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ABSTRACT
What effects do transnational ethnic diaspora communities have on the terrorist organizations with which they are linked? Are diaspora-linked terrorist movements more resilient and longer lived? What types of diaspora support affect terrorist survival? Finally, do diasporas affect peaceful resolutions of terrorist campaigns? Using data on 586 terrorist movements during the period 1970–2007, this study finds that movements linked to transnational ethnic diasporas are more resilient. They are significantly less likely to end, particularly through counterterrorism force, and this seems to be a product of diaspora provision of material support rather than diaspora political and propaganda efforts. Finally, diasporas seem to have a negative impact on political resolution of terrorist campaigns, as diaspora-linked terrorist movements are also significantly less likely to end by entering into a political process.

Introduction
Many prominent terrorist organizations are linked to transnational ethnic diasporas. Some well-documented examples include the Irish Republican Army and the Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia (ASALA), both of which had links with ethnic Irish and Armenian communities in
the United States; al-Fatah and Hamas, which have relationships with Palestinian diasporas throughout the Middle East, Europe, and the United States; the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (Tamil Tigers or LTTE), which, during its era of operations, enjoyed links with the Canadian and UK Tamil communities; the Kurdish Worker’s Party (PKK), which is linked to Kurds in Iraq and elsewhere; and Hezbollah, which is linked to the global Shi’i Lebanese diaspora. For these terrorist movements, ethnic diaspora communities worldwide have played important roles in founding, supporting, sustaining, and, in some cases, shaping the strategic behaviors of the movement. Indeed, experts have come to regard transnational diaspora support as a crucial quality in determining terrorist organizations’ sustainability and survival. Most terrorist movements are not associated with ethnic diasporas, but diaspora-linked terrorist movements are by no means a rarity. Gabriel Sheffer notes that out of the 50 most active terrorist movements in the post–World War II era, 27 of them were linked with ethnic diasporas. In a separate study of 87 insurgencies featuring terrorist activity for the period 2008 through 2013, Daniel Byman estimates that 38 of them (around 44 percent) featured external support by diaspora and refugee populations, whereas state sponsorship characterized a smaller number (around 37 percent). Moreover, diaspora involvement is by no means a contemporary phenomenon. Richard Bach Jensen documents the important links that turn-of-the-century anarchist terrorist movements in Russia held with ethnic immigrant communities in the United States. Finally, links between transnational ethnic diasporas and terrorist organizations are assumed by scholars to be highly consequential. Diasporas are assumed to affect the vitality and longevity of terrorist movements, terrorist organizations’ ability to wage terrorist campaigns, and the outcomes of those campaigns.

However, to date, few systematic empirical studies have considered the consequences of transnational ethnic diasporas for terrorist group survival and strategic behaviors. Previous research has examined the impact on terrorist-movement longevity of association with or ideological affinity for domestic ethnic communities. For example, two studies by Brian J. Phillips found that terrorist movements motivated by the goal to protect or

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7 See summary in Roth, “The Role of Diasporas in Conflict,” 289.
represent a domestic ethnic group were less likely to end. In these analyses, transnational ethnic ties were not considered and terrorist association with a local ethnic group is treated more as an ideological feature of the organization. Three other works have more directly considered the benefits that terrorists can derive from ethnic diasporas. In an unpublished paper, Bryce Loidolt, Zhengqi Pan and Stephen E. Gent found that insurgent organizations that use terrorism and receive material support from transnational nonstate actors, an inexact proxy for ethnic diaspora support, were no more or less likely to fail. Brandon M. Boylan’s terrorist-group-level study of the drivers of ethnonationalist terrorism produced an ancillary finding that ethnic-based terrorist organizations that received support from ethnic kin in other countries launched more terrorist attacks than those that did not. Brian J. Arva and James Piazza, in their study of spatial distribution of ethnic minorities and terrorism, found that countries containing ethnic minority communities with kin abroad featured more terrorist attacks. These latter two studies, however, do not examine the impact of transnational diaspora support on terrorists but rather determine that terrorist groups and countries associated with diasporas are more attack-prone. Moreover, neither considers how actual provision of material or other assistance might contribute to terrorist movement vitality. As a consequence, they do not directly test the argument that diasporas sustain terrorist organizations and campaigns or shed light on how this process works. The paucity of empirical research on this subject is surprising given the voluminous qualitative case study treatments of diasporas and the

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8 Brian J. Phillips, “Enemies with Benefits? Violent Rivalry and Terrorist Group Longevity,” *Journal of Peace Research* 52, no. 1 (January 2015): 62–75 and Brian J. Phillips, “Terrorist Group Cooperation and Longevity,” *International Studies Quarterly* 58, no. 2 (June 2014): 336–47. In both studies, “ethnic motivation” was used as a control variable. Phillips theorized that terrorists motivated by ethnic and religious concerns were better able to mobilize support than left-wing movements. To help further distinguish the effect of “ethnic motivation” from ethnic diaspora support, I also include a control for “nationalist-separatist” ideology in my analyses.

9 Bryce Loidolt, Zhengqi Pan, and Stephen E. Gent, “Diasporas, Rebel Internal Organization, and the Fate of Insurgencies” (paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, Chicago, IL, 29 August–1 September 2013).

10 In Loidolt, Pan, and Gent, “Diasporas, Rebel Internal Organization, and the Fate of Insurgencies”, receipt of “diaspora” support is operationalized through insurgency connections with a “transnational non-state actor”—a broader term—that provides material support, measured using data from David E. Cunningham, Kristian Skrede Gleditsch, and Idean Salehyan, “It Takes Two: A Dyadic Analysis of Civil War Duration and Outcome,” *Journal of Peace Research* 53, no. 4 (August 2009): 570–97. Furthermore, the Loidolt, Pan, and Gent study examines 93 organizations that appear in both Jones and Libicki, *How Terrorist Groups End* and Cunningham, Gleditsch and Salehyan, “It Takes Two,” making it likely that the sample of organizations in the study is primarily composed of larger insurgencies. Finally, the only covariates that Loidolt and co-authors include in their hazard models are state support for the organization, state support for the government, and the relative military capacities of the organization and the state. These significant differences in terms of operationalization, measurement, sample, and estimation help explain the divergent findings between their analysis and this study.


length of terrorist movements and campaigns\textsuperscript{13} and the well-established empirical documentation that transborder ethnic kin groups significantly affect the onset, intensity, and duration of intrastate wars and civil conflicts.\textsuperscript{14}

This study addresses this deficit by examining the impact of ethnic diasporas on the vitality, durability, persistence, and success of terrorist movements with whom they share ethnic community links. Using data on around 586 terrorist organizations for an observation period of 1970–2007, it makes several findings: First, terrorist movements linked to transnational ethnic diaspora groups are more resilient. They are less likely to meet their demise, are particularly resilient against state attempts to use police or military force to crush them and, in some cases, are less susceptible to the threat of internal dissolution through splintering. Diaspora support, however, does not seem to help terrorists achieve their ultimate objectives more often. Second, diaspora provision of material support—arms and financial resources—increases terrorist groups’ survival rates and resiliency against both external and internal threats. In contrast, diaspora political support (for example, lobbying or propaganda efforts) does not increase terrorist movement survival. Finally, terrorist organizations linked to ethnic diaspora groups are less likely to end through political negotiations, suggesting that transnational diaspora support sustains group bellicosity and resolve to continue fighting. This latter result is consistent with research showing that ethnic kin groups abroad play a role in reinforcing hard-line resistance to the resolution of armed civil conflicts. In the following sections I examine the relevant literature, present the hypotheses of the study, conduct the analysis, and discuss the results.

