 August 2018”, September 7, 2018. See also Lord Alderdice, John McBurney and Monica McWilliams, “The Fresh Start Panel Report on the Disbandment of Paramilitary Groups in Northern Ireland” (Northern Ireland Executive, June 7, 2016), para. 2.7; Rachel Monaghan and Peter Shirlow, “Forward to the Past? Loyalist Paramilitarism in Northern Ireland Since 1994,” *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 34(8) (2011), p.649–665, doi: 10.1080/1057610X.2011.583205; John Morrison and John Horgan, “Reloading the Armalite? Victims and Targets of Violent Dissident Irish Republicanism 2007-2015,” *Terrorism and Political Violence* 28(3) (2016),p. 576–597, doi: 10.1080/09546553.2016.1155940. According to Paramilitary Groups in Northern Ireland, An Assessment Commissioned by the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland on the Structure, Role and Purpose of Paramilitary Groups, para. 2, there were between 15 to 40 attacks annually between 2000 to 2015 inclusive primarily directed at PSNI officers.

¹⁴ See Lord Bourne of Abergavenny, Hansard Parliamentary Debates, Official Report 18 July 2017, p. 1590.

¹⁵ Northern Ireland Terrorism Legislation: Annual Statistics 2016/17, Northern Ireland Office, November 7, 2017, pp.7–12; Northern Ireland Terrorism Legislation: Annual Statistics 2017/18, Northern Ireland Office, November 7, 2018, pp.7–12.

¹⁶ Intelligence and Security Committee of Parliament, Annual Report 2016–2017, HC 655 (December 2017), p.27.

Schmid rightly observes that not much of the growing literature discussing the relationship between terrorism and organised crime ‘has bothered to clearly define these concepts’, both of which are contested.¹⁷ There is presently no agreement among states, and certainly no internationally codified definition in a multilateral treaty, of ‘terrorism’.¹⁸ Similarly, there is no internationally agreed definition of ‘organised crime’, although the international community was able to reach agreement on a broad definition of ‘organised criminal group’ in Article 2 of the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.¹⁹ For the purposes of this article we rely on the definitions of these offences as they apply to Northern Ireland. Organised crime therefore refers to ‘a group of two or more people who are engaged in serious criminal activities, usually with the aim of generating material gain;’²⁰ and terrorism is defined in section 1 of The Terrorism Act 2000, which applies to the whole of the UK.²¹

During the past twenty years, a wave of scholarship has examined the relationship between crime and terrorism.²² Leading scholars have developed a number of theoretical models that attempt to explain the

¹⁷ Alex P Schmid, “Revisiting the Relationship between International Terrorism and Transnational Organised Crime 22 Years Later” (Research Paper, The International Centre for Counter-Terrorism, The Hague (2018), pp. 1–40, doi: 10.19165/2018.1.06.

¹⁸ Ben Saul, “Terrorism as a Legal Concept,” in *Routledge Handbook of Law and Terrorism*, ed. Genevieve Lennon and Clive Walker (London, Routledge, 2015), pp.19–38.

¹⁹ Neil Boister, “The UN Convention against Transnational Organised Crime 2000,” in *International Law and Transnational Organized Crime*, ed. Pierre Hauck and Sven Peterke (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2016), 126–149.

²⁰ Department of Justice, “Organised Crime Task Force Annual Report and Threat Assessment 2017-18: Organised Crime in Northern Ireland” (2018), <https://www.justice-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/justice/octf-2017-18-annual-report.pdf> (accessed March 7, 2019), p. 6. See also Department of Justice, “The Northern Ireland Organised Crime Strategy” (Organised Crime Task Force) (2016), <https://www.octf.gov.uk/OCTF/documents/publications/N.I.%20Organised%20Crime%20Strategy/The-NI-Organised-Crime-Strategy-April-2016.pdf?ext=.pdf> (accessed March 7, 2019). The definition in Northern Ireland is slightly different to that provided by the UK’s National Crime Agency: “Organised crime can be defined as serious crime planned, coordinated and conducted by people working together on a continuing basis. Their motivation is often, but not always, financial gain. Organised criminals working together for a particular criminal activity or activities are called an organised crime group.” National Crime Agency, “Organised Crime Groups”, <http://www.nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/crime-threats/organised-crime-groups> (accessed March 7, 2019).

²¹ The definition of terrorism is contained in section 1 of the Terrorism Act 2000. The current definition refers to the use or threat of action involving serious violence against a person, serious damage to property, the endangerment of a person’s life, the creation of a serious risk to the health and safety of the public or a section of the public, or serious interference with or seriously disrupting an electronic system where the use or threat is designed to influence the government or an international governmental organisation or to intimidate the public of a section of it. See further *R v Gul (Appellant)* [2013] UKSC 64.

²² See, e.g., Erik Alda and Joseph L Sala, “Links Between Terrorism, Organized Crime and Crime: The Case of the Sahel Region,” *Stability: International Journal of Security & Development* 3, no. 1 (2014): 1–9; doi: 10.5334/sta.ea; Rajan Basra, Peter R Neumann and Claudia Brunner, (2016) “Criminal Pasts, Terrorist Futures: European Jihadists and the New Crime-Terror Nexus” (International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation and Political Violence, London, 2016); Sergei Boeke, “Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb: Terrorism, Insurgency, or Organized Crime?,” *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 27 (5) (2016), pp. 914–936, doi: 10.1080/09592318.2016.1208280; Chris Dishman, “The Leaderless Nexus: When Crime and Terror Converge,” *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 28(3) (2005), pp. 237–252, doi: 10.1080/10576100590928124; Michael Fredholm, *Transnational Organized Crime and Jihadist Terrorism: Russian-Speaking Networks in Western Europe* (New York, Routledge, 2017); Annette Hübschle, “From Theory to Practice: Exploring the Organised Crime-Terror Nexus in Sub-Saharan Africa,” *Perspectives on Terrorism* 5(3–4) (2011), pp. 81–95; Leslie Holmes, ed., *Terrorism, Organised Crime and Corruption: Networks and Linkages* (Cheltenham, Edward Elgar Publishing, 2007); Tamara Makarenko, “The Crime-Terror

nexus between crime and terrorism in different regions of the world, including the organisational, institutional and social interactions between the perpetrators of organised crime and terrorism; a diverse range of sporadic, temporary, opportunistic and long-lasting linkages between the phenomena; and a variety of cultural, ethnic, familial affiliations, ideological and financial motivations that may mould them together.²³ In the Northern Ireland context, leading scholars have examined the rise, composition, characteristics, behaviour, tactics and impact of paramilitary organisations,²⁴ as well as their interest in organised crime as a source of funding.²⁵ Yet this body of scholarship has not been located within the emerging body of academic work addressing the crime-terror nexus, which is largely dedicated to identifying and accurately understanding the dynamic interactions between these phenomena. This is despite paramilitary groups being heavily involved in and significantly facilitating the growing

Nexus: Do Threat Perceptions Align with Reality?,” in eds. Felicia Allum, Francesca Lono, Daniela Irrera and Panos A Kostakos, *Defining and Defying Organised Crime: Discourse, Perceptions and Reality* (London, Routledge, 2010), 180–192; Tamara Makarenko and Mesquita, Michael, “Categorising the Crime–Terror Nexus in the European Union,” *Global Crime* 15(3-4) (2014), pp. 259–274, doi: 10.1080/17440572.2014.931227; John T Picarelli, “Osama bin Corleone? Vito the Jackal? Framing Threat Convergence Through an Examination of Transnational Organised Crime and International Terrorism,” *Terrorism and Political Violence* 24(2) (2012), pp. 180–198, doi: DOI: 10.1080/09546553.2011.648349; Tuesday, Reitano, Colin Clarke and Laura Adal, “Examining the Nexus between Organised Crime and Terrorism and its Implications for EU Programming” (Counter-Terrorism Monitoring, Reporting and Support Mechanism, European Union, 2017); James Windle, John Morrison, Aaron Winter and Andrew Silke, eds., *Historical Perspectives on Organised Crime and Terrorism* (London, Routledge, 2017).

²³ E.g., Phil Williams, (1998) “Terrorism and Organized Crime: Convergence, Nexus or Transformation?” in Gunnar Jervas (ed), FOA Report on Terrorism, Swedish Defence Research Establishment, p. 69-92; Tamara Makarenko, “The Crime-Terror Continuum: Tracing the Interplay between Transnational Organised Crime and Terrorism *Global Crime* 6(1) (2004), p. 129-145; Louise I. Shelley and John T. Picarelli et al. “Methods and Motives: Exploring Links between Transnational Organized Crime & International Terrorism,” US Department of Justice (2005); Steven Hutchinson and Pat O’Malley, “A Crime–Terror Nexus? Thinking on Some of the Links between Terrorism and Criminality” *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 30:12 (2007), p.1095-1107; Santiago Ballina, “The Crime-Terror Continuum Revisited: A Model for the Study of Hybrid Criminal Organisations” *Journal of Policing, Intelligence and Counter Terrorism* 6:2 (2011),p. 121-136; Tamara Makarenko, “Europe’s Crime-Terror Nexus: Links between Terrorist and Organised Crime Groups in the European Union,” Directorate General for Internal Policies - Policy Department C: Citizens’ Rights and Constitutional Affairs (2012); Marinko Bobic, “Transnational Organised Crime and Terrorism: Nexus Needing a Human Security Framework” *Global Crime* 15:3-4 (2014),p. 241-258;

²⁴ E.g., John F. Morrison, “Origins and Rise of Dissident Irish Republicanism: The Role and Impact of Organizational Splits” (Bloomsbury Press, New York, 2014); John F. Morrison “Fighting talk: The statements of The IRA/New IRA,” *Terrorism and Political Violence* 28(3) (2016a) p.598–619; John F. Morrison and John Horgan, “Reloading the Armalite? Victims and Targets of Violent Dissident Irish Republicanism 2007-2015,” *Terrorism and Political Violence* 28(3) 2016; John F. Morrison “Copying to be different: violent dissident Irish Republican learning,” *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 40(7) (2017), pp.586-602.

²⁵ To date, a number of studies have noted links between organised crime and terrorist financing in Northern Ireland. For example, Andrew Silke, “In Defence of the Realm: Financing Loyalist Terrorism in Northern Ireland – Part One: Extortion and Blackmail”, *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 21(4) (1998): 331–361; John Horgan and Max Taylor, Playing the Green Card – financing the Provisional IRA: part 1, *Terrorism and Political Violence* 11(2) (1999), 1-38; Andrew Silke, “Drink, drugs and rock ‘n’ roll: financing loyalist terrorism in Northern Ireland – part two., *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 23:2 (2000), p.107-127; Richard Evans, “Organised crime and terrorism financing in Northern Ireland, *Intelligence Review* 14(9) (2002) 26-29; John Horgan and Max Taylor, Playing the Green Card – financing the Provisional IRA: part 2, *Terrorism and Political Violence* 15(2) (2003), 1-60; Jon Moran, “Paramilitaries, ‘ordinary decent criminals’ and the development of organised crime following the Belfast agreement,” *International Journal of the Sociology of Law*, 32 (2004), 263-278; Ryan Clarke and Stuart Lee, “The PIRA, D-Company, and the Crime-Terror Nexus,” *Terrorism and Political Violence* 20, no. 3 (2008): 376–395; Niamh Hourigan, John Morrison, James Windle and Andrew Silke, “Crime in Ireland North and South: Feuding Gangs and Profiteering Paramilitaries,” *Trends in Organised Crime* 21(2) (2018), pp 126–146; Peng Wang, “The Crime-Terror Nexus: Transformation, Allegiance, Convergence,” *Asian Social Science* 6(6) (2010): 11–20, 15, doi: 10.5539/ass.v6n6p11.

phenomenon of organised crime in Northern Ireland and beyond.²⁶ It is not possible to understand organised crime in Northern Ireland without also understanding the role that Republican and Loyalist paramilitaries play in these activities.²⁷ Conversely, it is essential to understand the involvement of paramilitaries in organised crime and the ways in which organised criminal groups facilitate paramilitary groups in their financing, access to weapons and explosives and capacity to commit terrorist violence if they are to be effectively countered.²⁸ Neither phenomena can be viewed and combatted in isolation.²⁹

Empirically informed by a wide range of sources, including police, intelligence and government reports and interviews with experts from government agencies within Northern Ireland,³⁰ this article therefore aims to fill an important gap in existing scholarship by shedding new light on the complex and dynamic linkages between terrorism and organised crime in Northern Ireland.³¹ In order to do so, it develops a new theoretical model of the terrorism-organised crime nexus designed specifically for application to Northern Ireland. This ‘Northern Ireland Terrorism-Organised Crime Interaction Model’ (Northern Ireland model) builds upon crime-terror models in existing scholarship. However, it represents a radical departure from these theoretical frameworks intended for universal application in important ways, as they do not capture the historical evolution, synergies and interactions between terrorism and crime in Northern Ireland. Nor, for that matter, are these existing models necessarily able to explain the nexus in other parts of the world. Thus, while the Northern Ireland model is primarily intended for application to Northern Ireland, it is not limited to that jurisdiction alone. Indeed, as both the organised crime and

²⁶ In 2005 the Independent Monitoring Commission reported that “because of [...] paramilitary involvement, organised crime is the biggest long-term threat to the rule of law in Northern Ireland.”

²⁷ Hourigan, *Crime in Ireland*, 137.

²⁸ Interview. House of Commons Northern Ireland Affairs Committee, *The Financing of Terrorism in Northern Ireland*, Fourth Report of Session 2001-02, HC 978-1 (2002), para. 32.

²⁹ Interview.

³⁰ The identities of these experts remain anonymous for security reasons. We refer to them in generic terms as ‘government experts’ to protect their anonymity as disclosure of their roles in their organisations may reveal their identity. It is important to note, at the outset, that the nature and extent of the crime-terror nexus does not always correlate with criminal prosecutions as this may not always be deemed the most efficient or effective means of disrupting criminal activity and there may also be issues of obtaining evidence to the requisite standard of proof and potentially revealing sensitive sources of intelligence; as such, the nexus also has to be established and mapped by intelligence gathered from investigations by various government agencies. Additionally, there are always issues of accuracy when relying on reports of newspapers, media accounts and scholarship. In an effort to counterbalance this, we have had our findings verified and corroborated by government agencies.

