Chapter 11

Frame Building and Media Framing of the Joint Counterterrorism

Comparing United States–Uganda Efforts

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Global terrorism has become a daunting challenge for nations around the world, and scholars from the social and behavioral fields have invested considerable time in trying to understand this challenge.

This chapter examines how state actors propagate counterterrorism efforts and how the press frames such efforts, taking as examples *The New York Times* of the United States and *The Daily Monitor* of Uganda.1 Before the August 1998 attacks on U.S. embassies in Nairobi, Kenya and Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania, the U.S.-sponsored joint counterterrorism efforts were concentrated on the countries of the Arabian Peninsula, South Asia, and the Middle East. The U.S. embassy bombings in East Africa were proof that terrorism could target U.S. assets and citizens anywhere, particularly in countries that were lax in their counterterrorism preparedness (Cronin, 2002). Since then, the United States has fostered joint counterterrorism efforts with some African states to empower them to combat international terrorism.2 Thus, since 9/11, the United States has offered financial and technical support to East African countries to fight terrorism, for instance $100 million was donated by America to the East African Counterterrorism Initiative (EACTI) in 2003 to cultivate cooperation among the Ugandan, Kenyan, and Tanzanian governments to fight international terrorism. Millions of dollars are disbursed annually to African governments through the Terrorist Finance Working Group (TFWG) to curb the flow of money from terrorist organizations to individuals (Silke, 2004). More monetary assistance in millions of dollars is channeled through the Anti-Terrorism Assistance (ATA) program. to the East African governments to support their National Counterterrorism Centers (Copson, 2005). The U.S. sponsors counterterrorism missions to ensure that African nations such as Uganda do not become a haven for terrorists and international criminal activity.

The U.S. government’s counterterrorism financing of African states such as Uganda is made on the reasonable assumption that those states also have terrorism problems that are similar to those faced by the United States (Copson, 2005). However, this chapter is based on the idea that newspapers from unique political cultures, on different continents, face different terrorist threats, and report their domestic and international terrorism problems in different ways. It is important to study how joint counterterrorism goals across political cultures could be allied since such bilateral efforts involve monetary support and military technical assistance. The theoretical propositions, frame building, and media framing of terrorism attempt to address the idea that frame sponsors propagate their preferred interpretation of events by means of powerful, persuasive messages and actions of conflict aggravation through the press. The analysis focuses on how power persuasion and conflict aggravation differed in frames propagated from both countries by state actors and other interest groups. Drawing from Wanta and Kalyango (2007), terrorism is defined in this chapter as the unlawful use or threat of violence by disgruntled factions, which have an ethnic, religious, or political agenda against a state/states or a group of citizens, with intentions to impair, intimidate, frustrate, or coerce a government, individuals, or any sector thereof.

Terrorism

A comprehensive definition of terrorism is nonexistent and all scholarship contributes to its understanding through theory building and conceptualization (Sorel, 2003). Policy makers have propagated a definition of terrorism through a power persuasion schema that describes it as the use of fear, anxiety, destruction, and loss of life against random targets designed to cause aggravation to and challenge the authority of the state (Crenshaw, 1972, 1981). The term terrorism was coined to describe the systematic inducement of fear and the escalation of conflict by using acts or threats of violence to control and influence a civilian population (Crenshaw, 1981). Terrorists also have power persuasion attributes such as attracting media attention to their cause, appealing for sympathy, impressing an audience, or promoting the adherence of the faithful (Dershowitz, 2002; Wilkinson, 1997).

Differences in definitions and conceptualizations of terrorism in unique political cultures make the global war on terrorism a daunting task for state actors and the press (Sorel, 2003). With the enormous U.S. financing of antiterrorism missions in Uganda and other East African nations, one would expect some conventional policies in their joint counterterrorism efforts. Corsi’s (1981) key work on terrorism as a desperate game showed how regimes that deny other able leaders access to power and persecute dissenters create dissatisfaction and motivate terrorism. International terrorism has been a bigger threat for democratic societies like the United States than for Third World nations because the develop-
ing nations are neither perceived as transnational cultural imperialists, unwanted external influences on the political economy of weaker states, nor as globalization exploiters (Corsi, 1981; Enders & Todd, 2000).

