

VI. News

News from the Country Coordinators of TRI's Network of PhD Theses Writers

by Alex P. Schmid

The Terrorism Research Initiative (TRI) seeks to improve the quality of research on terrorism and counter-terrorism as well as related research on political violence and armed conflict. One instrument is TRI's annual award for the best doctoral dissertation in this field. Another is the maintenance of national or regional networks of post-graduate students working on their PhD theses.

Currently there are ten such networks in place and there has been some interest of creating additional ones. Each network has a local coordinator, often a PhD candidate him- or herself, in some cases an academic professor or professional with a PhD degree. One of the objectives of local networks is to make the writing of a doctoral thesis a less solitary experience and to allow young scholars to reap the multiple benefits of cooperation – in line with the mission statement of the Terrorism Research Initiative “enhancing security through collaborative research”.

Some of our national and (sub-)regional networks are more active than others. Below a summary of progress reports received from three networks: the United Kingdom, the Nordic countries and Sub-Saharan Africa.

(i) TAPVA: TRI's UK Network (based on report by Dr. Gordon Clubb, coordinator TAPVA)

Over the last year, the Terrorism and Political Violence Association (TAPVA) has concluded the first phase of its Knowledge Exchange project, which involved creating research partnerships within the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the Home Office and a range of other partners. This project had secured over £10,000 in funding. A second phase of the project will be announced in September 2014. Details on one aspect of the project—building links with professional services—can be found at: <http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/impactofsocialsciences/2013/12/17/professional-service-sector-pathways-to-impact/>

Members of TAPVA across the UK have also been involved in writing a book which is due to be published in early 2015 -<http://www.amazon.co.uk/Terrorism-Political-Violence-Caroline-Kennedy-Pipe/dp/1446272818>. The Foreword to the volume has been provided by the coordinator of the country networks, Alex P. Schmid

TAPVA's energetic team of Research Assistants has hosted two successful events at the University of Leeds, seeking to engage undergraduate students with cutting-edge terrorism research. The first event saw Paul Rogers and Jason Ralph deliver presentations on 'Obama's War on Terror'. The second event, 'The IRA's Ceasefire: 20 Years On', saw presentations from Jonathan Tonge, Paul Morrison, Caroline Kennedy-Pipe, Aaron Edwards, Sophie Whiting and Gordon Clubb.

Over the coming year, TAPVA plans to re-invigorate its PhD theses writers network. It will also announce details about its second international conference in 2015, following the success of the 2013 Horizon Scanning conference held in London where Prof. Alex Schmid gave the keynote address. The UK country coordinator, Gordon Clubb completed his PhD thesis on “Disengagement and De-Radicalisation in the Irish Republican Movement” in June 2014. Shortly thereafter he has been appointed as a Lecturer in International Security at the University of Leeds in the School of Politics and International Studies.

(ii) TRI's Nordic PhD Theses Writers Network (based on report from coordinator Cato Hemmingby)

The Norwegian & Nordic network of PhD theses writers remains a small circle, as there are very few PhD-project opportunities, at least in Norway – and this even after the 22 July 2011 attacks by Anders Behring Breivik in Oslo and Utøya. The outcome of the recent Norwegian national research grants round (SAMRISK II), setting the course for the next five years, is not likely to change this situation. Outside the Norwegian Police University College and the Norwegian Defence Research Institute (FFI), there are few funded opportunities for terrorism research for PhD theses writers.

Some members of the Nordic network, in particular Jacob Aasland Ravndal (FFI) and Cato Hemmingby, have been quite active with regard to participation in conferences and workshops at home and abroad. The coordinator has approached two more potential candidates for the TRI network at FFI. Yet they have not yet confirmed their participation. There is also a PhD-candidate in Bergen who might join the network in the near future. He is working under Prof. Jan Oscar Engene, on counter-jihadist movements. The coordinator sees the benefits of closer links with other Nordic countries and has linked up with Hans Brun in Sweden. Brun is a PhD-candidate working with Prof. Magnus Ranstorp, although he is placed at Kings College in London.

PhD theses in the making in the Nordic network include

Name of author: Hans Brun (Sweden).

