Building an Empire: Terrorism VS Organized Crime

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This article has the objective of putting forward the claim that there is a strong convergence between terrorism and organized crime. The terrorist organization Partiya Karkeren Kurdistan (PKK) is the perfect example in portraying the organized crime and terrorism nexus. PKK uses organized crime as a technique in broadening the financial resources of the terrorist organization. In order to reach that goal the paper has the objective of contributing to the theoretical framework of the terror-crime nexus. It borrows Prof. Tamarenko’s conceptual framework of “The Crime-terror nexus”. Europe is the logistical base for PKK. Despite all the counter terrorism measures that Europe tried to bolster after the attacks in Spain and UK how can a region still be a base for a terrorist organization? Is Europe a safe haven for terrorist organizations? The first part will put forward a theoretical framework of the article centered upon the argument whether organized crime and terrorism converge or diverge in terms of motivations, objectives and anticipated outcomes. The second part will concentrate on the PKK. A brief historical introduction of how the terrorist organization was formed will be provided. The second sub part in this section will mainly deal with PKK’s methods of using organized crime as its tool in achieving its political goals. The third part will be the concluding section of the paper. Points for further research and policy suggestions will be discussed.

Keywords: Partiya Karkeren Kurdistan (PKK), drug trafficking, human trafficking

Introduction

The 2010 US National Security Strategy emphasizes the complex and transnational nature of 21st Century security threats. It is stated that “the crime-terror nexus is a serious concern as terrorists use criminal networks for logistical support and funding” (Whitehouse.Gov, 2010). Former US secretary of State Hillary Clinton stated at a Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing that Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb is “not only a terrorist syndicate, it is a criminal enterprise (Bergenas, 2013).

Both terrorism and transnational organized crime are the greatest threats to global security (Sever, 2012, p. 193). It is usually acclaimed that terrorism is motivated by political goals, organized crime is motivated by economic gains. As the era of globalisation takes a full swing the points of motivation and interest begin to collide between the two phenomena. Organized crime gangs may use terroristic tactics in achieving power and profit whereas terrorist organizations may use criminal methods in creating financial sources. As the support for state sponsored terrorism declined, most terrorist organizations experienced a downfall in their finances. The second strike came to terrorist organizations with the “war against terrorism” policies. Suspected bank accounts and large amounts of money being transferred were critically examined and forbidden. Both terrorism and organized crime are in deed crimes with different ends and means. A terrorist organization can receive the backing for support in its most illegal activities. Whether it is issuing, counterfeit money, passport or id
documentation, attaining large amounts of money in short time or receiving logistics for a new hideout, terrorist organizations work together with criminal gangs.

**Theoretical Framework**

United Nations (UN) Convention against Transnational Organized Crime defines “organized criminal group” as:

Organized criminal group” shall mean a structured group of three or more persons, existing for a period of time and acting in concert with the aim of committing one or more serious crimes or offences established in accordance with this Convention, in order to obtain, directly or indirectly, a financial or…

Other material benefit (UNDOC, 2000); Three or more people existing for a period of time acting in accordance with each other in order to commit serious crime or offence. What is “serious crime”? According to Article 2(b) “Serious crime” shall mean conduct constituting an offence punishable by a maximum deprivation of liberty of at least four years or a more serious penalty (UNDOC, 2000); A “structured group” according Article 2(C) of the Convention denotes to “Structured group” shall mean a group that is not randomly formed for the immediate commission of an offence and that does not need to have formally defined roles for its members, continuity of its membership or a developed structure (UNDOC, 2000). The organized crime receives a transnational approach in Article 3(2) of the Convention.

For the purpose of paragraph 1 of this article, an offence is transnational. In nature if: (1) It is committed in more than one State; (2) It is committed in one State but a substantial part of its preparation, planning, direction or control takes place in another State; (3) It is committed in one State but involves an organized criminal group. That engages in criminal activities in more than one State; or (4) It is committed in one State but has substantial effects in another State.

