

Hezbollah in the Triple Frontier: How Political Discourse and National Identity Can Augment How We Understand Counterterrorism Efforts

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Overview:

Hezbollah has, seemingly, shifted its primary focus in the Triple Frontier of Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay from executing terrorist attacks to fundraising for the organization in its entirety. Between 1999 and 2003, Hizballah operative, Assad Barakat allegedly transferred about \$6 million per year to Hezbollah.¹ Though the threat might not be violent in nature, fundraising missions for the organization supported by illicit activity in the region poses a credible threat to regional security.

Regional factors commonly attributed to Hezbollah's presence:

- Different definitions of terrorism
- Limited border control
- Cultural affinity groups

Political discourse analysis can reveal the relationship, or lack thereof, between expressed national values, national identity, and regional cooperation. For this reason, I propose that analysis of political discourse should be used as a method of analyzing counterterrorism efforts in the Triple Frontier.



Data:

	Argentina	Brazil	Paraguay
# of speeches ³	6	3	4
Years	2007-2011	2015-2016	2010-2013
# of words	18,096	8,024	12,014

Figure 1.1

Conclusions:

I believe that analysis of counterterrorism efforts in the Triple Frontier can be further supplemented by analyzing political discourse. This study shows that Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay demonstrate differing values and perceptions of national identity which impact political action.

Further questions to consider include:

- What is the relationship, if any, between societies (local, regional, transnational) and the presence of Hezbollah in the Triple Frontier?
- What would a complete analysis of the history and political discourse of counterterrorism policy add to this discussion?
- Would analyzing discourse in native language impact analysis?

References:

1. Trevisi, A F. "ASSESSING THE TERRORIST THREAT IN THE TRI-BORDER AREA OF BRAZIL, PARAGUAY AND ARGENTINA." *IDC Herzylia*, pp. 1-71.
2. Speeches given by Heads of State (or their representatives) at the General Debate of UN General Assembly
3. Analytical framework outlined by Fairclough, Isabela, and Norman Fairclough. *Political Discourse Analysis: A Method for Advanced Students*, Taylor & Francis Group, 2013. ProQuest Ebook Central
4. United States, Congress, Federal Research Division, and Rex Hudson. "TERRORIST AND ORGANIZED CRIME GROUPS IN THE TRI-BORDER AREA (TBA) OF SOUTH AMERICA ." *TERRORIST AND ORGANIZED CRIME GROUPS IN THE TRI-BORDER AREA (TBA) OF SOUTH AMERICA*, Library of Congress, July 2003.

Examples of analysis⁴:

Argentina, 2011

Claim for action: "I am demanding...that the Islamic Republic of Iran submit to the legal authority and in particular allow for those who have been accused of some level of participation in the AMIA attack to be brought to justice."

Goal (G): "The message that we received from Iran...does not satisfy our demands, which...are for justice."

Circumstances: "We are one of the only two countries in the Americas that have been the target of international terrorism." [Claim supported by details of 1992 and 1994 attacks]

Means-Goal: "We could choose a court from a third country, by mutual agreement, in order for the court to provide the only thing we are demanding—that is, justice."

Values (V): We must achieve our goal "which is to defend the values of truth and justice." [Truth and justice for the nation are valued.]

Figure 1.2

Paraguay, 2013

Claim for action: "Paraguay reaffirms its unequivocal commitment to the fight against all activities of criminal organizations and calls for a stronger position on the part of developed countries..."

Goal (G): Our goals are to "fight against money laundering and the financing of terrorism."

Circumstances: "Paraguay also reaffirms its strong condemnation of terrorism in all forms and manifestations."

Means-Goal: "Joint international efforts are needed, therefore, in order to fight such scourges head on." [Reference to transnational crimes.]

Values (V): "Paraguay wishes to reiterate here its commitment to international peace and security."

Figure 1.3

Brazil, 2016

Claim for action: "the Organization should assert itself as a source of effective solutions."

Goal (G): "It is essential to make global governance structures more representative."

Circumstances: "From outbreaks of violent fundamentalism, we face both old and new threats that we have been unable to contain."

Means-Goal: "The very safety of our citizens ultimately depends on our collective action."

Values (V): "We would like to live in a world in which law prevails over force. We would like to have rules that reflect the pluralistic nature of the community of nations."

Figure 1.4