



Bachelor thesis

**Revealing Failed State - Transnational Crime nexus in the
international security discourse**

- Deconstructing the failed state threat

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Abstract

This paper has adopted an inductive approach in answering this paper's research question; which discursive images does UN draw upon when addressing failed states in their international security policy discourse? Through applying Fairclough's critical discourse analysis, in combination with post-colonial framework, official and current policy UN documents have been analyzed. The documents contain an underlying ethnocentric western discourse that shapes the image of failed state in relation to transnational crime. Failed states are considered as a common signifier for three central transnational threats; organized crime, drugs and terrorism. Since failed states are considered to attract these transnational crimes, it has become a target for international security policy discourse in which preventive and intervening measures have been legitimized. The analysis revealed that the discursive image of failed states in international security policy discourse has been defined vis-à-vis an invisible *failed state-transnational crime nexus*. Thus, this paper argues that its association with transnational crime and vice versa determines the threat posed by failed states to international security and peace.

Key words: Critical discourse analysis, post-colonialism, failed states, UN, international security discourse and threats, transnational organized crime, failed state-transnational crime nexus.

Characters: 49,711

*I dedicate this research to my precious family for always
standing by me, and making me smile.*

- Zeynep Erdal

Malmö, 2012.06.20

Abbreviations

CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis
FP	Fund for Peace
FSI	Failed State Index
GWOT	Global War on Terror
IGO	Intergovernmental Organization
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NSS	National Security Strategy
SPF	Strategic Programme Frameworks
TC	Transnational Crime
TOC	Transnational Organized Crime
UN	United Nations
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
US	United States

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1. Introduction

Since 1990's, state failure has emerged as a central security issue on national and international policy agendas (Cojanu and Popescu 2007:114, Wyler 2008:1), but gained more attentions in relation to the events of 9/11. In the Global War on Terror (GWOT), UN began highlighting how "states in the periphery was moved to the center" of the world (Rotberg 2002:128). UN perceives negative developments in the Third World such as terrorist activity, transnational organized crime, trafficking and conflicts, to pose a threat to international peace and security (un.org). Failed states such as Afghanistan and Pakistan were considered as posing dangers to regional and international stability due to their incapacity to project power and assert authority within their own state borders (Rotberg 2002:128). Thus, failed states are considered as transnational threats (Cojanu and Popescu 2007:120). According to Yao (2011) UN has a strong belief that world peace require "independent states capable of controlling their territories", in order to prevent transnational crime (TC) activities from taking root (Yao 2011:96-7) It could be argued that capturing Osama Bin Laden inside the "failed state of Pakistan", reaffirmed the importance of addressing failed states due to continuing existence of Al Qaeda and other transnational networks.

1.1. Purpose and research question

The failed state concept leaves a question mark regarding its meaning and implications on international security. Henceforth, this paper will conduct a critical discourse analysis (CDA), within a postcolonial framework, on official UN security policy documents in order to uncover the current international discourse surrounding the concept of failed state and its implications on international security. By looking at which discursive images these actors draw upon when addressing the issue of failed states, the construction and meaning of "failed state" in the international security policy discourse will be highlighted. The aim of this research is to investigate which discursive images that are being attached to the concept of failed state and investigate which associations they create. Thus, this paper's research question is defined as following;

Which discursive images does UN draw upon when addressing the issue of failed state in its international security policy discourse?

1.2. Definition of discourse

Discourse analysis is a social constructivist approach and is a “particular way of talking about and understanding the world (or an aspect of it)” (Jørgensen and Phillips 2002:1f.f.). According to Jørgensen and Phillips (2002) struggle between different knowledge claims could be perceived “as a struggle between different discourses which represent different ways of understanding aspects of the world and construct different identities for speakers” (Jørgensen and Phillips 2002:2). This research use Fairclough’s definition of discourse; “a way of speaking which gives meaning to experiences from a particular perspective” (Jørgensen and Phillips 2002:67). Van Dijk (2012) argue that discourse analysts need to have an interactional point of view, by including those that send the message and its recipients such as the public and other states (Van Dijk 2012:13). Van Dijk thus define *political discourse analysis* (PDA) as “political actions or practices are at the same time discursive (/conversational) practices”, in which political texts, statements, reports, speeches and other type of communication have “political functions and implications” (Van Dijk 2012:14). Discursive images thus refer to images shaped within a specific discourse that shape our understanding when interpreting these images. For instance, 9/11 received an association with terrorism after the terrorist attacks in 2001. By looking at the discourse UN draw upon and reproduce, discursive images shaped and used when addressing failed states will be revealed.

2. Methodology

2.1. Research design

This research is based on analytical induction, in which the concept of failed state *within* UN constitutes its case study and central point of analysis. The comparative advantage of case study as a method, in comparison to other methods, is its ability to reveal of causal relationships (George & Bennett 2005:5), which would give deeper understanding of a specific phenomenon. Causality is revealed through process tracing; mapping the link between observed results and possible explanations (ibid:6). Process tracing is crucial in this study, since it will highlight the correlation between constructive ideas attached to failed states and its implications on policymaking and implementation.

2.2. Case selection

UN is the largest international institution in respect to size (amount of members), organizational structure (General assembly, Security Council etc.) and comprehensive security policy reach/ framework (transnational crime, terrorism, piracy, trafficking and much more), validating its selection as representative for international security policy discourse.

2.2.1. Criteria for text selection

- **Official policy document**; the documents are believed to represent the official view of the actor and address the issue of failed states in reference to the international security discourse.
- **Current / updated**: in order to highlight the current discourse the policy documents selected have been published between January 2006 to present (May 2011).