³¹ Additionally, this article is informed by the present authors’ experience and insight in leading, in 2018, a project on the links between terrorism and crime from a global perspective on behalf of the UN Office on Drugs and Crime.

paramilitary groups and their activities in Northern Ireland are international in their reach and effect, impacting numerous other states, it is not possible to understand and combat the nexus exclusively from a Northern Ireland perspective. The model is intended as a response to recent calls from the Global Counterterrorism Forum³² and the UN Security Council's Counter Terrorism Committee³³ for more research to be conducted to better understand the nature and scope of the nexus and enhance intelligence sharing and co-operation to counter it. Having recently led a project at the UN in identifying and analysing the linkages between organised crime and terrorism and existing scholarship discussing this relationship from a global perspective, the authors believe that the Northern Ireland model and variations of its constituent components have a broader application for mapping and understanding the nexus in numerous other jurisdictions.³⁴

Accurately identifying and understanding the dynamic interactions between organised crime and terrorism at the present moment could not be more important. The UK Government has recognised that 'more analysis needs to be done as to whether these threats [terrorism and organised crime] are converging and, if they are, what this means for the safety and security of the UK.'³⁵ The Home Office subsequently acknowledged that there exist gaps in knowledge and understanding on the synergies and overlaps between terrorism and organised crime and that better understanding of the relationship between them is a research priority in order to maximise the effectiveness and efficiency in response.³⁶ In addition, in recent years, this issue has become a priority concern for many states and the UN Security Council. Thus, in 2014 the Council adopted resolution 2195 on the interaction between terrorism and organised crime and its impact on international peace and security, calling upon states to better

³² "The Hague Good Practices on the Nexus Between Transnational Organised Crime and Terrorism," Global Counterterrorism Forum, p.4. Available at https://www.thegctf.org/Portals/1/Documents/Framework%20Documents/C/GCTF-Good-Practices-on-the-Nexus_ENG.pdf?ver=2018-09-21-122246-363 (accessed 6 March 2019).

³³ "Concept note, Open Briefing of the Counter-Terrorism Committee on the nexus between international terrorism and transnational organized crime," Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED), 8 October 2018, p.2.

³⁴ It also has to be borne in mind that, in applying the Northern Ireland model to other jurisdictions, states define the concepts of 'organised crime' and 'terrorism' differently, often in radically different ways, and sometimes not at all.

³⁵ HM Government, "Local to Global: Reducing the Risk from Organised Crime," (2011), para. 44. Available at https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/97823/organised-crime-strategy.pdf (accessed 6 March 2019).

³⁶ Home Office, "Future Directions for Organised Crime Research," (2011). Available at https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/116653/future-organised-crime-res-2011.pdf (accessed 6 March 2019).

understand and address the nexus between these phenomena.³⁷ In response to this resolution UNICRI,³⁸ UNODC,³⁹ EU⁴⁰ and the Council of Europe⁴¹ have been working expeditiously to produce policies on how to better understand and counter both threats.⁴²

In spite of this there remains a dearth of robust evidence-based analyses of the nexus. Indeed, existing analyses tend to generalise from a few prominent examples to across-the-board conclusions and theories between the two phenomena, potentially resulting in unwarranted exaggeration and inaccuracy. The present article, by providing one of the few up to date and empirically informed analyses of the nexus, therefore aims to make a valuable contribution to the current evidence base. It is perhaps worth noting that, during the UN Security Council meeting at which resolution 2195 was adopted, discussion among delegates focused primarily on the nexus in Africa and the situation in Northern Ireland was overlooked.⁴³ The present research reveals that the nexus in Northern Ireland is no less problematic, and because of the transnational nature of some of the linkages, that it has implications for security and law enforcement in numerous other states. The findings of this research could be used as a basis by the UN, and by security and law enforcement bodies in the UK and other jurisdictions influenced by

³⁷ S/RES/2195, 19 December 2014. See also Report of the Secretary-General on the threat of terrorists benefiting from transnational organized crime, UN Doc. S/2015/366, 21 May 2015.

³⁸ United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI) and Thailand Institute of Justice, "Breaking the Organized Crime and Counter-Terrorism Nexus: Identifying Programmatic Approaches," Meeting Report (2016).

³⁹ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), "Countering Illicit Arms Trafficking and its Links to Terrorism and Other Serious Crime" (2017) STEPPING UP INTERNATIONAL EFFORTS TO ADDRESS THE NEXUS BETWEEN TERRORISM AND TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME: WHAT MORE CAN BE DONE? Organized by the Government of the Netherlands, Interpol and the UNODC Terrorism Prevention Branch, (2017), https://www.unodc.org/documents/commissions/CND_CCPCJ_joint/Side_Events/2017/17-02842_CCPCJ_programme_ebook.pdf. United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI) and Thailand Institute of Justice (2016) "Breaking the Organized Crime and Counter-Terrorism Nexus: Identifying Programmatic Approaches," Meeting Report, http://unicri.it/in_focus/files/NEXUS_REPORT_UNICRI.pdf.

⁴⁰ Makarenko, Tamara (2012) "Europe's Crime-Terror Nexus: Links between Terrorist and Organised Crime Groups in the European Union," Directorate General for Internal Policies - Policy Department C: Citizens' Rights and Constitutional Affairs; Tamara Makarenko, "Address to the European Parliament's Special Committee on Organised Crime, Corruption and Money Laundering", (2013). Available at <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/document/activities/cont/201302/20130221ATT61506/20130221ATT61506EN.pdf>; Reitano, et al, "Examining the Nexus;" See also European Police Office (Europol), "Changes in Modus Operandi of Islamic State (IS) Revisited" (The Hague: Europol, 2016); European Police Force, "European Union Terrorism Situation and Trend Report" (The Hague: Europol, 2017). Interpol, INTERPOL launches project to counter terrorism in South and Southeast Asia, 30 August 2017, <https://www.interpol.int/News-and-media/News/2017/N2017-110>.

⁴¹ Council of Europe, 2nd Conference on Terrorism and Organised Crime, 21-22 September 2017, <https://www.coe.int/en/web/counter-terrorism/terrorism-and-organised-crime-2017>.

⁴² The UNICRI initiative resulted in the development of The Hague Good Practices on the Nexus between Transnational Organized Crime and Terrorism, endorsed at the Ninth Global Counter-Terrorism Forum Ministerial Plenary Meeting in New York in September 2018. See "The Hague Good Practices."

⁴³ 7351st mtg., 19 Dec. 2014.

interactions between crime and terror in Northern Ireland, to identify and understand the various types of interaction and formulate policy to counter them.

Countering the nexus has become an urgent priority for Northern Ireland. Significant steps have been taken by paramilitary groups on ceasefire to transition and decommission, resulting in far fewer numbers of shootings, bombings, assaults and destruction of property.⁴⁴ However, twenty years after the start of a number of landmark ceasefires, paramilitary groups continue to exist and impact adversely on communities in Northern Ireland.⁴⁵ After 11 weeks of intensive negotiations, in November 2015 the Northern Ireland Executive and the UK and Irish Governments adopted the Fresh Start Agreement committing to address the legacy of the Troubles by ending all paramilitary activity and the disbanding of all organisations and their structures, as well as their links with organised and cross-border crime.⁴⁶ However, the leaderships of existing paramilitary groups remain unwilling to disband.⁴⁷ This would suggest that paramilitary groups will continue to retain their organisational structures, revered reputations, membership, training and expertise and funding for the foreseeable future. Meanwhile, they are facilitating and heavily involved in widespread organised crime, not only in Northern Ireland but also in the Republic of Ireland, the UK and beyond.⁴⁸ A newly created Paramilitary Crime Task Force (PCTF) is specifically monitoring 100 organised criminal gangs, twenty five percent of which, it is estimated, have associations with paramilitary organisations.⁴⁹ Paramilitary engagement in organised crime is likely to improve the ability of the paramilitaries to control the localities in which they are predominately based, expand their criminal enterprises, and enhance their capacity for conducting

⁴⁴ The Fresh Start Panel Report on the Disbandment of Paramilitary Groups in Northern Ireland (2016), paras. 2.7-2.23. Available at <https://www.northernireland.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/newnigov/The%20Fresh%20Start%20Panel%20report%20on%20the%20disbandment%20of%20paramilitary%20groups.pdf> (accessed 6 March 2019).

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ A Fresh Start The Stormont Agreement and Implementation Plan (2015) Available at https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/479116/A%20Fresh%20Start%20-%20The%20Stormont%20Agreement%20and%20Implementation%20Plan%20-%20Final%20Version%20-%20Nov%202015%20for%20PDF.pdf (accessed 6 March 2019).

⁴⁷ The Fresh Start Panel Report

⁴⁸ See also “Organised Crime Task Force, 2017-18 Annual Report and Threat Assessment, Organised Crime in Northern Ireland,” Appendix 2 (2018).

⁴⁹ The Task Force was established in September 2017 as part of the commitment to tackle paramilitary activity in Northern Ireland set out in the Fresh Start Agreement. It was to include 40 PSNI officers, 22 NCA personnel and 10 customs officers and to receive £25million over 5 years; see Vincent Kearney, V. ‘New taskforce to tackle paramilitaries’ BBC, 27 September 2017. Available at <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-41407322>; interview.

terrorist attacks.⁵⁰ Policing the ‘security situation’ caused by paramilitaries costs the police service in Northern Ireland approximately £300 million of its annual budget.⁵¹ Brexit also has potential implications for the Irish border and presents by far the most important challenge to the Good Friday Agreement since its adoption amid concern that a return to a hard border between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, complete with customs and other checks, could mark a return to political violence orchestrated by paramilitary groups.⁵²

Part one introduces the new Northern Ireland model and outlines its main constituent elements. This is followed, in part two, by a more in-depth analysis of each of these components of interactions with respect to a number of prominent paramilitary groups. Viewed through the prism of the Northern Ireland model, part three details important findings and major trends as well as their implications for the executive and law enforcement before concluding.

Part I: A New Terrorism-Organised Crime Model for Northern Ireland

The Northern Ireland model is comprised of five components of interaction—namely, ‘alliances,’ ‘assimilation’, ‘hybrids’, ‘transformation’ and ‘conflicts’⁵³. These classifications are adopted in order to capture the organisational and operational dynamics of a diverse range of possible interactions between terrorism and organised crime in Northern Ireland (including ambiguous and largely autonomous networks of individuals within particular groups who immerse themselves in organised crime, not necessarily for terrorism but for self-enrichment), and to try to shed light on the current evolutionary status of paramilitary organisations as politically and criminally motivated entities.⁵⁴

⁵⁰ Interview.

⁵¹ The Fresh Start Panel Report, p.11.

⁵² The term ‘Brexit’ refers to Britain’s decision to exit from the European Union following a referendum held on 23 June 2016. See Mark Daly, Pat Dolan and Mark Brennan, “Northern Ireland Returning to Violence as a Result of a Hard Border due to Brexit or a Rushed Border Poll: Risks to Youth,” UNESCO, February 2019. Available at <https://senatormarkdaly.files.wordpress.com/2019/02/unesco-chairs-report-brexit-return-to-violence.pdf> (accessed 6 March 2019). See also Police Remuneration Review Body, “Fourth Report on Northern Ireland 2018” (May 25, 2018), 7–9.

⁵³ We do not include corruption in this model due to a lack of empirical evidence but note that in jurisdictions impacted by the nexus between terrorism and organized crime in Northern Ireland corruption may be an additional component of interaction

⁵⁴ It is important to note that these constituent elements are not necessarily self-contained and there may in some cases be overlap between activity assimilation and alliances.

Diagram inserted here: Northern Ireland Terrorism-Organised Crime Interaction Model

The main paramilitary groups examined within this model are the Provisional Irish Republican Army (PIRA), Irish National Liberation Army (INLA), Ulster Defence Association (UDA), Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) and Action Against Drugs (AAD), as well as violent dissident Republicans groups, including the ‘Real’ Irish Republican Army (RIRA), ‘New’ IRA (NIRA) ‘Continuity’ IRA (CIRA) and Óglaigh na hÉireann (ONH). We concentrate on these groups because, in developing the Northern Ireland model, an evidence-led approach is adopted, and they were discussed during interviews. Additionally, the UDA, UVF and INLA are proscribed terrorist organizations and are amongst the main targets being investigated by the newly established Paramilitary Crime Task Force.⁵⁵ Moreover, dissident Republican groups, such as CIRA, NIRA and RIRA, which are not on ceasefire and wage armed campaigns, continue to pose the greatest threat to Northern Ireland’s national security.⁵⁶

It is useful at the outset to explain briefly each of the constituent components of the Northern Ireland model. Alliance is understood as a functional and cooperative relationship between different terrorist groups as well as between terrorist and criminal groups or individuals within such groups for mutual benefit. Scholars including Williams, Makarenko and Shelley have alluded to the benefits accruing to both types of groups by forming alliances with each other.⁵⁷ Dishman has, however, been sceptical of the existence of cooperative relationships and dismissed them in the context of the PIRA.⁵⁸ We nevertheless maintain that alliances are significant features of crime-terror interaction in Northern Ireland. The nature and level of sophistication of alliances varies and include, for example, sharing of

⁵⁵ Home Office, “List of Proscribed Terrorist Groups or Organisations,” p.21. Available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/proscribed-terror-groups-or-organisations--2> (accessed 7 March 2019).

⁵⁶ Paramilitary groups in Northern Ireland, *An assessment commissioned by the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland on the structure, role and purpose of paramilitary groups focusing on those which declared ceasefires in order to support and facilitate the political process*, 19 October 2015, para. 2; Fresh Start Panel report, para. 2.7. For example, NIRA are alleged to have been responsible for the bomb attack in Derry on 19 January 2019. See Rory Carroll, “Derry bomb attack: Northern Ireland police arrest four men,” *Guardian* 20 January 2019.

⁵⁷ Williams, “Terrorism and Organized Crime,” p.70; Makarenko, “The Crime–Terror Continuum” p. 131; Makarenko, “Categorising”, p.260; Shelley “Methods and Motives”, p.37. Williams and Shelley at al. refer to this type of linkage as a ‘nexus.’

⁵⁸ Dishman, “Terrorism,” p. 48-49; see also Peng Wang, “The Crime-Terror Nexus”, p. 15.

operations as well as exchange of goods and services.⁵⁹ Even where paramilitaries are from opposing sides of the political divide they have been willing to work together in the pursuit of profit derived from organised crime.⁶⁰ In this analysis, alliance also includes the transfer of skills from members of one group to another to help them acquire knowledge and expertise necessary for conducting criminal activities without detection. In this way the Interaction Model is able to capture important transfers of operational, organisational, technological, and strategic skills from Republican terrorism.⁶¹ Prominent examples of cooperative alliances between terrorist groups involving knowledge and technical expertise transfers include the involvement of PIRA explosives engineers in the training of Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) guerrillas in Colombia, in exchange for money derived from the FARC's strong links with the Colombian drug trade, as well as an ability of PIRA members to test and improve new weapons and methods of destruction for use elsewhere.⁶² Similarly, bombing techniques used by the PIRA were passed on to the Taliban via al Qaeda, which had learned the process through the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and Hezbollah, which had, in turn, previously been trained by

⁵⁹ Europol, “EU Drug Markets Report. In-Depth Analysis,” 2016, p.18. Available at <http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/system/files/publications/2373/TD0216072ENN.PDF> (accessed 7 March 2019).

⁶⁰ House of Commons Northern Ireland Affairs Committee, “The Financing of Terrorism in Northern Ireland,” Fourth Report of Session 2001-02, HC 978-1 (2002), para. 22.