Thesis title: The Use of Hard Power and its impact on the IRA's operational capabilities.

University, institution: Kings College, Dep. of War Studies.

Expected date of completion: Late 2014

Name of author: Cato Hemmingby

Thesis title: The Terrorist Target Selection Process: Influencing factors with regard to terrorists' choice of targets.

University, institution: Norwegian Police University College

Expected date of completion: 2016

Name of author: Anne Siri Johnsen

Thesis title: Helicopter Emergency Medical Services in Major Incidents: Patterns of use and influence on outcome.

University, institution: University of Stavanger

Expected date of completion: 2019

Name of author: Jacob Aasland Ravndal

Thesis title: Far-Right Violence in Europe, 1990-2012: Patterns and Processes.

University, institution: Norwegian Defence Research Institute, Terrorism Research Group.

Expected date of completion: 2016

(iii) Southern and Sub-Saharan Africa Network (based on report by Coordinator Petra Harvest)

While there have been no joint workshops in the past year, the African network is expanding. Tonie Botha joined the network in 2013. He is working on a thesis with the title «Broadening the Concept of Security to Include Threats Other Than Military Threats» is conducted at the University of Pretoria and will probably finish in 2015.

A postgraduate student from Nigeria, Emeka Thaddues Njoku, is working on «Counter Terrorism and Civil Society in Nigeria» at the University of Ibadan. He is still at the beginning stages of the thesis. Lyle Pienaar, who is studying at the University of Pretoria and whose thesis is on organised crime as a national security issue, will complete his PhD thesis before the end of 2014. Anneli Botha, who is working on «Radicalization to Commit Terrorism from a Political Socialization Perspective in Kenya and Uganda», is planning to complete her thesis this year, graduating by early 2015 at the University of the Free State, South Africa. Petra Harvest also hopes to complete her thesis in early 2015.

Leaza Jernberg, is studying at the University of the Witwatersrand. Her thesis on the security of sea lanes will still take some time to complete due to the fact that she recently gave birth to twins. Andrews Atta-Asamoah, from Ghana, who is studying through the University of Cape Town, and whose topic is “Transnational Security Challenges and Statehood in Africa. Case Study: Drug Trafficking in Ghana”, is planning to complete the thesis later this year, graduating by early 2015. Samuel Adotey Anum, from Ghana, is studying through the University of Pretoria. His topic is “The new insurgencies and mass uprisings in Africa and international involvement: Selected case studies”. Since he was recently posted abroad, this has slowed the progress of his thesis.

Charles Nyuykonge, who is studying through the University of Zululand, and whose topic is «A review of international administration of justice: The relevance of the Rwandan GaÇaca restorative justice system for global peace and security», is very close to the completion of his doctoral thesis. Happy Kayuni, from Malawi, who is studying at the University of the Western Cape and whose topic is «The Westphalian Model and Trans-border Ethnic Identity: The case of the Chewa Kingdom of Malawi, Mozambique and Zambia» will be completing thesis work by September 2014.

NB: All thesis writers who complete their PhD in 2014 are encouraged to submit their doctoral dissertation for the competition for the annual TRI award for the best PhD thesis in terrorism and counterterrorism (Deadline: 31 March 2015).

List of Country/Regional Coordinators of the PhD Thesis Writers Network

- The United Kingdom. Country coordinator: [Gordon Clubb](#)
- The Netherlands and Flanders (Belgium). Country coordinator: [Daan Weggeman](#)
- Russia. Country coordinator: [Yulia Netesova](#)

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- The United States. Country coordinator: [Neil D. Shortland](#)
 - Canada. Country coordinator: [Nick Deshpande](#)
 - South Africa. Country coordinator: [Petra Harvest](#)
 - Australia. Country coordinator: [Levi-Jay West](#)
 - Norway. Country Coordinator: [Cato Hemmingby](#)
 - Spain. Country Coordinator: [Miguel Peco](#)
 - Brazil. Country Coordinator: [Jorge Lasmar](#)

PS: If you want to participate in the creation of other country/regional networks, contact Dr. Alex Schmid, Coordinator TRI Theses Writers Network at apschmid@terrorismanalysts.com. If you want to join an existing one, contact the country coordinator.