

Terrorist Financing on the Internet

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In response to growing international pressure since the September 11 attacks, al-Qaeda has increasingly relied on the internet to spread its message and gain support throughout the world. In addition, al-Qaeda has used the web's broad reach, timely efficiency, and certain degree of anonymity and security as a conduit for terrorist financing. Unfortunately, al-Qaeda is not the only terrorist group that exploits the internet for financing; groups such as Hamas, Laskhar-e Taiba, and Hizballah also use the internet to raise and transfer funds to support their groups' activities. Although there is broad international agreement that the internet creates serious counterterrorism vulnerabilities and that action is needed to counter this growing threat, there is far less agreement on what steps need to be taken.