**Terrorism in the United States**

Terrorists who have targeted the United States, its property, and its citizens are portrayed by U.S. state actors through the media as irrational agitators, religion-inspired (Islamic) fundamentalists such as the Al-Qaeda and Taliban networks, fascists bent on undermining Western influence, and left-wing terrorists. The left-wing terrorism factor refers to international movements such as communist movements during the Cold War, Marxist political philosophers, and others. Terrorist acts that target U.S. citizens and their property occur as a result of anti-Westernism and Islamic fundamentalism (Cronin, 2002; Enders & Todd, 1999; Rapoport, 2001), which emanate from anti-Americanism, and are closely related to antiglobalization (Elliot, 2004; Enders & Todd, 2000). Anti-Americanism is also a result of a dashed expectations and a heightened resentment of the perceived U.S.-led Western hegemonic system vis-à-vis other regions such as Africa. This kind of terrorist activity targets symbolic American targets to get public attention and to provoke a public outcry in the hope of upending U.S. foreign policy (Cronin, 2002). Fantu (2002) explained that this is due to a general belief that the United States is the primary driver of the powerful forces that result in globalization and Western influence.

Comparative political literature shows that international terrorists do not seek political power in the United States (Ballard, 2005). The threats and attacks are designed to win political leverage and express a desire to change U.S. foreign policy toward regions with disenfranchised groups such as the Middle East, the Arab world, Asia, and parts of Africa (Enders & Todd, 1999; Jenkins, 1986). In addition, Cronin (2002) concluded that the international terrorists' goal is to destabilize the strategic U.S. global leadership in the world by influencing and enlisting the weak and the disenfranchised to move against the United States.

**Terrorism in Uganda**

Since 2001, the Uganda government has condemned and prosecuted individuals suspected of committing acts of terrorism, using the Anti-terrorism Act of 2002. Some of the clauses in the Act include violence characterized by spontaneity, instigation of mass participation in uprisings, a primary intent of physical destruction of state property, libel or defamation of the name of the president by the press, and treason. A notable example of how the Uganda government enforced the laws under this Act occurred in late 2005 when presidential candidate Dr. Kizza Besigye was arrested on charges of terrorism. During the 2006 presidential elections, Ugandan president Yoweri Museveni employed an extreme act of presidential coercion by bringing charges of terrorism against Dr. Besigye. He accused Besigye of leading an armed insurgency called the People's Redemption Army (PRA) against the state (president). The state also linked him to the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) that had politically destabilized northern Uganda for the last 24 years and the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) in Southwest of the country for the last 12 years (Rubongoya, 2007). The government registered the LRA and ADF with the U.S. Department of State in 2002 as terrorist organizations.

Upon his return from exile in October 2005, Besigye announced his intention to defeat Museveni in the presidential elections. Two weeks after his return, Besigye was incarcerated on charges of terrorism and concealment of treason (The Daily Monitor, November 15, 2005). Museveni ordered the same charges of terrorism and illegal possession of firearms to be brought against Besigye before the military General Court Martial (GCM). Museveni addressed the nation on state-owned television and reiterated that the state had received reliable information that Besigye planned a terrorist attack. He said Besigye's arrest prevented a coup and maintained peace (The New Vision, November 20, 2005).

Other opposition politicians were also arrested on the same terrorism charges in late 2005 during the presidential campaigns. Besigye spent the better part of his campaign in jail while Museveni vigorously campaigned for reelection. The terrorism case was dismissed by the Supreme Court and all other charges against Besigye were dropped by the state after the March 2006 General Elections. According to press reports, Besigye and his FDC party were considered by the government as a serious political and foreign relations threat to Museveni's political fortunes. That's why they declared him an international terrorist. Some opposition politicians told The Daily Monitor that the State House (official presidential palace) locked up Besigye to wreck his presidential ambitions (The Daily Monitor, December 14, 2005).

- Apparently, Besigye was facing identical charges before both the High Court and a military tribunal—a duplication of charges. According to Besigye's lawyers, it meant that if their client was released by the High Court, he would be legally detained by the Court Martial and imprisoned in a military barracks. It turned out that the Court Martial did not have jurisdiction to try terrorism charges. Besigye's legal team challenged the twin trials in the Constitutional Court, calling the military hearing "a kangaroo court." The Anti-Terrorism Act 2002 says that charges of terrorism can only be tried by the High Court (The Daily Monitor, January 6, 2006).
Frame building is used here as a communication process from state leaders and other message sponsors to structure meaning of the term terrorist and terror when combating international terrorism. Media framing deals with how journalists choose certain viewpoints of a political order from news sources such as state actors and other interest groups to provide meaning, in this case to terrorism and terrorist acts. It entails selecting and highlighting some facets of events in order to promote a particular interpretation, evaluation, or solution (Entman, 1993, 2003). The outcome of the frame building of terrorism is the frames manifest in the media through power persuasion.

In a recent study on the framing of terrorism, Norris et al. (2003) concluded that perceptions and evaluations of terrorism in the United States differ sharply between the political elite and the public. Entman (2003), for instance, found that the media portrayal of terrorism significantly contributes to what people think they know about it, which comes from the journalistic rationalization of terror that is built from elite influence and political persuasion. State actors build frames that influence how the press interprets and depicts terrorism (Norris et al., 2003). The routine begins with a consensual interpretation of events from political actors which is then passed on to the media (Nelson, Oxley, & Clawson, 1997).