⁶¹ The need for expanding tactical expertise led the PIRA, and other republican groups, to seek direct training from international allies to complement their own internal training. In the 1970s it is widely believed that both the Irish National Liberation Army (INLA), and the PIRA, received training in Palestine from the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). See John F. Morrison and Paul Gill, “100 Years of Irish Republican Violence,” *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 28:3, (2016) 409, 411; Morrison, “Copying to be Different,” 589.

⁶² These three men—Niall Connolly, Martin McCauley, and James Monaghan—indicted in Columbia in 2002 for training FARC militants in the use of explosives, including homemade mortars, and, in 2004, were sentenced to 17 years in prison. It is important to keep in mind that this is not the first time that FARC and PIRA have allegedly exchanged knowledge and information. PIRA purportedly initiated contact with FARC in 1997 through the ETA, with which PIRA has a long-standing relationship and has exchanged knowledge and technical know-how, particularly in bomb making. According to an April 2002 U.S. Department of State report, one of the three PIRA men, Connolly, Sinn Fein’s representative in Cuba, initiated the contact with FARC in 1997; and, from 1998 to 2001, at least 15 PIRA militants travelled to Colombia, along with Iranian, Cuban, and Basque terrorists, to train FARC. One expert alleged that senior PIRA leaders would have sanctioned this kind of an exchange of technology with another militant group, even though they are publicly adhering to a cease-fire. Notably, PIRA has a long-standing policy prohibiting “freelancing” by its members; as such, the Colombia Three did not likely act alone, despite vehement denials from Sinn Fein, which does not want to be seen as violating the cease-fire. U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell, responding to the information that this relationship developed after the 1997 peace process began in Northern Ireland, said on a trip to Bogotá in December 2002 that the groups were “sharing experiences and knowledge.” For a case study examining the exchange of technology and knowledge between the PIRA and the FARC, see Kim Cragin, Peter Chalk, Sara A. Daly and Brian A. Jackson, “Sharing the Dragon’s Teeth: Terrorist Groups and the Exchange of New Technologies,” RAND Corporation (2007), ch. 5. See also House of Commons Northern Ireland Affairs Committee, The Financing of Terrorism in Northern Ireland, Fourth Report of Session 2001-02, HC 978-1 (2002), para. 5; Hearing before the Committee on International Relations, House of Representatives, “International Global Terrorism. It’s Links with Illicit Drugs as Illustrated by the IRA and other Groups in Colombia,” (April, 2002). Available at http://commdocs.house.gov/committees/intlrel/hfa78947.000/hfa78947_0f.htm (accessed 7 March 2019).

the PIRA in Lebanon.⁶³ The outsourcing of the expertise of PIRA members has been connected also with groups in Iran, the Basque region and Cuba.⁶⁴

Assimilation involves the adoption by terrorists or organised criminals of the activities of the other without the individuals concerned or their respective organisations working together or forming an alliance.⁶⁵ This includes situations where paramilitary organisations develop criminal enterprises in-house and, in the process, engage in criminal activities normally associated with organised crime groups. This type of interaction is well-established in academic literature on the crime terror nexus. Dishman⁶⁶, Williams,⁶⁷ Shelley and Picarelli⁶⁸ have, for example, all noted imitation by terrorist groups of criminal behaviour normally associated with criminal gangs, and this phenomenon is also referenced in the first plane of Makarenko's revised crime-terror model for the nexus in the European Union.⁶⁹

Conflict refers to the spectrum of feuds and hostilities that occur among paramilitary groups and between them and organised criminal groups.⁷⁰ These conflicts may arise, for example, due to a breakdown of an alliance, or because a terrorist group frowns on drug dealing or other criminal activity taking place on its turf, or for reasons of rivalry for control of a particular criminal market. Conflicts are overlooked in existing crime-terror models, yet they have the ability to influence the dynamic interactions between paramilitary and criminal groups.

Hybrids have been presented in scholarship as typifying a convergence between separate terrorist and organised criminal groups.⁷¹ Shelley and Picarelli positioned hybrid entities at the end-point of their

⁶³ David Bamber, "The IRA 'is Teaching Palestinians how to blow up Israeli Soldiers' in West Bank," *The Telegraph* 28 April 2002; Jim Cusack, "Taliban Using IRA Bomb Techniques in Terror War," *Irish Independent* 3 June 2007.

⁶⁴ Andrew Alderson, David Bamber and Francis Elliott, "IRA's Involvement in International Terrorism," *The Daily Telegraph* 28 April 2002.

⁶⁵ Shelley and Picarelli, "Methods and Motives," p.36.

⁶⁶ Dishman, "Terrorism" p.48-49.

⁶⁷ Williams, "Terrorism and Organized Crime," p.70.

⁶⁸ Shelley and Picarelli, "Methods and Motives," p.53

⁶⁹ Makarenko and Mesquita, "Categorising," p.260.

⁷⁰ The importance of conflicts that occur between terrorist groups and organised criminal groups has recently been highlighted by Hourington et al.

⁷¹ Shelley and Picarelli, "Methods and Motives," p.54; Makarenko and Mesquita, "Categorising," p.260.

spectrum of interaction between crime and terror groups, regarding it as one of the last phases of an evolutionary course of merger between the two types of groups.⁷² Makarenko's revised model of interaction noted that hybrids also form when one type of group adopts the tactics of the other. In a similar manner, for this analysis we regard hybrids as forming when paramilitary organisations maintain campaigns of violence grounded in political ideology, or retain the capacity to commit such violence, while also engaging in criminality by appropriating activities or forming alliances with criminal groups.⁷³ In Northern Ireland, all paramilitary groups either are or have been hybrids.⁷⁴ During the Troubles, the Republican and Loyalist paramilitaries engaged in organized crime as a method of terrorist financing, but also at times as a means of lining their own pockets.⁷⁵ This organised criminal activity continues to the present day. Unlike the observations of some leading scholars, which establish a dichotomy between crime and terrorism, it is difficult to make any clear distinction between these phenomena in Northern Ireland.⁷⁶ Recognising this, and to capture the realities of linkages between organised crime and terrorism in Northern Ireland, we place hybrids not at the end of a linear model but centre stage in a circular model of interaction.

The final element of the model refers to the transformation of an organisation from one type of entity to another. Identified by Dishman⁷⁷, Williams⁷⁸, Shelley and Picarelli⁷⁹ and Makarenko⁸⁰, this type of interaction typically accounts for situations where terrorist groups and criminal organisations change their objectives and activities to such a degree that they transition from political terrorism to criminal

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ We are concerned with this relationship in this analysis rather than the additional possibility of organised criminal groups adopting terrorist tactics as we find no evidence of this development in Northern Ireland. This is not to adopt Shelley's definition of a hybrid which normally envisaged a convergence of separate terrorist and organised crime groups.

⁷⁴ Interview.

⁷⁵ Interview. See also House of Commons Select Committee on Northern Ireland Affairs, Third Report, June 28, 2006, paras. 11–12, <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200506/cmselect/cmniaf/886/88605.htm#n44>; House of Commons Northern Ireland Affairs Committee, The Financing of Terrorism in Northern Ireland, para. 18.

⁷⁶ For debates on the dichotomy see, for example, Alison Jamieson, "The Use of Terrorism and Organized Crime", in *Root Causes of Terrorism. Proceedings from an International Expert Meeting*, Tore Bjørgo, ed., Conference Report, The Norwegian Institute of International Affairs, (Oslo, 9-11 June 2003), p.169. See also Louise I. Shelley, *Dirty Entanglements: Corruption, Crime and Terrorism* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2014), p. 113.

⁷⁷ Dishman, "Terrorism," p.47-50.

⁷⁸ Williams, "Terrorism and Organized Crime," p.71.

⁷⁹ Shelley and Picarelli, "Methods and Motives," p.36.

⁸⁰ Makarenko, "The Crime–Terror Continuum," p.135; Makarenko and Mesquita, "Categorising," p. 261.

enterprise or vice versa. This may be as a result of achieving their political aims, reduced support for those aims, or a realisation of the futility of terrorist actions to achieve them following years of attritional state intervention. The Northern Ireland model identifies three subsets of this type of interaction, namely ‘minor’, ‘partial’ and ‘complete’ transformation in order to accurately reflect the transitional status of paramilitary organisations in Northern Ireland.

Complete transformation refers to situations where a paramilitary group disbands and ceases to exist and does not engage in either political violence or organised crime. It also refers to situations where a paramilitary organisation continues to exist as an entity with a membership and leadership hierarchy but it has terminated its engagement in and capacity for engaging in both organised crime and terrorist activities. Currently, there is no evidence to suggest that any paramilitary groups in Northern Ireland have undergone complete transformation. Partially transformed paramilitary groups transition from hybrids to groups that no longer retain the capacity to commit terrorist violence, but continue to be involved in organised crime. As with complete transformation, there is no evidence to suggest that paramilitary groups have undergone partial transformation. Lastly, paramilitary groups transform to a minor extent. This third situation of transformation captures paramilitary groups whose leadership publicly declare ceasefires, commit to the peace process and the decommissioning of weapons and withdraw from political campaigns of violence. Nevertheless, they refuse to disband and therefore their organisations, leadership structures and sub-groups, recruitment, funding, training, skill sets and technical knowledge and revered reputations strategically remain intact.⁸¹ As such, these groups deliberately retain their capacity to re-engage in terrorist activity should the need arise. While they have been assessed as ‘highly unlikely’ to return to terrorism and ‘unable to resurrect the capability demonstrated at their peak’,⁸² the continuing capacity of these groups, albeit much reduced, to engage in terrorist violence and the underlying threat remains a concern to law enforcement and a threat to national security.⁸³ Additionally, individual members of paramilitary groups continue to engage in

⁸¹ Rosie Cowan, “Loyalists Recruit the Next Generation,” *The Guardian*, 2 April 2001.

⁸² Paramilitary groups in Northern Ireland, *An assessment commissioned by the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland on the structure, role and purpose of paramilitary groups focusing on those which declared ceasefires in order to support and facilitate the political process*, 19 October 2015, para. 2.

⁸³ *Ibid*, para. 18. Interview.

violent paramilitary assaults and murders in order to terrorize and ultimately exercise control over local communities, both directed by local leadership and conducted without sanction, and continue to represent a serious? threat to Northern Ireland's national security.⁸⁴ As none of the leadership has complete control over the activities of its members⁸⁵ and they are unwilling to disband and cease to exist, then the groups themselves should not escape the attribution of a portion of responsibility or be regarded as partially or completely transforming. The majority of paramilitary groups included in the Northern Ireland model have undergone minor transformation. Although we refer to these groups as transforming in a minor way, this is not to underestimate the significant steps these groups have taken to commit to peace during the past twenty years, as is evident by the vastly reduced scale of paramilitary-style shootings and bombings at present when compared to the period of the Troubles.⁸⁶ This stands in sharp contrast to violent dissident Republican and dissident Loyalist groups included in the Northern Ireland model, which have not transformed at all because they reject the 1998 Agreement and continue to commit terrorist attacks in Northern Ireland.⁸⁷ The indicators of complete, partial and minor transformation provide important differentiation from previous theoretical frameworks of the crime-terror nexus, which suggest only a process of evolution from one type of group (terrorist or criminal network) to another.⁸⁸

The typologies in this new model seek to categorise forms of interactions between organised crime and terrorism in Northern Ireland and, where possible, empirically informed references are made to particular groups to illustrate how the interactions play out. This model builds upon crime-terror theoretical models in existing scholarship, which have acknowledged important organisational, structural and activity-related associations between organised crime and terror groups⁸⁹ However, these models do not necessarily capture the historical evolution and current complexities of linkages in

⁸⁴ Ibid, para. 2.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Independent Monitoring Commission, First Report 20 April 2004, p.25.

⁸⁷ Paramilitary groups in Northern Ireland, para. 2.

⁸⁸ For example, Makarenko and Mesquita, "Categorising," p.261.

⁸⁹ See earlier, referenced in the Introduction.

Northern Ireland and therefore it represents a radical departure from them in five significant ways.⁹⁰

Firstly, it is not based on the premise that a dichotomy exists between terrorism and organised crime, so that these phenomena must always be regarded as being perpetuated by groups driven by different political and economic motivations.⁹¹ As will be explained below, all of the paramilitary groups in Northern Ireland have evolved as both terrorist and criminal groups. Secondly, it does not focus exclusively on interactions between paramilitary and organised criminal groups and realistically accounts for the activities of networks of individuals within groups.⁹² In this way it seeks to account for current realities in Northern Ireland where small groups of individuals who acquired kudos and skill sets as members of a paramilitary organisation during the Troubles engage in organised criminal activity for personal profit under the banner of the original paramilitary organisation, taking advantage of the fear that their association with the terrorist group can generate. None of the existing models of interaction provide for this nuanced level of crime-terror interaction. Thirdly, it introduces new and previously unexplored types of interaction to the theoretical debate on the crime-terror nexus, including the conflicts that occur both within paramilitary groups and between paramilitary and organised crime groups and different gradations of transformation in order to categorise the linkages between crime and terrorism in Northern Ireland.⁹³ Transformation is not, therefore, considered solely by reference to a groups' transition from terrorism to organised crime, and vice versa, but by reference to a more nuanced indicator of progression which takes into account the failure of the group to disband and its retained capacity for resurrecting campaigns of political violence. Fourthly, it notes that the interactions between crime and terrorism cannot always be explained in a linear format by reference to a timeline with a start and end point from one kind of activity to another. As stated above, this model allows for more complex arrangements where terrorist or criminal groups deliberately retain the capacity to return to activities

⁹⁰ E.g., Clarke and Lee, observed that 'the continuum proposed by Makarenko cannot sufficiently account for the blurred distinction between categories of criminal or terrorist, nor can it realistically represent the dynamic complexity of the PIRA's former day-to-day operations as a terror group, punishment squad, criminal group for fundraising, and alleged collaborator with both state and non-state actors,' Clarke and Lee, "The PIRA," p. 392.

⁹¹ E.g., see Alex P Schmid, "Revisiting the Relationship between International Terrorism and Transnational Organised Crime", p. 13.

⁹² E.g., see Peng Wang, "The Crime-Terror Nexus".

⁹³ Dishman noted different degrees of transformation from one type of group – terrorist or criminal – to another, but not those outlined in this article.

they have previously abandoned. Furthermore, rather than regarding hybridisation as an end-point of convergence between crime and terrorism, it is placed centre-point in a fluid model of interaction, representing the nexus as undergoing continuing processes of change and transition as various organised crime and terrorist networks and capability structures adapt relative to political developments and the exploitation of organised crime markets. Lastly, the model is deliberately focussed on Northern Ireland in order to provide an informative, localised threat assessment. Such national models of interaction, including the one outlined here, albeit with variations to its constituent components to accommodate local situations, represent the most appropriate means of capturing and understanding the nexus between organised crime and terrorism and factors that contribute to it. This proposition runs against the grain of current international good practice recommendations, which advocate the use of existing models designed for universal application, which risk encouraging one-size-fits-all solutions devoid of local context.⁹⁴

Part II: Examining the Components of Interaction

Northern Ireland's paramilitary organisations have required substantial funds to finance their operations and meet related expenses, including, for example, the cost of purchasing weapons and explosives, vehicles, communications systems, training, paying operatives, supporting imprisoned volunteers and their families and contributing to political campaigns.⁹⁵ The combined annual budget of the PIRA, the UVF and the UDA towards the end of the Troubles in the mid-1990's is thought to have been between £15 million and £18 million.⁹⁶ The considerable financial demands placed upon the organisations to wage their campaigns, particularly during the Troubles, resulted in their engaging directly in organised

⁹⁴ Although the model is Northern Ireland focused, it does take into account terrorist groups located in Northern Ireland but engage in organised crime and have interactions with organised criminal groups transnationally.

