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Strategies for combating dark networks



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Everton, Sean F.

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Abstract

Our goal in this paper is to explore two generic approaches to disrupting dark networks: kinetic and nonkinetic. The kinetic approach involves aggressive and offensive measures to

eliminate or capture network members and their supporters, while the non-kinetic approach involves the use of subtle, non-coercive means for combating dark networks. Two strategies derive from the kinetic approach: Targeting and Capacity-building. Four strategies derive from the non-kinetic approach: Institution-Building, Psychological Operations, Information Operations and Rehabilitation. We use network data from Noordin Top's South East Asian terror network to illustrate how both kinetic and non-kinetic strategies could be pursued depending on a commander's intent. Using this strategic framework as a backdrop, we strongly advise the use of SNA metrics in developing alternative counter-terrorism strategies that are context dependent rather than letting SNA metrics define and drive a particular strategy.

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