Meanwhile, frame building and media framing relate to the persistent political culture of states and their regime types, which stress specific values, facts, and other considerations to shape content. In this case, frames are tied in with culture as a macrosocietal structure moderated by political actors, press systems, and interest groups (Van Gorp, 2007). Media framing also deals with how journalists choose certain interpretations of elite dissatisfaction and mass protests against the state to provide meaning to conflict aggravation in order to rationalize actions of disgruntled interest groups or “terrorists” (Cronin, 2002; Norris et al., 2003). Framing is thus an important approach for this comparison of two newspapers in two unique political cultures. State actors are political leaders in the executive and legislative arms of government, and interest groups refer to other frame sponsors such as terrorist organizations or individual terrorists.

Conceptualizing Frame Building

The two concepts of power persuasion and conflict aggravation are used to explain frame building of terrorism. Decades of research show that terrorists employ diverse strategies of ideological power persuasions and conflict provocations designed to influence change by induce-ment of threat, fear, or extreme violence (Crenshaw, 1981; Rapoport, 1984, 2001). In this case, state actors pursue their political-ideological
persuasions about terrorism to frame the content for the media to shape public opinion (Jablonski & Sullivan, 1996). Other frame sponsors or interest groups (terrorists) expect the press to frame their messages as conflict aggravations to bring about a political advantage.

Political actors use their position of power to portray terrorists, at a macrolevel, as agitators for irrational beliefs such as socioeconomic opportunism, a power struggle for a particular political ideology, and radicalism against the status quo. Yet at a microlevel, the activities of terrorists may also elicit power persuasion through intense media coverage that sometimes frames their actions as struggles for power against the state as a result of elite dissatisfaction (Elliot, 2004; Rapoport, 1984). Figure 11.1 is a typology that illustrates an abstract concept of power persuasion in media framing of terrorism.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Frame Sponsors</th>
<th>Framing Attributes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>State Actors</td>
<td>- Islamic fundamentalists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(i.e. president)</td>
<td>- Left-wing terrorism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Interest Groups (i.e. terrorists)</td>
<td>- Jihadists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Alqaeda and Taliban</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- U.S. hegemonic system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Western imperialism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Anti-globalization (trade advantage and imbalance)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- U.S. foreign policy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Uganda | State Actors (i.e. president) | - Opposition state offenders  |
|        | Intigators of mass uprising | - Allied Democratic Forces |
|        | - Lord’s Resistance Army  | - Authoritarian presidency |
|        | - Undemocratic repression | - Militant government |
|        | - Museveni’s dictatorship |

**Figure 11.1** Power persuasion as applied to frame building of terrorism

*Figure 1 is a schematic representation of message construction derived from frame building. Both political actors and terrorists try to influence the framing of media messages. To test inter-coder reliability, two cases/codes in frame building were set up for the variable 'power persuasion': state actors = 1 and terrorists = 2, which were distributed in fixed cells/columns to thematically code (based on structural relationships of themes/concepts emerging from the frames) all the attributes.

The concept of power as an act of persuasion in Figure 11.1 illustrates how (in the Interest Groups column) terrorists commit or commission acts such as a political protest designed to cause political change. Terrorists single out the executive government or state institutions to blame for popular suffering as part of their campaign of political power persuasion. This political ideology is also propagated by state actors as a mobilization strategy in order to garner mass support against terrorists (Cronin, 2002). The executive branches of both governments, supported by the U.S. Congress or the Ugandan parliament (in the State Actors column) portray terrorists as agitators, religious fundamentalists, and nonconformists who use acts of violence to achieve their objectives (Okumu, 2007).

Terrorists draw on conflict aggravation because they can achieve certain instantaneous ends, such as general insecurity, disorientation of the public and the government, which attract media publicity. This concept has been tested by several students of terrorism such as Jenkins (1986) and Fantu (2002). Conflict aggravation relates to international terrorist actions such as kidnappings, bombings (mortars and suicide blasts), assassinations, barricades, hostage taking, armed attacks, and skyjackings directed toward the United States and her allies (Enders & Todd, 1999, 2000; Fantu, 2002).

