



The National Defense College
44th Class 2016-2017

Final Paper Research Proposal

Academic Advisor: XXXX
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The subject of the paper:

The challenges of fighting modern jihadism in Singapore

Background:

The rise of the Islamic State (IS) has presented a new form of warfare, touted as the modern jihadism. Its extreme ideology and operational methods, a result of continuous learning and adaptation from the wars it fought, have created a profound impact on the psyche of societies and the response frameworks of states worldwide. This influence of extremism and modern terrorism, as espoused by the IS, has intensified from the epicenter of the Middle East towards South East Asia. As such, Singapore has begun to heighten its responses to these threats because a terrorist attack occurring in Singapore is not a matter of “if”, but “when”. Recently, IS-claimed attacks have reached the shores of Singapore's closest neighbors, Indonesia and Malaysia, while the Indonesian authorities have discovered terrorists' plot to attack Singapore's iconic landmark, Marina Bay Sands.

The last terrorist incident in Singapore occurred in 1991, the SQ 117 hijack, which happened some 25 years ago. As such, it was felt that while the Singapore government acted quickly to the latest wave of terrorism to assure the public, the impact of these perceived “knee-jerk” reactions was not yet fully considered. For example, some of the initiatives implemented or enhanced to deal with Islamic radicalization might have created unintended consequences, such as reinforcing negative perceptions and alienation of the Singapore Muslims community. Besides, in the dynamic interactions between the state of Singapore and a learning terrorist organization, there is

a danger of “preparing for the last war”, which renders existing efforts ineffective against the next terrorist attack. Therefore, the key task is to analyze, systemically and critically, the adequacy of Singapore's current counter-terrorism strategy and response framework against an adversary who is also adapting its operational capabilities to achieve its strategic goals.

Goal of the paper:

1. To analyze Singapore's national security strategy and measures in combating terrorism and extremism.
2. To recommend policy changes and/or enhancements to the counter-terrorism and counter-extremism efforts in Singapore.

Research questions:

1. What are the threats of terrorism facing Singapore today?
2. To what extent are the various elements (political, military, economic, social, psychological, legal) of Singapore's counter-terrorism and counter-extremism strategy effective and relevant in fighting modern jihadism?

Research claims (if any):

A terrorist organization is a learning organization, which learns about itself and its enemy country. Singapore has to continuously learn and implement relevant and effective policies to better fight terrorism.

Method of presenting the idea of the research (Outline):

This paper will analyze Singapore's strategy and measures on counter-terrorism and counter-extremism through the approaches of systems thinking and strategic thinking. The analysis will examine national security in the social, economical, military, political and legal aspects.

1. Introduction and research methodology.
2. Threats of terrorism in Singapore.
3. Critical analysis of Singapore's strategy.
4. Policy recommendations.
5. Conclusion.

The importance / novelty of the paper:

The increasing sophistication of extremism and modern terrorism threats have caught many countries unprepared, including Singapore. The quick and instinctive responses to address the challenges are unavoidable and far from ideal. Thus, a more in-depth analysis and evaluation of the impact of the measures implemented will be needed to assess the potential weaknesses and blindspots that could have been glossed over as a result of the immediate reactions because these gaps can be quickly exploited by the terrorists. This stems from the basic understanding that: (1) a national security system comprises parts that are interdependent and related, and (2) learning competition exists between two actors in (opposing) actions. Simply put, the dynamic nature of fighting terrorism requires one to constantly examine its enemy and itself to stay ahead in the contest.

Gantt Chart

S/N	Tasks	Start Date	End Date	Duration (Days)
1	Brainstorm topic	1 Oct 16	20 Oct 16	20
2	Proposal for Final Paper	21 Oct 16	4 Nov 16	15
2.1	Draft research proposal	21 Oct 16	24 Oct 16	4
2.2	Topic discussion with Team Instructor	25 Oct 16	27 Oct 16	3
2.3	Topic discussion with Academic Advisor	28 Oct 16	1 Nov 16	5
2.4	Complete research proposal	2 Nov 16	4 Nov 16	3
3	Research and Reading	5 Nov 16	4 Dec 16	30
3.1	Methodology	5 Nov 16	9 Nov 16	5
3.2	Refine scope of work / Mind-map	10 Nov 16	19 Nov 16	10
3.3	Preliminary writing	20 Nov 16	4 Dec 16	15
4	Presentation to MG Tamir Haiman	- Dec 16	- Dec 16	3
5	Chapter 1: Introduction	15 Dec 16	24 Dec 16	10
5.1	Draft Introduction	15 Dec 16	20 Dec 16	6
5.2	Feedback on Introduction	21 Dec 16	24 Dec 16	4
6	Chapter 2	25 Dec 16	7 Jan 17	14
6.1	Draft Chapter 2	25 Dec 16	3 Jan 17	10
6.2	Feedback on Chapter 2	4 Jan 17	7 Jan 17	4
7	Chapter 3	8 Jan 17	21 Jan 17	14
7.1	Draft Chapter 3	8 Jan 17	17 Jan 17	10
7.2	Feedback on Chapter 3	18 Jan 17	21 Jan 17	4
8	Chapter 4	22 Jan 17	4 Feb 17	14
8.1	Draft Chapter 4	22 Jan 17	31 Jan 17	10
8.2	Feedback on Chapter 4	1 Feb 17	4 Feb 17	4
9	Chapter 5: Conclusion	5 Feb 17	16 Feb 17	12
9.1	Draft Conclusion	5 Feb 17	12 Feb 17	8
9.2	Feedback on Conclusion	13 Feb 17	16 Feb 17	4
10	Status update	17 Feb 17	20 Feb 17	4
10.1	Preparation	17 Feb 17	19 Feb 17	3
10.2	Presentation on status of the draft	20 Feb 17	20 Feb 17	1
11	Completion	21 Feb 17	6 May 17	73
11.1	Final amendments (Instructor / Advisor)	21 Feb 17	1 Apr 17	40
11.2	Abstract / Acknowledgement / Bibliography	2 Apr 17	23 Apr 17	22
11.3	Proof-read	24 Apr 17	3 May 17	10
11.4	Print and Bind	4 May 17	6 May 17	3
12	Submission of Final Paper	7 May 17	7 May 17	1
13	Presentation of Final Paper	2 Jul 17	2 Jul 17	1