Terrorism acts on a highly political motivation whereas organized crime operates on making profit. There is no agreed upon definition of terrorism just as organized crime. It can be defined as the systematic use of terror especially as a means of coercion (Merriam-Webster, 2013). Terror can be defined as a state of intense fear, one that inspires fear, a frightening aspect, and a cause of anxiety. It can be summarized as using violence in order to achieve political goals.

What differs terrorism from violence without intend is that the victim has no relation to the perpetrator (Demir & Küçükyuval, 2011, p. 209). The perpetrator does not choose particular victims. They are usually innocent bystanders, whereas violence is usually against someone or for someone. The victim is highly symbolic in a terrorist’s mind. The victim is to horrify and intimidate others who are not victims. The physical casualty of a terrorist attack may be in few numbers but its after effect is indescribable. The September 11 attacks have created a black hole in the security image of American public. Terrorism aims in changing the political system by force.

After providing working definitions for both organized crime and terrorism one needs to understand whether the two different phenomena can be compared. There is some work that was previously done to clarify the attempt to compare.


Similarities between organized crime and terrorist groups: (1) Both are generally rational actors; (2) Both
use extreme violence and the threat of reprisals; (3) Both use kidnappings, assassinations, and extortion; (4) Both operate secretly, though at times publicly in friendly territory; (5) Both defy the state and the rule of law (except when there is state sponsorship); (6) For a member to leave either group is rare and often fatal; (7) Both present an asymmetrical threat to the United States and “friendly” nations; (8) Both can have “interchangeable” recruitment pools; (9) Both are highly adaptable, innovative and resilient; (10) Both have back-up leaders and foot soldiers; and (11) Both have provided social services, though this is much more frequently seen with terrorist groups.

There are not only similarities but also divergences between organized crime and terrorism. Organized crime groups prefer to have a low profile. The terrorist organization on the other hand desire to have public attention. Terrorists take responsibility for their acts, it is their trademark and marketing too, they take pride in advertising but criminals usually do not admit that they have committed the crime. A terrorist organization inclusion in the crime scene increases the chances of being caught (Sanderson, 2004, p. 55). Another difference is motivation. Terrorist organizations have a political goal. Their penultimate aim is to overturn the government. The organized crime organizations have the goal of making more profit (Sanderson, 2004 p. 56). It has no intention of overturning the government. It may only replace uncooperative officials if it is necessary. It has no unsettled history with the system (political or economic). It has no motivation in revising or changing. Terrorism may be influenced by ideology, culture or religious belief but organized crime organizations have no inclination to such fields. Terrorism may be used as a tactic for criminal activity but in the end it may become a necessity.

Terrorism and transnational organized crime have certain aspects that facilitate the two in becoming partners in crime. First, most states refuse to sponsor terrorist organizations, this results in terrorist organizations searching for financial resources other than states (Sanderson, 2004; Dishman, 2001; Bovenkerk, 2004). Second, globalization have facilitated the mobility of the both terrorist organizations and the criminal organizations. They can transfer know how and information easily and in short time. Third, states with weak or no authorities prepare the fertile ground for both organizations to operate (Sanderson, 2004). Fourth, it is easier to attain small arms and light weapons. Such weapons are easily obtained from states with instabilities. Fifth, organized crime members target only selected victims whereas terrorist organizations target everyone and at random (Shelley & Picarelli, 2004). The use of violence by both sides can be summarized as organized crime attacks the critical points/people in in government to eliminate groups that are against organized crime (police officials, prosecutors etc.). Terrorist organizations attack everyone. Shelley and Picarelli (2004) noted that the operating techniques of transnational crimes rely heavily on violence, information technology, money laundering and corruption (pp. 308-312). There are also criminal activities that are pursued by both organized criminals and terrorists. They are narcotics trafficking, trafficking in persons, credit card frauds, protection rackets, kidnapping and collecting ransom and cigarette smuggling (Shelley & Picarelli, 2004, pp. 313-314). Methods used by terrorists do not differ very significantly from those used by criminals although their basic motivation differs greatly (Prefontaine, 2004, p. 24).