\textbf{Transnational Ethnic Diasporas and Terrorist Organizations}

Transnational ethnic diaspora communities have long been assumed to play an important role in terrorist conflicts. Scholars and terrorism experts frequently depict transnational ethnic diaspora communities as critical sources of sustenance for the terrorist organizations with which they are linked. Dennis Pluchinsky exemplifies this line of thought in describing ethnic diasporas as “umbilical cords that provide manpower and morale,

\textsuperscript{13} For a comprehensive summary of this literature, see Roth, “The Role of Diasporas in Conflict” and Sheffer, “Diasporas and Terrorism.”

logistical, financial and political support” to terrorist movements, while scholars such as Byman conclude that transnational diaspora support is key to the survival of many contemporary terrorist organizations. Why is diaspora support assumed to be so crucial? If they are to endure, all terrorist movements require funding, weapons and equipment, a source of recruits, communication and propaganda capacities, and a constituent population from which to cultivate active or passive support. Ethnic kin communities have been documented to provide allied terrorists with monetary and nonmonetary material support, safe houses, help in acquiring weapons and official documents, assistance in laundering and transferring money, lobbying and public relations services, intelligence, favorable state policies (including sponsorship), and recruits. The typical, non-diaspora-linked terrorist movement must acquire these sorts of assets locally, which is a significant constraint that potentially affects terrorist organizational survival, success, and strategic behaviors. Diaspora-linked terrorist movements, in contrast, can call upon kin communities abroad to help provide all of these assets, relieving them from relying solely upon the local environment.

This is a significant advantage. Pluchinsky notes the example of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA), a terrorist movement active in the Balkans in the late 1990s and early 2000s, to illustrate this point. Ethnic Kosovar Albanians living in Europe formed the KLA and almost exclusively comprised the base of its support. This allowed the movement to persist despite a lack of popular support among Kosovars within the former Yugoslavia and a poor fundraising and political communication environment within the conflict zone in which it operated. Similar dynamics are evident for other notorious ethnic and sectarian diaspora-linked terrorist movements, including the Palestinian Fatah and Hamas organizations, the Provisional Irish Republican Army, Hezbollah,
ASALA,22 the Sikh Khalistan movement,23 the Kurdish PKK,24 and various Croatian terrorist movements.25 Moreover, in an era of declining state sponsorship of terrorist movements, diaspora links are argued to have become an important substitute for ensuring movement survival and relevance.26 Loidolt and coauthors further argue that diasporas help to provide “cultural and emotional zeal” that can be harnessed and manipulated by terrorist organizations to further garner material and other support.27 Pluchinsky summarizes that diaspora-linked terrorists “have a better chance of internationalizing their conflict and keeping their struggle active than those which have no diaspora.”28

Affiliation with a supportive transnational ethnic diaspora, therefore, can be expected to increase the vitality, resilience, and durability of terrorist organizations and terrorist campaigns. This is broadly consistent with a related empirical literature on the impact of transnationally dispersed ethnic kin on intrastate conflicts. While the impact of diasporas on terrorist group duration has not received much attention from empirical studies, civil war scholars have found diaspora kin communities to be an important factor for armed civil conflicts. Halvard Buhaug and Kristian S. Gleditsch find transborder kin to be an important trigger of intrastate ethnic conflicts, stating that “transnational ethnic linkages are the central mechanism of conflict contagion.”29 A host of scholars have determined that civil wars featuring ethnic groups that have kin across borders and in other countries are longer lived, more intense, harder to resolve, and more likely to reignite.30 In a summary produced for the World Bank, Paul Collier found that after five years of peace post-conflict, countries containing ethnic communities with large diaspora kin populations abroad were around six times more likely to experience a reoccurrence of armed intrastate conflict in the next five years than those without such diasporas.31

26 Byman, “The Logic of Ethnic Terrorism.”
27 Loidolt, Pan, and Gent “Diasporas, Rebel Internal Organization and the Fate of Insurgencies,” 7.
Types of Diaspora Support and Terrorist Organization Survival

How, exactly, do transnational ethnic diasporas boost terrorist movement survival? The existing literature credits various forms of diaspora-provided support in explaining how transnational ethnic communities help sustain terrorist movements and terrorist campaigns back in the homeland. Ethnic diasporas provide allied terrorist organizations with two main categories of assistance: material and political. Material assistance includes provision of cash, weapons, and other supplies that terrorist movements need in order to wage campaigns. These resources enable terrorists to recruit and pay members, acquire weapons and other tools to engage in attacks, better resist state counterterrorism efforts, and maintain internal resilience as organizations, rendering them more vital and, by extension, durable. Material support provided by transnational diasporas also enhances the overall organizational capacity of local ethnic kin organizations in the home country. This too can reasonably be expected to boost the survival of local terrorist movements allied to the local ethnic community receiving kin support. Frequently, diaspora communities help link terrorist movements with co-ethnic criminal and assorted black-market organizations that can be used to acquire and manage material resources. In particular, ethnic-based money transfer and laundering operations, such as the global Hawala networks that facilitate money transfers for jihadist organizations, are important for facilitating financial support for terrorist movements and helping them resist counterterrorism efforts by states. And, as previously mentioned, material support from diaspora kin abroad has become particularly crucial for terrorist movements as state sources of support have declined since the end of the Cold War. Although there has been no systematic


36 Daniel Byman et al., Trends in Outside Support for Insurgent Movements (Santa Monica, CA: Rand, 2001). Loidolt, Pan, and Gent provide an additional point regarding diaspora/nonstate-actor-provided material support versus state sponsorship. Because nonstate organizations that represent diaspora groups are weaker and less organized than states, terrorists are better positioned to maintain their autonomy when allying with and accepting aid from them. This allows terrorist organizations to benefit from the material resources that diasporas provide without the costs or risks that states frequent impose upon armed proxies. “Diasporas, Rebel Internal Organization, and the Fate of Insurgencies,” 7–8.
empirical study of the effect of diasporas’ material-resource provision on terrorist organization survival, there are, again, studies in the intrastate war literature demonstrating the importance of material support by transnational ethnic kin for civil conflicts. Indeed, Nicholas Sambanis finds that insurgencies receiving such financial support last longer than those without.