2.2.2. Material for analysis

When looking at UN policy documents and speeches, the term “failed state” was barely helpful in finding articles. Instead phrases such as “fragile states” and “international security threats” were used. United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) is a UN agency covering wide range of transnational security issues such as crime, drugs, trafficking,

terrorism, money laundering and piracy (unodc.org). The primary bodies that shape and implement international security policies are the UN Security Council (UNSC) and the General Assembly. The UNSC primary responsibility is “to maintain international peace and security in accordance with the principles and purposes of the United Nations” and thus “to determine the existence of a threat to the peace or act of aggression and to recommend what action should be taken” (un.org). The General Assembly assists UNSC and function as an advisory body and a forum for all (192) member states (un.org). Since failed states are considered as a possible threat for international security, reports and speeches from these UN bodies will be used. Speeches reliability could be questioned since they are carried out by specific individuals and thus could represent a non-official /subjective viewpoint. However, since speeches and statements have been conducted by the highest official representatives within those agencies and was carried out in official settings, it could be argued that speeches represent policies and viewpoint of those agencies they represent. (Next section will highlight the method deployed when analyzing these documents.)

Three articles from each (above mentioned) UN bodies has been selected

- *Security Council*: Statement by the President (February 24, 2010). On the issue “Threats to international peace and security”¹
- *General Assembly*: Speech by the President of 64th Session (June 17, 2010). At the high-level meeting of UN General Assembly on Transnational Crime.²
- *CTOC report*: “Towards security and justice for all: making the world safer from drugs, crime and terrorism” (September 21, 2006).³

This research’s hypothesis is that the failed state concept is constructed, and the associations made in reference to it are dependent upon discursive images UN shape and draw upon.

¹ See Appendix 1

² See Appendix 2

³ This document can be found at: http://www.unodc.org/pdf/ctoccop_2006/V0657207e.pdf

2.3. CDA: Fairclough's approach

Critical discourse analysis, CDA is a qualitative text analysis method “for analyzing social practices with particular regard to their discourse moments within the linking of the theoretical and practical concerns” (Chouliaraki & Fairclough 1999:16). Aim of CDA is to reveal which role discursive practices have in maintaining social world, and is considered to “contribute to the creation and reproduction of unequal power relations between social groups” (Jørgensen and Phillips 2002:63). Within this paper unequal power relations refer to whether some states are targeted and others excluded within UN's international security policy regarding failed states.

In order to reveal which consequences discursive premises have in social practice, the analysis will take on Fairclough's three dimensions: *text*, *discursive practice* and *social practice* in which each selected policy documents will be treated independently (Fairclough 1993:73). The first dimension reveals how texts are both constitutive and constituted, which Fairclough explains as following:

discourse is a form of social practice which *constitutes* the social world and is *constituted* by other social practices (Jørgensen and Phillips 2002:61).

Thus, first dimension emphasize how textual discourses shapes our understanding of the world, identities, social structures and reality (ibid. 2002:65). Second dimension, *discursive practice*, emphasizes how discourses shape and influence social reality, and the third dimension emphasize *social practice*: the discourse in which social relations and systems constitute its meaning (ibid. 2002:72).

2.3.1 Methodological strategies

This section will present methodological strategies based on CDA, that this research will use. The methodological strategy will take its starting point in is *comparison between texts* (that are believed to represent the same discourse), by applying several analytical strategies that could highlight the discursive images UN draw upon and reproduce in its policies regarding failed state.

Second strategy selected is *the substitution of words*; to detect the semiotic meaning, making comparisons or to achieve consensus in inter-textual texts. Peoples' perception of the world is inescapably affected and shaped by terminologies (and associations these trigger), and thus by looking at which particular terminologies that have been selected (and deselected), distinctive meanings within the texts will be detected and highlighted (Jørgensen et al. 2002:150).

Third analytical strategy is the *exaggeration of detail*: Jørgensen et al. (2002) discuss how exaggeration of textual detail out of proportion can help analysts to conclude whether it leads to a revelation of which prerequisites necessary to fulfill the exaggeration (ibid. 2002:151). This strategy will clarify whether the significance of failed states role in international security has been exaggerated out of proportion.

Final strategy used is *multivocality*, which draws upon inter-textually, stating that text production emanates from multiplicity of voices incorporating or challenging earlier statements. Through using this strategy, it will be possible to analyze the character of these voices, in which circumstances they speak, and which meanings they create and promote (ibid. 2002:151). For instance, this strategy can enable us to perceive how failed states are pictured in different contexts. This strategy will thus facilitate identifying occurrence of themes. Since all documents published by UN are considered to represent one official perception, the material will be treated as one single document in the analysis.

2.3.2. Methodological obstacles

Chouliarki and Fairclough (1999) emphasizes that the researcher should be reflexive and self-critical of its own position when conducting CDA, or else the researchers results might be (more) influenced by its own premises (Chouliarki and Fairclough 1999:9) which is not always easily detectable. Another main methodological challenge within Fairclough's method is to identify where in social space, the discursive and non-discursive field can be distinguished; what is consciously constructed and what is not? In this case however, the non-discursive practice is of less relevance since this research focus on social practices and processes that constitute the discursive image of failed states.

2.4. Previous Research

Discussions surrounding failed state has been frequently conducted last two decades, however discourse analysis on the concept itself has been limited. Manjikian (2008) conducted a discourse analysis the concept of failed state from a feministic perspective, with a special emphasis on US approach. Manjikian analyze failed state discourse by bringing in a health perspective, in which failed states is defined as sick, whilst non-failed as healthy (Manjikian 2008:335-6). Lambach (2006) analyzed the Australian security discourse about failed states, and conclude that development and security is understood as the anti-thesis of failed states. However, Lambach adopted Duffield's theory that focus on development-security nexus. Many authors have simply investigated how states fail and which danger these states pose to international security, without really deconstructing and questioning the concept itself.