⁹⁵ Silke, "In Defense of the Realm," p.335-336; HC Committee Northern Ireland Affairs. Northern Ireland Affairs Committee, Financing of Terrorism, Fourth Report, 2001-02.

⁹⁶ On report estimated the combined budget for UDA and the UVF to be £3 million per annum: see Templeton, D. 'Terror Bosses Feel the Pinch' Sunday Life 21.04.1996, p.12; the PIRA's annual budget was in the region of £15 million: see Silke, "In Defense of the Realm" p.333. In 2002 the PSNI estimated that PIRA raised £5-8 million annually, while RIRA raised £5 million, UDA raised £1 million and UVF raised £1.5 million: see House of Commons Northern Ireland Affairs Committee, The Financing of Terrorism in Northern Ireland, Fourth Report of Session 2001-02, HC 978-1 (2002), para. 33.

crime, assimilating criminal activities from organised criminal groups, and forming short-term and long-term alliances with them. All of Northern Ireland's paramilitary groups consequently evolved as hybrid organisations. The Good Friday Agreement and later announcements of the cessation of campaigns of violence marked processes of transformation of some of them. However, even when paramilitary organisations have been on ceasefire, fundraising has continued to finance propaganda and political campaigning, as well as provide a precaution in case of the collapse of the peace process.⁹⁷ In addition, not all money raised by paramilitaries, however, finds its way into an organisation's coffers; increasingly individuals have used their status, connections and skills to line their own pockets.⁹⁸ We now examine these interactions in more depth with reference to the constituent elements of the Northern Ireland model.

Alliances

One of the most important and common types of interaction occurring between terrorists and organised criminal groups in the Northern Ireland model is alliance, which, until recently, has been little discussed in scholarship.⁹⁹ Yet, they are far from new. A recent study by Hourigan et al. provides a systematic overview of the emergence and development of organised crime in the Republic of Ireland and in Northern Ireland since the latter part of the 1960s.¹⁰⁰ Notably, the authors find that, in many cases, organised crime groups and paramilitary groups 'engaged in mutually beneficial arrangements'.¹⁰¹ The UK House of Commons Select Committee on Northern Ireland Affairs officially recognised the influence of alliance interactions in Northern Ireland in 2002¹⁰² and, in the same year, a threat assessment estimated that nearly half of 76 organised criminal gangs had links to paramilitary organisations.¹⁰³

⁹⁷ Interview. See also Silke, "Drink, drugs and rock n' roll;" House of Commons Northern Ireland Affairs Committee, The Financing of Terrorism in Northern Ireland, Fourth Report of Session 2001-02, HC 978-1 (2002), paras. 11-12.

⁹⁸ Interview. House of Commons Northern Ireland Affairs Committee, The Financing of Terrorism in Northern Ireland, Fourth Report of Session 2001-02, HC 978-1 (2002), para. 13.

⁹⁹ Interview.

¹⁰⁰ Hourigan, "Crime in Ireland."

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 142.

¹⁰² House of Commons Select Committee on Northern Ireland Affairs, The Financing of Terrorism in Northern Ireland Fourth Report of Session 2001-02, HC 978-1 (2002); Organised Crime Task Force, The Threat Assessment 2002: Serious and Organised Crime in Northern Ireland.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

Presently, there is ample evidence of alliances established within Northern Ireland's borders as well as transnationally in the EU and beyond.¹⁰⁴ The majority of studies on Northern Ireland concentrate upon organised crime as a source of terrorist financing.¹⁰⁵ However, alliances are more complex than terrorist funding and terrorists equally further the aims of organised criminal groups. Based on interviews with legal experts, this section provides insight on three different types of alliances within Northern Ireland and transnationally—namely, money laundering, contract killing and cross border smuggling operations.

(i) Money laundering: Operation Metropolis

A prominent example of a transnational alliance is illustrated by the Operation Metropolis case study. After a five-year investigation in 2013 Italian police uncovered a sophisticated money laundering scheme involving the 'Ndrangheta—the Calabrian Mafia and one of the most wealthy and powerful criminal groups in the world—business entrepreneurs in Spain and a former member of the IRA worth €450 million.¹⁰⁶ According to investigatory evidence arising out of the operation, it is believed that Henry Fitzsimons, one of the most active officers in the PIRA during the bombing campaign in the 1970s and convicted of terrorist offences in 1973, established with members of the 'Ndrangheta and Spanish investors, a joint venture, involving a complex and extensive business structure of shell companies and offshore accounts in several countries, to develop luxury properties and tourist resorts on undeveloped beaches in the Calabrian region of southern Italy.

The nature of this alliance is complex and not entirely clear but it is likely that it was based on a close relationship between the Italian crime syndicate and the PIRA which was forged in the 1990's when the 'Ndrangheta acted as a go between and 'guarantor' for the passage of arms from Lebanon to

¹⁰⁴ Interview. Terrorist-organised crime alliances are frequently referred to by intelligence and law enforcement officials across Europe as a 'marriage of convenience.' See Makarenko, "Europe's Crime-Terror Nexus."

¹⁰⁵ Dishman, "Terrorism;" Silke, "In Defence of the Realm;" Evans, "Organised Crime;" Chris Ryder, "Organised Crime and Racketeering in Northern Ireland," in *Combatting Terrorism in Northern Ireland*, ed. James Dingley (Abingdon Routledge, 2009).

¹⁰⁶ Interview. James Bone and Tom Farmery, "Italian Police Arrest 20 People in €450 Million IRA Money Laundering Plot," *The Times*, March 6, 2013.

Belfast.¹⁰⁷ In this new interaction the PIRA was laundering money on behalf of the ‘Ndrangheta, which was heavily involved in drug trafficking to Europe.¹⁰⁸ Fitzsimons was the Director of one of the property development companies involved in the money laundering scheme, based in Dublin. Italian investigators believe that Fitzsimons reinvested at least €12 million of criminal origin in to the scheme and created offshore bank accounts in several countries, with the aim of making money untraceable.¹⁰⁹ According to Nicola Gratteri, an anti-Mafia prosecutor leading the investigation, Fitzsimons was ‘the middle-man delegated by the PIRA to recycle the proceeds of terrorist activities and to reinvest the financial resources of the movement’.¹¹⁰ Conversely, the ‘Ndrangheta have extensive control over the legal economy, particularly the construction industry, and the ability to infiltrate city councils and corrupt local politicians, as well as govern and control territory and use intimidation to obtain land.¹¹¹ The money laundering scheme enabled the ‘Ndrangheta to reinvest the proceeds of trafficking in drugs and weapons and other criminal activities, estimated at tens of billions of Euros annually. The alliance with the PIRA signals the tendency of the ‘Ndrangheta to project itself abroad and build strong ties with other organised crime and terrorist organisations, as well as a modern and sophisticated way of conducting criminal activities behind a screen of legal entities and infiltration of the legitimate economy. The PIRA has a long history in money laundering. During the Troubles, it had a finance department in charge of procuring and laundering illegally gained funds. The laundering of these funds was often carried out through PIRA-owned legitimate businesses, including public houses, Dublin-based hackney services, video shops, courier services, a security firm, a haulage company and guest-houses.¹¹² The joint venture with the ‘Ndrangheta therefore represents the ability of terrorist groups in Northern Ireland to engage in much more sophisticated money laundering schemes transnationally and

¹⁰⁷ Makarenko, “Europe’s Crime-Terror Nexus,” p.23-24.

¹⁰⁸ European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction, “EU Drug Markets Report: In-Depth Analysis” (EMCDDA-Europol Joint Publications, Luxembourg, 2016), p. 33.

¹⁰⁹ Italian investigators ultimately were unable to identify the source of the money.

¹¹⁰ Leandro Di Natale, “Anti-Money Laundering Operation Proves Links between Italian ‘Ndrangheta and IRA” (European Strategic Intelligence and Security Centre, 2013) <http://www.esisc.org/contact-us>.

¹¹¹ See also Main & Ors v (Giambrone & Law) & Ors [2017] EWCA Civ 1193.

¹¹² Hourigan, “Crime in Ireland,” p.138; Clarke and Lee, “The PIRA.”

penetrate the legal economy.¹¹³ Experts from government agencies in Northern Ireland regard this alliance as a ‘frightening crossover’ between terrorist and organised crime groups.¹¹⁴

(ii) Contract killing: subcontracting terrorist groups

In addition to Northern Ireland’s terrorist groups forming alliances with powerful organised crime syndicates to further their aims there is evidence to suggest that organised crime groups form alliances with terrorists by subcontracting them to enforce discipline and settle turf wars on their behalf.¹¹⁵ This is illustrated by the contract killing of David Byrne by the CIRA on behalf of the Hutch criminal group.¹¹⁶ On 24 September 2015 Gary Hutch—the nephew of the head of the Hutch organised crime group based in Ireland, was shot dead on the Costa del Sol.¹¹⁷ Gary Hutch was assassinated by James Quinn—a hitman subcontracted by a rival Irish criminal network based in Spain, North Africa and Dubai, the Kinahan crime group.¹¹⁸ This group is believed to be one of Europe’s wealthiest and most powerful drug cartels with the ‘capability to import drugs from South America, Asia and anywhere else in the world’.¹¹⁹ The murder of Gary Hutch began a deadly feud between his large group of criminal associates in Dublin and members of the Kinahan crime gang in Spain and its associates in Dublin.

In retaliation for the murder of Gary Hutch, on 5 February 2016, during a boxing tournament weigh-in at the Regency Hotel, Dublin, a group of armed men entered the building dressed in police armed response unit uniforms and shot dead David Byrne. David Byrne was a ‘soldier’ of the Kinahan

¹¹³ Fitzsimons was extradited to Italy in 2013, having fled to Senegal, but was eventually released due to insufficient evidence, Mark Rainey, “Ex-IRA Man Henry ‘Harry’ Fitzsimons Beats Mafia Fraud Extradition” *News Letter*, April 30, 2016.

¹¹⁴ Interview.

¹¹⁵ Interview.

¹¹⁶ Interview. Tom Clonan, “This Dublin Gun Violence Bears all the Hallmarks of Paramilitary Involvement,” *The Guardian*, February 10, 2016; Paul Williams, “Deadly Kinahan-Hutch Feud is Linked to €7.6m Tiger Kidnapping”, *Irish Independent*, January 28, 2018; Henry McDonald, “Dublin’s Dead Men Walking: 29 on Death List in Brutal Gangland War,” *The Guardian*, February 19, 2018.

¹¹⁷ The Hutch gang controls smuggling routes at Dublin port. The Kinahan cartel have always craved control of that network and by defeating the Hutch gang they would take over these routes, Interview.

¹¹⁸ James Quinn was convicted for the murder of Gary Hutch in Spain. Reportedly, Hutch was murdered following an attempt by the Hutch group to murder Daniel Kinahan—the son of the Kinahan organised crime group. Gerard Couzens, “James Quinn Jailed for 22 years in Spain over Gary Hutch Murder,” *The Irish Times*, June 21, 2018.

¹¹⁹ Interview. In 2008 several police forces across Europe collaborated to investigate the Kinahan crime group. The investigation, codenamed “Operation Shovel”, was led by Spanish authorities but also incorporated specialist police teams in Belgium, the Republic of Ireland and the UK, UN Office on Drugs and Crime, “Operation Shovel,” https://www.unodc.org/cld/case-law-doc/drugcrimetype/esp/operation_shovel.html (accessed March 4, 2019).

organisation, which ‘controls’ boxing in Ireland.¹²⁰ While Byrne’s murder was a revenge attack by the Hutch crime group, it was the CIRA that claimed responsibility for it.¹²¹ The gunmen used high-velocity Kalashnikov assault rifles, which bear a strong resemblance to the type of weapons used in large numbers by the PIRA at the height of the Troubles.¹²² The choreography of the murder operation equally echoes the same type of paramilitary-style killings during the Troubles. According to a CIRA spokesperson, David Byrne was also targeted because he had been involved in the killing of Alan Ryan—the leader of the RIRA—in Dublin in 2012. Ryan and his associates were involved in various types of organised crime and reportedly engaged in a feud with organised criminal groups, including the Kinahan organisation. The same spokesperson announced that CIRA units had been authorised to carry out further operations. This has led experts from government agencies in Northern Ireland to believe that the Hutch criminal group subcontracted terrorists to perform the contract killing.¹²³

(iii) Cross-border smuggling

While there is a scarce amount of scholarship on illicit weapons and explosives and the links between terrorism and organised crime, including in Northern Ireland,¹²⁴ there is evidence that terrorist and organised criminal groups are reciprocally involved in the traffic from overseas and supply of weapons.¹²⁵ In the 1990s the ‘Ndrangheta acted as a go between and ‘guarantor’ on behalf of the PIRA for the passage of arms from Lebanon to Belfast.¹²⁶ During the same period and also in the early 2000s, the RIRA purchased large quantities of weapons from the Balkans through a network of state officials

¹²⁰ Interview. See also Ewan MacKenna, “Boxing to Daniel Kinahan is what Football was to Pablo Escobar - and it’s Choking the Sport in Ireland”, *Irish Independent*, March 5, 2018.

¹²¹ Vincent Kearney, “Dublin Weigh-In Murder: Continuity IRA Claims Murder of David Byrne”, BBC NEWS, February 8, 2016.

¹²² According to one source, the weapons used to murder Byrne were obtained from an old PIRA stockpile, Allison Morris, “Suspect in Dublin Gangland Murder Dies,” *The Irish News*, August 11, 2017.

¹²³ Interview. See also Conor Lally, “Kinahan-Hutch Feud Edges into Northern Ireland: North Increasingly used as Hiding Place for Criminals Involved in Gang Feud,” *The Irish Times*, July 24, 2017.

¹²⁴ Paul Holtom, Paul James and Connor Patmore, “From the IRA to ISIS: Exploring Terrorist Access to the UK’s Illicit Firearms Market”, in *Triggering Terror: Illicit Gun Markets and Firearms Acquisition of Terrorist Networks in Europe*, ed. Nils Duquet (Flemish Peace Institute, Brussels, 2018). The authors have observed the lacuna in academic research on terrorist acquisition of firearms in the UK. But see Michael Jonsson and Elliot Brennan, “Drugs, Guns and Rebellion: A Comparative Analysis of the Arms Procurement of Insurgent Groups in Colombia and Myanmar,” *European Journal on Criminal Policy and Research* 20, no. 3 (2014): 307–321, doi: 10.1007/s10610-013-9228-0.