On the contrary, some studies have shown that the media exaggerate the real risks of terrorism when framing conflict aggravation. Bassioumi (1981) argued that terrorists tailor their acts and choice of target to ensure media framing of the threats and underlying message to achieve terror-inspiring effects from political conflicts. Bassioumi analyzed the role of the media in handling terror–violence coverage. That study echoed the attributes of conflict aggression used by terrorists and their networks to spark mass dissatisfaction and elite discontent of the regime. He identified terrorism as including the use of the media to impress an audience, to promote the adherence of the faithful, and to dramatize a particular claim or grievance. Bassioumi stated that the overt fear inspired in the public by terrorist acts may be attributed to the media framing of conflict escalation.

Other studies on media coverage of terrorism tend to support the relationship between media coverage of terrorism and propagation of domestic political ideologies. For instance, Entman (2003) introduced the cascading activation concept that focused on the White House framing and promotion of the war against terrorism after 9/11 through the media. Entman analyzed stories in major U.S. newspapers and on network television and determined that the media guard the boundaries of culture and maintain domestic dissent within conventional bounds when covering crises like international terrorism. He found that during its campaigns to attack Iraq in 2002, the White House deployed its power
over the media to reassert frame building that would promote support for its proposed attack. Table 11.1 presents a typology that illustrates the concept of conflict aggravation from earlier literature on the antiterrorism challenges avowed by U.S. and Ugandan newspapers.

**The Media, Politics, and Terrorism**

The Western press, such as *The New York Times*, has covered state-sponsored and organizational terrorism in Africa. However, few studies have been conducted by Western scholars of terrorism and the media about the new terrorist breeding grounds in sub-Saharan Africa. The focus of antiterrorism research has been on Egypt, Libya, and more recently Somalia because most of the known terrorist activities in sub-Saharan Africa had not directly targeted Western governments and their property before the 1998 bombings in East Africa (Cilliers, 2003; Wanta & Kalyango, 2007). Seminal works on terrorism and the media examined the acts of terror, terrorists, and how governments use the media in their campaign to fight terrorism, fight freedom of the press, and promote censorship (Paletz & Schmid, 1992).

Recent contributions on media and terrorism addressed political aggression and the ways that sponsors of a particular terrorism frame shape messages for the media (Ballard, 2005). Hess and Kalb (2003) looked at freedom of information and how leaders build news frames that support international military action against terrorism. When ter-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Conflict aggravation</th>
<th>Target of aggression</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>Airline hijacking →</td>
<td>Passenger commercial planes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hostage taking → →</td>
<td>U.S. journalists/ workers/troops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Suicide bombing → →</td>
<td>Civilians, U.S. citizens/troops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kidnapping → → →</td>
<td>U.S. Citizens/tourists/polit. elites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Car bombing → → →</td>
<td>State property/monuments/etc...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Assassination → →</td>
<td>Diplomats/pol. elites/aid workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uganda</td>
<td>Mutilation → → →</td>
<td>Children and women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Arson → → → →</td>
<td>On homes in villages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Abduction/Rape → →</td>
<td>Coercing boys and girls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Barricades → → →</td>
<td>On state &amp; civilian vehicles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Protest/Demos → →</td>
<td>Against state autonomy/injustice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hostages → → →</td>
<td>Women and children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Libel/Treason → →</td>
<td>Journalists/opposition/activists</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Frames for United States were drawn from terrorism literature as types of aggression and modes of conflict (Jenkins, 1986; Enders et al., 2000; Fanu, 2002).
* The frames for Uganda are anecdotal evidence from the Ugandan press (The New Vision & The Daily Monitor) which refer to aggression and modes of terror.
* In the Ugandan case, some conflict aggravations are state-inspired acts of aggression.

Methods

**Data, Sampling, and Coding**

A comparative content analysis was conducted to determine how terrorism was framed in *The Daily Monitor* and *The New York Times*. The data used were generated from LexisNexis academic search for *The Daily Monitor* and *The New York Times* index. The unit of analysis was a paragraph. News and feature stories published in both papers between December 31, 2002 and December 31, 2004 that contained the words terror, terrorism, terrorists, and terrorist acts were collected. The rationale for choosing these 2 years was that they were considered salient for the Bush administration's start of the global war against terrorism, as the U.S. troops deployed on the frontlines in Afghanistan and Iraq, and other U.S.-led foreign counterterrorism engagements. Second, several notable incidents framed as terrorism related in Uganda appeared in the Ugandan press during the same period after the enactment of the antiterrorism bill.

By using instruments of categorization (Stempel, 1989; Wimmer & Dominick, 2003), the study assessed the relevance of stories collected from both newspapers to the research question. A total of 179 stories were published by *The Daily Monitor* during that period on terrorism, and 674 stories were published by *The New York Times* on terrorism that occurred in the United States or against U.S. interests abroad and in Uganda. A sampling using the constructed week approach (Riffe, Aust,
& Lacy, 1993) ensured that all days of the week had equal chances of being represented, to arrive at the total of 200 stories from both newspapers in the sample.