Previous research using Fairclough's CDA and/or postcolonial framework when analyzing the concept of failed states is non-existent. Neither has a discourse analysis on UN's security policy regarding failed states, been conducted - event though UN is the largest inter-state institution globally. Thus, this research's contribution to academia is both significant and valuable.

2.5. Data

This research included both primary and secondary resources, however the analysis itself will solely be based on primary material (mentioned previously). Secondary material mainly consists of articles and books published by recognized researchers.

2.6. Limitations

As mentioned before, this research has several limitations in order to sustain a clear focus. Firstly, point of departure is the construction of failed state concept, thus discussions whether "failed state" is a strategy, theory, analytical tool etc. will not be carried out. Since there are several international and regional institutions that are concerned with international security issues such as EU, NATO, Interpol, etc. this paper has chosen to solely focus on UN, because it is the largest inert-governmental transnational institution in regard to amount of size (amount of members), most comprehensive policy framework (declarations, UN Charter etc.).

This paper acknowledges that other, especially regional, organizations could contribute valuable information regarding the conception of “failed states”. Threats and implications posed by failed states will have a military-centered focus. Economic, social, religious and other aspects will be excluded, even though they could be interesting and valuable in understanding the international security policy discourse.

3. Post-colonial framework

Post-colonial theory has been selected as theoretical framework, due to its constructivist approach that recognizes the interrelationship between (constructed) knowledge and reality. This chapter will highlight the theoretical propositions of post-colonial theory, and those analytical tools guiding this research.

3.1. Construction of knowledge

Post-colonialism entered development discourse in 1990's as a reaction to failed implemented policies by Northern /rich states in southern/ poor states in post-colonial era. Post-colonialism argue that international discourses are shaped along Northern values and perspectives. According to McEwan (2008) Northern scholars and policy makers are dominating and control knowledge production affecting international discourses in a pattern that still exploits and disfavors developing countries in South (McEwan, 2008:125). When discussing the relevance of post-colonialism in today's globalized world order, the most significant question is no longer how former colonial structures can explain global system, but rather how structures and patterns of domination, oppression and resistance can be traced, and how to challenge them. Postcolonial theory is influenced by post-structuralism in highlighting the interrelationship between power and knowledge, emphasizing that knowledge is socially constructed (Kinnvall 2006:121). Rather than being time-limited (e.g. referring exclusively to the period after the colonial era), "post-colonialism" refers to the methods applied in criticizing "the material and discursive legacies of colonialism" (McEwan 2008:124). Foucault adds subjectivity and language to this equation; all ideas are constructed and determined by knowledge. Words gain their meaning in reference to the association created in their application rather than their "natural"/ objective description of the world (Loomba 1998:35, Bloor 1991:3).

The theoretical standpoints within post-colonialism are as following: firstly, international politics is considered to be influenced by an invisible Northern ethnocentric discourse, which shapes peoples' perception about the world along imperial/ Northern interests to preserve colonial domination (ibid. 2008:124) / asymmetrical relationships. Secondly, rhetorical discourse (for instance terminologies applied) affects inescapably people's perception of the

world, and due to the current domination of Northern scholars – southern states continue to be subordinated in shaping perceptions about the world . Thirdly, spatial metaphors (such as the Third World and West) are rejected because of their contribution to a natural division between North-South, even though these are integrated parts of same phenomena in “reality” (ibid. 2008:125). Through challenging and re-examining assumptions about the world’s construction, post-colonialists attempts to change existing power-structures by; revealing structure of power and domination within development discourses, removing negative stereotypes about the South (e.g. as backward), empowering and including Southern agents voices in development discourses (ibid 2008). Thus, post-colonial theory will be valuable in investigating whether domination /asymmetrical relationship constitute itself within UN and whether this could be revealed through the concept of failed state.

3.2. Overview of failed state terminology

The concept of failed state has been widely debated by researchers, policy officials, international organizations, NGO’s and many others, resulting in divergent ideas and definitions of the concept. Wyler (2008) highlights that different concepts /words have been deployed when ascribing the same perception on (failed) states; “weak, fragile, vulnerable, failing, precarious, failed, in crisis, or collapsed” (Wyler 2008:1). Thus due to the non-existence of a universal definition of failed states, some researchers measure failure in reference to certain criteria /characteristics (Wyler 2008:4, Cojanu and Popescu 2007:115). However, these criteria /characteristics are not universal – rather subjectively selected by policy makers and researchers. For instance; the Fund for Peace (FP) has established the Failed State Index (FSI) which deploy twelve different indicators, each consisting of ten grades/levels, when measuring state failure (FP 2011:3). The current table available is from 2010, and presents four states as failed: Somalia, Chad, Sudan and Zimbabwe – all located on the African continent (FSI 2010). However, Hehir question FDI’s reliability, since its methodology and “grading” system (and thus also rating) system is considered as subjectively defined (Hehir 2007:314).

Rotberg (2002) describe failed states as “tense, conflicted, and dangerous”, and with following characteristics; insufficient infrastructure, collapsed health system, basic food shortages, economic decline such as inflation and lower GDP, decreased provision of

education, increased internal violence and criminal activity, uncontrollable borders, etc. (Rotberg 2002:132). However, Rotberg also acknowledges that “violence alone does not condition failure and the absence of violence does not necessarily imply the state in question unfailed” (Hehir 2007:314) which indicates the complexity in defining a state as failed. Hehir thus argue that terminological and methodological inconsistency in defining states as failed, question this practice’s reliability (Hehir 2007:313). In line with Hehir’s argument, this paper argue that the lack of a consistent definition of and methodological approach to failed states facilitate the emergence of subjectively defined concepts – which could easily be manipulated to gain specific interests. Since post-colonialism is an effective tool in deconstructing concepts and their inherent meaning it is perceived as a valuable tool in this research.