¹²⁵ Interview. See also Paul Holtom, Paul James and Connor Patmore, *ibid.*, 409–417. Ciaran Barnes, “Murdered Dissident Republican Michael Barr got Mum to Stash his Haul of Drugs,” *Belfast Telegraph*, May 3, 2016.

¹²⁶ Makarenko, “Europe’s Crime-Terror Nexus,” p. 23.

and criminal groups.¹²⁷ It has been suggested that it developed alliances with arms traffickers, led by Veljko Borovina, an ally of the Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadžić, in the Bosnian Serb Republic.¹²⁸ With the support of state and military contacts, the arms traffickers sold a range of weapons, leftover from the Bosnian Serb and Yugoslav armed forces and police, to the RIRA.¹²⁹ Similarly, a General in the Croatian armed forces, Ivan Andabak, was questioned by the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia over his alleged links with the RIRA, including the establishment of arms networks.¹³⁰ In particular, Andabak is alleged to have supplied a rocket-propelled grenade to the RIRA fired at MI6 Headquarters, London, in September 2000, which was manufactured in either Bulgaria or Russia and obtained in the former Yugoslavia.¹³¹ Andabak is believed to have received explosives training from Irish Republicans in the 1990s, while the grenade used to target MI6 Headquarters was similar to weapons found by Irish police at a secret RIRA firing range.¹³² Weapons hauls, including rocket-propelled grenades, reportedly destined for the RIRA, have also been discovered in Croatia and Slovenia.¹³³

Notwithstanding the dearth of scholarly attention, paramilitary groups illicitly trafficking, accessing and utilizing weapons and explosives in Northern Ireland continues to be a significant security threat for the police and security forces to the present day.¹³⁴ Arsovska suggests that there are principally two primary markets for illicit arms—those who need weapons for political insurgent purposes, and those who need them for criminal ones, including organised crime.¹³⁵ This dichotomy, however, fades into non-existence in Northern Ireland given the hybridized status of many of the paramilitary organisations

¹²⁷ Jana Arsovska, “Introduction: Illicit Firearms Market in Europe and Beyond,” *European Journal of Criminal Policy and Research* 20, Issue 3 (2014): 295–305, 299–300, doi: 10.1007/s10610-014-9254-6; Jana Arsovska and Panos Kostakos, “Illicit Arms Trafficking and the Limits of Rational Choice Theory: The Case of the Balkans,” *Trends in Organized Crime* 11, Issue 4 (2008): 352–387, doi: 10.1007/s12117-008-9052-y; Samantha Bricknell, “Firearm Trafficking and Serious and Organised Crime Gangs” (Research and Public Policy Series No. 116, Australian Institute of Criminology, Canberra, 2012).

¹²⁸ After 13 years of hiding, Karadžić was convicted in 2016 by the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia for the commission of genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity during the Bosnian war in the 1990s, *PROSECUTOR v RADOVAN KARADŽIĆ*, Case No.: IT-95-5/18-T, March 24, 2016.

¹²⁹ Giles Tremlett, “Karadžić family ‘arming Real IRA’,” *The Guardian*, April 5, 2001.

¹³⁰ The reason for Andabak’s questioning was in connection with the murder of a Bosnia Croat official who was blown up by an under-car booby-trap similar to those devised by the Provisional IRA during the Troubles in the 1970s and 1980s.

¹³¹ Arsovska, Introduction: Illicit Firearms, 299–300; Henry McDonald, “Croat General ‘Armed Real IRA Terrorists’,” *The Guardian*, September 24, 2000.

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ Giles Tremlett, Karadžić family arming Real IRA.

¹³⁴ Interview.

¹³⁵ Arsovska, Introduction: Illicit Firearms, 297–298.

operating there. These weapons are used against the police and security services as well as to commit organised crime and maintain control and influence in communities. PSNI data indicate that during 2016/17 the number of paramilitary style shootings doubled from 14 to 28, 25 of which were carried out by Republicans and 3 by Loyalists.¹³⁶ There were also 29 bombing incidents in the same reporting period.¹³⁷ Moreover, the PSNI seized 45 firearms,¹³⁸ 75.1kg of explosives and 2,635 rounds of ammunition,¹³⁹ the largest quantity of explosives seized per year since 2007/08.¹⁴⁰ Between February 2001 and March 2017 411 individuals were charged with firearms offences and 279 with offences relating to explosives.¹⁴¹ Interviews with experts from government agencies in Northern Ireland confirms that paramilitary groups obtain a vast array of weapons from different parts of the world, including Kalashnikov-type automatic rifles, Heckler and Koch MP5 sub-machine guns, Glock and Makarov semi-automatic pistols, and shotguns.¹⁴²

In an effort to address the lacuna in academic and policy-oriented research on terrorist acquisition of firearms in the UK, Holtom et al. examine the methods used by the IRA and other terrorist organisations in Northern Ireland.¹⁴³ Relying heavily on interviews conducted with current and former high-ranking UK police officers with experience of investigating the illegal firearms market from an organised crime group and counter-terrorism perspective, the authors find that terrorists in the UK do not usually have access to the semi-automatic or automatic firearms that have recently been used in terrorist attacks in

¹³⁶ Police Service of Northern Ireland, Police Recorded Security Situation Statistics Annual Report, 1st April 2016 – 31st March 2017, May 17, 2017, 2, 6. However, during 2017/18 the police recorded 50 shooting incidents, 11 fewer than in the previous year. Police Service of Northern Ireland, Police Recorded Security Situation Statistics Annual Report, 1st April 2017 – 31st March 2018, May 17, 2018, 5.

¹³⁷ Ibid., 2, 5. A significant level of terrorist threat remains in Northern Ireland as a result of the security situation which is evidenced by the number of bombing incidents over the past five years; indeed, during the reporting period 2012/13 to 2016/17, there were 230 bombing incidents, *ibid.*, 5. In 2017/18, there were 18 bombing incidents as a result of the security situation, the lowest number per year since 1995/96. Police Recorded Security Situation Statistics Annual Report, 1st April 2017 – 31st March 2018, 5.

¹³⁸ Ibid. This compares to 66 seized during the previous year. The number of firearms seized each year has fluctuated over the last decade with a peak of 176 firearms seized in 2011/12, *ibid.*

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid. However, during the reporting period 2017/18, PSNI officers seized 40 firearms and 5,758 rounds of ammunition, the smallest number found since records began in 1969. Likewise, the 0.43kg of explosives found during 2017/18 was the smallest quantity found since records began. Police Recorded Security Situation Statistics Annual Report, 1st April 2017 – 31st March 2018, May 17, 2018, 8.

¹⁴¹ Northern Ireland Terrorism Legislation Annual Statistics 2017/18, Northern Ireland Office, 7 November 2018, 12.

¹⁴² Interview.

¹⁴³ Holtom, “From the IRA to ISIS,” p. 409–417.

other parts of the EU.¹⁴⁴ However, the situation in Northern Ireland differs significantly, with dissident Republican groups having retained a wide range of legacy weapons from the Troubles supplied by the Qaddafi regime in Libya and continuing to use them in politically motivated attacks. These weapons, including different types of military-grade firearms, have circulated in the illegal firearms market for decades.¹⁴⁵ Although paramilitary weapons have been decommissioned, the members of the UVF, UDA and the PIRA continue to have access to weaponry.¹⁴⁶ The ‘terrorist-criminal nexus’ also continues to influence the availability of illegal firearms in Northern Ireland.¹⁴⁷ Indeed, there is evidence to suggest that some of these firearms, including military-grade firearms such as Glock 9 mm pistols and Skorpion sub-machine guns, might have been smuggled into Northern Ireland more recently by organised crime groups, including by using established routes for smuggling drugs.¹⁴⁸ These routes include, for example, by bus from Bulgaria, Latvia, Lithuania, and Poland; by ferry to Dublin and then into Northern Ireland; and by ferry from Liverpool in England and Stranraer in Scotland.¹⁴⁹

Other cross-border smuggling operations have involved alliances between paramilitary groups and organised criminal groups.¹⁵⁰ For example, the UVF have been linked to Chinese Triad organised crime organisations and the smuggling of drugs, weapons and the illicit traffic of humans.¹⁵¹ The UDA has also established alliances with Triads to operate a drugs distribution network across Northern Ireland.¹⁵² The alliance worked with Triads mailing Cannabis packages to a property in Randalstown, which was effectively a drugs distribution centre. The drugs were then purchased by Ballymena-based UDA which

¹⁴⁴ Ibid. While automatic firearms are not considered an easily available option for a jihadist in the UK, the authors observe that “10 terrorist attacks foiled by British security services and police during 2015-16 involved plans to buy guns”, *ibid.*, 409.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 410-413.

¹⁴⁶ Paramilitary groups in Northern Ireland, An Assessment Commissioned by the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland on the Structure, Role and Purpose of Paramilitary Groups Focusing on those which Declared Ceasefires in Order to Support and Facilitate the Political Process, October 19, 2015.

¹⁴⁷ Holtom, “From the IRA to ISIS,” p. 411.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p.412-413; interview.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁰ Interview. See also Bimpre Archer, “Three Quarters of Organised Crime Gangs in Belfast Involved in Drugs, Police Chief Reveals,” *The Irish News*, March 5, 2019.

¹⁵¹ Interview. See also John Cassidy, “UVF Link to Triad Gang: RUC Probe Attacks on Chinese Immigrants,” *Sunday Mirror*, July 2, 2000.

¹⁵² Ciaran Barnes, “UDA Drugs Ring Exposed - Terror Group’s Racket Involved Triad Gang and Ex-Mercenary,” July 29, 2018. See also BBC NEWS, “‘Triad Gang Link’ to Belfast £1m Cannabis Haul,” January 10, 2019.

would send its men to the house to collect the packages, which would be weighed and vacuum packed.

The drugs were then sold to crime gangs all round Northern Ireland.¹⁵³

In addition, alliance interactions have been recorded in connection with cigarette and tobacco smuggling.¹⁵⁴ In 2006 the UK House of Commons Select Committee on Northern Ireland Affairs received evidence that cigarette smuggling is one of the major activities of organised criminals in Northern Ireland and includes the involvement of paramilitary groups.¹⁵⁵ In 2012 the Financial Action Task Force reported that the RIRA has flooded Ireland with contraband cigarettes and imported counterfeit versions of popular brands and that cigarette smuggling was a substantial funding source for the organisation. The combined IRA groups reaped an estimated \$ 100 million in proceeds from cigarette smuggling over a five-year period to 2012.¹⁵⁶ In 2014/15 the Northern Ireland Organised Crime Task Force seized over 3 million cigarettes, 860 kilograms of hand rolling tobacco and 11 tonnes of unprocessed tobacco.¹⁵⁷ Furthermore, in 2014 the Home Office Border Force, HMRC and National Crime Agency highlighted that, in Northern Ireland, the majority of organised criminal groups examined have either a direct or tenuous link with one or more individuals with alleged paramilitary connections.¹⁵⁸

Interviews with experts from government agencies in Northern Ireland confirm that paramilitary groups in Northern Ireland directly engage in and work with transnational organised criminal groups to import both counterfeit cigarettes and so-called “illicit whites” – cigarettes made in legitimate factories overseas but smuggled into Europe in large shipping containers without paying excise duty.¹⁵⁹ These groups also have tobacco factories, which are used to manufacture fake cigarettes.¹⁶⁰ Paramilitary

¹⁵³ Ibid.

¹⁵⁴ Interview.

¹⁵⁵ House of Commons Select Committee on Northern Ireland Affairs, Third Report, paras. 40–43.

¹⁵⁶ Financial Action Task Force Report, “Illicit Tobacco Trade” (June 2012), 32.

¹⁵⁷ Organised Crime Task Force, “The Northern Ireland Organised Crime Strategy” (April 2016), 4; Organised Crime Task Force, “Annual Report and Threat Assessment Organised Crime in Northern Ireland” (2017).

¹⁵⁸ House of Commons Home Affairs Committee for the Tobacco Smuggling Inquiry, Written Evidence from Border Force, HM Revenue and Customs and the National Crime Agency, May 6, 2014. See also House of Commons Home Affairs Committee, Tobacco Smuggling, First Report of Session 2014–15, HC 200, June 14, 2014.

¹⁵⁹ Interview.

¹⁶⁰ Interview.

organisations have forged relationships with organised criminal groups in Hong Kong, Malaysia, Vietnam and Cambodia and are embarking on cigarette importations from there.¹⁶¹ In December 2011, as part of a multi-agency cross-border operation 9.7 million illegal cigarettes were seized in Co. Monaghan. These cigarettes were ‘President’ and ‘Hatamenr’ brand and had been imported in a 40ft maritime container from Malaysia via Rotterdam. In April 2012, 38 million cigarettes were seized in Dublin Port. These cigarettes had been imported from Vietnam via Rotterdam.¹⁶² In October 2015, almost 10 million cigarettes with a retail value of over €5.25 million were seized in Slane, Co Meath, which travelled from Vietnam via Singapore and Rotterdam, arrived into Dublin Port. In October 2017, 9.6 million cigarettes, with a retail value of €4.5 million, that arrived into Dublin Port on a vessel from Rotterdam were seized.¹⁶³ The European Commission’s Anti-Fraud Office reported that gangs in Ireland were working with Eastern European organised criminal groups, particularly from Russia, for the purpose of importing counterfeit cigarettes.¹⁶⁴ Not inconsequentially, in 2018 Forbes placed the RIRA tenth in its list of the world’s richest terrorist organisations, estimating a total annual income of \$50 million and noting its connections with cigarette and tobacco smuggling operations.¹⁶⁵

Assimilation

Loyalist and Republican paramilitaries have generated funding streams from a variety of appropriated activities including extortion, tax fraud, video and audio piracy, drug trafficking, kidnapping and smuggling operations involving, in particular, animal grains, cigarettes and fuel.¹⁶⁶ Extortion has been a reliable source of income for all of the organisations.¹⁶⁷ Silke noted widespread extortion practices amongst both Loyalist and Republican groups during the Troubles, targeting small and large businesses and the building industry.¹⁶⁸ By way of example, in 1987 the UDA were exposed seeking £27,000 in

¹⁶¹ Interview.

¹⁶² Interview.

¹⁶³ Hayley Halpin, “€4.5 million worth of cigarettes found at Dublin Port in container marked ‘tyres’,” *TheJournal.ie*, October 25, 2017.

¹⁶⁴ “Russia Gangs ‘Help Cigarette Scams’,” *Belfast Telegraph*, June 22, 2011.

¹⁶⁵ Itai Zehorai, “The Richest Terror Organizations in the World,” *Forbes International*, January 24, 2018.

