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THE LONG WAR - Insurgency, Counter- Insurgency and Collapsing States

Guest Editors

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While the Cold War was characterized by the expansion and consolidation of nation-states against the backdrop of USA-Soviet superpower rivalry and the emergence of the Three Worlds of development, one of the key characteristics of the post-Cold War era, in which the USA has emerged to unrivalled global hegemony, is the growing number of collapsing or collapsed states mired in conflict or civil war. The USA has compounded state failure in polities such as Iraq as a result of its use of military force to overthrow regimes in the context of the Global War on Terror (GWOT) or what is also increasingly referred to as the 'Long War'. The Long War is often represented as a 'new' era in warfare and U.S. geopolitics. However, the assumption here is that the Long War is new in important respects, but it also bears many similarities to the Cold War. A key similarity between the Cold War and the Long War is the way in which insurgency and counterinsurgency are seen primarily in the context of inter-state rivalry in which the critical local or regional dynamics of revolution and counter-revolution are neglected. In this context American policy-makers and their allies have again erroneously applied a 'grand strategy' that suits the imperatives of conventional military and geo-political thinking rather than engaging with what are a much more variegated array of problems facing the changing global order.

The contributors to this special issue approach this overall theme from a variety of perspectives in an effort to shed light on the history and future of insurgency, counterinsurgency and collapsing states in the context of the Long War.

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Editor: Shahid Qadir, *Royal Holloway, University of London, UK*

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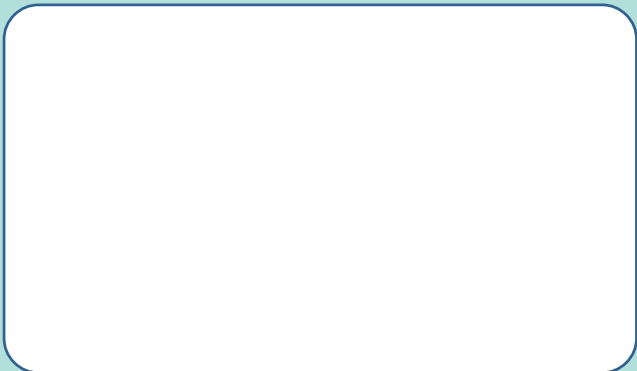
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