In addition to providing material support, Bruce Hoffman argues that diasporas provide another essential category of support to terrorist movements: domestic and international political lobbying and propaganda efforts. Diaspora kin groups are particularly well positioned to provide political support to terrorist organizations because they tend to be small and unified communities in their resident countries that can easily engage in collective action to mobilize support and pursue policies. Moreover, the role of transnational ethnic kin in influencing intrastate armed conflicts through nonmaterial support, such as by providing the political motivation of ethnic rebellion and facilitating transnational communications, is well established in the civil war literature.

Transnational ethnic diasporas stand to offer several types of political support that may enhance terrorist movement vitality. Diaspora kin abroad can lobby governments to secure favorable policies and support for the terrorist movements to which they are allied. They can also launch public relations campaigns to bolster public support in favor of allied terrorist organizations and against the governments favored terrorists are fighting. Diasporas can provide links between terrorist organizations and other sympathetic transnational organizations. Moreover, diasporas help to frame conflict issues in ways that are favorable to the movement and can provide formal and informal infrastructures for discussion and negotiations on


39 Bruce Hoffman et al., The Radicalization of Diasporas and Terrorism: A Joint Conference by the RAND Corporation and the Center for Security Studies, ETH Zurich (Santa Monica, CA: Rand, 2007).

40 Collier, Economic Causes of Civil Conflict and Their Implications for Policy.


42 Byman et al., Trends in Outside Support for Insurgent Movements; Wayland, “Ethnonationalist Networks and Transnational Opportunities.”

43 Loidolt, Pan, and Gent “Diasporas, Rebel Internal Organization and the Fate of Insurgencies.”
behalf of armed movements. Peter Chalk illustrates in detail how Tamils residing in Canada and the United Kingdom mobilized to provide political and propaganda support for the LTTE, helping to boost the organization’s international reputation while highlighting human rights abuses committed by the Sri Lankan government during counterinsurgency efforts against the Tigers. Finally, transnational diaspora political support is particularly crucial to terrorist organizations that are located and operate in nondemocratic repressive environments where public expression and independent political activity are repressed. For these terrorist groups, allied diaspora communities abroad can use their own political voice in their freer resident countries to counteract and overcome state efforts to repress dissent in the homeland.

This discussion leads to the first hypothesis tested in the study:

Hypothesis 1 (H1). Terrorist organizations are less likely to end if they are linked to or provided material or political support by a transnational ethnic diaspora.

The above hypothesis posits that transnational diaspora support increases the vitality and strategic position of aligned terrorist organizations. However, vitality, and its connection to terrorist fortunes and outcomes, can be conceptualized in different ways. For example, diaspora support might affect terrorist vitality by making terrorist movements more resilient to external threats posed by state counterterrorism efforts. Diaspora lobbying and political efforts might also boost the strategic advantages of terrorist organizations vis-à-vis the states they oppose. In these cases, diaspora support reduces the vulnerability of terrorist organizations to state efforts to militarily crush them or police them out of existence or complicates counterterrorism for states. At the same time, diaspora support might also enhance the internal resilience of terrorist movements, rendering them more vital by reducing the chances that the organization will suffer member defections or organizational fragmentation. Organization leaders endowed with diaspora resources can distribute them in a way that co-opts terrorist organization members and punishes defectors, thereby cementing control over the group. Likewise, allied terrorist movements can harness diaspora political voice to discredit dissidents and defectors from within their own ranks. Finally, diaspora-provided material and political support could ultimately better position a terrorist movement to be successful in its struggle, achieving its ultimate goals. Because each of these are potential

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47 Salehyan, “Transnational Rebels.”
48 Roth, “The Role of Diasporas in Conflict.”
facets of terrorist movement outcomes, the study tests three additional hypotheses:

*Hypothesis 2 (H2).* Terrorist organizations are less likely to meet their end by military force or policing if they are linked to or provided material or political support by a transnational ethnic diaspora.

*Hypothesis 3 (H3).* Terrorist organizations are less likely to end by splintering or internal dissolution if they are linked to or provided material or political support by a transnational ethnic diaspora.

*Hypothesis 4 (H4).* Terrorist organizations are more likely to end by victory if they are linked to or provided material or political support by a transnational ethnic diaspora.

**Diaspora Terrorist Organization Participation in Political Negotiations**

Transnational ethnic diaspora communities have also been depicted by civil war scholars as “peace wreckers” that mobilize to prevent political resolution of intrastate armed conflicts in their home countries. Collier points out that qualitative case studies of intrastate conflicts involving ethnic groups with kin abroad indicate that community members in the diaspora tend to harbor more intransigent grievances than do local members on the frontline of the conflict. Diaspora community members tend to be hardliners and purists regarding conflicts and negotiations to end conflicts in their homelands. Compared with their kin in the country directly experiencing the conflict, diaspora groups outside of the homeland are often more psychologically invested in conflicts and are more focused on preserving historical and cultural legacies and on servicing their need for identity than on attending to the immediate or future needs and security of ethnic group members on the ground. Moreover, individuals in the diaspora are physically removed from the conflict and therefore not directly subject to the costs of its continuance. On this point, Collier explains that because they do not suffer directly from the consequences of hard-line intransigence, diasporas “have a greater incentive to purchase vengeance than resident populations.” Consequently, scholars have argued that diaspora members are more likely to adopt rigid, uncompromising positions in the


50 Collier, *Economic Causes of Civil Conflict and their Implications for Policy*.

51 Ibid., 9.
face of negotiations and to hold fast to zero-sum and maximalist objectives, leading them to prefer continuation of violent conflict over peace settlements.

This potentially affects the end of terrorist campaigns. Several prominent terrorist organizations have abandoned their engagement in violence by agreeing to enter into nonviolent political processes and negotiations with governments. Some examples include: the Islamic Salvation Front of Algeria and its armed wing the Islamic Salvation Army, which agreed to a unilateral ceasefire in 1997 in the face of defections by more-moderate political allies, resulting in the amnesty of its leadership and agreement to assist the government in countering more-violent al Qaeda-affiliated terrorists in Algeria; the Polisario Front of Morocco, a separatist Sahrawi ethnic group terrorist movement that agreed to a ceasefire in 1991 in exchange for Moroccan government promises to hold a referendum on independence; the Moro Islamic Liberation Front of the Philippines, which modified its original demand for a separate Muslim state and signed a 2012 peace treaty that provides more local autonomy for the Moro population in Mindanao; and the 19th of April Movement (M-19) of Colombia, a leftist terrorist organization that renounced armed struggle in exchange for an amnesty. In each of these cases, pragmatic strategic calculations by the organization leadership and a willingness to adjust demands and make significant concessions prompted the decision to abandon terrorist activity. Terrorist movements linked to and dependent upon “hard-liner” transnational diasporas are less likely to themselves exhibit pragmatism or concessionary behaviors. The end result is that such terrorist organizations are less likely to end by entering into a political process. This leads to the fifth and final hypothesis tested in the study:

Hypothesis 5 (H5). Terrorist organizations are less likely to end by entering into a political process or joining a political system if they are linked to a transnational ethnic diaspora.