¹⁶⁶ Laura K. Donohue, *The Cost of Counterterrorism: Power, Politics and Liberty* (Cambridge University Press, 2008), p.127; James Adams, *The Financing of Terror: How the Groups that are Terrorising the World Get the Money to Do It* (Simon and Schuster, New York, 1986); Silke, “In defense of the realm,” p. 336; Dishman, “Terrorism,” p.48-49.

¹⁶⁷ Moran, “Paramilitaries,” p.268. According to Moran, organisations on the opposite sides of the political divide will co-operate with each other in the allocation of targets situated on the boundaries of the areas they control.

¹⁶⁸ Silke, “In defense of the realm,” p.336-355.

protection money by a reporter posing as a businessman in the belief that he was on the verge of winning a building contract worth £3.25 million.¹⁶⁹ In another case, the UVF demanded an immediate payment of £15,000 from a meat-processing factory, failing which it threatened to contaminate its products and place them in shops.¹⁷⁰ These types of practices have continued beyond the Good Friday Agreement.¹⁷¹ It is estimated that the average extortion payment for small businesses is between £450 and £750 per week though payments of £2,500 a week by building contractors have been reported¹⁷² and large building sites may expect to pay between £20,000 and £30,000 or more.¹⁷³ Targets are usually located within geographical areas controlled by particular paramilitary organisations and are offered assurances that, upon payment, they will not be approached by another group, though these arrangements are occasionally infringed. A committee of MPs were advised in 2006 that a businessman paid a six-figure sum to the PIRA and a five-figure sum to the UVF,¹⁷⁴ demonstrating the lucrative nature of this type of criminal activity to different groups on opposite sides of the political divide in Northern Ireland.

Robbery and theft have also been commonplace fund-raising activities. Robberies targeting organisations connected to the state and multinational corporations are particularly appealing due to their potential high yield and low political cost. The early twentieth century saw IRA volunteers undertaking robberies of bookmakers, post offices, retail outlets and in-transit services.¹⁷⁵ The development of the INLA in the 1970's was assisted by robberies of gun shops and post offices¹⁷⁶ and the UVF was responsible for committing bank robberies and stealing weapons and arms from the police during the Troubles.¹⁷⁷ These types of activities continued to be committed regularly by the PIRA until its instruction to its volunteers to desist from engaging in criminal activity in 2005. Not long before then it was claimed to have been responsible for three robberies, including the hijacking a number of

¹⁶⁹ Helen Shaw, "Mawhinney 'declares war' on paramilitary rackets," *Irish Times* 21 August 1987.

¹⁷⁰ Phelim McAleer, "UVF threat delivered as minister was due," *Irish News*, 10 November 1994.

¹⁷¹ "Paramilitary Groups in Northern Ireland," 19 October 2015. Available at https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/469548/Paramilitary_Groups_in_Northern_Ireland_-_20_Oct_2015.pdf (accessed 1 March 2019).

¹⁷² Independent Monitoring Commission, First Report 20 April 2004, p.30

¹⁷³ Moran, "Paramilitaries," p.267.

¹⁷⁴ "Report Highlights Level of Extortion in the North," *The Irish Times*, 5 April 2006.

¹⁷⁵ Alan O'Day, *Terrorism's laboratory: the case of Northern Ireland* (Aldershot: Dartmouth, 1995)

¹⁷⁶ Jack Holland and Henry McDonald, *I.N.L.A.:deadly divisions* (Dublin: Torc, 1994), p.26-27 and p.73.

¹⁷⁷ Moran, "Paramilitaries," p.266.

cigarette lorries with a market value of £2 million¹⁷⁸ and also for the robbery of a central branch of Northern Bank which yielded £26.5 million and more than £1 million in US dollars and euros.¹⁷⁹

It is reported that Loyalist paramilitaries currently represent by far the most formidable bloc of organized crime activity in Northern Ireland today.¹⁸⁰ Until the early 1990's, when there was a shift towards drug trafficking and dealing, the traditional primary sources of funding for the Loyalists were drinking clubs, extortion, robbery, smuggling and counterfeiting. By the mid-1990s, it was estimated that approximately 60% of Northern Ireland's drug trade had fallen under the control of Loyalist paramilitaries.¹⁸¹ It is likely that Loyalist groups continue to control the drug trade to this extent today.¹⁸² From 2000 onwards, Organised Crime Task Force reports continually indicated that the Loyalist groups remain very active in relation to drug dealing, extortion, smuggling and counterfeiting.¹⁸³ The final IMC report in 2011 singled out the Loyalist groups for particular concern and warned that: 'Some members and former members of all groups remain heavily involved in a wide range of serious crime, exploiting the contacts and expertise they acquired during the Troubles and thereby presenting a challenge to law enforcement which is significantly more serious than it would otherwise have been.'¹⁸⁴ The House of Commons Select Committee on Northern Ireland Affairs also reported that there is a tendency for Republicans to predominate in cases of smuggling, armed robbery and fraud and for Loyalists to specialise in drug crimes, intellectual property theft and extortion, using legitimate businesses, notably pubs, clubs and taxi firms as cover for their illegal operations.¹⁸⁵

¹⁷⁸ Independent Monitoring Commission, Fourth Report, 10 February 2005, p.6.

¹⁷⁹ Independent Monitoring Commission, 4th Report, 10 February 2005, p.5.

¹⁸⁰ Hourigan, "Crime in Ireland," p.141.

¹⁸¹ Silke, "Drink, drugs and rock 'n' roll," p.107-127.

¹⁸² Hourigan, "Crime in Ireland," p.141

¹⁸³ For example, see Organised Crime Task Force Annual Report and Threat Assessment (2016). Available at <https://www.octf.gov.uk/OCTF/files/12/12306e6f-0ad0-408a-b50d-558b2955932b.pdf>

¹⁸⁴ Independent Monitoring Commission, 26th Report, 4 July 2011, p.56.

¹⁸⁵ "Written Evidence from the Police Service of Northern Ireland," Select Committee on Northern Ireland Affairs. Available at <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200506/cmselect/cmniaf/886/886we06.htm> (accessed 28 February 2019).

We consider the continued engagement in criminal activity of those groups that have announced the end of their campaigns of violence in more detail later.¹⁸⁶ Dissident Republican groups, such as the RIRA, CIRA and ONH, continue to be directly involved in organised crime to the present day, including armed robbery, smuggling of fuel, cigarettes and tobacco and extortion.¹⁸⁷ ONH and CIRA were reported to be responsible for armed robberies committed in 2008 and 2009.¹⁸⁸ The Independent Monitoring Commission's report in May 2009 and November 2010 noted the involvement of both the CIRA and the RIRA in a range of serious criminal activities.¹⁸⁹ A former member of the PIRA, Aiden Grew, who served 15 years in prison in the 1980s for a landmine attack, was jailed in 2011 for offences relating to the smuggling of contraband cigarettes.¹⁹⁰ More recently, Hourigan et al note provisional republicans located in south Armagh engaging in the illegal treatment and re-sale of diesel and that between 200 to 300 operators in the trade have become millionaires as a result.¹⁹¹ Thomas Murphy, a member of the PIRA, was reported in 2016 to be earning more than £10 million a year from four diesel laundering plants worth £23 million.¹⁹²

With regard to some interactions the distinctions between alliances and assimilation can be blurred. This is particularly evident in the context of gun-running operations. In 2000 self-professed PIRA member Conor Claxton and three of his associates were tried and convicted in the US on charges of purchasing 122 firearms and 600 rounds of ammunition and smuggling them to the Republic of Ireland.¹⁹³ Claxton claimed that he had been sent by 'higher ups' within the PIRA to purchase the weapons, which were intended to be stockpiled in the Republic of Ireland.¹⁹⁴ In 2001 the U.K. secured the extradition of three Irish individuals arrested in Slovakia on suspicion of gunrunning for the RIRA,

¹⁸⁶ See Hybrids and Transformation

¹⁸⁷ Interview 24 August 2018. See also Hourigan, "Crime in Ireland," p.137-142.

¹⁸⁸ Independent Monitoring Commission, 20th Report, 10 November 2008, p.5; 21st Report, 7 May 2009, p.9.

¹⁸⁹ Independent Monitoring Commission, 21st Report, 7 May 2009; and 25th Report, 4 November 2010, p.17

¹⁹⁰ Stephen Wright, "IRA's cigarette-smuggling millionaires: former terrorists flooding the UK with potentially lethal fakes, cheating taxpayers of billions," *Daily Mail* 6 June 2013.

¹⁹¹ Hourigan, "Crime in Ireland," p.138.

¹⁹² Ciaran Barnes, "Thomas 'Slab' Murphy takes a £10 million hit – busted Armagh plants 'linked to IRA leader's gang,'" *Belfast Telegraph*, 29 February 2016.

¹⁹³ House of Commons Northern Ireland Affairs Committee, The Financing of Terrorism in Northern Ireland, Fourth Report of Session 2001-02, HC 978-1 (2002), para. 5.

¹⁹⁴ House of Commons Northern Ireland Affairs Committee, The Financing of Terrorism in Northern Ireland, Fourth Report of Session 2001-02, HC 978-1 (2002), paras. 68-81.

who were later convicted of conspiracy to import weapons,. MI5 officers had posed as members of the Iraqi intelligence service, purporting to be a state friendly to their cause and willing to supply weapons and explosives.¹⁹⁵ The leadership of the RIRA were purported to be seeking state sponsorship for their activities and aiming to establish an alliance with a foreign government in support of their cause, in the same way that the PIRA had sought support from the Gaddafi regime during the Troubles.¹⁹⁶

More recently, RIRA members have been involved in the illicit traffic of weapons and explosives both directly and by attempting to establish alliances with organised criminal groups. For example, in 2010 Paul McCaugherty, a deputy commander of the RIRA, was convicted of attempting to import an arsenal of weapons and explosives into Northern Ireland, including 100kg of explosives, detonators and cords, 20 AK-47 assault rifles, 20 rocket-propelled grenade launchers, ten sniper rifles and 20 pistols with silencers.¹⁹⁷ Mr Justice Hart, presiding over the non-jury trial, formed the opinion that McCaugherty: ‘Was one of a group of terrorists determined to buy arms and explosives to carry out attacks on members of the security forces in Northern Ireland.’ The RIRA used a restaurant on the Algarve in Portugal as a global hub for weapons shipments to Ireland as well as a means to fund terrorist operations. It had a purpose-built trailer, which it used to transport the weapons from Portugal to a safe house, purchased by McCaugherty, in southern France. The RIRA also engaged in lucrative cigarette smuggling activities in Continental Europe in order to fund the cost of weapons purchases.¹⁹⁸ In 2011, Portugal prosecuted two individuals from Northern Ireland with links to the RIRA for possession of weapons and ammunition. According to police in Portugal, the individuals were connected to a criminal organisation engaged in international arms trafficking.¹⁹⁹ It is believed that the men were attempting to send the firearms to the RIRA in Northern Ireland.

¹⁹⁵ David Cracknell and Alan Murray, “Three Men Held in Slovakia over IRA gunrunning,” *The Telegraph*, 8 July 2001.

¹⁹⁶ Henry McDonald, “UK Accused of Failing Victims of IRA Killed by Libya-supplied Weapons,” *The Guardian*, 2 May 2017.

¹⁹⁷ Gordon Rayner, “Real IRA commander caught in MI5 arms dealing sting,” *The Telegraph* 30 June 2010.

¹⁹⁸ Conor Spackman, “How an MI5 ‘weapons dealer’ tricked a Real IRA leader,” BBC, 2 July 2010.

¹⁹⁹ Henry McDonald, “Men Arrested of Real IRA Links in Portugal,” *The Guardian*, 10 July 2011.

Closely linked to McCaugherty's conviction, in 2011 Michael Campbell was convicted in Lithuania of supporting a terrorist group, illegal possession of weapons and attempted smuggling. Campbell was caught in an MI5 weapons sting operation in 2008, with an agent posing as a Lithuanian arms dealer, for attempting to purchase weapons from Lithuania and smuggle them to Ireland for the RIRA.²⁰⁰ Campbell was directly involved in the traffic of firearms but believed that he was establishing an alliance with a criminal group.

Conflict

It is in the interest of organised criminal groups to minimise hostilities with paramilitary groups.²⁰¹ However, the engagement in organised criminality has seen paramilitary groups become embroiled in violent feuds with organized criminal gangs across both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, and most notably in Dublin.²⁰² This is illustrated most clearly by the violent conflict between dissident Republican paramilitary groups and the Kinahan criminal network. This conflict includes the contract killing of David Byrne, who was lieutenant of the Kinahan criminal network, by the CIRA on behalf of the Hutch criminal group.²⁰³ It is reported that the Hutch criminal group has a long-term alliance with the PIRA and that the figurehead of the Hutch grouping has received protection from PIRA members.²⁰⁴ In addition, the NIRA allegedly murdered Michael Keogh, a member of the Kinahan group, and offered to supply explosives to the Hutch gang.²⁰⁵

²⁰⁰ "Real IRA's Michael Campbell found guilty after M15 sting," BBC, 21 October 2011. In 2013 a Lithuanian Appeals Court overturned Campbell's conviction due to lack of evidence: <http://www.thejournal.ie/michael-campbell-released-1111352-Oct2013/> (accessed 7 March 2019).

²⁰¹ Interview.

²⁰² The Hutch-Kinahan conflict, discussed above, has no apparent geographical limitations and is taking place across Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland, Spain and beyond. The Garda operation to tackle the feud has resulted in the seizure of 456 firearms, €2.2 million cash and €64 million drugs. However, despite the establishment of 22,428 check points across Dublin city in 2016 and 2017 to police the feud, efforts to stem the violence have had mixed success partly because the leaders of the two feuding entities are based overseas. See also Hourigan, "Crime in Ireland."

²⁰³ For discussion of the contract killing of David Byrne and the Kinahan criminal network, see the alliances section above.

²⁰⁴ Cormac O'Keeffe, "Kinahan Boss Issued with Threat to His Life," *Irish Examiner*, January 11, 2017; Emma McMenamy, "Dissident Republicans Planning Massive Kinahan Retaliation Attack on Behalf of the Hutch Gang, Gardai Fear," *DublinLive*, January 12, 2017.

²⁰⁵ Gareth MacNamee, Gareth MacNamee, "Gardai Probe 'New IRA' Group's Bomb Trade with Hutch Gang," *TheJournal.ie*, June 8, 2017.

Mickey Barr—a member of the NIRA—was assassinated by the Kinahan criminal network for the supply of weapons to the Hutch criminal group.²⁰⁶ In response, the NIRA held a high-level summit and approved a plan to revenge attack the Kinahan gang for the murder of one of their members.²⁰⁷ It is reported that the NIRA may subcontract organised criminal groups from across continental Europe to murder members of the Kinahan gang headquartered in Spain.²⁰⁸

Similarly, the murder of the RIRA leader Alan Ryan by a criminal gang was also a result of his involvement in one of these feuds.²⁰⁹ Ryan and his associates were reportedly involved in various types of organised crime and used the front of a security company to run a vast protection racket targeting legitimate businesses, at the same time as imposing ‘taxes’ on various criminal groups.²¹⁰ For instance, Ryan ‘licenced’ the narcotic trade across Dublin; those groups that paid taxes were permit to stay in business, whereas those that did not had members threatened and even murdered. Ryan organised the murder of drug dealers on behalf of other drug dealers competing for dominance. Ultimately, he himself was murdered after he threatened a criminal group to make payment for drugs shipments entering Ireland.