One hundred stories were identified from The Daily Monitor and 100 stories from The New York Times during that period. To arrive at 100 stories for each newspaper, stories were eliminated from the sampling data due to lack of relevance to the theoretical concepts or because they were repetitive, were opinion pieces rather than news stories (Stempel, 1989), or lacked general suitability (Cresswell, 2003; Wimmer & Dominick, 2003). Data were coded by evaluating and dividing them into appropriate variable categories.

Frames were identified from hard news stories, feature stories, and staff writers’ columns from each paragraph. Hard news stories included terrorist attacks that had just taken place and had been reported in the press as well as breaking news on terrorism; feature stories included reports from press briefings by state actors and follow-up stories on terrorist incidents; and the columns included stories from regular columnists who are staff writers of these papers or special contributors who wrote about conflicts or terrorism. Conflict aggravation variables, namely suicide bombings, airline hijackings, kidnappings, car bombings, assassinations, mutilations, arson, abductions, raping/defiling, barricades, and others were coded to determine the correlation between The Daily Monitor and The New York Times. The frames examining power persuasion which were measured in units of terrorism attributes (e.g., radical jihadist, Islamic extremist, and others) were also coded to determine frame building from state actors and other frame sponsors.

Once the initial coding of 100 stories from The Daily Monitor and 100 from The New York Times was completed, two independent coders, both graduate students, were recruited to establish reliability. Coders were trained to acquaint them with Uganda’s polity as well as style of news reporting and writing, and to ensure a common frame of reference. The intercoder reliability over a systematic subsample of 10% of the stories was calculated with Scott’s pi formula (1955). The observed agreement of the overall intercoder reliability calculated was 86%.

Construct validity was obtained with chi square to determine the significant differences in frequencies of the categorical frames between The Daily Monitor and The New York Times when framing terrorism. Content construct validity refers to the degree to which inferences can justifiably be made from the operationalizations on which the initial assumptions were based (Angoff, 1988). The purpose of this statistical analysis was to determine which frames contributed to the differences in frame building and the media framing of international terrorism from both newspapers.

### Results

Overall results in frame building of terrorism in terms of power persuasion and conflict aggravation showed significant differences between The Daily Monitor and The New York Times. Both conflict aggravation ($\chi^2 = 1, N = 8) = 58.469, p < .000$) and power persuasion ($\chi^2 = 1, N = 9) = 43.394, p < .000$) frames were significantly different. As expected, actions and violent incidents framed as terrorism by The Daily Monitor that occurred in Uganda were significantly different from those in The New York Times.

Of the articles on suicide bombings and other bombings that were framed as terrorist attacks, 93% appeared in The New York Times and only 6.7% of the same frames appeared in The Daily Monitor. On the contrary, 95.5% of the frames that described raping and defilement of women as acts of terrorism appeared in The Daily Monitor while only 0.5% of similar frames were characterized as acts of terrorism in The New York Times. Results show that internal (civil domestic) mutilations (87.5%) and domestic arson (78.6%), which occurred in East Africa were among types of actions and violent incidents considered as acts of terrorism in The Daily Monitor. The same incidents received less attention: (12.5%) for internal (civil domestic) mutilations and (21.4%) for domes-

### Table 11.2 Conflict Aggravation Frames and Frequencies – Uganda and USA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conflict Aggravation Frames</th>
<th>Between newspapers</th>
<th>Within newspapers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NYT</td>
<td>DM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bombings</td>
<td>93.3</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Airline Hijacking</td>
<td>87.5</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arson</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>78.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assassinations</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barricades</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suicide Bombings</td>
<td>93.3</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kidnappings</td>
<td>40.7</td>
<td>59.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mutillations</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>87.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raping/Defilement</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>95.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total: 100</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$\chi^2(1,N=8)=58.469,p < .000$

- Frequencies between newspapers are shown in percentages.
tic arson in *The New York Times*. One exception in conflict aggravation was on assassination (no matter where it occurred), which was similarly framed as an act of international terrorism in both newspapers.

Results show that Al-Qaeda terror cells dominated the content of international terrorism in *The New York Times*, appearing 37.2% of the time between December 31, 2002, and December 31, 2004. In contrast, Al-Qaeda terror cells in *The Daily Monitor* constituted 4.9% of all content characterized as international terrorism in the same period. Data show that incidents characterized as international terrorism that occurred in East Africa appeared 5.4% in *The New York Times* with the rest of 94.6% incidents that occurred in other regions. In *The Daily Monitor*, 16.5% of articles referred to the U.S.-led international counterterrorism efforts.

