

Maritime Terrorism

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It is a pleasure and a privilege to serve as editor for the special edition of "Maritime Terrorism". The U.S. Army Counterterrorism Manual defines terrorism as the calculated use of violence or threat of violence to attain goals, often political or ideological in nature, by intimidation, or coercion. Terrorism is a criminal act, sometimes symbolic in nature, intended to influence an audience beyond the immediate victims. Key words are "criminal" and "political". Concepts have not changed since Thucydides. Technology and globalization has changed. Today terrorism is linked to transnational organized crime through narcotics, weapons, people, training, and commerce (money).

The Maritime Terrorism Research Center defines Maritime Terrorism as "the use or threat of violence against a ship (civilian as well as military), its passengers or sailors, cargo, a port facility, or if the purpose is solely a platform for political ends. The definition can be expanded to include the use of the maritime transportation system to smuggle terrorists or terrorist materials into the targeted country. Maritime terrorism is motivated by political goals beyond the immediate act of attacking a maritime target".

Maritime terrorism and unconventional warfare were first addressed in "The Landmark Thucydides, A Comprehensive Guide to The Peloponnesian War". Thucydides also addressed the need for coalitions and the importance of commerce during his "long war".

I am sure the reader will appreciate the contributions of our multi-disciplined authors. The international community is familiar with the sea and its history. National, inter-national, and transnational terrorism can only be countered by the strengthening of international coalitions in defending the rule of law and our human security. Maritime terrorism has morphed beyond ramming and hostage taking. Unfortunately the international community has witnessed homicide / suicide vessels, drugs-for-arms, trafficking of dual use equipment, smuggling of chemical precursors, human smuggling and trafficking, and high yield chokepoints on the "blue part of the map". The Cold War is over. Unconventional warfare and unconventional weapons are now at sea. Our militaries and law enforcement need to fuse intelligence, protect our shipping lanes, and our ports against "all hazard" (CBRNE) man-made disasters. Offensive strategies are also needed to eliminate, contain and control this plague called "terrorism".

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