**Convergence Theory and the Nexus**

There are some theories concerned with the relationship between organized crime and terrorism. This

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1 The links between terrorist organizations and drug traffickers can have many forms from protection to transportation to taxation and even direct trafficking (Abadinsky, 2010, p. 6).
paper will mainly deal with Makarenko’s crime-terror nexus framework but it is best to briefly touch upon
others as point of reference.

Most authors stress the fact that in given time, organized or terrorist organizations will change in an
evolutionary or revolutionary speed. Makarenko (2004) provided a model that signifies the ties between both
groups, the ties change due to circumstances. It stresses cooperation, “they both exist in the same plane”. Naylor (2002) on the other hand suggested that organize crime and terrorism experience a mutual evolutionary
process where the relationship is based upon criminal activity that is beneficial to both. Williams (1998)
categorized the relationship between the two groups as full integration, in one group into a close but a separate
relationship in which one influences the other. Dishman (2001) analyzed the relationship between the two in a
more revolutionary aspect, meaning changes take place abruptly and fast. Terrorist organizations turn into
criminal organizations and vice versa in Dishman’s (2001) definition “political by day, criminal by night”.

Yet another attempt in conceptualizing this relationship is by Picarelli (2006) who believes that
International Relations (IR) theory like post internationalism can make a good contribution to attempt in
conceptualizing the relationship. He states that the relationship is more of a “marriage of convenience” but
motives sweep the relationship into long term separation. He also maintains the view that post internationalism
operates in two realms: “sovereign bound”\(^2\) and “sovereign-free”\(^3\) which provides the fertile ground for a
crime-terror nexus to occur. Schmid (1996) like Picarelli maintained the view that the only relationship
between the two areas is “short term and businesslike”. It is also stated by Picarelli (2006) that “profit motives
by criminals and political motives of the terrorists are too strong to yield a collaboration or alliance” (p. 4).

Organized crime is defined as any “structured group of three or more persons existing for a period of time
and acting in concert with the aim of committing one or more serious crimes or offenses… in order to obtain,
directly, or indirectly, a financial or other material benefit” (United Nations, 2000).

Organized crime is different from other crime in that it is profit driven and ongoing (Giraldo, 2011, p. 431).
The resilience of transnational crime can be attributed to supply rising to meet demand (Giraldo, 2011, p. 432).

It can be said that both globalization, with its impact of facilitation of transnational flow of people and
undermining state authority have contributed to transnationalizing global crime. Groups that use terrorist
methods have relied on crime as a means to fund their activities.

After 1990’s both criminal and terrorist groups incorporated economic and political capabilities into their
sphere of activity. Thus at the start of the 21st century, a growing number of groups simultaneously displayed
characteristics of organized crime and terrorism (Makarenko, 2003, p. 169). Hybrid organizations also
developed. Motivations, organizations and operations of criminal and terrorist groups have converged
(Makarenko, 2003). Makarenko (2003) also contributed to current literature on organized crime and terrorism
by introducing the term “crime terror continuum” (CTC) (p. 163). It’s a continuum because, there is no
separation between the two phenomena. Since an organization, whether it is an organized crime subsidiary or a
terrorist organization, has an evolutionary life span, yet it does not mean that the organization will evolve in

\(^2\) Picarelli (2006) refers to “sovereign bound” classification as hierarchical organizational structure with a strong central authority. Organizations like the PKK, Japanese Yakuza and PIRA are common examples.

\(^3\) This term bears a resemblance to a term that was coined by Sageman (2004) to define the Al Qaeda as the “leaderless jihad”. It is based on the assumption that some terrorist organizations pursue a leaderless lifespan where each cell is free from a central structure and is not in contact with other cells as well. These cells can go to sleep and wake up after a long period of time. Another aspect is that, even if the cell is detected by authorities, since it is not connected to a central point or other cells destruction of the organization will be impossible. This sort of organization is usually preferred by radical terrorist organizations and it guarantees the resilience of the organization (Sageman, 2004).
one direction or the other. The continuum is a linear representation of one end being organized crime and the other end being terrorism.