*The Daily Monitor* featured U.S. counterterrorism efforts more often than *The New York Times* featured counterterrorism efforts in Uganda. Ugandan state actors characterized the guerrilla rebellion in Northern Uganda [internal civil-political threat] as countering international terrorism. Such frames appeared in *The Daily Monitor* 88.9% of the time as counterterrorism efforts. In contrast, these incidents appeared 11.1% of the time in *The New York Times* but were framed as East Africa’s domestic terrorism threats. As Table 11.3 shows, the frames frequently propagated and used in *The New York Times* as countering international terrorism were Islamic militants, radical jihadists, Al-Qaeda fighters, Islamic extremists, and Islamic terrorists and Islamic fundamentalists in global counterterrorism efforts. They were significantly different from those propagated by Ugandan state actors as international [external] terrorism threats in *The Daily Monitor*. Counterterrorism efforts reported in *The Daily Monitor* included responses to acts perpetrated by rebel leaders, bandits, irate [libelous] journalists, and other typical criminals.

**Discussion**

The comparative examination of these two counterterrorism bedfellows has produced valuable results in understanding the challenges involved in combating international terrorism. The analysis compared the power persuasion and conflict aggravation frames in *The Daily Monitor* of Uganda and *The New York Times*. First, it was noted earlier in the introduction that the United States is leading transnational efforts, specifically investing financial and technical resources in East Africa to combat international terrorism.

The data reveal that the power persuasion of counterterrorism in Uganda is shaped differently by Ugandan state actors from the way it is shaped by the U.S. government. Hence the two newspapers framed both the internal and external threats of terrorism in different ways. For instance, *The Daily Monitor* reported that terrorists had committed atrocious and psychologically shocking acts of terrorism such as physical mutilation of Ugandan victims, cutting off ears and noses by rebels fighting a guerrilla war. Although this was an internal political rebellion, Ugandan state actors built the frames as fighting international terrorism and as part of global counterterrorism efforts.

The imprisonment of the Ugandan presidential candidate, Dr. Kizza Besigye, by the state as a terrorist during elections and the media framing of this political leader who heads a major opposition political party as a state terrorist is another example. Terrorism frames in *The Daily Monitor* included, but were not limited to: rebel insurgents killing civilians; acts of treason by opposition politicians; armed bandits robbing and occasionally murdering residents; carjacking “for economic gains”; and publication of “harmful” news that was said to promote rebel/civil conflicts against the government.

The provocations and violent incidents framed as terrorism in *The Daily Monitor* that occurred in East Africa were significantly different from those framed in *The New York Times*, such as kidnappings, abduction of diplomats, and rebel attacks. Most of these incidents were
not framed as terrorism in *The New York Times*. This inconsistency in frame building of terrorism by state actors and in their respective newspapers shows that the U.S.-led joint counterterrorism efforts with Uganda were not executed in unison by the two cultures, by targeting international terrorists with similar traits. These significant differences in frame building of terrorism and media framing may bring into question the efficiency of the joint counterterrorism efforts.

The findings support arguments by Norris and colleagues (2003) and Entman (2003) that the news media guard the boundaries of culture and maintain a remarkably parochial stance even when covering international terrorism. There were several other instances where frames in *The Daily Monitor* indicated unique conflict aggravations unlike those in *The New York Times*. In Uganda for example, school children had been abducted by terrorists; the boys were forced to join the rebellion against the government as freedom fighters and the girls were forced to serve as the rebel commanders’ concubines. Rebel attacks on military barracks and exchange of fire in the jungles between the Uganda army and rebel fighters were also framed as terrorism in *The Daily Monitor*. The newspaper reported common patterns of Uganda’s use of excessive force to quell protest or squash dissent, in some cases arresting journalists and also charging activists as terrorists in its counterterrorism efforts. These incidents do not appear on the long list of the U.S. Department of State’s terrorism incidents in Uganda. However, Ugandan leaders framed these incidents and they were reported in *The Daily Monitor* as global counterterrorism efforts, a position which does not reflect the reality of the U.S.-led counterterrorism effort, the United States defining international terrorism in quite different terms from the way it was defined by the Ugandan government and media.

Coverage of internal threats, which are promoted by Ugandan leaders as global counterterrorism efforts, indicates inconsistent and contradictory frame building from state actors of both countries. It is therefore determined that the joint counterterrorism efforts between the United States and Uganda as well as their media do not reflect consistent efforts of to create a common front against international terrorism. In support of Schmid and Jongman (1988), literature and statutes on terrorism in these two countries and other counterterrorism allies reveal variations in statutes and policy-implementation of counterterrorism efforts. Consistent with previous findings from Corsi (1981), Entman (2003), and Elliot (2004), the United States and her citizens are victims of a different conflict aggravation from many of the Third World countries allied with it in the global effort to jointly counter terrorism, since countries like Uganda also indict and prosecute actions of their political opponents and civil activists as terrorism.