3.3. Criticism /weaknesses

Criticism directed at post-colonialism stresses that the theory emphasize a theoretical rather than a practical approach to power inequalities; firstly, equality will be achieved through deconstructing the underlying meaning of language (McEwan 2008:126), rather than processes. However since this paper argue that the theoretical /policy discourse shape our understanding of the world, in which our actions are being defined – deconstructing processes /incidents are not necessary to obtain this papers objective. Second critique, underline that post-colonialism itself was developed by Northern scholars (being a product of this discourse), questioning its neutrality (McEwan 2008:127). Elimination of inequality is realized through the inclusion of southern agents (McEwan 2008:126), which indicates that criticism is directed at the agents physical origin (which is believed to determine their line of thought) rather than recognizing different approaches. This critique is thus considered as a vague and misinterpreted critique since post-colonialism is an intellectual approach /mindset rather than regional.

3.4. Analytical tools

Post-colonialism emphasizes several important aspects that this paper will use when evaluating the policy discourse UN draw upon when addressing failed states. Through

defining analytical tools that are based in post-colonial theory, I hope to reveal the official or/and unofficial perception on failed states. Following theoretical /analytical tools has been selected

- ***Homogenous representation /Categorization***: will reveal whether failed states are considered as homogenous blocks or if their heterogeneous features are highlighted. Does all failed states have common signifiers such as political structure, exposure same threats to the international security, same characteristics.
- ***Subordinated terminology /hierarchical indications***: will highlight if the rhetorical discourses (e.g. terminologies applied) indicate a patronizing approach, implies any hierarchical power structures, portray notions of good and evil etc. and will thus reveal the US and UN's perception on their own role vis-à-vis failed states.
- ***Associations of threats***: this tool will reveal which associations the documents attach to the concept of failed states in relation to international security issues. By outlining the threats associated with failed states, its centrality in the international security policy discourse will be highlighted.
- ***Proposed strategies***: by investigating which strategies that are being advocated by the UN, its practical approach to and treatment of failed states will be highlighted. The formulation of strategies will e.g. highlight "the grade of threat" failed states expose.
- ***Normative discourse***: this strategy will identify if there are any premises /values prominent in international security discourse when perceiving the issue of failed states.

These analytical tools will reveal how UN perceive and address the issue of failed states, by looking at which associations are being established between failed states and international security.

4. Deconstructing failed state concept

This chapter will present and analyze official UN security policy documents, in order to identify themes and images attached to failed states

4.1. Security Council: Statement by the President

The report begins by stressing that UNSC's "primary responsibility is the maintenance of international peace and security", which highlights the self-perception of UNSC; a global police that are responsible for ensuring peace and security. It should be remembered that the UNSC consist of five permanent member states and 10 rotating delegations /member states, The five permanent members (US, France, Great Britain, Russia and China) have been delegated a veto right (un.org). Two central security issues are highlighted in the upcoming parts after the statement; transnational organized crime (TOC) and drug trafficking. UNSC states that "these transnational crimes may threaten the security of countries on its agenda, including post-conflict states" and that there exist "...an increasing link, in some cases, between drug trafficking and financing of terrorism" which "undermine the authority of states" (SC President 2010). Thus, international organized crime (/drug trafficking and terrorism is considered to be interlinked. Since transnational crimes decrease states' authority, there is a special emphasis on post-conflict states due to their instable condition.

However, these statements leave several question marks: which are the other states on TOC's agenda that are targeted? In which way do these criminal activities undermine state authority? The Presidential speech highlight that international crime has targeted some states, other than post-conflict states– however those states are left undefined. The statements clearly treat international crime as a homogenous entity with one and single agenda with the same "targets". It is also clear that several associations are being established between different international security issues: connection between drug trafficking and terrorism; correlation between TOC, drug trafficking and undermined state authority; latter on also between international crime and corruption. The two latter associations are however very weak, because of the lack of argumentation for the correlation and could thus be perceived as exaggerations.

The speech also highlight the negative implications of globalization; ".. in a globalized society, organized crime groups and networks, (are) better equipped with the new information

and communication technologies, are becoming more diversified and connected in their illicit operations” (SC President 2010). Thus, globalization increase and facilitate TOC’s (cross-border) operations and collaborations. The latter sections advocate a common approach in combating transnational crime, in which “coordination of United Nations actions, including those of its agencies, fund and programmes” will be deployed. International threats that have been highlighted in the speech are suggested to be included when shaping strategies, interstate and interregional cooperation and should be “in compliance” with international law and UNSC resolutions (SC President 2010). Thus, this speech underline that crime transboundary nature of criminal networks due to globalization and the necessity to combat it collectively on an international level.

The UNSC text also contains a normative discourse; all aspects of terrorism are considered as being “contrary to the purposes and principles of United Nations” (SC speech 2010), which could be applied for criminal networks as well. Since UNSC aims at maintaining the global security and peace, and the aims of terrorism are the opposite – a sharp polarization between UNSC /good and terrorism /evil is created.

