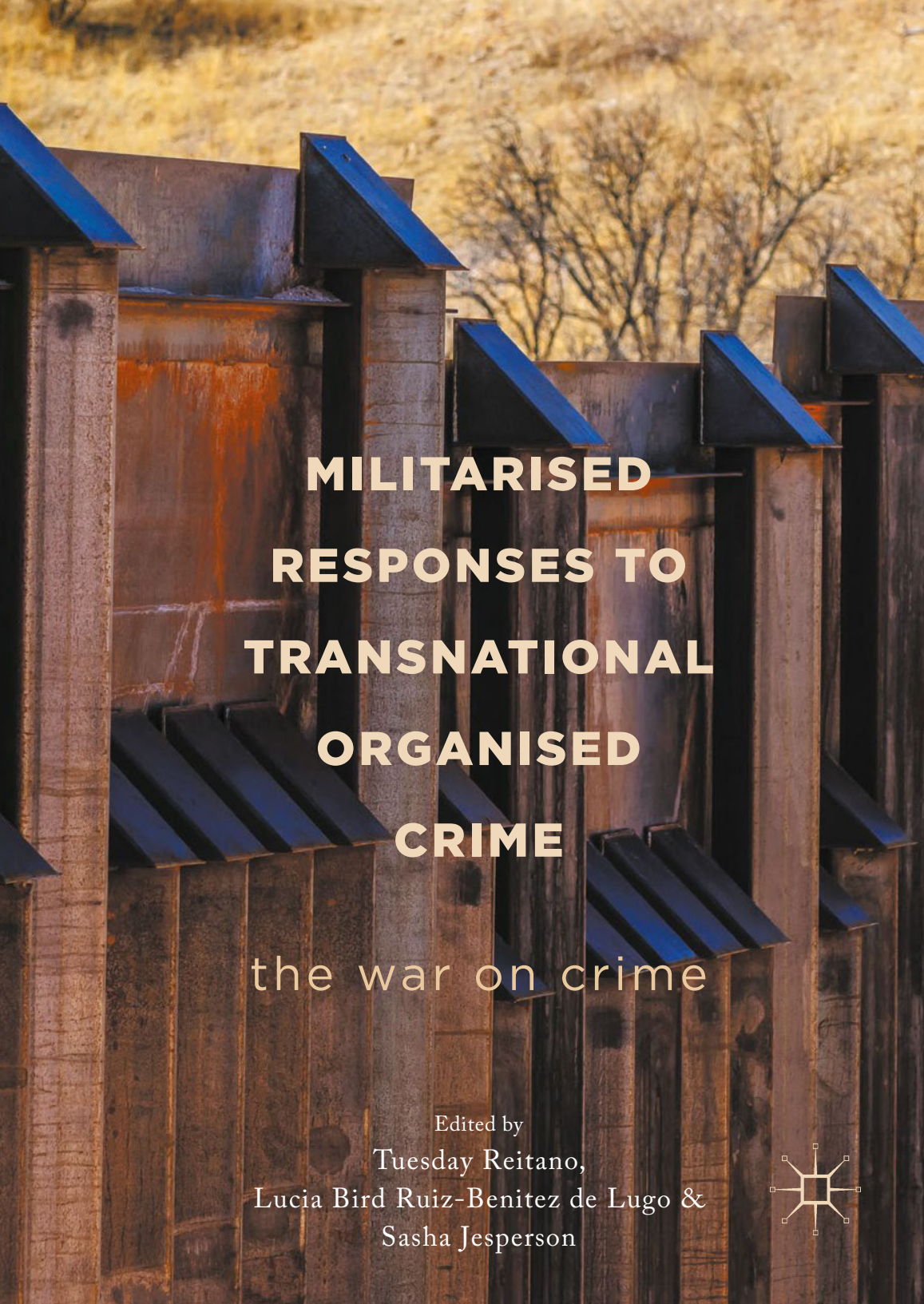

MILITARISED RESPONSES TO TRANSNATIONAL ORGANISED CRIME

the war on crime

Edited by
Tuesday Reitano,
Lucia Bird Ruiz-Benitez de Lugo &
Sasha Jesperson

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Contents

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List of Figures

CHAPTER 1

Assessing Militarised Responses to Transnational Organised Crime

Sasha Jesperson

Organised crime continues to plague society. Although we know much more about it, how it functions, who is involved and why it persists, we are still no closer towards eradicating it. Policymakers are beginning to understand that any response needs to be multifaceted, dynamic and persistent; however, they continue to search for an elusive silver bullet. Despite the growing diversity of our organised crime–response toolbox, military solutions continue to be widely prioritised. Perhaps it is the quick wins, the direct pursuit of criminals or the outright show of force that creates the impression that action is being taken. Nevertheless, these responses are not always the most suitable.