Makarenko also states that the most threatening situation in the continuum is the “fulcrum point” where criminal and political motivations converge in one group. It also puts forward the idea that the organization can move up and down the continuum in either direction. The CTC wants to put forward the idea that the differences that are commonly identified between organised crime and terrorism have become extinct. It is nearly impossible to define which is which. The convergence thesis which is a term used to explain that criminal and terrorist organizations could converge into a single entity and display the characteristics of each group. Ultimate aims of the organization have changed, there are no defining points that identify them as a political or a criminal group. The first group includes criminal groups with political motivations, the second group is made up of terrorist groups who want to make profit (Makarenko, 2003, p. 165).

Convergence thesis has two important sub-components, there are criminal groups that have a political motivation and terrorist groups who are equally interested in criminal profits (Makarenko, 2003). The politically motivated groups, usually use that political motivation to attain more power to portray a resistance against the state. Therefore, they need to be more than criminal groups. They either use terror tactics in gaining control of the state or power or they use terrorism to establish a monopoly over the economic sector (Makarenko, 2003, p. 170). The terrorist groups that are interested in criminal profits become engaged in their profit making adventure, they nearly forget their political aim. Although major aim being changed, the tactics to be pursued remain to be linked to terrorism. This facilitates their operations by keeping government authorities busy in political issues rather than prosecuting criminal investigations (Makarenko, 2003, p. 171). Using terrorism as a means is also effective in establishing themselves amongst rival groups.

Another important point is that with the demise of the state sponsored terrorism, organized criminal activities became more important. The 1990s can be termed as the decade for crime-terror nexus (Makarenko, 2004, p. 130). The nexus can be used as a tool in understanding terrorist organizations using organised crime as source for funding. It can also be used in understanding the formation of alliances between criminal and terrorist organizations. Therefore, two different phenomena of organized crime and terrorism started to share many common denominators on the organization.

There are also some authors who believe that there are no connections between the two phenomena. Mark Galeotti states that “the connection between terrorists and criminals are exaggerated”.

The paper will try to test three basic assumptions that is borrowed from Makarenko’s (2003) crime-terror nexus structure. Makarenko categorizes four types$^4$ of relationship between criminal and terrorist organizations. Two of the four will be applicable in the Partiya Karkeren Kurdistan (PKK) case, therefore the three categories will be used to produce the assumptions: (1) In order to reach political ends, the PKK have used criminal ends (operational motives); (2) PKK has allied with local criminal gangs to maintain economic power (forming alliances); and (3) The PKK has converged into a single entity and displays the characteristics of both groups simultaneously (convergence).

Since PKK is a terrorist organization and has ties with the criminal organizations, the level of the relationship between organized crime and terrorism will manifest itself in a most striking way. Its particular influence through narcotics makes it a meaningful case study.

$^4$ The four categories of relationships are: forming alliances, operational motives, convergence and black hole. The only category that is inapplicable to the PKK is the black hole.
The PKK

PKK and its origins

PKK is classified as a terrorist organization by most of the EU member states, the US, the UK and Australia (US Department of State, 2013a; European Council, 2001; Home Office, 2001; Australian National Security—Listing of Terrorist Organizations, 2001; US Department of State, 2012). This emphasis is provided for an ongoing dispute whether the PKK is a terrorist organization or a group of “freedom fighters”. It is obvious that based on different and comprehensive criteria, many view PKK as a terrorist organization.

The intellectual foundation of PKK was built on Marxist-Leninist theory/ideology (Roth, 2007, p. 904). It was established at Diyarbakur in 1978. In its foundation statement PKK made reference to two aims. First aim was to reunite the Kurds that were scattered in Turkey, Syria, Iran and Iraq. The second aim was the formation of a Greater Kurdistan (Roth, 2007). It is also noted that the formation of the organization was made possible by both Turks and Kurds which opposed ethnicity based policies. It adopted a Marxist Leninist ideology with a Stalinist (one man, authoritative leadership) leadership model with Maoist strategy (guerilla warfare).