4.2. General Assembly: Speech by the President

This speech is more concerned with highlighting the implications of TOC on the international security. TOC is argued to be “a plague on the rule of law and legitimate institutions throughout the world”. The regions mentioned in reference to be plagued by TOC are as following; West Africa, West Asia, the Andes (North-west South America) and parts of Africa (GA President 2010). Even though TOC’s negative implications have penetrated states throughout the world, all regions except for European and North American states (consisting mainly of Western states) are mentioned. It establishes an image that the rule of law and legitimacy of institutions in many non-western has been damaged. This creates an image of Western states as being capable of maintaining stability /security and legitimacy within its borders (the core of modern state) whilst many non-western states have failed to achieve this.

The picturing of TOC’s within this speech is rather complex when acknowledging its diverse criminal activities (trafficking, piracy, organized crime, cybercrime, money laundering, etc), strengthened capabilities (movement, adaption), organizational structure (network,

collaborations etc.) and its “collusion with legitimate activity” (which complicate juridical processes, evidence gathering, detecting illicit money etc.) (GA President 2010). The heterogeneous organizational features of TOC’s make it harder to detect, control and eliminate, however it has one common feature; “to exploit any opportunity to make money” (GA President 2010). This assumption highlights UN’s homogenous treatment of TOC’s purposes as *solely* profit-driven. However, when perceiving profit in economical terms, other aspects of importance are being dismissed such as ideological motivations, increased political power, social status and change and other aspects of importance.

The speech highlights a clear connection between TOC and failed states; TOC is considered to be “a threat to peace and stability”, and “a serious cause of destabilization in fragile countries” which can “fuel regional crisis” if not addressed, because it “subvert governmental institutions, undermine economic and social structures”. Since TOC are believed to have “little or no regard to borders” (GA President 2010) it could be argued that it threatens the security of states on three levels: local, regional and international. However, since TOC firstly destabilize fragile/failed and later “spread” to the regional and international level, it could be argued that there is an underlying assumption that failed states affects rest of the world. Adding that non-western regions were identified to be plagued by TOC, indicates that fragile states/ non-western states damage western states.

The speech emphasizes that member states are concerned for states increasing vulnerability to TOC and that it should be “stopped”; that UN must take “tougher stand against organized crime” by deploying a coherent common strategy by “increasing the risks to criminals, and reduce demand for illegal goods and services” (GA President 2010). Since failed states and other non-Western regions are the only states mentioned disrupted and seriously affected by TOC, it could be argued that proposed strategies clearly express that there is a concern for non-Western states.

TOC is considered to affect civilians and create many victims that should be protected. TOC has thus negative effects “on development...and human rights” and believed to hinder states from developing and prospering economically due to the existence of corruption and crime (GA President 2010). An association between corruption and failed states /non-western states is inserted, and at the same time reduced human rights are presented as the feature of failed

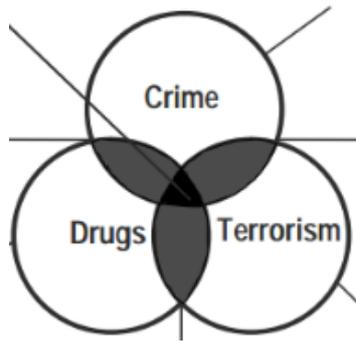
states. The normative discourse is thus human rights; TOC violates these rights, hinder states from developing and civilians from being safe. Thus, TOC threaten the psychological and physical safety of civilians and states.

4.3. CTOC report

This report highlights the relationship between three central TOC activities; drugs, organized crime and terrorism, and present a comprehensive policy framework in combating these. These activities are treated separately even though the interrelationship between them is acknowledged. The report advocates a common strategy in developing policies (due to the threats transnational character), however mechanisms (for instance separate regimes, conventions and methods) in addressing these threats are treated separately (CTOC report 2006:3ff). Thus, in this report TOC is treated as complex and diverse, and each threat requires its own strategy to be addressed. However, a common strategy is underlined, due to its transnational character.

So what are the common features between these threats? According to the report common features are as following; cross-border activity, international security threat, and their interrelationship with “failed states” (CTOC report 2006:5ff). The report contain an image (see image 1) picturing the three security threats as three separate circles which overlap each other to some extent – and the area where all three circles /threats overlap is presented as failed states. However any further explanation of this overlap is not given. This is the first and only time in the report where the term “failed states” is deployed. Since these threats are perceived as an international security threat and a common feature for these is identified as failed states, it could be argued that failed states themselves indirectly become an international security threat.

Image 1. Linkage between drugs, crime and terrorism, in which the overlapping area is presented as failed states (CTOC report 2006:4).



Later on, the report suggest strategies that should be deployed when combating these threats. One of these strategies highlighted, is an existing regional approach /strategy, which is incorporated into regional /country programmes, also known as “Strategic Programme Frameworks”, SPF (CTOC report 2006:3ff). The report thus mention regions /states where these SPF have, will or should be implemented; Africa, Central Asia, Central America, Caribbean, East and Central Asia (including China) and the Gulf (CTOC report 2006:14-5). Once again, European and North American (Western) states are excluded as a target for these policies. Clearly, the importance of implementing SPF’s is considered vis-à-vis non-western regions /states. The exclusion of Western regions /states in this debate, establish a polarized relationship between those affected /weak and those non-affected strong. The aim is to combat drugs, terrorism and organized crime – and since some states are “successful” they are perceived as role models for “good” development. Thus, development patterns are also polarized; states infected with TOC are perceived to have bad development, whilst non-affected are role models for good development.

So does this mean that all non-western states are infected and bad? No. The report does not state exactly which states that are targeted, however it specifies states most vulnerable for TOC; “Post-conflict societies are particularly vulnerable to international threats” and that UNODC has the “expertise” to increase the efficiency of “peace-keeping interventions, or in a peace-building transition phase when fragile states needs capacity building”. Thus “these are areas... where the *Office* (UNODC) will expand its activities in the future” (CTOC report 2006:15ff).