Across all four areas of criminal activities that are explored in this book, military activity is considered a key element of the response. This was certainly the case in the response to Somali piracy, where the lack of a functioning state provided the opportunity to use force in a way that has not been possible in the Gulf of Guinea, or other areas plagued by pirates. Poaching in the Horn of Africa has also spawned a range of organisations ready to use

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military techniques against organised crime. Vetpaw[1] is only one amongst the most notorious of a plethora of organisations launched by retired members of the armed forces. The International Anti-Poaching Foundation was founded by ex-special operations military sniper Damien Mander. Maisha Consulting, an Israeli security company that specialises in wildlife protection includes many former soldiers in its ranks, primarily special forces and intelligence.

The other two areas considered in this book—drug trafficking and migration—are not immune to military responses. As the Health Poverty Action chapter points out, the extreme end of the 'war on drugs' has seen CIA operatives and heavily militarised civilian forces engaging in covert operations to stop drugs entering the US. Borrowing from piracy, in particular the success of operation ATALANTA, naval capacities have become a key part of the European response to migration, aiming to deter people smugglers in the Mediterranean.

Of course, not all military actions are unhelpful. For example, the Royal Lancers Counter Poaching Coordination Team, part of the British Army, shaped the role of armed forces in anti-poaching operations by developing a strategic understanding of how herds moved in order to pre-empt and cut off poacher movements. Like any response to organised crime, the role and impact of military responses is mixed and requires a deeper assessment to understand what it can offer and how they might interlink with other approaches.

That is what this volume seeks to do. It is the culmination of a series of workshops jointly organised by the Global Initiative against Transnational Organized Crime and the Royal United Services Institute to discuss and debate militarised approaches to crime. Each workshop focused on a different form of criminality. Although we are witnessing increasing crossover between crime types—for example, the Akasha family in Kenya is linked to the heroin trade as well as ivory smuggling—responses still tend to focus primarily on one crime type. Such crossover does mean that responses, although focussed on a specific illicit market or activity, encounter or hinder a range of activity. An EU-funded project under the Cocaine Route Programme, AIRCOP, established Joint Airport Interdiction Taskforces in South American, Caribbean and West African airports. These taskforces seized cash, wildlife products and falsified medicines, although the primary aim is to interdict drug traffickers.

The workshops brought together a range of perspectives from academics, practitioners and policymakers, those in support of military responses and those opposed, those who have been directly involved in

military action, those that have evaluated it, and those that have proposed alternative solutions.

In this volume, we have maintained the balance between these perspectives in order to draw out the nuances of the debate and understand what military approaches can contribute towards organised crime responses, but also where it can undermine them. The evidence on which organised crime analyses are based, while growing, remains thin, particularly when it comes to evaluating specific responses. This volume begins to fill that gap, as many chapters are based on empirical evidence.

What Is a Militarised Response?

At the outset, it is necessary to define the contours of this debate, in particular, what a militarised approach entails and how it comes about. As I have written elsewhere,[2] militarised approaches are at one end of a spectrum that extends to people-centred development approaches. In light of the discussions around comprehensive approaches, responses to organised crime should sit near the centre of this spectrum. They should constitute a mix of security responses that combine intelligence, law enforcement, and the direct pursuit of criminals with development strategies that engage with the factors that make a country vulnerable to organised crime.

Even in countries where different programmes are underway across this spectrum they rarely interact or work in collaboration. Development actors are beginning to focus directly on organised crime. For instance, the German development agency, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), is supporting the fight against poaching in Africa and targeting illegal trade chains in Asia. However, other programmes that have a direct impact on organised crime, such as livelihood programming, are often not considered part of the response to organised crime. Rather development is primarily viewed in terms of how it is affected by organised crime, or, as in Health Poverty Action's chapter, how military responses to organised crime affect development. Many chapters in this volume conclude that development should play a more prominent role, most notably Rivzi's contribution, which argues that migration is merely a symptom of conditions in source countries—an area where development can have a significant impact.