Research Design

To test these hypotheses, I conduct a series of Cox proportional hazard survival estimations with a Breslow method for ties and multinomial logistic

52 Shain, “The Role of Diasporas in Conflict Perpetuation or Resolution.”
53 Roth, “The Role of Diasporas in Conflict.”
54 It is important to note several case studies in which scholars have alleged that ethnic-diaspora members have eventually played a role in promoting and supporting peaceful negotiations to end terrorist conflicts. See, for example, Bahar Baser and Ashok Swain, “Diasporas as Peacemakers: Third Party Mediation in Homeland Conflicts,” International Journal on World Peace 25, no. 3 (September 2008): 7–28.
55 The Cox models are nonparametric tests. Parametric Weibull tests produce the same core results. Results available from the author.
competing risk analyses\textsuperscript{56} on a cross-sectional sample of 586 terrorist organizations for an observation period of 1970 to 2007. The core data for the terrorist organizations are derived from a reduced version of the Seth G. Jones and Martin C. Libicki\textsuperscript{57} terrorist group database produced by Khusrav Gaibulloev and Todd Sandler.\textsuperscript{58} The analysis also includes several of the group and structural/environmental covariates developed by S. Brock Blomberg, Gaibulloev, and Sandler\textsuperscript{59} and Gaibulloev and Sandler.\textsuperscript{60} The Jones and Libicki data are frequently used in studies in terrorist organization survival\textsuperscript{61} and provide a comprehensive and balanced sample of organizations.\textsuperscript{62} The data used in the analysis are structured as a cross-section rather than as a time series. This is because it is difficult to precisely determine change in levels or types of diaspora support temporally with existing data sources. Moreover, several of the covariates in the study derived from the Jones and Libicki database, such as ideology or organization membership size, do not vary over time. This structure, of course, presents some limitations, not the least of which is that terrorist organizations often change over time due to exogenous factors, such as the ending of the Cold War or the September 11th attacks and their aftermath. To address these limitations and assuage concerns, I present the following clarifications and empirical checks. First, it should be noted that the median terrorist organization in the data survives for six years in the analysis period. Around 67 percent of organizations in the data survive ten years or less. This suggests that most organizations have a relatively short lifespan and therefore have a


\textsuperscript{57} Jones and Libicki, \textit{How Terrorist Groups End}.

\textsuperscript{58} Gaibulloev and Sandler, “An Empirical Analysis of Alternative Ways that Terrorist Groups End”; Khusrav Gaibulloev and Todd Sandler, “Determinants of the Demise of Terrorist Organizations,” \textit{Southern Economic Journal} 79, no. 4 (April 2013): 774–92. The Jones and Libicki database contains data on 652 terrorist organizations. Some of these organizations are duplicates. Gaibulloev and Sandler manually cleaned the Jones and Libicki database to remove these duplicates and produce a list of 586 unique terrorist groups.


\textsuperscript{60} Gaibulloev and Sandler, “An Empirical Analysis of the Alternative Ways that Terrorist Groups End”; Gaibulloev and Sandler, “Determinants of the Demise of Terrorist Organizations.”


\textsuperscript{62} On this point, see Brian J. Phillips, “What is a Terrorist Group? Conceptual Issues and Empirical Implications,” \textit{Terrorism and Political Violence} 27, no. 2 (2015): 225–42. Phillips argues that Jones and Libicki provide the most comprehensive sample of terrorist organizations by adhering to a more inclusive definition of what constitutes a terrorist group. Moreover, Piazza and Piazza, in “Terrorist Group Engagement in Crime and Survival,” illustrate that the Jones and Libicki database includes a large and diverse sample of terrorist organizations based upon organization size, lifespan, ways that groups end, ideological orientation, and regional distribution.
diminished opportunity to be characterized by temporal changes, organizational or otherwise. Second, the most important change that an organization can experience—splintering—is accounted for as an outcome variable in the analysis. Third, I reran all analyses controlling for whether or not an organization survived for ten years and whether the organization began before or after the end of the Cold War in 1991 and the September 11th terrorist attacks, both of which are argued to be watershed events for terrorist movements. These tests reproduced the same core results as in the main analysis and are displayed in Appendix Tables 1–3.

The objective of the analyses is to identify organizational and environmental factors that make a terrorist organization more or less likely to end during the period examined. During the observation period, around 63 percent of the terrorist organizations in the sample ended. Of these, the average years to termination were 9.9, censored for the 2007 endpoint of the observation period. The overall average number of survival years, including those organizations that did not end, is 9.6 years.
| Model | Ethnic Kin in Diaspora | Ethnic Kin, not in Diaspora | Diaspora Kin Provide Material Support 1 | Diaspora Kin Provide Political Support 1 | Peak size | State sponsorship (no safe haven) | State sponsorship (safe haven) | Left ideology | Nationalist-Separatist ideology | Religious ideology | ERCISR goal | Policy change goal | Territorial goal | No. of groups in competition | Attack diversity | Trans. attacks per mil. persons | Polity score of base state | (log) Real GDP p.c. base state | (log) Population base state | Gov. spending % GDP base state | Ethnic fractionalization base state | (log) Elevation base state | Tropical climate base state | Landlocked base state | Observations (Total) | Observations (Failures) | Time at risk | Log ratio \( \chi^2 \) |
|-------|----------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|-------------|---------------------|----------------|-----------------------------|----------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
|       | 0.571** | 0.580** | 0.661* | 0.607** | 1.000** | 0.615* | 0.676 | 0.853 | 0.902 | 1.440 | 0.357* | 0.897 | 1.424 | 0.559* | 0.998 | 0.584 | 1.149 | 0.981 | 1.252* | 0.924 | 2.395 | 1.342 | 1.470 | 583 | 370 | 5,773 | 111.35*** |
|       | (0.098) | (0.107) | (0.119) | (0.124) | (0.000) | (0.124) | (0.184) | (0.234) | (0.156) | (0.359) | (0.318) | (0.240) | (0.381) | (0.240) | (0.212) | (0.579) | (0.154) | (0.013) | (0.112) | (0.049) | (2.899) | (0.480) | (0.167) | (0.299) | 541 | 354 | 5,628 | 145.44*** |
|       |               |               | 0.617* | 0.607** | 0.676 | 0.607** | 0.897 | 0.853 | 0.902 | 1.440 | 0.491* | 0.894 | 1.378 | 0.617 | 0.998 | 0.584 | 1.149 | 0.981 | 0.607** | 0.924 | 2.395 | 1.342 | 1.470 | 583 | 370 | 5,773 | 149.27*** |
|       |               |               | (0.107) | (0.124) | (0.000) | (0.124) | (0.234) | (0.234) | (0.167) | (0.359) | (0.318) | (0.240) | (0.381) | (0.240) | (0.212) | (0.579) | (0.154) | (0.013) | (0.112) | (0.049) | (2.899) | (0.480) | (0.167) | (0.299) | 541 | 354 | 5,628 | 145.44*** |
|       |               |               |               | (0.124) | (0.000) | (0.124) |               |               |               |               |               |               |               |               |               |               |               |               |               |               |               |               |               |               |               |               |               |               |               |               |

Table 2. Ethnic diasporas and terrorist organization survival, Cox Hazard Ratios.