These statements represent UNODC’s self-perception and role in combating transnational threats. Firstly, post-conflict societies are perceived as vulnerable, whilst UNOCD is

portrayed to have the expertise to help these states. Secondly, the report underline that UNOCD consider itself to have expert-knowledge, and thus express a desire for extended power in UN missions. Lastly, an association between transnational threats and peace-keeping and peace-building mission is established. UNOCD thus desire to intervene in post-conflict societies and fragile (non-western) states, to decrease the threat of international threats. UNODC presentation of itself as an “expert” creates a polarization between those that have knowledge capable of leading, and those that lack this knowledge that should follow.

Transnational threats are defined as the anti-thesis of UN Millennium Development Goals (MDG), which underline the importance of addressing these threats to face “the global challenges of development, security and human rights” (CTOC report 2006:3). The struggle against transnational crime is thus a normative struggle between evil (/TOC activities) against good (/development, security and human rights) in which UN is the guiding /leading hand.

5. Occurring themes and analysis

This chapter will analyze and identify occurring themes within the texts presented.

Subordinated terminology

The policy documents definitely highlight a polarization between those that are delegated to “lead” (the UN) and those that should be “led” (the rest such as partners, failed states etc.), due to the formers “capabilities”, “expertise”, “universal values” etc. There is an underlying assumption that those states that has failed or might fail to combat TC should be intervened and listen to the states that has succeeded. The UN reports highlights that all geographical areas considered to be affected are non-western, particularly post-conflict states. Thus, post-conflict states are the burning points for combating TC in which the “unaffected /West should to lead the Rest”. Thus the first occurring theme is that there is an underlying notion that failed states occur in non-western states, and are non-existent in western states that are therefore being delegated “expertise position” – and thus also leading position. This creates an asymmetrical power relationships among states, in which delegation to lead is dependent upon ones geographical location and state capacity. Such an assumption undermines failed states sovereignty and encourages intervention from external parties into states’ internal affairs – breaking one of the most crucial norms within inter-state relations.

Homogenous representation /Categorization

The material analyzed indicate that hose states that are perceived as “fragile”, “weak”, “post-conflict societies”, “failed” exist in non-western states. These states are believed to automatically attract transnational crime activities such as terrorism, organized crime and drug traffickers, simultaneously functioning as a safe-haven for these activities to establish themselves and their transnational operations. Henceforth, all failed /failing states are a threat to “international peace and security”. The perception on failed states is generally homogenous, and is treated as one category. UN considers that all states that are failed or failing, (1) contain or attract TC’s, (2) which threaten international peace and security, (3) and are mainly located in non-western states (4) which function as a safe-haven for criminal groups and terrorists. Failure expresses itself differently and is rather contextual, which

indicates that UN's approach towards failed states is misleading and could result in ineffective and misjudged policies and measurements.

However, complexities surrounding TC is acknowledged in the report, which underlines its diverse activities, purposes, capabilities and organizational structures. Transnational crime express itself in many different shapes and if this diversity is denied attention effective strategies to combat it becomes impossible. So, given the heterogeneous basis for TC it becomes even more strange to predicate that solely failed states attract it. After all, it is called "transnational"(!).

Associations of threats

Failed states is thus associated with TC activities such as trafficking, piracy, proliferation, cybercrime, money laundering, organized crime, drugs and terrorism. The UN policy documents heavily emphasized the last three activities; organized crime, drug trafficking and terrorism when addressing the issue of international security and peace. The importance of failed states was thus highlighted vis-à-vis these threats. Failed states were identified as the overlapping /common signifier for these threats; however this interrelationship was not explained any further. The importance of failed states and TC as security threats is thus defined vis-à-vis its connections to terrorism (crime-terror nexus). Failed states function as a safe-haven for this nexus, and thus pose a national and international security threat.

UN consider failed states to be a threat to international and national peace and stability; it attracts TC that "subvert governmental institutions" and destabilize failed states, which as a consequence create regional crisis as a "spillover effect". However, the key word here is TC rather than the capacity of failed states, because the latter is presented to create a transnational threat solely when the former exist.

Since TC are believed to have "little or no regard to borders" the reports highlights that TC threatens the security of states on three levels: local, regional and international. However since the first level is experienced within failed states, and then "spread" to the regional and international level there is an underlying assumption that; failed states /the periphery affects the center /West. Thus, it could be argued that the importance of failed states as a threat to

“international peace and security” is defined vis-à-vis the threats posed by TC – rather than state failure itself.

Proposed strategies

The strategies proposed, when addressing threat posed by failed states, emphasizes an international collective and coherent framework as basis for action. The UN documents emphasize that there is a *need* for effective implementation of policies, juridical mechanisms and actions in addressing failed states. Failed states are being deprived their sovereignty when being addressed as incapable of protecting its territory and population from external threats posed by TC. This underlying assumption of failed states “incapability”, delegate UN a justified reason to “help and restore” failed states through offering their expertise, capacity building, peace-keeping and peace-making processes. It could be argued that this justification create a gateway for intervention.

Even though the main strategy is emphasize “collective and coherent international action” to eliminate TC and threats posed by it, states defined as failed/ failing become an object of attention due to its “natural attractiveness” for TC activities and groups - rather than its failure itself. It could be argued that the *natural correlation* presented between failed states and TC legitimizes preventive measures carried out by the UN. Thus, labeling /categorizing a state as failed or failing, facilitates (/legitimize) interventions carried out by UN – even though TC activities and groups are non-present. Since these states are mainly located in non-western states, states targeted for possible interventions will be in these regions. Strategies shaped when addressing failed states are thus based on preventive and intervening measures.