While development may be a recommendation of some chapters, the focus remains on the other half of the spectrum. On the security side,

there is also great diversity. At the far end of the spectrum is direct military involvement. After the war in Bosnia, organised crime was a major problem. When the violence ended, the criminal actors who had played a key role during the war were eager to sustain their illicit activity bolstered by the legitimacy they had gained by facilitating a steady supply of food, fuel, weapons and even jeans in wartime. The EU took over from UN and NATO forces in post-conflict reconstruction with two missions, the EU Police Mission (EUPM), launched in 2003, and EU Force Althea (EUFOR), launched in 2004. EUFOR was a military mission deployed to oversee the military implementation of the Dayton Peace Agreement. In order to address organised crime EUFOR launched operations to directly pursue criminals, often independent of Bosnian police or military forces who were viewed by many as collaborating with criminals.

EUPM had a different approach. European law enforcement officers were co-located with their Bosnian counterparts. The mission led the security sector reform process, and in its final two phases, from 2009 to 2012, corruption and organised crime was the sole focus. Although the process was highly politicised and controversial, EUPM worked in partnership with local forces. In seeking to address organised crime, EUPM personnel worked with these forces on cases to identify knowledge and capacity gaps and trained them accordingly. Although EUPM was a security focused response, it was far removed from the direct military approach of EUFOR. It employed a partnership model and engaged in capacity building, shifting much closer to the middle of the spectrum.

The contributions in this volume engage with responses at different points along this spectrum. The civilian forces referred to by Erickson, Health Poverty Action and McDermott, although not military per se, can still be located towards the security end of this spectrum, as can the naval forces discussed by Forbes and Shortland in Somalia, and Roberts in the Mediterranean. Although not a direct focus, the activities of organisations like Vetpaw, referred to by Maguire, also fit here. They share a focus on direct action, and a disregard of local capacity or institutions, as well as for human rights, sustainability, or even in some instances, due process.

However, not all military action exists at the hard end of the spectrum. Some military engagement employs similar strategies to EUPM, working in partnership with local actors and seeking to build capacity to ensure long-term engagement on organised crime threats. This form of

engagement is discussed in Ralby's chapter, which focuses on piracy in West Africa. Ralby refers to military action in the region as 'cooperation' rather than direct engagement.

Other contributions focus specifically on law enforcement of the type pursued by EUPM, such as Sellar's chapter. Such an approach is posited as an alternative to direct military engagement, particularly as it focuses on ensuring adequate legislation is in place to prosecute individuals involved in organised crime. Shortland highlights the essential role this plays—unless these factors are addressed crime is likely to return once international military attention wanes. This has been widely recognised, although not adequately accounted for in the context of drug trafficking. Effective military or law enforcement action has created a balloon effect where criminal activity is pushed elsewhere. This is cited as the reason West Africa became a transit hub for cocaine originating in South America destined for the European market in the 2000s, with increased attention in that region reopening the Caribbean route in the mid-2010s.[3]

Shortland argues the same is true for the Horn of Africa. Although the military response to piracy is recognised as a success, it merely deterred pirates while the risk was too high. All the conditions that allowed piracy to flourish in coastal communities remain in place today. Waning international attention could result in a resurgence of piracy in the region.

Ungoverned Spaces

Perhaps the greatest determinant of whether a response will be positioned at the hard end of the spectrum is the level of governance in the region. When military forces were deployed in Bosnia, there were limited governance structures in place. While the High Representative sought to rebuild these structures, EUFOR, operating in a governance vacuum, appeared vindicated in its direct pursuit of organised criminals. In contrast, as EUPM was deployed to restore the security sector, it played a key role in reconstituting police and ensuring they were equipped to pursue organised criminals, arguably having a more sustainable impact.

Similarly, as Forbes and Ralby point out, Somalia's statelessness effectively gave the international community, endorsed by UN Security Council resolutions, carte blanche in their response to piracy in the Gulf of Aden. In contrast, a similar strategy is not possible in the Gulf of Guinea.

Although there are still a number of fragile states in the region, they are able to develop their own maritime strategy, even if assisted by internationals. There are also strong states, such as Nigeria, Ghana, Togo and Cote d'Ivoire that are playing a key role in the region, supported by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). Nigeria even has a law preventing internationals from being armed on vessels in Nigerian waters.