Note: All models are Cox nonparametric estimations.

1Reference category = group not associated with an ethnic community.

\* \( p \leq .05 \)

\** \( p \leq .01 \)

\*** \( p \leq .001 \)

coded 1 for organizations ending due to internal dissolution or splintering; a dichotomous measure coded 1 for organizations ending due to terrorist organization successful achievement of goals or victory; and a dichotomous
Table 3a. Ethnic diasporas and types of terrorist organization endings, multinomial logit.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Y = Group Ends by:</th>
<th>Model 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Force</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic Kin in Diaspora</td>
<td>$-0.868^*$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0.442)</td>
<td>(0.396)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic Kin, not in Diaspora</td>
<td>$0.744$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0.645)</td>
<td>(0.712)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peak size</td>
<td>$0.000$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0.000)</td>
<td>(0.000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State sponsorship (no safe haven)</td>
<td>$-0.050$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0.494)</td>
<td>(0.589)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State sponsorship (safe haven)</td>
<td>$0.900^*$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0.447)</td>
<td>(0.525)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Left ideology</td>
<td>$-0.128$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0.717)</td>
<td>(0.801)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nationalist-Separatist ideology</td>
<td>$-0.431$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0.762)</td>
<td>(0.844)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious ideology</td>
<td>$-2.013^*$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0.789)</td>
<td>(0.848)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ERCR goal</td>
<td>$0.791$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0.817)</td>
<td>(0.834)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy change goal</td>
<td>$1.244$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0.855)</td>
<td>(0.864)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Territorial goal</td>
<td>$0.092$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0.841)</td>
<td>(0.818)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of groups in competition</td>
<td>$-0.029$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0.016)</td>
<td>(0.015)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attack diversity</td>
<td>$3.638$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2.427)</td>
<td>(3.272)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trans. attacks per mil. persons</td>
<td>$0.656$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0.959)</td>
<td>(0.908)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polity score of base state</td>
<td>$-0.081^*$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0.033)</td>
<td>(0.033)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(log) Real GDP p.c. base state</td>
<td>$0.310$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0.212)</td>
<td>(0.205)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(log) Population base state</td>
<td>$0.168$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0.146)</td>
<td>(0.137)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gov. spending % GDP base state</td>
<td>$7.871^*$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3.759)</td>
<td>(3.938)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic fractionalization base state</td>
<td>$0.855$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0.914)</td>
<td>(0.938)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(log) Elevation base state</td>
<td>$-0.420$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0.254)</td>
<td>(0.266)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tropical climate base state</td>
<td>$-1.051^*$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0.505)</td>
<td>(0.509)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landlocked base state</td>
<td>$-0.220$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0.594)</td>
<td>(0.539)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>$-2.260$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3.309)</td>
<td>(3.497)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Observations       | 541     |
| Log ratio $\chi^2$ | 330.03  |
| Pseudo $r^2$       | 0.2063  |

Note: Multinomial logistical regression estimation.
Base category ($Y = 0$) is group did not end.

1Reference category = group not associated with an ethnic community.

*p ≤ .05 **p ≤ .01 ***p ≤ .001

measure coded 1 for organizations ending due to the decision to join a political process or to enter a (nonviolent) political system. Of these terrorist organization outcomes, group demise due to force (18.9 percent), splintering (22.4 percent), and termination to join a political process (18.0 percent)
Table 3b. Ethnic diaspora support and types of terrorist organization endings, multinomial logit.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model 6</th>
<th>Force</th>
<th>Splitter</th>
<th>Political Process</th>
<th>Victory</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diaspora Kin Provide Material Support</td>
<td>$-0.929^*$</td>
<td>$-0.780^*$</td>
<td>$-1.027$</td>
<td>$-0.121$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diaspora Kin Provide Political Support</td>
<td>$0.699$</td>
<td>$1.042$</td>
<td>$0.426$</td>
<td>$-1.356$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic Kin, not in Diaspora</td>
<td>$0.052$</td>
<td>$0.594$</td>
<td>$0.793$</td>
<td>$1.378$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peak size</td>
<td>$0.000^*$</td>
<td>$0.000$</td>
<td>$0.000$</td>
<td>$0.000$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State sponsorship</td>
<td>$0.054$</td>
<td>$1.137$</td>
<td>$0.747$</td>
<td>$0.961$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Left ideology</td>
<td>$0.001$</td>
<td>$0.080$</td>
<td>$0.521$</td>
<td>$14.096$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious ideology</td>
<td>$-1.976^*$</td>
<td>$-0.417$</td>
<td>$-3.465^{***}$</td>
<td>$-0.532$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ERCSR goal</td>
<td>$0.373$</td>
<td>$0.827$</td>
<td>$0.087$</td>
<td>$0.340$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy change goal</td>
<td>$1.224$</td>
<td>$1.064$</td>
<td>$1.058$</td>
<td>$0.968$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Territorial goal</td>
<td>$0.031$</td>
<td>$0.073$</td>
<td>$0.082$</td>
<td>$-1.916$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of groups in competition</td>
<td>$-0.023$</td>
<td>$0.015$</td>
<td>$-0.023$</td>
<td>$-0.060$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government spending % GDP base state</td>
<td>$7.311$</td>
<td>$0.299$</td>
<td>$0.200$</td>
<td>$0.363$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gov. spending % GDP base state</td>
<td>$0.046$</td>
<td>$0.367$</td>
<td>$0.117$</td>
<td>$0.294$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tropical climate base state</td>
<td>$-1.060^*$</td>
<td>$-0.156$</td>
<td>$-0.226$</td>
<td>$0.159$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landlocked base state</td>
<td>$-0.220$</td>
<td>$0.226$</td>
<td>$1.038$</td>
<td>$-0.131$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>$-1.793$</td>
<td>$2.382$</td>
<td>$0.341$</td>
<td>$-15.070$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>$541$</td>
<td>$334.78^{***}$</td>
<td>$0.2093$</td>
<td>$1.243.504$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Multinomial logistical regression estimation.
Base category ($Y = 0$) is group did not end.

1Reference category = group not associated with an ethnic community.

$^*p < .05$ $^{**}p < .01$ $^{***}p < .001$
are the most common. Victory is quite a rare outcome at only 4.2 percent of group terminations.