Conflict also occurs within paramilitary organisations. The leadership of the UVF faces strong opposition from brigades in Ballymena and Coleraine and in particular East Belfast, where operatives are heavily involved in criminality, including drug dealing and extortion.²¹¹ In addition, conflicts

²⁰⁶ Allison Morris, Suspect in Dublin Gangland Murder Dies.

²⁰⁷ Lauren Fruen, “IRA ‘Revenge’. Now the IRA Declares War on Dublin Gangs: Security Forces on High Alert After Paramilitary Group ‘Sanctions Spectacular Revenge Attack’ for Shootings,” *The Sun*, April 27, 2016; Organised Crime and Corruption Reporting Project, “Murder Hit Plots Unravelled in Irish Gang Wars,” November 6, 2018.

²⁰⁸ Emma McMenamy, “Fears New IRA Could Recruit Deadly Criminal Gangs from Europe to Assassinate Enemies,” *Mirror*, April 29, 2016.

²⁰⁹ Ryan had previously been convicted for possession of a firearm and receiving training in the use of firearms. “Six Given Jail for Taking Part in Real IRA Training Camp,” *Drogheda Independent*, March 30, 2001.

²¹⁰ Cathal McMahon, “Promising GAA Player ‘The Beast’ Led Real IRA in a Bloody War on Drugs Gangs,” *Independent.ie*, December 7, 2016; “The Truth About Alan Ryan and His Funeral,” *Independent.ie*, September 16, 2012.

The ‘taxation’ of criminal groups involved in the traffic and supply of drugs has been used by other Republican paramilitary groups in Northern Ireland, including the INLA and AAD, and terrorist organisations in other parts of the world. For example, in southern Colombia both the FARC guerrilla group and the paramilitary organisations fighting them imposed ‘taxes’ on all the actors involved in the cocaine chain including the cartels operating cocaine labs in the regions under their control. Likewise, in Afghanistan, the Taliban taxed the actors of the heroin chain including the criminal organisations operating heroin laboratories. See Ryan Smith, “Revealed: The PSNI’s Four Main Targets in Organised Crime Crackdown,” *BelfastLive*, January 12, 2018; Vanda Felbab-Brown, *Shooting Up: Counterinsurgency and the War on Drugs* (Washington, DC, Brookings Institution Press, 2010).

²¹¹ Interview.

between paramilitary groups influence the dynamics of the nexus. For instance, it is reported that the Kinahan group has an alliance with the INLA and that the INLA murdered members of the Hutch group.²¹² In retaliation, the NIRa dispatched a murder squad to assassinate members of the INLA.²¹³ The past fifteen years have been marred by very serious conflicts between Loyalist groups, with control of organized crime activity frequently lying at the heart of most of the feuds.²¹⁴ Prior to the 1998 Good Friday Agreement, a violent split in the UVF in 1996, which led to the emergence of a new and aggressive group, the LVF, was primarily connected to the drug-dealing activities of the latter group.²¹⁵ Feuding between the two groups, thought to be the result of criminal competition and the LVF's involvement in the drug trade, escalated between May 2004 and August 2005, leading to the deaths of 5 LVF members, 17 attempted murders, and 18 incidents involving the use of explosives of petrol bombs.²¹⁶ Hourigan et al argue that Loyalists groups will continue to control the illicit drug trade in Northern Ireland and maintain their active involvement in organised crime, which is likely to result in persistent conflict between the various factions, leading to a fragmented bloc of groups whose ambition and focus is more concerned with control of power over local areas and of organised criminal activity within them than with creating any cohesive network and coherent political representation in the post peace-process era.²¹⁷

Hybrids and Transformation

It is a striking feature of the nexus between crime and terror in Northern Ireland that all of the main Loyalist and Republican paramilitary groups developed into hybrid organisations. The groups that declared the cessation of their campaigns in order to support and facilitate the political peace process

²¹² "Missing Kinahan Hitman Stalked by New IRA Murder Squad," *Herald.ie*, June 9, 2016.

²¹³ Ibid.

²¹⁴ Hourigan, "Crime in Ireland," p.141; Ciaran Barnes, "Inside the UVF: Money, Murders and Mayhem – The Loyalist Gang" Secrets Unveiled," *Belfast Telegraph*, October 13, 2014.

²¹⁵ Silke, "Drink, drugs, and rock 'n' roll".

²¹⁶ Independent Monitoring Commission, Sixth Report, September 2005, 4–6.

²¹⁷ Hourigan, "Crime in Ireland," p.141–142.

and the dissident republican groups that continue to pursue terrorist tactics have all, at some stage, engaged in criminal activity while at the same time conducting their terrorist campaigns.

This hybridisation has been the consequence of their turning to crime to finance terrorism.²¹⁸ In so doing, as has been noted, they both assimilated the activities of organised crime syndicates and formed alliances with them, demonstrating an ability to suitably adapt to and profit from a diverse range of criminal opportunities as they arose.

Those organisations that existed during the Troubles that we consider in this analysis, namely the UVF, UDA, PIRA and INLA, continue as hybrid organisations but have nevertheless undergone minor transformations following their declaration of ceasefires and the decommissioning of their weapons. The significance to the peace process of their public announcements of the end of their campaigns of violence cannot be underestimated. Nor can the impact of decommissioning on their ability to engage in terrorism be dismissed lightly. In this regard, according to British intelligence services, they have all ‘undergone significant change.’²¹⁹ However, interviews with experts from government agencies confirms that while these groups continue to remain in existence they retain a capacity to return to violence and represent a continuing threat to security. It is this retained potential for resurrecting their campaigns of violence that distinguishes them as having undergone only minor transformations.

In making this point it should be acknowledged that the full extent of the transformations of these groups is sometimes difficult to accurately determine as the structural composition of some of them allows for autonomous criminal activity limited to networks of individuals.²²⁰ These individuals typically engage in the same types of criminal activities and rely on the same criminal connections developed by the organisation until its ceasefire, as well as its reputation for violence. While the criminal activities may or may not be sanctioned by the leadership of the paramilitary organisation and may be the actions of a

²¹⁸ Hourigan, “Crime in Ireland,” p.138.

²¹⁹ “Paramilitary Groups in Northern Ireland,” p.2

²²⁰ Interview.

few individuals rather than of a homogenous group, it is their association with the organisation that enables them to profit from the activities and therefore, for this analysis, these criminal activities are construed as related to the organisation. This approach provides that until an organisation disbands and ceases to have any membership, training, recruitment or any capacity or reputation for violence and crime upon which individuals or autonomous cells can rely for profiteering, it and its leadership should assume responsibility for their acts.

The hybrid nature of the UVF can be traced from the time of its emergence until the decommissioning of its weapons in 2009, by which stage the IMC reported that it was ‘on its way to going out of business as a paramilitary organisation.’²²¹ Its violent campaign resulted in more than 500 deaths until the Belfast Agreement²²² and it continued to engage in sectarian-related shootings, assaults and pipe-bomb attacks until its renouncement of violence in 2007.²²³ At the same time, it was raising funds from a range of criminal activities, including robbery, extortion and smuggling and the IMC considered it to remain ‘heavily engaged in major crime’²²⁴ until its 2007 statement. Its purported intent to transform from a military to a civilian organisation and the decommissioning of its arms was called into question with its assassination in May 2010 of a former associate, Bobby Moffett.²²⁵ Currently, as an entity, it is reported as being no longer engaged in a campaign of violence and its central leadership has been attempting to move it away from criminality and towards a complete transformation to a non-violent, non-criminal organisation.²²⁶ However, brigades in north and east Belfast continue to be heavily involved in extortion and the illicit drug economy and are using networks that the UVF developed during the Troubles to profit from these activities.²²⁷ M15 reported in 2015 that a large ‘number of members, including some senior figures, are extensively involved in organised crime.’²²⁸ Moreover, according to legal experts, the organisation as a whole boasts a membership in the thousands, still has large reserves of financial

²²¹ Independent Monitoring Commission, 22nd Report, 4 November 2009, p.19.

²²² Independent Monitoring Commission, 24th Report, 15 September 2010, p.3.

²²³ Independent Monitoring Commission, 1st Report, 20 April 2004, p.16-17; and 12th Report, 4 October 2006, p.15-17.

²²⁴ Independent Monitoring Commission, 1st Report, 20 April 2004, p.17.

²²⁵ Independent Monitoring Commission, 24th Report, 15 September 2010, p.1-6.

²²⁶ “Paramilitary Groups in Northern Ireland,” p.2.

²²⁷ Interview.

²²⁸ “Paramilitary Groups in Northern Ireland,” p.2.

assets and retains access to weaponry and explosives.²²⁹ This evidence points towards a minor transformation from an organisation actively committing acts of terrorism to one outwardly committed to peace but engaging in organised crime and retaining its capacity to quickly re-engage in terrorism.

The situation with regard to the UDA is broadly similar. It quickly developed into a hybrid organisation, engaging in both terrorism and organised crime, following its formation in 1971. Scholars including Moran, Silke,²³⁰ Taylor²³¹ and Bruce²³² have reported extensively on its engagement in criminality throughout the Troubles, during which time it killed 408 individuals and was responsible for more civilian deaths than the PIRA.²³³ Its hybrid status appears to have continued at least until its decommissioning of weapons in 2010. According to the IMC, it continued to murder people and undertake paramilitary assaults and shootings beyond the Belfast Agreement²³⁴ and it was still recruiting and acquiring weapons until 2009.²³⁵ Furthermore, successive IMC reports from 2004 to 2010 warned of its continued involvement in the drug trade and various other criminal activities including loan sharking, extortion and cigarette supplying.²³⁶

Following decommissioning the structural makeup of the organisation has remained intact, though it is becoming increasingly fragmented with different brigades operating autonomously.²³⁷ Some leadership figures are committed to transforming the organisation to one committed to peace and refraining from criminality. However, the result of limited centralised control is that it has diminished the impact of leader's reform agenda over the activities of its members who, according to the M15 assessment in 2015, continue to engage in paramilitary-style assaults and organised crime. The fragmented organisational structure of the UDA makes it difficult to make strong assertions about its transformative

²²⁹ Interview.

²³⁰ Silke, "Drink, drugs and rock 'n' roll."

²³¹ Peter Taylor, *Loyalists* (London, Bloomsbury, 2000)

²³² Steve Bruce, *The Red Hand. Protestant Paramilitaries in Northern Ireland* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1992).

²³³ "Paramilitary Groups in Northern Ireland," p.3.

²³⁴ Independent Monitoring Commission, 1st Report, 20 April 2004, p.16-17, 22

²³⁵ Independent Monitoring Commission, 21st Report, 7 May 2009, p.14

²³⁶ Independent Monitoring Commission, 1st Report, 20 April 2004, p.30; 21st Report, p.13-14.

²³⁷ "Paramilitary Groups in Northern Ireland," p.3.

nature, but the continued involvement of some of its members in both violence and crime once again suggests a minor transformation.

Amongst the Republican groups, the PIRA, which was responsible for 1771 murders during the Troubles,²³⁸ remained active as a hybrid organisation until the announcement by its leadership in 2005 of the end of its campaign of violence.²³⁹ The previous year, it had been responsible for eight shootings, had undertaken the Northern Bank robbery, and was described by the IMC as a ‘well-funded organisation, deriving substantial income from smuggling and other criminal activities.’²⁴⁰

Since 2005 the PIRA’s leadership has maintained a commitment to pursuing a strategy of political reform to achieve its ideological aims and the same leadership has instructed volunteers to give up all forms of criminal activity.²⁴¹ This suggests that the PIRA has undergone a complete transformation to an organisation that has disengaged from both terrorist and criminal activity. Certainly there appears to be a significant deterioration of the terrorist intent and capabilities of the organisation and, according to British intelligence services, it is ‘not involved in targeting or conducting terrorist attacks against the state or its representatives.’²⁴² Nevertheless, it refuses to disband and retains its command structures. Moreover, some former members of have continued to be involved in criminal activity, including large-scale smuggling, hijacking and extortion²⁴³since the PIRA ceasefire. Furthermore, it retains access to weapons and is assessed by local enforcement organisations as presenting a threat of returning to terrorism if its political goals are not achieved.²⁴⁴ The result is an organisation that has undergone a minor transformation since 2005.

²³⁸ “Paramilitary Groups in Northern Ireland,” p.4.

²³⁹ Dishman, “Terrorism,” p. 48-49.

²⁴⁰ Independent Monitoring Commission, 1st Report, 20 April 2004, p.13.

²⁴¹ The statement of 28 July 2005, stated ‘volunteers must not engage in any other activities whatsoever.’ See Independent Monitoring Commission, 7th Report, 19 October 2005, p.9.

²⁴² “Paramilitary Groups in Northern Ireland,” p.4.

²⁴³ “Report Highlights Level of Extortion in the North”, *The Irish Times*, 5 April 2006.

²⁴⁴ Interview.

The INLA was also a hybrid organisation during the Troubles and until its announcement of the end campaign of violence in 2009. Responsible for 126 murders during the Troubles, it was considered by the IMC to have remained ‘a significant terrorist group’²⁴⁵ beyond the Belfast Agreement and was assessed in 2008 as continuing to present a threat, with capacity for extreme violence²⁴⁶ while also perpetrating serious crimes ‘including drug dealing, extortion, robbery and offences against the revenue such as fuel laundering and smuggling.’²⁴⁷

Since decommissioning its weapons in 2010 the leadership of the INLA have continued to commit to the peace process. However, there is minimal centralised control of the organisation and small factions of the organisation operate independently of each other across NI, with some members engaging in criminality including illicit drugs and extortion. It is also alleged to still be recruiting and to retain access to weapons, some of which it supplies to republican dissident groups. These links that some of its members still have with political violence and organised crime suggest that the INLA continues to remain a hybrid organisation.

As noted earlier, Dissident Republican groups, such as the RIRA, CIRA and ONH, also continue to exist as hybrid entities. British intelligence services assess them as presenting ‘the most serious current terrorist threat in Northern Ireland.’²⁴⁸ Responsible for between 15 and 40 terrorist attacks annually from 2000 to 2015²⁴⁹ they remain intent on dismantling the peace process and community recognition of normal policing by targeting the PSNI in particular. At the same time, they are engaging in organised crime to finance their campaigns. IMC reports have noted all of them as being heavily engaged in a

²⁴⁵ Independent Monitoring Commission, 1st Report, 20 April 2004, p.12

²⁴⁶ Independent Monitoring Commission, 22nd Report, 4 November 2009, p.19. p. 9

²⁴⁷ Independent Monitoring Commission, 20th Report, 10 November 2008, p. 9.