However, assumptions on governance are not always well-founded, and in these cases military action can be more damaging than helpful. Von Hoesslin and Bird, for example, discuss how private security employees often engage in pre-emptive attacks, expecting to be operating in an empty environment where the normal rules that regulate military action do not apply. The result can be violations of human rights and international law, as well as escalating violence by initiating an arms race with groups benefiting from criminal activity. This makes it clear that many factors need to be considered before deciding which mechanisms to deploy to respond to organised crime.

Book Structure

In the next chapter, Shaw considers the trends, rationales and justifications of militarised responses. This chapter provides an overview and background to the evolution of militarised responses to organised crime, beginning with the war on drugs in the 1970s and continuing into other forms of illicit activity from wildlife crime to migration to piracy. It provides the context for the subsequent debates regarding the role of militarisation.

The first section focuses on the illegal wildlife trade. As violent criminal networks have become increasingly involved in the trafficking of wildlife, pushing iconic species to the brink of extinction, the argument for militarised responses has become increasingly vocal, both to protect the remaining wildlife, and to address the threat posed by poachers. This is resulting in an arms race between poachers and rangers, with a consequential rising death toll. This section focuses on outlining the effective use of military or security-based strategies to counter wildlife crime within a policy framework which combines other strategies, including criminal justice and community development responses.

Humphrys opens this section with a discussion on the underpinnings of the response to the illegal wildlife trade, and the politicisation of the military response. Rademeyer and Maguire's chapters draw on empirical

research of particular regions affected by the illegal wildlife trade where military strategies have been employed—Southern Africa and Kenya, respectively—to highlight the flaws of a purely militarised response. Sellar concludes the section by exploring the commonly subordinated role of law enforcement, encouraging increased cooperation between military, police, and speciality wildlife protection bodies.

In the section on piracy we explore this phenomenon in its various manifestations across the globe, highlighting differences and identifying parallels. The naval response to Somali piracy is typically portrayed as one of the key success stories of militarised approaches, and is now being proposed in other theatres across the world, as well as for other crimes. A review of the spectrum of responses, from the deployment of navies and armed contractors to protect shipping lanes, and the impact these had on piracy allows for a greater understanding of best practice, and permits a stringent analysis of the scope for possible replication.

Forbes examines the successes of the military response in Somalia, emphasising that it was only one element of the wider response. Ralby draws on the lessons from Somalia and considers how the response on the opposite side of the continent has been managed. Von Hoesslin and Bird contrast the mode and mechanics of Somalian and South-East Asian piracy to highlight how the response to the former may not be merely transferred onto another. Finally, Shortland reflects on how many lessons from the Somalian experience have been ignored going forward, raising the spectre not only of renewed piracy in this region, but missing an opportunity to hone piracy responses globally.

Although migration is a multi-faceted problem with a wide range of push and pull factors, responses to the current migration crisis in the Mediterranean have relied heavily on military strategies, including increased naval patrols and the interdiction of boats. The result is the criminalisation of migrants rather than the criminal actors facilitating their transit, with implications for human rights. These strategies respond to the final stage of the supply chain, with little impact on migration flows.

Rivzi opens this section by contextualising the role of smugglers as a product of a new migration paradigm. Reitano follows by looking at the nature of the smuggling market, how it is structured and functions and how a security first, militarised response will make the smugglers richer, more professional and increasingly criminalised, adversely affecting the balance of power between migrant and smuggler. Roberts engages with the European response to migration in the Mediterranean, debunking

some of the popular misconceptions that undermine our ability to effectively respond. Erickson focusses on migration into the US from Latin America, and specifically on the role of US Customs and Border Protection, a quasi-paramilitary police.

The 'war on drugs' has been widely discredited for its focus on lower level operatives which engender more clandestine trafficking methods, overburdened criminal justice systems and spiralling levels of violence and corruption. Yet, many governments continue to turn to military strategies to respond to the drugs trade, in particular, in times of crisis. In 2014, Bolivia and Honduras implemented legislation that allowed the military to shoot down aeroplanes suspected of drug trafficking. In contrast, some governments are beginning to reject the traditional 'war on drugs' rhetoric and engage with alternative strategies drawing on development, public health and rule of law.