The independent variables of the study are three dichotomous measures, each of which is coded 1 for terrorist organizations with links to transnational ethnic diaspora communities, for organizations linked to ethnic diasporas that provided material assistance to their co-ethnics within the country of operation, and for organizations linked to diasporas that provided political support to their co-ethnics within the country. To develop these three variables, I used a two-step process. First, for each terrorist organization I determined whether it was associated with a particular ethnic or sectarian group and then identified the group or groups. I made this determination by consulting the terrorist organization narratives in the Terrorist Organization Profiles (TOPs) database, the background descriptions of terrorist organizations published by the Terrorism Research and Analysis Consortium (TRAC), and terrorist group entries found in the reference works by Martha Crenshaw and John Pimlott and Chalk. Around 43.5 percent of all terrorist movements in the sample—255 out of 586—were identified, using these sources, as having an association with a particular ethnic or religious-sectarian group.

Second, I consulted the Minorities at Risk (MAR) database to determine whether the terrorist organization’s affiliated ethnic group is identified as having kin abroad in other countries. In the case that the MAR database did not include information about the associated ethnic group, I consulted David Levinson to make a determination about ethnic group attributes.

64 For this operationalization, I include both ethnolinguistic and religious-sectarian groups. My assumption is that the same diaspora dynamics are at play for both types of communities. Examples of the former would include the Basques of Spain, the Kurds of Iraq, and the Palestinians of Israel and the Occupied Territories. Examples of the latter include the Catholics of Northern Ireland, the Shi’is of Lebanon, and the Sunnis of Iraq. Of the terrorist movements included in the sample that are coded as being associated with an ethnic group, around 77 percent are ethnolinguistic; 23 percent are religious-sectarian.

65 The TOPs database was housed by the University of Maryland’s START Center but is now defunct and offline. I used a saved version archived on 25 June 2012.


70 David Levinson, Ethnic Groups Worldwide: A Ready Reference Handbook (Phoenix, AZ: Oryx Press, 1998). MAR only includes data for ethnic minority groups that comprise at least one percent of the national population of their resident country and that is “at risk” for conflict or discrimination. It therefore excludes majority ethnic communities, very small ethnic communities, and ethnic communities that are not at risk. Of the 255 terrorist organizations associated with an ethnic group or groups in the data, 41 of them were associated with ethnic groups not included in the MAR database. For these groups, I used information from Levinson to address these gaps. I examined the qualitative descriptions of these groups in Levinson to see if the group was depicted as having a connection with or providing any sort of material or political support for the terrorist organization in question. In the case that such support was mentioned, I coded a 1 for the appropriate indicator (Ethnic Kin in Diaspora, Ethnic Kin not in Diaspora, Diaspora Kin Provide Material Support, Diaspora Kin Provide Political Support). In the case that that no such support was mentioned, I coded a zero.
Using this information, I then extracted four indicators from MAR and constructed them into dichotomous variables coded 1 for whether the terrorist movement was associated with ethnic communities that have diaspora kin (Ethnic Kin in Diaspora);\(^{71}\) whether the organization was associated with a solely domestic ethnic community (Ethnic Kin, not in Diaspora);\(^{72}\) whether their associated transnational ethnic community has ever been provided material support (Diaspora Kin Provide Material Support);\(^{73}\) such as financial resources or arms, by their diaspora kin; and whether their associated ethnic community has ever been provided political support, such as lobbying, public relations, or propaganda, by ethnic kin abroad (Diaspora Kin Provide Political Support).\(^{74}\) Of the 255 terrorist movements linked to ethnic communities with diaspora kin, 125 of them were linked to diasporas that provided co-ethnics with material support, and 40 were linked to diasporas that provided political support.

Included in the models are sets of basic and extensive covariates that may also affect terrorist organization lifespan and demise. The basic set of covariates, derived from Jones and Libicki\(^ {75}\) and included in every model, are the peak size of the terrorist organization, (measured between 10 and 10,000 members), the terrorist organization’s political ideology, and the terrorist organization’s goals or objectives. I directly use the ideological categories from Jones and Libicki—left, religious, nationalist-separatist—and designate right-wing terrorist ideology as the reference category. For the terrorist goal variable, I conform to the operationalization used by Gaibulloev and Sandler\(^ {76}\) in creating three goal types: ERCR goals—a category that combines objectives to create an empire or caliphate (E), to achieve regime change (RC) or to spark a social revolution (SR)—policy change goals, and territorial change goals. I exclude the fourth category, status quo goal, as a reference category in the estimations. I add to this list of basic covariates two dichotomous measures from David B. Carter for whether the terrorist organization was provided with state material support.

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\(^{71}\) Derived from “GC10 Transnational dispersion—kindred groups” from the MAR database. I considered a group having transnational kin if GC10 = 1, 2, or 3.

\(^{72}\) Derived from “GC10 Transnational dispersion—kindred groups” from the MAR database. I considered a group to be a solely domestic ethnic group if GC10 = 0. Note this variable simply indicates if the terrorist organization is associated or affiliated with a domestic ethnic group, not whether that group provides material or political assistance. The MAR database does not provide data on provision of support by domestic ethnic groups. Nonetheless, inclusion of this indicator in all estimations helps differentiate the impact of domestic from transnational ethnic group connections to terrorist organizations.

\(^{73}\) Derived from “KINMATSUP—Kindred group material, non-military support,” “KINMILSUP—Kindred group military support” from the MAR database. I considered a group receiving material support if KINMATSUP = 1 or KINMILSUP = 1.

\(^{74}\) Derived from “KINPOLSUP—Kindred group political support” from the MAR database. I considered a group receiving political support if KINPOLSUP = 1.

\(^{75}\) Jones and Libicki, How Terrorist Groups End.

and/or with safe haven within a state’s territory. My expectations are that larger organizations and organizations with more ambitious or nebulous goals, such as constructing an empire, changing a regime, or ushering in a social revolution, are less likely to end. In line with Carter’s findings, I expect organizations that receive state material support are more likely to survive, but terrorists receiving safe haven are more likely to end.

The more extensive set of covariates, included in some models to test the robustness of the main findings, is derived from Gaibulloev and Sandler’s data on terrorist group survival. These variables are crucial in that they indicate not only terrorist organization attributes but also measures of the strategic environment within which terrorist movements operate and are based. Included are a count of the number of competing terrorist movements, a Hirschman-Herfindahl index of the attack diversity of the organization—which measures the range of modes of attacks undertaken by the terrorist group during the observation using a method developed by Blomberg, Gaibulloev, and Sandler—and a count of the number of transnational attacks per million persons the terrorist organization launched during the observation period. These three attributes measure terrorist organizational capacity and the competitive strategic climate facing terrorist movements, all of which can be expected to affect organization survival. The remaining Gaibulloev and Sandler indicators measure the environment facing the organization. These include the regime type of the country in which the terrorist organization is based—measured using Polity scores—the logged real gross domestic product, national population, and government spending as a percentage of GDP of the base state; the degree of ethnic fractionalization within the base state; the logged elevation of the base state; and whether the base state has a tropical climate or is landlocked. These measures of the strategic environment for the terrorist organization could also be reasonably expected to affect organization survival.

The descriptive statistics for all variables used in the analysis are summarized in Table 1.