“Terrorists” also build power persuasion frames such as fighting an autocratic state, a tyrant, political imbalance, military dictatorship, and so forth, and succeed in exploiting the frustrations of the ordinary people. The Uganda government, for example, declared the ADF an international terrorist group which destabilizes Uganda by kidnapping and murdering civilians in northern and western towns resulting in hundreds of deaths. When the government built its case against ADF, it eventually linked the rebel forces to powerful opposition politicians who are Members of Parliament representing major opposition political parties. The opposition politicians then used the press to provoke and shape media frames that captured the image of the ADF as liberators and revolutionary heroes whose major crime was to liberate citizens from President Museveni’s “oppressive government.”

Some disgruntled and deprived citizens end up believing in the “liberation cause” of violent activists and “terrorists” if their frame-sponsors succeed in getting constant coverage in the press. This happened when crowds protested the arrest and continued remand in custody of presidential candidate Dr. Besigye as a terrorist suspect. Government property was destroyed in the second wave of riots and this prompted police to unleash more tear gas and pepper spray on onlookers (*Daily Monitor*, November 23, 2005). Placards described Besigye as a liberator at a time when government was building its case to charge him as a terrorist (*Daily Monitor*, November 26, 2005). Both state and private businesses came to a standstill for one week following Besigye’s continued incarceration.

Once political leverage or state power is attained, some present-day liberators and statesmen have been known to have once been former terrorists (Ahmad, 2001; Nathanson, 2004). These maladies of presidential supremacy and prosecution of politicians and activists as “international terrorists” as displayed by President Museveni of Uganda further weaken the legitimacy of a cohesive global fight against terrorism. Sometimes *The New York Times* framed as absolute truth the crackdown on political activists who were framed as terrorists in Uganda. The ADF is still listed as a terrorist organization but no known leader has ever been convicted by the Ugandan government, yet some prominent opposition politicians who were named ADF terrorists by the state in 2003 still looming large in the city and still served as opposition Members of Parliament in 2008.

Stories in *The Daily Monitor* on violations of human rights as a result of Uganda’s Anti-Terrorism Act 2002 reflect arguments similar to findings from earlier studies by Enders and Sandler (2000) as well as Cronin (2002). The authors argued that circumstances also provide terrorists with compelling reasons to commit criminal acts while seeking political change. These latter assessments are offered with a caution that they are precipitating assumptions not empirically supported by these data, and other causations are plausible.
Implications and Conclusion

The question of why there are these cross-political cultural differences despite joint counterterrorism efforts is salient and will continue to be debated beyond this assessment. It is apparent from these data that Uganda's power persuasion ideology on terrorism goes beyond fighting conventional international terrorism. Nonetheless, the United States continues its counterterrorism funding programs despite these differences that include significant disregard of human rights on the Ugandan part. Moreover, The Daily Monitor reported that Uganda's state actors have their own unique frame building of terrorism, which is used to fight domestic political contestation and civil conflicts. Thus, the implication could be that the U.S. counterterrorism program funds Uganda, which stifles domestic political competition and dissent using the Anti-terrorism Act 2002 to guarantee presidential supremacy.

Data collected in The New York Times during the period examined in this chapter had no editorial investigation as to why the U.S.-sponsored allies such as Uganda pursue different forms of antiterrorism not conventionally consistent with U.S. counterterrorism policies. Uganda should be seen as an example of a political culture marred by a history of presidential supremacy, which still hampers its democratic institutional building, this along with a defective joint counterterrorism effort. It is also important for the U.S. press to be cautious of stereotyping an international terrorist based solely on propaganda by other governments, due to the bifurcated antiterrorist laws and political efforts of some foreign leaders. The dislodging of the rule of law in Uganda during the 2005-2006 presidential elections on flawed international terrorism charges is an example of how leaders can easily manipulate antiterrorism laws for their own political benefit. As Okumu (2007) argued, these bifurcated antiterrorism laws are so broadly legislated that they have been used in Uganda to prosecute members of the civil society, such as trade unionists and independent journalists on terrorism charges without guarantees of a fair trial.

With this evaluation, it can be argued that these inconsistent power persuasion strategies in Uganda could lead to other social negatives, such as human rights violations, which may also engender mass protests, elite dissatisfaction, and terror from interest groups. It also appears that the joint counterterrorism efforts may sometimes increase anti-American sentiments in Third World nations where the rights of citizens are violated by leaders who use the U.S.-sponsored antiterrorism missions for their own political ends. According to editorials and commentaries from a variety of independent newspapers across Africa, some governments on the continent, including Uganda, have allegedly used the enormous financial backing and technical support of the United States to thwart their political opponents. They have also prosecuted civil activists, protesters, and ethnoconflict dissidents under the guise of the joint counterterrorism efforts.