McDermott outlines the seminal case-study of the implementation of the 'war on drugs', detailing the past and present of the Latin American drug trafficking trade and responses to it, engaging with how the 'war on drugs' has been enacted in practice. Collins provides a history and background to the drug wars, culminating in the UN General Assembly Special Session in 2016, concluding that the current 'flexible' policy outlook is to be lauded, and that it has created an opportunity for regulatory experimentation. Health Poverty Action focuses on how damaging the war on drugs has been for development. Jesperson completes this section by questioning how effective the increasingly common security alternative is.

Pulling together the themes that emerge from these chapters, Reitano finishes the volume by drawing out the lessons to be learnt in crafting responses to organised crime. Although this volume does seek to shed further light on the factors that must be considered in devising responses to organised crime, and concludes that any response needs to be multifaceted and context specific, it offers no silver bullet. Instead it highlights the range of unintended consequences of militarised approaches, complementing such analyses with a discussion of what other tools, from development, civil society and law enforcement can offer.

Notes

1. Veterans empowered to protect African wildlife deployed army veterans to train and support wildlife rangers.
2. Sasha Jesperson (2016), '*Rethinking the Security-Development Nexus: Organised crime in post-conflict states*', London, Routledge.
3. See for example J. Cockayne (2011), 'State fragility, organised crime and peacebuilding: towards a more strategic approach', *NOREF*; *The Economist* (2014), 'Full Circle: An Old Route Regains Popularity with Drugs Gangs'.

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CHAPTER 2

Soldiers in a Storm: Why and How Do Responses to Illicit Economies Get Militarised?

Mark Shaw

Introduction

It is now commonly agreed that globalisation has created a plethora of evolving illicit markets and a network of trafficking and smuggling routes and organisations that feed them.[1] The illicit trade in drugs is perhaps the longest standing and the most widely known, but a read of any news source highlights developments in several other illicit markets. Arguably the two most prominent and relatively recent additions on the global stage are the smuggling and trafficking of people and the illicit exploitation and movement of environmental commodities such as rhino horn or elephant ivory. While both of these illicit markets have long flourished, what makes them topical now is the degree to which they have increased in scale and scope, and the extent to which they are extensively covered by the global news media. Pictures of packed boats of migrants floating in the Mediterranean, or of slaughtered rhinos with

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a bloody stump where their horn once was, are iconic images that have come to define what has been termed 'deviant globalisation'.[2]

What has seldom been analysed in any systematic way is the degree to which different policy responses may demonstrate parallels and contrasts across and between different illicit markets. The case of the legalisation of illicit commodities to reduce the profits available to organised criminal groups illustrates how responses in the context of different markets are often diametrically opposed. Vocal civil society groups argue for the decriminalisation of drugs as the key policy step in reducing the scale of the illicit market and diminishing the profits for organised crime. In contrast, equally vocal voices urge the banning of environmental products to prevent their exploitation and sale in order to reduce the profits for questionable and/or illegal business operators. This demonstrates how fragmented and often contradictory the discussion of illicit markets remains when the same sets of economic principles are arguably present in all of them.

These contradictions reflect the fact that responding effectively to illicit markets, with their complex and generally hidden equations of supply and demand, is a challenging process: there are no quick fixes and, as many experts have pointed out, what is required is a package of demand reduction, economic incentives, law enforcement and political initiatives. Calibrating and financing such solutions in a context where global policy makers have many other issues on their agenda is a difficult task to say the least. Policy responses to illicit markets are clearly challenging, and to date no single solution in any market has proved entirely successful. Indeed, some analysts have suggested that there may be no solution and illicit markets can only ever be 'managed'. The public and policy makers remain largely ignorant as to how illicit markets operate or what can be done to stem them. Consequently, and in part also due to the failure of any single approach to present a holistic solution, illicit markets typically invite simplistic responses. Politicians and populace repeatedly declare that 'something must be done', while usually meaning that something must be *seen* to be done.

Conceptualising Militarisation

Given the paucity of real success when it comes to stemming illicit markets, an important initial point to make about military-style responses is that they are in large part a result of the perceived (or actual) failure

of other strategies. Police and other state agencies across the spectrum are under increasing pressure to devise effective responses. A difficult feat when criminal markets, and the powerful pull they exert, constitute a key and largely unresolved policy question. Militarised responses occur because states perceive their options to be limited, in contexts where public and often international pressure to take action is great.