**Results**

The results of the survival analyses are summarized in Table 2. In the analyses, standard Cox Hazard Ratios are presented, rather than Cox coefficients, in order to simplify discussion of the substantive results. A Hazard Ratio of 1.0 indicates a predictor that neither increases nor decreases survival. A ratio

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77 Carter, “A Blessing or a Curse?” I transformed Carter’s measures of state support into dichotomous indicators coded 1 for receipt of material support or safe haven at any time in the lifespan of the group.


79 Blomberg, Gaibulloev, and Sandler, “Terrorist Group Survival.”
of above 1.0 indicates a predictor that increases the chances of termination, whereas a ratio of below 1.0 indicates a predictor that reduces chances of termination and increases survival. Table 2 presents the results for the first set of analyses, which examine the impact of terrorist organization links with ethnic diasporas and the types of assistance diasporas provide on organization survival.

In model 1, terrorist organizations associated with ethnic groups that have diaspora kin abroad are significantly less likely to end than those that are either associated with exclusively domestically distributed ethnic groups that lack diaspora kin (Ethnic Kin, not in Diaspora) and those that are not associated with any ethnic group—the reference category. Model 1 only includes the basic set of covariates. However, when the extended controls are added in model 2, the same result is found. Association with an ethnic diaspora reduces terrorist movement termination and increases survival. The impact of association with ethnic diasporas on survival is substantive: diaspora-linked terrorists are between 42.0 and 42.9 percent less likely to end during the period observed than groups without such links. Models 3 and 4 test the types of support that ethnic diasporas provide their kin and how this affects terrorist survival. In both of these models, terrorist organizations linked to diasporas that provide material support—such as weapons or cash—are significantly less likely to end. Provision of such support to local kin reduces terrorist termination between 33.9 percent when only the basic covariates are included in the estimation and 49.9 percent in the full model.

However, contrary to expectations, diaspora provision of political support to local brethren has no significant effect on related terrorist organization survival. Indeed, the Hazard Ratios for diaspora political support are above 1.0. Were the hazards to be within the bounds of conventional standards of statistical significance, this would suggest that provision of political support by diaspora kin reduces life expectancy of allied terrorist movements, which is the opposite relationship to that hypothesized. There are several potential explanations for this null finding. First, it is

80 Around 10 percent of the terrorist movements in the sample began prior to 1970, the start of the survival observation period. These organizations could, in theory, be more durable than organizations that began in 1970 or after, thereby affecting the overall results. I therefore reran all estimations controlling for whether or not an organization was founded before 1970 and for the number of years prior to the observation period an organization was in existence. Inclusion of either of these two variables do not change the main results. Results available from author.

81 Calculated by subtracting Hazard Ratio from 1.0.

82 Lars-Erik Cedarman et al. find that transborder ethnic groups that hold political control over a state reduce the likelihood of civil wars in other countries where they have ethnic kin. “Transborder Ethnic Kin and Civil War,” International Organization 67, no. 2 (April 2013): 389–410. To check for a similar dynamic in this study, I regressed a dichotomous variable coded 1 for terrorist organizations linked to transnational ethnic diasporas that are in a ruling coalition in another state to organization demise. I found that the survival rates of terrorist organizations linked to diasporas holding state power abroad (42.4 percent reduction in demise) is similar to those of organizations linked to diasporas that do not hold state power (49.6 percent reduction in demise). Therefore, the benefit a terrorist organization gets from having kin in power abroad is minimal.
important to note that diaspora provision of political support to local kin linked with terrorist movements is quite rare in the sample. Whereas around 56 percent of terrorist organizations tied to ethnic groups with transnational diasporas received material support from kin abroad, only 17 percent organizations in the sample were linked to ethnic groups with diaspora kin that provided political support. A mundane explanation for the lack of evidence that diaspora political support matters is that such support is too rare to have much of an effect on terrorist movement longevity and behavior. Second, although a direct theoretical link can be made between receipt of diaspora material support and increased ability of terrorist organizations to deploy actual resources towards resisting state counterterrorism efforts—material support directly reduces the resource gap and power asymmetry between organizations and states—the ways that diaspora political support affects terrorist organization vitality are much more indirect. For example, diaspora political assistance is theorized to aid terrorist organizations by, among other things, securing state support or allowing organizations in nondemocratic, media-censored environments to have a greater political voice. However, within the sample, terrorist organizations linked to ethnic groups that receive political support from diasporas are no more likely to also enjoy state sponsorship of any type, suggesting that there is little empirical evidence for this theorized benefit. Tests of terrorist longevity rates in nondemocratic countries similarly show no benefit of diaspora provision of political support. Possibly, the impact of diaspora political support on terrorist survival and vitality is complex and mediated rather than direct. Diaspora political support, particularly efforts to raise community awareness and sympathy, may increase flows of diaspora material support to terrorist organizations that then boost longevity. Some very preliminary mediation tests suggest this to be a fruitful direction for further investigation.

To further illustrate the substantive findings of the study, I also conducted and graphed sets of Kaplan–Meier failure estimates. The results of these tests, presented in Figures 1–3, graph the cumulative demise or ending rates of terrorist movements in the sample over the period examined. In Figure 1, the demise and ending rates of terrorist organizations that are associated

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83 Correlation tests for Diaspora Kin Provide Political Support, State sponsorship (no safe haven), and State sponsorship (safe haven) are $r = .004, -.042$ respectively.

84 I reran the main tests on a subset of terrorist organizations operating in nondemocratic countries (where the Polity score was lower than 5). These reproduced the main findings of the study: material support reduces organization demise, whereas political support does not. This challenges the theorized assumption that diaspora political support aids terrorists by, among other things, providing them a way to avoid local censorship or repression and exert a political voice abroad. Results available from the author.

85 Simple, Sobel–Goodman tests of partial mediation suggest that the effect of diaspora political support on terrorist organization demise and longevity (years lived in observation period) is mediated through diaspora material support. Results available from author.

86 It is important to note that the Kaplan–Meier failure estimates are bivariate and exclude controls.
with transnational ethnic diasporas are compared with those organizations that have no such affiliation.

As illustrated, throughout the time period observed, diaspora-linked terrorists end at a lower rate than terrorists not linked to ethnic diasporas abroad. The demise rates for diaspora-affiliated and unaffiliated groups diverge by the second year of the observation period. Over the course of the entire observation period, diaspora-linked terrorists are around 15 to 30 percent less likely to meet their end than nonlinked terrorists. At the end of the thirty-seven-year observation period of the study, around 85 percent of the non-diaspora-linked terrorist organizations had ended, in comparison to only around 65 percent of diaspora-affiliated terrorist movements.

A similar pattern is found when comparing terrorist movements linked to communities receiving material support from diaspora kin with those that do not. This is expressed in Figure 2.

In contrast, as illustrated by Figure 3, the demise rates of terrorists lodged in ethnic groups receiving political support from transnational ethnic diaspora groups do not substantively differ from terrorists that do not receive diaspora political support.