It can be said that its first ultimate aim was to spread socialism due to the systemic organization of the bipolar world of the cold war. The PKK began its guerilla warfare on Turkey on August 1984. It changed the focus of its attacks from rural to urban targets by attacking government posts. Suicide bombings, kidnapping tourists, and teachers, attacking Turkish diplomats, planting car bombs were tactics that was used by the PKK terrorist organization. Due to the pattern of attacking Turkish diplomats, the first attacks of the terrorist organization was suspected as being the work of ASALA (Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia).

The PKK has a hierarchical structure. Chairman (Abdullah Öcalan) is situated at the top, he is accompanied by chairmanship board, a central committee and a disciplinary board (Roth, 2007, p. 905). Despite the detailed structure it is usually inferred that Abdullah Öcalan, although imprisoned, continues to rule the organization single handedly. Between the years of 1999-2004 the PKK declared a cease fire but after 2004, the terrorist activities restarted. Syria has been one of the supporters of PKK. It has provided logistical, military and financial support (FAS,1995). Roth (2007) stated that since 1984, Soviet Union, Cyprus, Greece, Armenia, Libya, Iran, Iraq, Bulgaria and Cuba have supported the PKK in various ways (p. 906). With the decline of the cold war and the “war against global terrorism” state sponsored terrorism have become extinct. The PKK had to find other sources of finance. This was the breaking point of how the PKK became a criminal organization. Roth (2007) stressed that Turkey’s major disadvantage is its geographical placement. It has a long coastline and it is the major conjunction point of different routes (p. 907). Routes intersecting Europe to the Balkans, Middle East,

5 The list consists of terrorist organizations and states that the PKK was on the terrorist list since August 1997.
6 Council Decision 2011/70/CFSP of 31 January 2011 updating the list of persons, groups and entities subject to Articles 2, 3 and 4 of Common Position 2001/931/CFSP on the application of specific measures to combat terrorism. This list also includes the PKK as a terrorist organization.
7 The UK also lists the PKK as a terrorist organization.
8 There is a detailed overview of the PKK as a terrorist organization.
9 It acknowledges the PKK, as one of the most threatening terrorist organization for Europe.
10 A terrorist organization that was active during the 1975-1985. The principal goal of ASALA was to reestablish historical Armenia that would include eastern Turkey and the Soviet Armenia. It organized and pursued 110 attacks in which 42 Turkish diplomats were assassinated, 4 foreigners killed and 80 injured (Uras, 1988). The organization has been classified as being a terrorist organization by the US and has been added to its list of terrorist organizations in 1980 and in foreign terrorists’ lists.
Central Asia make Turkey an important hub. Turkey is one of the important transit points of heroin inflow. According to Sahin (2001) a kilogram of heroin can be bought between 1,000-2,000 USD from Thailand, as it reaches Turkey it becomes 6,000-8,000-USD by the time it reaches Germany it is 20,000-80,000 USD (p. 41). More strikingly by the time it is available on the streets it is 200,000 USD. Talbot (2010) referred to the PKK as being a group of individuals who desired to have a communist revolution and establish a separate Kurdish state, later it turned to using terrorist tactics (p. 96).

Like most of the other terrorist organizations the PKK maintained most of its financial sources during the Cold War through extortion, collecting ransom, robbing banks. After the cold war the financial sources organized around national and international smuggling (Cengiz, 2012, p. 68). Smuggling ranged from goods (narcotics, guns, cigarettes) to people. They have also formed teams at borders where each team serves as “tax collector”, “courier” and “guide” in collecting money at the points.

**PKK and Organized Crime**

**Drug Traffickers**

The PKK uses drug smuggling as one of its major financial resources (Özdemir, 2011, p. 88). Drug smuggling that reaches 350-400 billion dollars is a very good source of finance for terrorist organizations (TADOC, 2011). Talbot (2010) stated that PKK’s involvement in narcotics stems from Turkey’s geographical position providing a transit route for southwest Asian opiates. He also concludes that morphine base and heroin are shipped from Iran, Pakistan and Afghanistan to Turkey (p. 98).