Many governments forced to implement policy responses to the emerging array of illicit markets have, by default, opted for militarised solutions. However, defining a 'militarised solution' in this context is difficult. Does it include cases where politicians or policy makers talk tough, evoking the metaphor of 'war', as was the case in the so-called 'war on drugs'? Is a situation militarised when civilian agencies, like forest or environmental departments, adopt tactics and operational styles that are military or paramilitary in nature, reflected in dress, weapons issued, or how they operate? Or, can militarisation only be said to have occurred when there are 'boots on the ground', soldiers, airmen or sailors deployed to respond to a crisis arising from an illicit market? The latter is currently the case in several places: soldiers have been deployed in game parks across Africa, navies patrol the seas to prevent migrant smuggling (and to rescue migrants) and the crime of piracy, and paramilitary style forces are deployed to guard borders to prevent an array of different types of smuggling.

Militarisation of responses across different markets suggests that a similar set of calculations may occur in different places and in diverse illicit markets. If these factors can be identified, it may make our discussion of militarisation clearer, and may also answer the question why militarisation may be short-lived in some cases, developing into a different approach or ceasing altogether, or may deepen or be sustained in others. A key error of previous analysis of militarisation is that analysts are often too willing to take things at face value. Much of what has been written about the militarisation of responses to poaching, for example, draws on public statements, without closer analysis of military or security actors, or interviews with them. A more holistic approach is required, including better research on the security actors themselves and their motivations.

'Militarisation' should be understood to constitute a series of actions along a spectrum, a response which may change over time. But, how to conceptualise this process? First, we can seek to identify a series of common features that are acting together or separately constitute a model around which a better analytical understanding of militarisation in the response to

illicit markets and associated organised-crime can be built. The purpose of this chapter, which provides the background to the other cases presented in the book, is to propose such an approach.

Model Militarisation

The challenge facing the analysis in this area, as stated earlier, is that scholars often reach kneejerk conclusions about 'militarisation' without examining the data. That is not to say that militarisation does not occur, but that the process in which it does tends to be more contested and messy than is typically portrayed. It is a key to distinguish between three crucial sets of information which determine why and how militarisation occurs, and whether it is a phenomenon that is likely to be sustained or short-lived.

These three factors can be summarised very broadly under three simple monikers: 'war talk', 'strategic timing' and 'institutional interest'. The intersection between them is illustrated in the Fig. 2.1. Each is discussed in turn.

War Talk

Making war is generally accompanied by strong rhetoric, in part to identify and demonise 'the enemy', but also to mobilise or respond to popular sentiment. This is no different in the case of militarised responses to illicit markets and organised crime. Further, as in the case of war between states, bellicose talk may not lead to violence. It may instead be a response to popular sentiment that 'something should be done'.

It is, therefore, unsurprising that analysts typically focus on the use of 'war talk' in the context of militarised policy responses to illicit markets and organised crime. Part of the reason for doing so is that the research is relatively easy as quotes can be culled between newspapers and official speeches. However, although military discourse, including the use of the phrase 'war', may become widely used, it may not translate into militarisation—although it may reinforce this process later on.

It is a key to note that talk of 'war' may be as much a political as a practical response, at least initially. The 'war on drugs' did not per se mean the use of military resources, instead it heralded a tougher approach was to be adopted. In South Africa for example, rhetoric around the 'war on rhino poaching' has been interpreted by some analysts as suggesting

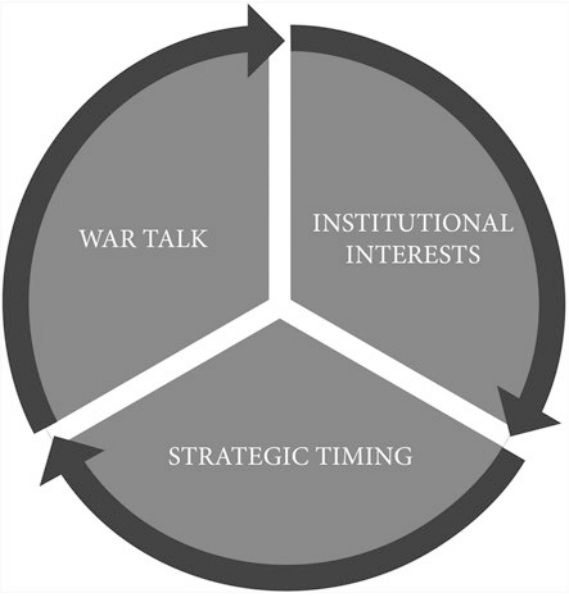

Fig. 2.1 Elements that interact to promote and sustain militarised responses to illicit markets and organised crime