This is a further demonstration of the mechanism by which transnational diasporas enhance the vitality and longevity of the terrorist movements to which they are linked: by providing weapons and financial assets rather than political propaganda and other support.

Several of the covariates are also found to be significant in Table 2. Larger terrorist organizations are found to have higher survival rates,
though the substantive impact is below .001 percent. Receipt of state material support is found to reduce terrorist demise by between 38 and 39 percent. However, state provision of safe haven to terrorists does not significant reduce group demise in the full estimations. These results,
therefore, partially reproduce Carter’s findings. Religious terrorists are also found to have higher survival rates, reducing organization termination rates between 44 and 50.9 percent. Terrorists that have a territorial goal also have reduced rates of demise between 38 and 52 percent. However, this finding is produced only in models 1 and 2, where the extensive set of covariates is not included. Finally, two factors are determined to increase chances of terrorist movement termination in some of the models: terrorist organizations that are located in higher-GDP-per-capita countries, which are presumed to be able to deploy greater counterterrorism resources, are between 25 and 28 percent more likely to end during the observation period, while terrorists in landlocked states, which presumably suffer from strategic disadvantages—reduced movement, supply and evasion—are around 52 percent more likely to fail in model 4.

In Tables 3a and 3b, the competing risks multinomial logistical analysis tests for the impact of diaspora kin, and the types of support provided by kin, on the ways in which groups end are summarized.

These estimations reveal that terrorist organizations connected to diaspora groups with kin in other countries (model 5), and connected to diasporas that provide material assistance to local ethnic groups they are affiliated with (model 6), are significantly less likely to end through force by succumbing to police or military action. Relative probability calculations of these results indicate that terrorist organizations affiliated with a transnational diaspora are around 41.9 percent less likely to end by force, whereas organizations associated with ethnic groups receiving material support from diaspora kin are 39.4 percent less likely to end by force. This provides support for the contention that diaspora links and assistance boost the external resilience of affiliated terrorist movements. Likewise, terrorist organizations associated with ethnic groups with kin abroad, and that receive diaspora material aid, are less likely to end by entering into a political process. Terrorists affiliated with ethnic groups with kin abroad are 33.8 percent less likely to terminate through a political process and 35.7 less likely to do so if they are affiliated with groups with diaspora kin that provide material assistance according to relative probability calculations. This finding is consistent with the “diasporas as peace-wreckers” model discussed in the civil war literature. Association with transnational ethnic diasporas, and provision of material support by diaspora groups, is not found to significantly affect the likelihood of a terrorist movement ending by splintering or achieving victory. As was the case with the survival models

87 See Carter, “A Blessing or a Curse?” A possible explanation for my slightly different finding is that my database is cross-sectional, whereas Carter’s is time-series. Also, Carter theorized that these two types of state support affected the chances of a terrorist organization’s demise by military force at the hands of another state. This is more directly tested by the competing risk multinomial logistical tests in the second part of the analysis.
above, diaspora provision of political support to terrorist-affiliated kin is not found to be significant in the competing risks estimations.

Several covariates are also consistent predictors of different ways terrorist organizations meet their demise across the competing risk estimations. In both models 5 and 6, state provision of safe haven is found to be a positive predictor of terrorist termination by policing or military force. This is further vindication of Carter’s findings.89 Terrorists with a religious ideology are found to be more resilient against state efforts to crush organizations with military or police force across both models. This is intuitive, as scholars have observed that religious terrorists frequently bring higher levels of dedication and commitment to their causes. The religious terrorism phenomenon, furthermore, is a more recent development and includes a number of newer terrorist movements that began later in the observation period, further reducing their probability of demise. Interestingly, terrorist movements with religious ideologies are also less likely to end by joining a political process. This, again, could be due to the relative youth of many religious organizations in the data and the fact that the conflicts in which such groups are engaged, such as Iraq and Afghanistan, are relatively recent, have not reached a political settlement phase, and also are ongoing in areas where the state is weak and less able to make credible commitments at the bargaining table. In both models 5 and 6, terrorist organizations are found to be less likely to succumb to force or to end by joining a political process if they operate in democracies. The first finding is intuitive, as democracies frequently place limits on forceful counterterrorism efforts and afford terrorist suspects rights of the accused. The second finding is more surprising, but it is consistent with some of Max Abrahm’s criticisms of the rational-actor model of terrorist movements.90 Terrorist organizations, Abrahms observes, frequently eschew nonviolent modes of redress of grievance when they are available in favor of political violence to display their commitment to the cause and to each other as extremists. This could help to explain the finding that terrorists are particularly unlikely to join a political process when one is more easily afforded to them in a democratic context. However, more research will need to be done to fully explain this finding.

The Importance of Diasporas

The study demonstrates the critical importance of transnational ethnic diasporas to terrorist movements and to terrorist campaigns and their

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88 A number of the covariates are not significant in the models. As a check, I reran all Cox and multinomial logistical estimations in the study including only the significant covariates. These reproduced the core findings of the study. Results available from the author.


resolution. It produces systematic empirical evidence that terrorist organizations with links to ethnic diaspora communities abroad have higher survival rates than those without such links, including terrorist movements that are associated with local ethnic groups that do not have diaspora kin. The material support diasporas provide to terrorist movements enables them to better resist forceful counterterrorism efforts, thereby allowing them to survival longer. This salubrious effect is constant and irrespective of terrorist movements’ size, ideology, goals, external sponsorship by states, and the wider political, economic, and strategic environment in which they operate. This finding empirically substantiates much of the qualitative case literature alleging that direct, material support by diaspora groups is a highly consequential element of global terrorism threats.

Another key finding is that as diaspora communities help to materially sustain associated terrorist organizations, they also make it less likely that terrorist conflicts will be peacefully resolved by bringing terrorist movements into political processes and negotiations. This too is consistent with previous literature on civil wars detailing the “peace-wrecker” and “hard-liner” effect that transnational ethnic kin communities lend to intrastate conflicts that they support. Terrorist movements linked to transnational ethnic diasporas, and dependent upon diaspora material resources, likely feel little pressure to shift tactics and undertake nonviolent negotiations.

While the study empirically underscores the importance of ethnic diasporas to terrorism, it also leaves important avenues of inquiry unexamined. Future empirical research could examine the impact of diaspora kin support on other aspects of terrorist movements and campaigns. For example, it could be that diaspora support shapes the types, targeting patterns, and intensity of violence in which linked terrorist movements engage. In choosing to engage in attacks, terrorists frequently consider whether their tactical behaviors will generate backlash and cost them public sympathy and support locally. Backlash effects can have significant material costs for terrorist movement. However, terrorists linked to, and supported by, ethnic groups in other countries may be more sheltered from the costs of backlash; much in the same way that transnational diaspora groups are less affected by the consequences of ongoing terrorist violence than their co-ethic brethren on the frontline within their home countries, diaspora kin may be. This may make diaspora-linked terrorists less inhibited in planning attacks.

Acknowledgments

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