The PKK contributes to drug trafficking in two ways (Cengiz, 2012, p. 70). First, it collects taxes from traffickers that pass through PKK controlled areas. Secondly, it uses global crime narcotics networks to deliver the shipment to its designated address. The PKK also hires street dealers through Kurdish crime clans to conduct the delivery of drugs (Özdemir, 2011). Özdemir (2011) also noted that sympathizers for the PKK are employed in drug delivery, where ideological foundations for the PKK motivates new recruits (p. 90). The PKK also uses social and political institutions that were legally formed by sympathisers for drug dealing activities. Pek (2007) record that PKK operates in four different segments (p. 151). First, it controls the illegal cannabis cultivation fields in Northern Iraq. Second, it has created custom check points in Iraqi and Iranian borders, to collect taxes. Third, it uses its well developed courier system to deliver drugs to Europe. Finally, it abuses Kurdish refugees in Europe, especially children, to take part in street delivery.

According to previous reports of The International Narcotics Control Strategy by the US State department, PKK used heroin production and trafficking to support its activities in terrorism (US Department of State, 2013b).

Drug smuggling is an important financial resource for the PKK (TADOC, 2011). The 2013 INCSR Country Reports that is prepared by the US State Department states that “Turkey remains a significant transit country for illicit drug trafficking (US State Department, 2013b). The PKK was enlisted as a drug smuggling organization by the USA in 2008 and is considered to be one of the major players in international drug smuggling (TADOC, 2011).

In the opening statement of a report prepared by the Turkish International Academy Against Organized Crime (TADOC), General Director Mehmet Kılıçlar of Turkish National Police states that “The operations that

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11 According to Özdemir (2011) PKK controlled the drug sector in England, Germany, Netherland and France.
were carried out show that the terrorist organization PKK-KCK not only receives protection racket from smugglers but also take part in other narcoterrorism activities like transnational shipment and distribution of narcotics” (TADOC, 2011). In a research done by KOM (Department of Anti-Smuggling and Organized Crime) show that PKK/KCK terror organization engages in all stages of illicit drug trade. These stages are stated as receiving commission from smugglers, controlling plantation of cannabis and coordination of drug smuggling in Europe and laundering drug money (TADOC, 2011). Kelly (2012) stated that the terrorist organization is involved in both illicit and legitimate fundraising activities which are set up by diaspora networks (p. 241). These networks provide assistance in money laundering, smuggling, drug trafficking and extortion. At the same time there are legal resources for finance such as cultural organizations, “döner kebap” restaurants and pizza shops.

The PKK contributes to drug trafficking domestically by collecting percentage on each shipment. On the international setting it cooperates in delivering drug into Europe. The people who have been smuggled as immigrants are used as tallymen (Üney, 2006, p. 95). The people who take part in drug trafficking are members of the organization that have not been previously involved in drugs. On an interview Şemdin Sakık, an ex PKK member now a prisoner, stated that “the source of our money was resulting from drug trafficking. PKK and Apo (Abdullah Öcalan) have received the greatest share in Turkey-Middle East drug trafficking axis. We bought guns and ammunition with the money” (Üney, 2006, p. 98).

**Traffickers of Illegal Immigrants**

The PKK is also effective in trafficking illegal immigrants. Roth (2007) pointed out that refugees are transported from Northern Iraq to Italy via Turkey and the most popular routes are Istanbul-Milan, Istanbul-Bosnia-Milan and Turkey-Tunisia-Malta-Italy (p. 909). Illegal immigrants have a two-fold function. As the PKK masters in forging and issuing false documents, the refugees are smuggled to Europe. Once in Europe, the refugees continue to pay PKK in order not to be discovered by the government officials. It also promises the refugees lodging, food and jobs. Once the refugees are placed in jobs then the fees are collected. The PKK calls this membership fee.