that the response has become militarised or 'securitized' by the state.[3] The issue will always be one of degree however. As illustrated in later chapters there is evidence of this, mainly by militarising the role of conservation staffs themselves. In this and other cases, however, it is important to determine what the military intervention actually means on the ground and what role military personnel play. To take just one obvious example: soldiers deployed to guard a border have quite different implications to their use in 'hunting down' poachers.

In short, the use of strong language around 'war' and 'tougher responses' may not mean that those responses are either planned for or resourced on the ground. Nevertheless, it seems clear that 'war talk' often engenders a wider militarisation of responses. This is either because the 'talk of war' provides space within the relevant bureaucracies for planning more militarised options, or because the 'war talk' is a genuine public precursor to a process of internal militarisation that may have been underway for some time.

Analysing 'war talk' is therefore a key. In its more subtle forms it begins with words or phrases such as 'fight', 'combat' or 'destroy'. It evolves into discussions and statements which suggest 'war has been declared' on the relevant target: drug trafficking, rhino poaching, illegal migrancy or other illicit markets. The institutionalisation of 'war talk' is perhaps most clearly demonstrated by the use of the vocabulary of war in government policy or strategy documents.

'War talk' regardless of whether it engenders any significant levels of militarisation, causes human rights concerns to be downgraded or ignored, both by the institutions charged with protecting them and the political class. For example, while the degree to which the response in the Kruger National Park to rhino poaching has been militarised may be questioned, bellicose rhetoric has arguably led to a downgrading of human rights concerns that would be a prerequisite in the context of ordinary policing. For instance, once a poacher has been killed there are no formalised systems of investigation, something that would be a requirement in the context of democratic policing systems.

Finally, 'war talk' is hard to back down from, at least without a clear explanation of why it has not worked. Consequently, while it may be toned down, 'war talk' more often escalates over time.

Strategic Timing

Greater militarisation is almost always justified by the argument that the issue to be addressed is 'urgent'. A failure to act is portrayed as dramatically increasing the nature of the threat in the long-term. While military planners and strategists have long noted the linkage between military, political and developmental initiatives, particularly in counter-insurgency doctrine, such linkages are often hard to forge in the short term when action is demanded.

When 'urgency' is underscored, it is an obvious choice to deploy military resources as they are the arm of the state designed for rapid response. Arguments for the use of the military tend to suggest that militarised responses constitute a stop-gap measure until long-term political or developmental responses can be implemented. This underlying principle is not new in military planning and doctrine, and is an established strategic principle of counter-insurgency warfare.[4]

When approaches to illicit markets are seen through a military or security lens, it is common to believe that military action must be

accompanied by policy that focuses on 'winning hearts and minds'. Alternatively, military minds themselves perceive such conflicts to require primarily 'political solutions', while military force is needed to ensure a stronger negotiating position. However, counter-insurgency doctrine is not a perfect fit for responses to illicit markets. A key flaw in the 'stop-gap' approach is that developmental and political responses to illicit markets remain weakly developed—'buying time' must mean ensuring that other alternatives are developed in the interim.

However, justifying the use of military resources does require an acknowledgement that other responses are likely to fail, at least in the short-term. For example, in the case of combating piracy off the coast of Somalia, developmental and community-based responses were predominantly seen as too long-term (and thus difficult to raise funds for) when military and later militarised private security responses were shown to be effective. The arguments surrounding the response to piracy were clearly driven by 'urgency' as ships continued to be hijacked and their crews kidnapped without an effective response being instigated. In this case, as in others, developmental responses were considered insufficiently immediate, and too difficult to implement, to be effective.[5]

The military nonetheless argue that they 'buy time' for other actors to respond. Consequently, militarisation is often sold as a strategic intervention at a particular point in the policy cycle. However, rather than being implemented within strict time limits, such interventions are often extended. Ironically, this occurs both when military solutions are working and when they are not. In the latter case, arguments that insufficient resources have been deployed create greater 'urgency' to do more.