Normative discourse

As outlined before there is a natural correlation between failed states and TC, and thus the threats posed by former have been defined vis-à-vis the threats posed by latter. TC is defined as threat to development, human rights and democracy, and thus portrayed as the anti-thesis to UN purposes, principles, and its values, by challenging *economic prosperity and development*, maintenance of *international peace and security*, and the establishment of *just* and respectively *peaceful and legitimate governments*. Thus, it is clear that there exist an underlying assumption that countering TC (and failed states) are considered as a *normative*

struggle between good portrayed as UN and evil portrayed as TC (/failed states). However, the identification of failed states as located in non-western states, indicate that evil is more prone to infect non-western states than others. The “evilness” of failed states and its representation as the antithesis of UN’s values, purposes and principles is not based on its failure, rather to its correlation to TC.

Summary of themes

- 1) Failed states occur in non-western states (particularly post-conflict states)
- 2) and are non-existent in western states that are therefore being delegated “leading position”.
- 3) Failed states as a threat to is defined vis-à-vis the threats posed by TC – rather than state failure itself.
- 4) Strategies shaped when addressing failed states are based on preventive and intervening measures.
- 5) Countering TC (and failed states) are considered as a *normative struggle* between good portrayed as UN and evil portrayed as TC (and indirectly failed non-western states).

6. Conclusion: Failed state–Transnational crime nexus

The articles presented, highlights how transnational crime and failed states have become intervened in the international security policy discourse - in which the former shapes the threats posed by the latter. Failed states are portrayed as naturally attractive for TC groups and activities, due to its weakness and failure to project power within its borders. The terminology when referring to failed states as fragile, weak and post-conflict indicates the existence of inconsistent terminology on international policy level. So the question is thus, who has the right to define states as failed? This question is ignored.

Given the transnational feature of the crimes connected to failed states, the presentation of non-western states as being more prone to fail than western states is highly doubtful – and could thus be considered as an exaggeration of detail with an underpinning of ethnocentric western discourse. Some states might be more vulnerable to TC groups and activities, than others – but solely considering failed states as attractive is misleading. TC groups exist and operate globally, irrespectively on states geographical location, stability, military capability, development etc.

Given the attractiveness of failed states for TC, threats posed by them for international security is defined vis-à-vis threats posed by TC groups and activities. Thus, threats associated with failed states are not related to state failure itself, rather determined by the threat TC poses for international security. The strategies that are being advocated by UN are based on this notion; the purpose of deploying intervening and preventive measures is mainly to counter TC in non-western states. UN's international policy surrounding failed states mainly targets on non-western states, which questions its “moral leadership”.

In line with Foucault and post-colonialism, it is clear that knowledge /perceptions shapes actions, and those actors that shapes knowledge itself are delegated the power to “determine” actions. UN's discourse in presenting a causal relationship between failed /failing states and establishment of TC, in combination with the non-existence of a clear definition on failed states – indicates that strategies in addressing failed states could easily be misled and disfavor

some states more than others. Preventive measures itself are a rather controversial issue and measurement, due to the non-existence of *actual* threat. Preventive measures are deployed when there is a belief of a “future threat”. Identifying a future threat is generally based on interpretation, and against the doctrine of just wars. Thus, since there is no definition to sort out failed states from non-failed ones in combination with a questionable hypothesis stressing a causal relationship between failed states-TC – indicates that strategies advocated by UN when addressing failed states could easily be used to serve specific interests.

In line with post-colonialists argument, an ethnocentric western discourse is prominent in the international security policy discourse. UN delegates itself the responsibility to combat TC and maintain international security and peace (and at the same deny other states the same opportunity). UN also reinforce itself as the leader /guiding hand in the international security policy discourse that shape our understanding of failed states. Non-western states are targeted as failed, whilst western states are portrayed as the role model for successful development. Fairclough argue that reality is constructed and constituted by discourses, and UN’s security policy discourse clearly shape ones understanding of failed states in a way that create polarization between non-western and western states. Whilst the former regions are more prone to “fail” (and should therefore be led), the later has been successful and should thus function as a role model. Henceforth, social identities among states are shaped and created.

Given the centrality of TC in shaping the image of failed states in the international security policy discourse - it could be argued that the discursive images that UN draw upon when addressing the issue of failed states is centered around a failed state-TC nexus. In reference to Fairclough’s perception of how social practices are influenced by discursive ones, the failed states-TC nexus could be considered as both constituted and constitutive; the construction of the failed state image is dependent upon TC, and vice versa. Without the existence of each other, neither failed states nor TC would be considered as a threat to *international* peace and security. Thus, these concepts gain their importance in relation to each other.

The conclusion within this research is thus; *the discursive images of failed states in UN’s international security policy is shaped vis-à-vis a failed state–TC nexus (and vice versa) that polarize non-western and western states.*

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Appendix 1

Security Council: Statement by the President (February 24, 2010). On the issue "Threats to international peace and security"

"The Security Council reaffirms its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.

"The Security Council notes with concern the serious threats posed in some cases by drug trafficking and transnational organized crime to international security in different regions of the world. These transnational threats are a source of growing concern.

"The Security Council, in this context, further notes with concern the increasing link, in some cases, between drug trafficking and the financing of terrorism, including through the use of proceeds derived from illicit cultivation, production of and trafficking in narcotic drugs and their precursors, as well as illegal arms trafficking.

"The Security Council notes that these transnational crimes may threaten the security of countries on its agenda, including post-conflict states, and expresses its intention to consider such threats, as appropriate.

"The Security Council notes with concern that drug trafficking and transnational organized crime contribute to undermine the authority of states.