²⁴⁸ “Paramilitary Groups in Northern Ireland,” p.1.

²⁴⁹ Ibid.

range of criminal activities including drug dealing, robberies, smuggling, kidnapping and extortion.²⁵⁰ These groups are unlikely to transform any further as they are not committed to the political peace process. Similarly Loyalist paramilitary groups are currently unlikely to undergo more than a minor transformation in the absence of any robust political platform capable of representing the interests of its members.

Part III: The Northern Ireland Model and the Crime-Terror Nexus

Looking at the crime-terror nexus through the prism of the new Northern Ireland model gives rise to a number of important findings. Firstly, all of the Loyalist and Republican paramilitary organisations either have been or continue to be hybrid entities, engaging simultaneously in crime and terror. Those groups that operated during the Troubles and that declared ceasefires have undergone a minor transformation and continue to engage in organised crime while retaining a worrying capacity to return to terrorism. Dissident Republican organisations, meanwhile, operate as hybrids and continue to commit acts of terrorism.

The hybridisation of these organisations is a consequence of their need for funds to meet their annual operating expenses and to prepare for sustained campaigns of violence. This necessitated the assimilation of and direct engagement in a diverse range of criminal activities associated with organised crime groups as well as the development of lucrative alliances with organised crime syndicates, as outlined in Part II. In engaging in both forms of interaction, paramilitary organisations have demonstrated a remarkable ability to adapt and exploit, as well as develop, new opportunities for profiting from both domestic and transnational criminality. Notably, many assimilated activities such as extortion, armed robbery, kidnapping and the taxation of drug dealers occur within geographical areas over which the paramilitary groups assume control. Alliances also occur within Northern Ireland.

²⁵⁰ RIRA has been involved in drug dealing, kidnapping, robbery, extortion and smuggling: see Independent Monitoring Commission, 21st Report, 7 May 2009, p.11-12; ONH members have engaged in robbery, tobacco smuggling ad drug dealing: see 20th Report, 10 November 2008, p. 5; CIRA was noted as involved in a serious criminal activities including two armed robberies in 2009: see 21st Report, p.9.

However, as evidenced from money laundering and smuggling operations outlined in Part II, this type of interaction tends to be noticeably more transnational in nature, requiring increasing levels of sophistication.²⁵¹ During the Troubles, for example, the PIRA typically laundered money through domestic outlets such as video shops, taxi and security firms. Now, paramilitary organisations are profiting from more complex transnational money laundering schemes which employ offshore accounts to filter illicit proceeds of crime into the legal economy.

Secondly, the hybridisation and minor transformation of the paramilitary groups in Northern Ireland has implications not just for the domestic but also for the global terrorism and organised crime landscape. Through their engagement in organised crime, evidenced by activities such as weapons, drugs and cigarette smuggling, these paramilitary organisations, and the criminal networks that they have established, extend beyond Northern Ireland and are penetrating illicit economies in different regions of the world, including, for example, Europe and South East Asia. Given the evidence of transnational paramilitary-criminal activities referred to in Part II it is reasonable to surmise that some of the 100 organised crime groups known to be linked to the paramilitary organisations in Northern Ireland that the PCTF are monitoring are also operating transnationally. The result is that the engagement of paramilitary organisations in organised crime is both encouraging and facilitating organised crime in other countries. Similar concerns can be raised in the context of international terrorism, given that the hybridisation of Northern Ireland's paramilitary organisations has resulted both directly and indirectly in facilitating international terrorist organisations. The organisations in Northern Ireland have been complicit in transferring their knowledge base and skill sets to terrorist organisations elsewhere. We reference in Part's I and II the PIRA's alliance with FARC and the passing on of bombing techniques between terrorist organisations. FARC is also reported to have replicated the PIRA's structural composition.²⁵²

²⁵¹ Both Loyalist and Republican groups have profited from transnational criminal operations, as outlined in Part II. See also Donohue, "The Cost of Counterterrorism." Donohue notes that Republican arms have come from the Balkans and Loyalist paramilitaries have obtained weapons from South Africa; p.128.

²⁵² <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/1559348/IRA-training-haunts-Colombias-guerrilla-war.html>.

Within the PIRA's broader structure, there were numerous independent brigades, each of which were made up of an indeterminate number of active service units. The South Armagh Brigade had a particularly high level of independence and

Thirdly, organised crime networks continue to profit from their interactions with Northern Ireland's paramilitary organisations. Using a variety of networks of their own they source illicit commodities for the organisations, arrange for their transportation, take payment and launder the proceeds. These syndicates have no political affiliations and, consequently, are able to enter into alliance transactions with paramilitary organisations from both sides of the political divide. What emerges, therefore, from this analysis is that the interactions between crime and terror in Northern Ireland comprises a complex web of networks between organised crime syndicates, each with their own networks of contributors to the sourcing, transportation and laundering processes, and various individuals, groups and factions associated with assorted paramilitary groups, all of which either engage in or retain a capacity for engaging in terrorism.²⁵³ Conversely, there is evidence that organised crime groups conflict with paramilitary organisations in some situations, particularly when there is rivalry for control over illicit trade or a breakdown of an existing alliance. This, in turn, impacts in how both types of organisations establish and maintain their alliance interactions.

Fourthly, all of the paramilitary organisations analysed in this article, both those that have decommissioned and those that have not, continue to be involved with criminality and are likely to continue to do so until they disband. This seems to be the case irrespective of their organisational structure. Some groups that have announced the end of their campaigns, such as the PIRA and UVF, maintain a centralised command structure and arguably greater oversight of the actions of their members, suggesting an improved ability to prevent criminality. The PIRA has long been regarded as one of the most highly organised terrorist groups the world has seen, with a hierarchically organised command structure.²⁵⁴ However, it also employs a system of isolated, independent cells or active service

was really “under the control of local chieftains … rather than part of a structured centrally directed organization.” Brendan O’Brien, *The Long War: The IRA and Sinn Féin* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1999).

²⁵³ in 2014 the Home Office Border Force, HMRC and National Crime Agency highlighted that, in Northern Ireland, there is ‘clear evidence’ that organised criminal groups with presumed loyalist and nationalist affiliations are prepared actively to trade contraband cigarettes with each other, with one group smuggling, and then selling to the other for onward distribution; ‘this further blurs any clear delineation of criminal activity according to particular factions / groups;’ <https://www.parliament.uk/documents/commons-committees/home-affairs/Tobacco-written-evidence.pdf>. Also, interview 24.08.18

²⁵⁴ John Horgan & Max. Taylor, The provisional Irish republican army: Command and functional structure.

units, which has allowed for autonomous acts of criminality committed by members and former members since the announcement of the end of its campaign. The UVF also has a clear hierarchical command and control structure. Yet in spite of this and its senior ranks calling on members to desist from criminal activity, its lower ranks continue to be involved in widespread criminality.²⁵⁵ Other groups, such as the INLA and UDA, can be more accurately described as comprising a loose network of autonomous factions, mostly operating in their own interests while relying on their association with the organisation. While the leadership of all of these organisations have publicly declared that their members should disengage from criminality, their members continue to profit from crime, ensuring that the links between these organisations and criminality remain intact. Until these organisations disband, which the leadership will not yet countenance, their members will continue to engage in organised crime.

It should be noted also that the engagement of Northern Ireland's paramilitary groups in organised crime has important implications for scholarship on the crime-terror nexus. The models of crime-terror interaction developed to date fail to accurately map the complex and dynamic interactions between crime and terror in Northern Ireland. The ability, for example, of paramilitary organisations to decommission and commit to ceasefires but retain a capacity for terrorism does not fall neatly within these models. Moreover, they do not adequately account for the conflicts that occur between terrorist and organised crime groups. Nor do they capture situations where individuals and loose networks associated with paramilitary organisations oscillate between active terrorism, periods of inactivity and organised crime while the groups to which they are associated may or may not have decommissioned or sanctioned their acts. Existing nexus models also assume that terrorist organisations are capable of undergoing complete transformations to organised crime groups and vice versa, whereas evidence in Northern Ireland, where no complete transformations have yet taken place, suggests that there is a need for grading to reflect different scales of transformation at different times. The impact of existing scholarly models cannot be underestimated, particularly as they are influencing strategic decision-

²⁵⁵ Interview.

making aimed at identifying and countering linkages between crime and terror at the international level. However, their inapplicability to the situation in Northern Ireland highlights an important gap in existing scholarship and suggests that national models of crime-terror interaction are better able to capture the nuances of these links and their repercussions in any particular jurisdiction than those designed for universal application.

In addition, the organisational structure and hybridised composition of the paramilitary organisations impacts on law enforcement responses. The autonomous arrangements of a number of the organisations and the ability of different cells within them to engage in criminality of their choice renders it difficult, and perhaps even unnecessary, to assess the split between personal profits and the desire to fund terrorist activity or establish any clear distinction between terrorism and organised crime.²⁵⁶ As a result of the autonomous nature of the criminality of several of the existing paramilitary organisations, the police response has been to concentrate on individuals as opposed to groups.²⁵⁷ In terms of developing effective responses to the criminality of the paramilitary groups it is essential that the phenomena of organised crime and terrorism should be viewed in Northern Ireland through the same lens and treated one and the same. Both scholarship and officialdom have been slow to recognise this.

It has taken time for the United Kingdom government to respond to the challenges presented by paramilitary criminal activity in Northern Ireland. An Organised Crime Task Force was established in 2000 but it was not until 15 years later that a framework was agreed by the United Kingdom and Irish governments and the Northern Ireland Executive, which resolves to bring about the end paramilitarianism and its associated criminality.²⁵⁸ As a result of this agreement a Paramilitary Crime Task Force was established in 2017, which is comprised of officers from the PSNI, NCA, HMRC and has the specific remit of tacking all forms of criminality linked to paramilitarianism. To date, it has

²⁵⁶ See also <https://www.parliament.uk/documents/commons-committees/home-affairs/Tobacco-written-evidence.pdf>

²⁵⁷ Interview.

²⁵⁸ Fresh Start Agreement https://www.northernireland.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/nigov/a-fresh-start-stormont-agreement_0.pdf

seized an estimated £58,000 worth of drugs and illicit tobacco products preventing the loss of £1,237,462 in revenue, as well as retained £50,000 worth of cash.²⁵⁹

These successes are tainted, however, by uncertainty about the Task Force's future. It is now two and half years into its five-year programme of funding until 2022 but there has been no clear commitment by the UK government that it will provide further funding beyond then or, if it will, what the budget will be, making long-term planning problematic.²⁶⁰ This requires urgent commitment and funding from the three Executive bodies responsible for the framework committed to ending paramilitary activity and disbanding all organisations and their structures.

Conclusion

This article has utilized a wide range of empirical evidence to develop a new Terrorism-Organised Crime Interaction Model to identify and accurately understand the complex and dynamic interactions between terrorism and organised crime in Northern Ireland. This is the first national theoretical model of its kind?, designed for application specifically at the local level,. In doing so, it fills an important gap in existing scholarship. Indeed, there has been a lack of scholarship examining the nexus between terrorism and organised crime in Northern Ireland, while existing crime-terror theoretical models intent on universal application do not adequately capture the complex realities of the nexus in Northern Ireland. Looking through the lens of the Northern Ireland model reveals an array of domestic and transnational activity assimilation and alliances, as well as other new forms of interactions including conflicts and different gradations of transformation.

²⁵⁹ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-43698164>

²⁶⁰ Interview.

The Northern Ireland model illustrates that one of the most important legacies of the Troubles and the post peace process era is the hybridisation and minor transformation of paramilitary groups in Northern Ireland. The groups that formed during the Troubles used their influence to gain positions of strength in local communities. Having secured these positions, they engaged in large scale organised crime, evidenced by assimilation and alliance interactions, involving a diverse range of activities. As hybrid organisations they continued to engage in these activities beyond the 1998 Good Friday Agreement when a reduction in security as part of a UK government policy designed to augment peace and reconciliation arguably allowed for increased levels of paramilitary criminal activity.²⁶¹ The hybridisation of Northern Ireland's paramilitary groups, therefore, spans a remarkable 50-year period from the start of the Troubles in 1969 to the present day, which highlights the extent and longevity of the convergence of crime and terrorism in the country, unparalleled anywhere else in Europe.

In 2014 the UN Security Council, pursuant to resolution 2195, called upon states to better understand and address the nexus between organised crime and terrorism, a point reiterated recently in October 2018 by the UN Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED). It is notable that bodies such as UNICRI and the Global Counterterrorism Forum, responding to this resolution, are currently proposing to adopt existing crime-terror conceptual models which are intent on universal application to assist states in developing national policy, law enforcement and intelligence responses.²⁶² However, this article has shown that these models are not always effective when applied at the national level. In the light of these findings, it is likely that these models may equally be unable to capture and explain the evolution, synergies and interactions between terrorism and organised crime in other jurisdictions and across different operational environments. In response to CTED and resolution 2195, this article advocates consideration of the adoption of national theoretical models as a standardised methodological approach for identifying and understanding the nexus, rather than one-size-fits-all models devoid of

²⁶¹ Moran, "Paramilitaries," p. 269-270.

²⁶² UNICRI is currently submitting its draft to the UNSC for consideration. <https://www.thegctf.org/Home/ArtMID/491/ArticleID/64/Ninth-GCTF-Ministerial-Plenary-Meeting>

local context, recognising that they will have transnational value and will be significant for mapping and understanding the nexus in other affected jurisdictions.

The UK and Irish Governments and the Northern Ireland Executive have recognised—and tackled head-on for the first time in the past twenty years since the signing of the Good Friday Agreement—the terrorism-organised crime nexus in Northern Ireland with the establishment of the Paramilitary Crime Task Force. This has been a vital development as it allows for a holistic view of the nexus drawing together collective expertise from the PSNI, National Crime Agency, Organised Crime Task Force and HM Customs and Revenue. At the same time the Paramilitary Crime Task Force and law enforcement agencies are finding it difficult to understand the terrorism-organised crime nexus as the Northern Ireland Executive, dormant since January 2017, has not yet developed a comprehensive policy on it. The lack of an authoritative executive body has also restricted urgently-required legislative reform necessary to enhance the ability of the Paramilitary Crime Task Force to tackle money laundering and conspiracy-related offences. At the same time, the future of the Paramilitary Crime Task Force is uncertain due to funding limitations. This also comes at a period of marked political uncertainty as a result of Brexit and its implications for border control between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland and policing the transnational criminal activity of paramilitary and organised criminal groups across Europe and beyond. While the Interaction model responds to recent calls by the UN to encourage increased understanding of the nexus in order to develop context-specific responses, it also underlines the considerable challenges that lie ahead in countering the interactions between terrorism and organised crime in Northern Ireland. It is evident that continued and urgent investment is now required to enhance research, intelligence sharing and cooperation between non-governmental organisations and national, regional and international law enforcement agencies concerned with further understanding and tackling these legacies of the Troubles.