In the case of piracy, more militarised responses were successful in reducing the volume of incidents. In this context, discussion of developmental and community-based responses in this context, although necessary to show that a wide-set of alternatives were being considered, were arguably merely symbolic, with few resources (despite elaborate costed plans) supporting them.

However, the success of militarised responses to piracy should be regarded as the exception. More commonly the deployment of military resources and strategies has not halted illicit markets, rather it has created new complexities, including the thorny issue of collateral damage and human rights abuse. The latter may be managed and mitigated in military-style engagements which show success relatively quickly, but are difficult to sustain in the long-term.

Equally, 'urgently required' militarised interventions may have unintended consequences. For example, while ultimately not implemented, the proposal to bomb smugglers' boats along the Libyan coast would likely have caused wider collateral damage, which could have included fuelling anti-western sentiment in an already fraught political context.

Institutional Interests

A similarly murky question to consider is the degree to which militaries may seek out a role for themselves. In the case of piracy, for example, faced with the cutting of naval budgets, some evidence suggests that navies quickly identified anti-piracy work as an area to justify continued funds. Indeed, those close to the naval response to piracy emphasised to the author that navies, struggling to demonstrate their relevance, were eager to engage in the fight against this threat.[6] Budgets and political influence were at stake that may have had little to do with piracy.

Cynically it is possible to view military involvement as the exercise of bureaucratic interests seeking to attract a greater portion of the national budget by showing that they make useful peacetime contributions. Institutional interests are, therefore, likely to play a role in determining how military and security agencies may respond to illicit markets, including trafficking, smuggling and piracy.

However, academic researchers have sometimes been too hasty to identify military institutional interests as driving responses to illicit markets. In the case of trafficking, this is illustrated by several analyses suggesting that the South African government's deployment of the military in the Kruger Park in response to rhino trafficking was partly driven by apartheid-era military and counter-insurgency interests. The latter conclusion is questionable. For their part, the military have appeared reluctant to take on wider duties given peacekeeping commitments, performing poorly at the limited border control task they were assigned, and lacked any recent counter-insurgency training and experience.[7]

The role of institutional interest is clearly typically a nuanced question, with different actors within relevant institutions often expressing different views. Despite evidence that institutional interests in the military, or certain units in the military, may influence institutional responses, it is risky to conclude that such interests inevitably drive militarisation. All may not be what it seems: some security interests may be opposed to militarisation, others view it as an opportunity for the military to

demonstrate its usefulness, while others may covet other benefits, including those linked to sustaining or protecting the illicit market itself. The latter is illustrated in the role of the military and the security establishment in wildlife areas in Zimbabwe. Here it appears that security actors interest in managing the illicit trade is based on a desire to reap illegal profits, rather than ending the trade itself.

It is also a key to consider the degree to which militarised deployments build or reinforce long-term interests in sustaining the conflicts they seek to address. The wide literature on war and conflict does suggest that bureaucratic interests within security establishments may act both to sustain conflict, and to construct wider military-industrial complexes[8] with strong links to private sector interests. In the modern age of warfare, where the private sector and the technologies it produces and sells are increasingly critical to national responses, such a coalescence of institutional interests is a strong possibility. For example, it is said to have occurred in the context of the role of private security companies in responding to illicit environmental poaching, although evidence of direct links between current military interests and companies in the environmental sector require more investigation.

Analysing institutional interests within the security sector can be difficult. Security institutions seldom speak with one voice. Different actors within them may have different interests. Increasingly, in some contexts security actors may be beneficiaries of the very illicit markets that they claim to be acting against.

Constrained Militarisation

The militarisation of responses to illicit trafficking and illicit markets more broadly is a feature of these three overlapping factors—war talk, strategic timing and institutional interests. Acting alone they may provide some opening for the growing militarisation of responses. However, acting together they suggest a deeper and more sustained process of militarisation in which each element reinforces the others. So, actions in one area impact on developments in the others, creating a cycle of increasing militarisation which may be hard to reverse. The use of war rhetoric provides the justification for military actors to seek greater involvement, either on the grounds of ‘buying time’ or ‘securing the future for development’, concepts drawn from counter to insurgency doctrine. Complex and sometimes contradictory institutional interests may shape and sustain