"The Security Council notes that, in a globalized society, organized crime groups and networks, better equipped with new information and communication technologies, are becoming more diversified and connected in their illicit operations, which in some cases may aggravate threats to international security. In this context, the Council expresses concern at the increase in incidences of kidnapping and hostage-taking, in some areas of the world with a specific political context, with the aim of raising funds or gaining political concessions. The development of cybercrime is another particular source of concern.

"The Security Council calls upon Member States to increase international and regional cooperation, on the basis of a common and shared responsibility, as well as their cooperation with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the International Narcotic Control Board, in order to counter the illicit production of, demand for and trafficking in drugs, and to

identify emerging trends in drug trafficking. It welcomes relevant initiatives such as the Paris Pact. The Council also encourages Member States to undertake further action, as well as to consider, on the basis of concrete proposals by UNODC and INCB, through the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs, possible new international initiatives aimed at strengthening the combat against illicit trafficking in chemical precursors.

“The Security Council encourages the coordination of United Nations actions, including those of its agencies, funds and programmes, in order to enhance the effectiveness of appropriate international efforts.

“The Security Council reaffirms and commends the important work of UNODC in collaboration with other relevant entities of the United Nations.

“The Security Council encourages States to strengthen international, regional and sub-regional cooperation to counterdrug trafficking, transnational organized crime, terrorism and corruption and to investigate and prosecute, as appropriate, persons and entities responsible for these crimes consistent with international law. Through compliance with their obligations under international law, including the relevant resolutions of the Security Council, States can help strengthen international peace and security. The Council notes relevant international conventions such as the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961 as amended by the 1972 Protocol, the Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971, the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988, the United Nations Convention against Transnational organized crime of 2000 and the Protocols thereto, the United Nations Convention against Corruption of 2003 and the relevant international conventions and protocols related to terrorism.

“The Security Council expresses its concern about the number of victims caused by acts of terrorism in various regions of the world. The Council further reiterates that acts, methods and practices of terrorism, as well as knowingly financing, planning and inciting terrorist acts, are contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations. The Council calls upon States to continue to condemn in the strongest terms all terrorist acts, irrespective of their motivation, whenever and by whomsoever committed, as well as the incitement of terrorism.

“The Security Council invites the Secretary-General to consider these threats as a factor in conflict prevention strategies, conflict analysis, integrated missions’ assessment and planning

and to consider including in his reports, as appropriate, analysis on the role played by these threats in situations on its agenda.

“The Security Council welcomes further briefings, as necessary, on a more regular basis, by the Executive Director of UNODC.”

Appendix 2

General Assembly: Speech by the President of 64'th Session (June 17, 2010 in New York). At the high-level meeting of UN General Assembly on Transnational Crime.

Mr. Secretary General,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

We meet today to discuss the phenomenon of transnational organized crime and to reflect on the best solutions to address it. Indeed, crime has turned into a global business operating in collusion with legitimate activity. It now represents far more than localized violence - it has turned into a pervasive threat to the security of entire States and regions.

Organized crime acts as a plague on the rule of law and legitimate institutions throughout the world; drug cartels are spreading violence in Latin America..... West Africa is under attack from drug traffickers that are gaining profit and political power..... collusion between insurgents and criminal groups threatens the stability of West Asia, the Andes and parts of Africa, fuelling the trade in smuggled weapons, the plunder of natural resources and piracy;in many urban centers, authorities have lost control of parts of cities to organized gangs and thugs;.... And finally, human trafficking has spread throughout the world.

This brief outline demonstrates the increasing diversity and the influence of organized crime networks. Indeed, while criminal networks continue to operate in areas such as racketeering and drug trafficking, many now ply their trade in a wide range of activities, such as human trafficking, migrant smuggling, environmental crime, weapons trafficking, trafficking in cultural property, fraud, cybercrime and money laundering. This evolution of organized crime testifies to the capacity of criminal groups to adapt, moving, often with little or no regard to borders, to exploit any opportunity to make money. Older crimes, such as kidnapping and piracy, are also undergoing a period of resurgence. Furthermore, the escalating collusion between previously disconnected criminal networks is also alarming. Heroin traffickers, for example, have made available their infrastructure to facilitate cocaine traffickers at the

regional level. In return, cocaine traffickers help heroin traffickers gain new markets at the local level.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime has shown in numerous reports how organized crime constitutes a threat to peace and stability. It is also a serious cause of destabilization in fragile countries. The failure to grasp the enormity of this challenge may bear grave consequences, considering the growing capacity of criminals to subvert government institutions, undermine economic and social structures, and fuel regional crises. Organized crime is also a development issue. In countries ravaged by crime and corruption, development and economic performance cannot take hold.

The General Assembly has pledged its commitment to fighting organized crime in several important resolutions, but efforts need greater coherence. We must take a tougher stand against organized crime. We must mainstream our fight against crime into broader programmes. Today's meeting is an indispensable step in this direction.

Ten years ago the General Assembly adopted the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime. In the 2005 Summit outcome document, Member States expressed grave concern at the negative effects on development, peace and security and human rights posed by organized crime, and at the increasing vulnerability of States to such conduct. We must prosecute and punish the criminals involved and protect and assist the victims and their families.

We must spur governments – and all members of society – into action: to reduce the vulnerability of victims, increase the risks to criminals, and reduce demand for illegal goods and services.

This High-level meeting presents us with the occasion to revitalize our collective and individual resolve to prevent and combat organized crime. Let us today send a strong signal from this Assembly that transnational organized crime must be stopped before it spreads even more fear, poverty, violence and impunity.

Thank you for your attention.