The PKK guarantees its human resource via human trafficking. As the immigrants are illegally transmitted they are employed by the PKK as street sellers or carriers. They are also used as part of the terrorist organizations military wing (Üney, 2006, p. 103).

**Extortion**

The PKK terms extortion as “revolutionary tax” or “voluntary contribution”. It is obvious that it is neither revolutionary nor voluntary. Turkish citizens of Kurdish origin are usually pressured to pay these “contributions”. The extortion starts itself from Turkey and extends itself to citizens living in Europe. Countries that are used as extortion sources are Great Britain, Belgium and Germany. It is suggested that PKK collects about a third of its annual budget on imposing taxes and issuing solidarity taxes (Kelly, 2012, p. 241).

**Money Laundering**

The PKK have become an expert in fund transferring. Since fund raising and other sources of finance bring in substantial amounts of money, it has to be hidden in a way that it is noticed (Üney, 2006, p. 113).

**Arms Smuggling**

According to Üney (2006) previous studies show that the arms that are smuggled to Turkey either stay in
Turkey, are transported to Europe or handed over to the PKK (p. 101). It is stated that Northern Iraq due to the vacuum of authority prepares a fertile ground to criminal activities. Üney also stresses that the PKK money that is attained from smuggling of drugs is used in buying weapons. The international illegal arms dealers are in Italy, Belgium and other European and the Middle Eastern countries.

**Others**

Counterfeiting is one of the popular criminal activities of the PKK. Government stamps and money are counterfeited easily, due to the advancements in software. Sale of illegal cigarettes is another financial resource. Another source was collecting blood from citizens of Kurdish origin for the purposes of charity. The PKK not only profits from selling the blood but also has the blood analyzed by foreigners (Roth, 2007, p. 912). The terrorist organization has established the International Kurdish Employers’ Association. This association brings together the Kurdish businessmen in Europe and makes sure that they act according to the terrorist organization’s (Üney, 2006, p. 94) principles like making donations and financing the organization. Cengiz (2012) also stated that the PKK have become an expert in issuing fake passports and identity cards. These documents facilitate illegal immigration (p. 69).

**Conclusion**

In order to reach political ends, the PKK have used criminal ends (operational motives). PKK has allied with local criminal gangs to maintain economic power (forming alliances). The PKK has converged into a single entity and displays a characteristics of both groups simultaneously (convergence). The first assumption was TRUE in the case study. The PKK used criminal ends to reach political ends. Particularly after the end of the cold war and the insistence of globalization, terrorist organizations could no longer depend on state support, collecting ransom, robbing banks etc. The second assumption was also TRUE in the case study. The PKK, after changing its strategies of financing terrorism, relied on the local drug traffickers, cigarette smugglers etc. It collected tax from suppliers by extortion and racket money. Second, it started both smuggling and trafficking at the same time. Some joined the PKK because they were scared to be reported to the authorities whereas some joined in because it was more beneficial to their interest.

The third assumption was FALSE in the case study because one can not state that PKK acted as a terrorist and criminal organization simultaneously. It remains to be a terrorist organization. The terrorist organizations usually deny involvement with crime or narcotics because it undermines its propaganda cause (Pek, 2007, p. 140). The propaganda is based upon the assumptions that “they are fighting for freedom, they do not need money, their ideals and goals can not be bought”. As romantic and bewildering as it may seem, this is not the case. It is true that the PKK uses criminal strategies, but making profit, is not its guiding principle.

It is obvious that greater amount of international cooperation is needed in confronting PKK and its illicit transnational activities. It is interesting to see that despite the fact that the PKK continues to appear in Europol’s Annual reports as a terrorist and a criminal organization, most European countries continue to harbor PKK members or turn a blind eye towards its illicit activities. International cooperations have to be operative. Theoretical agreements which have no applicability does not hinder terrorism nor criminal activities. As former US Secretary of State has expressed, in order to combat multifaceted, illicit networks “we have got to have a better strategy” (Bergenas, 2013). As long as the PKK continues to take central role in European Narcotics trafficking, PKK will cease to be a national problem for Turkey, but an international one for Europe.
References


