

Chapter 8. Democracy and Transnational Terrorism Revisited: Rule of Law

Abstract

The question of whether democratic institutions attract transnational terrorist activity is a controversial topic in the area of terrorism. Though the rule of law is an essential institutional pillar of any mature democracy, its direct effect on transnational terrorism remains unexplored. Chapter 8 presents a causal mechanism in which the democratic rule of law--conceived as the coexistence of an effective and impartial judicial system in combination with a recognition on the part of the citizens of the law as legitimate--is considered to decrease the opportunity and willingness for ordinary citizens to engage in political violence, thereby preventing democracies from experiencing transnational terrorism. Built off of Li's (2005) cross-sectional, time-series data analysis of 100 countries from 1984 to 1997, this chapter finds that, *ceteris paribus*, maintaining a high-quality rule of law considerably reduces the number of transnational terrorist incidents while other widely- publicized democratic features (such as the political participation and government constraints variables that are reported in Li's work) are statistically insignificant.