

Countering Foreign Terrorist Fighters: The Importance of Internal Security for Outlier Nations

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Research Questions and Thesis

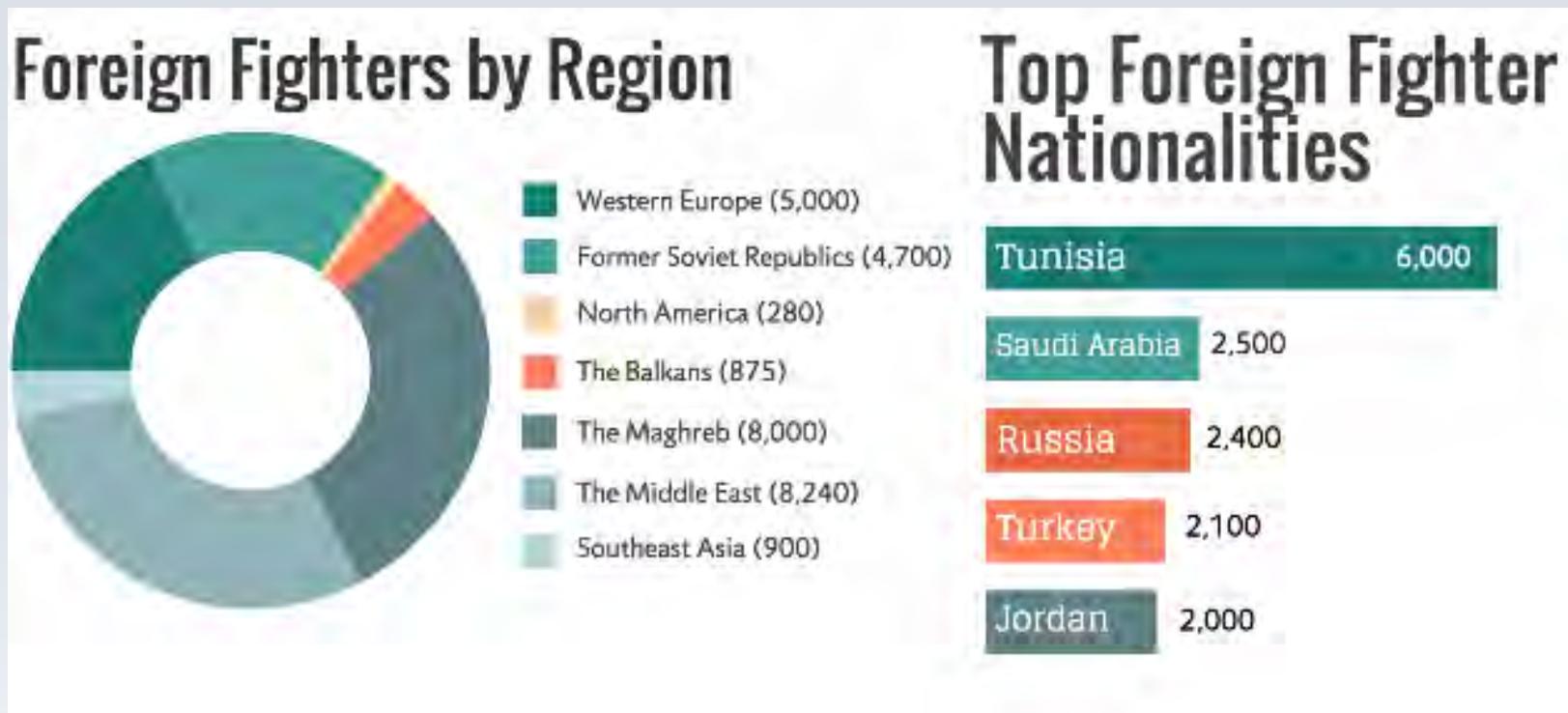
- Research Questions

- What accounts for the difference in foreign fighters per capita of the outlying nations (Belgium and Tunisia versus Indonesia)?
- How should these differences drive policy making in countering foreign terrorist fighters?
- Is compliance with UNSCR 2178's requirements for legislation and action plans for countering terrorism and violent extremism enough?

- Thesis

While implementing the requirements under UNSCR 2178 has been a priority for the international community, Nations must first look to strengthen internal measures to counter terrorism and violent extremism. International cooperation should come after the nation has developed and implemented effective counterterrorism and counter violent extremism policies.

Outlier Nations: Tunisia



As of October 2015

**Foreign Fighters: An Updated Assessment of the Flow of Foreign Fighters into Syria and Iraq, THE SOUFAN GRP., 6 (Dec. 2015).*

Outlier Nations: Belgium

- Belgium has produced the most foreign fighters per capita of all European countries
- As of October 2015, 470 individuals left Belgium for the Levant.

**Foreign Fighters: An Updated Assessment of the Flow of Foreign Fighters into Syria and Iraq, THE SOUFAN GRP., 6 (Dec. 2015).*



Outlier Nations: Indonesia

- As of November 2015, Indonesia has had relatively few foreign fighters per capita, with 700 individuals leaving for the Levant region.
 - However, according to the Soufan Group, analysts believe that the official number is too high, and that the number is no higher than 500 individuals.
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- *Foreign Fighters: An Updated Assessment of the Flow of Foreign Fighters into Syria and Iraq*, THE SOUFAN GRP., 6 (Dec. 2015).

Findings

Belgium

- The Belgian government is in compliance regarding UNSCR 2178's requirements of enacting legislation and "action plans" to counter terrorism and violent extremism.
- The Belgian government's CT and CVE policies and legislation are ineffective in combating the foreign terrorist fighter phenomenon.
 - These failures are largely driven by the following contextual variables:
 - 1. The federation of the nation and poor intergovernmental communication
 - 2. A large immigrant population which faces perceived alienation
 - 3. The presence of very active and efficient radical recruitment networks

Findings

Tunisia

- The Tunisian government has only partly complied with UNSCR 2178.
 - It is also too soon to tell whether Tunisia's counter terrorism legislation has been effective.
- Tunisia's CT and CVE policy failures are largely driven by a weak governance and weak border security.

Findings

Indonesia

- The Indonesian government is in compliance regarding UNSCR 2178's requirements of enacting legislation and "action plans" to counter terrorism and violent extremism.
- Indonesia is an example of relatively effective CT and CVE policies largely due to a focus on internal security measures.
 - Special Detachment 88 (a special security force with the Indonesian National Police [POLRI]) has neutralized as many as 450 militants between the years 2004-2009
 - Indonesia's National Defense Force (TNI) has also focused largely on internal security measures (even though their primary responsibility was external defense) rather than external security concerns.

Conclusion

- Compliance with UNSCR 2178 alone is not enough to create effective CT and CVE policies .
- Using Indonesia as an example of effective CT and CVE policies, outlier nations should focus on improving internal security measures.
 - Each Nation must develop country specific CT and CVE policies rather than implementing broad CT and CVE policy measures.