This study has explored how state actors from two independent nations on separate continents build frames and how the press frame counterterrorism efforts. Power persuasion and conflict aggravation have also been introduced as testable framing concepts for understanding the political game of joint counterterrorism. This is by no means preordained as a comprehensive comparative analysis of frame building and media framing of the joint counterterrorism efforts, since several questions remain unanswered. Global joint counterterrorism efforts are a recent development, and the press should rise to the occasion to address this phenomenon. Future research should examine how the press can independently address these inconsistent counterterrorism efforts without a clear universal definition of terrorism. Why these differences exist despite joint counterterrorism efforts should be explored beyond this content analysis.

Because most governments that are engaged in joint counterterrorism efforts seek cooperation, understanding, and loyalty from the press in their efforts to curb terrorism (Perl, 1997; Wilkinson, 1997), a solution to this crisis is thus proposed: first, to create a universal intergovernmental news media pool on counterterrorism for the international press. Second, define the dynamics of joint counterterrorism efforts and develop policies that are recognized by and serve all nations, the international news media, and global interests. What Corsi (1981) predicted 25 years ago still stands the test of time. If the current trends of the global joint counterterrorism efforts continue unchanged, in a dyad of unique political cultures and coverage from distinctive systems, these findings potentially illustrate how the war on international terrorism may last for generations unabated.

Notes

1. The Daily Monitor is an independent, privately owned commercial newspaper. It steers away from government influence and propaganda in its coverage of national affairs. The Daily Monitor and the New York Times are widely respected and to a large extent influence public opinion in their respective countries.
2. This is contained in a (2004) memorandum presented to the U.S. House of Representatives by the U.S. Department of State.
3. These portrayals are contained in memoranda from the U.S. State Department (August, 2004) and testimonies from the Department of Homeland Security (April, 2006) before the House International Relations and House Security Committees.
4. This clause is also reprinted in the Ugandan Law Society Review booklet (2004), 2(4).
5. These are people who commit misdemeanors like disobeying common law, habitual banditry, possession of unlicensed arms, and so forth.

6. Terrorists in that paragraph referred to the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) rebel group, led by Joseph Kony, which operates from northern Uganda. The Ugandan government says that this terrorist group commits all of these atrocities as it tries to topple government using guerrilla warfare and terrorism tactics.

7. The independent newspaper commentaries in Africa referred to here include the Monitor newspaper (Uganda), The Daily Nation (Kenya), The Accra Mail (Ghana), The Star (South Africa), The Post (Zambia), The Guardian (Nigeria), and The Addis Tribune (Ethiopia).

References


Chapter 12

See No Evil, Hear No Evil, Judge as Evil?

Examining Whether Al-Jazeera English-Language Web Site Users Transfer Their Belief in Its Credibility to Its Satellite Network

Thomas J. Johnson and Shahira Fahmy

When Al-Jazeera aired live coverage of civilian casualties during the U.S. military bombardment of Fallujah in the Iraq War, the coverage renewed U.S. criticism that the Qatar-based Arab satellite network biased its coverage against America and aided the terrorist cause. Senior U.S. military spokesman Mark Kimmitt suggested that Iraqis “change the channel to a legitimate, authoritative honest news station.” Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld went further, noting that what Al-Jazeera was doing in airing the civilian deaths was “vicious, inaccurate, and inexcusable.” Secretary of State Colin Powell, as a result of the Fallujah coverage, demanded that the Qatari foreign minister resign in the network (Mekay, 2004).

Al-Jazeera, has faced mounting criticism from the United States and other Western nations as an unreliable source of information on the Iraq War because it has graphically portrayed civilian deaths and aired messages from terrorist organizations, including al-Qaeda. But while U.S. officials have excoriated Al-Jazeera’s coverage, they concede their criticisms are not always based on actually viewing the Arabic-language Al-Jazeera network, but on what they have heard from other sources they trust (Lynch, 2005).

Credibility of a medium is typically tied to the amount of reliance on it as a source of information, with people judging those sources they rely on most as being more credible (Johnson & Kaye, 2000, 2002; Wanta & Hu, 1994). But because credibility is based on audience perceptions, not necessarily experience with a medium, sources can be judged as believable even if the person has little or no experience with them.

Several studies have compared different media on credibility, as well as advertising studies on celebrity endorsers, which have suggested a transference of credibility in which media users will assess credibility of an unfamiliar source based on their knowledge of a similar but familiar source. Advertising researchers have suggested a meaning transfer model where viewers will form a celebrity image and transfer the meaning