Introduction

This edited volume is the product of a NATO-funded workshop that was held in December 2007 in Ankara, Turkey, on the topic of transnational security cooperation and intelligence sharing. Nearly two years in the planning, the Ankara workshop was particularly designed to bring together leading international scholars who prepared papers offering different theoretical perspectives on security cooperation, with practicing intelligence, military, and police officers, who spoke about their practice-based observations and experiences with international cooperation. The workshop provided a unique opportunity for both groups to exchange ideas, reflect on the various perspectives represented, and all join together in roundtables in which particular issues and themes running throughout the theoretical and experiential accounts could be highlighted and discussed.

The premise of the workshop was designed in recognition of the increasingly accepted idea that intelligence cooperation – domestically between agencies, internationally between states, and transnationally among states, sub-states and non-state actors – is essential in order to successfully counter the evolving transnational nature of security threats. Assuming that the most effective response to transnational threats should be equally transnational, the workshop focused specifically on the question of whether there is evidence of a transnationalization in states’ responses to a transnational security threat like “global” terror. In other words, are we seeing a progressive materialization of state or sub-state transnational countering mechanisms, processes, and agencies, to a degree that we can identify early signs of a “Statist-transnationalism” for a new global insecurity governance?

The papers selected for this volume explore this question from different theoretical perspectives and by highlighting different examples of states’ responses, for example, looking at what the use of extraordinary rendition or police liaisons mean for the development and growth of transnational security cooperation. Also highlighted in the volume is an effort to tease apart the differences between the intelligence and policing communities, in order to see whether, and, if so, how, transnationalizing efforts and developments in the latter – which were widely reported at the workshop – can be duplicated in the former. While the featured chapters focus primarily on perspectives and experiences from North America and Europe, the workshop itself and the discussions held there were highlighted by contributions of practitioners from a variety of backgrounds (e.g. the Middle
East, Russia, the Caucasus, Central Asia, and South Asia). Due to the often sensitive nature of the topics under discussion, the identities of these participants can not be given here, but their opinions, as expressed at the workshop, come through in the subsequent chapters.

The opening chapter of the volume sets the stage for the subsequent works. Ersel Aydinli’s chapter identifies a growing gap between transnational security threats, and the international response to them, and then argues that the international community has felt the pressure to build up effective security cooperation to close this gap. He shows how this pressure has been most tangible with respect to the global terrorist challenge of the violent Jihadists, and, for comparative purposes, recalls an earlier case of a global terrorist challenge. Crafting effective intelligence cooperation among states would be a key practical move in building up effective governance to face the current terrorist threat, and close this gap, but since the gap is between a transnational threat and an international countering mechanism, such practices seem to demand the development of a “statist-transnationalist” approach. This brings us back to the main focus of the volume, which is to consider both in theory and practice whether such a transnationalization of state security-providing capacity is possible and whether it is taking place. Once again we are reminded to ask: have states devised new ways of transnational intelligence cooperation?

In the next section of the book, three authors take very different perspectives on the question of what traditional state actors should be and have been doing with respect to transnational cooperation. Derek Reveron starts things off by underscoring the need for intelligence cooperation. He presents the basic categories of intelligence cooperation that have existed and been practiced over the years, and explores the commonly accepted objectives of, and risks involved in, cooperating. In consideration of what states should be doing to build up better intelligence cooperation, he presents a parallel case of cooperation, that of the Maritime Commons. By looking at this case he is able to reflect on such questions as what information should be shared, whether international regimes can help, and whether advanced technology is the answer or part of the problem.

The following chapter by James Igoe Walsh assumes more of a realist perspective on cooperation, and discusses the idea of hierarchical cooperation relationships – in other words, those between a dominant state, which pays the costs and provides certain other benefits, and a subordinate state, which agrees to give up certain powers or autonomy in return for perhaps protection or economic aid. Walsh provides a framework for understanding when hierarchical cooperation can and should occur, specifically, in cases in which there are high gains to the dominant state, high costs of defection by the subordinate state BUT low governance costs to the dominant state, e.g. in cases like cooperation between the US and Morocco, Egypt, or Jordan. Walsh’s position runs counter to long-standing arguments that cooperation can only take place in cases of low defection possibilities, i.e. when there are high degrees of trust.

The final chapter in this section features Peter Gill’s investigation into the controversial statist practice of extraordinary rendition, and questions whether it has harmed future possibilities for transnational cooperation – even as it represents a
form of cooperation in itself. Although Gill concludes that in fact extraordinary rendition has not done long-term damage to transnational cooperation prospects, he makes the point that it has ironically represented a reassertion of US hegemonic power, and thus its practice serves as a reminder of the need for fuller – including both state and non-state actors – frameworks for developing future intelligence cooperation.

The remainder of the book considers various actual practices by states and sub-state entities. The first chapter in this section explores the case of the Serious Organised Crime Agency (SOCA) in England, as an indication of how one state has chosen to collapse state agencies into a single entity better able to respond to transnational threats. Author Glen Segell points out that changes within SOCA make the case an interesting one for beginning to explore the differences between the policing and intelligence communities, as the agency gradually comes to see its own mandate extending beyond a more criminal focus to one including terrorism and intelligence-related issues.

The following three chapters provide the necessary details on policing in order to be able to make such a comparison between the policing and intelligence communities. Otwin Marenin’s chapter looks at the past and present nature of police cooperation and considers what it can show us about transnational cooperation in general. It explores the main forms of police cooperation and argues that primary conditions allowing for the growth of police cooperation (based on police autonomy, shared professional interests, the nature of shared information vs. shared intelligence, and a common policy discourse) have not traditionally allowed for a similar degree of cooperation among intelligence communities.

Hasan Yon, a police liaison officer himself, provides an introductory overview to the police liaison system in particular. He explains its development and growth, particularly in the post-9/11 period, and shows how the needs of the job – in this case, countering transnational terrorism – have led some national police organizations to build up transnational networks for information sharing, and to forge informal cooperation platforms. His account of police liaison officers, their appointment procedures, mandates, and on-site relations, attitudes, manners, and operational code, reveals how some states and sub-state entities can be adaptive and open to transnational security practices necessary to counter the transnational threat. He also shows how the police, operating with transnational capacity, may sometimes clash with their own diplomats, who seem to be less equipped to adapt. At the micro level, therefore, the chapter shows how some parts of the state are proving faster at adapting transnational practices than others.

The third chapter to look at police practices in detail is Brian Nussbaum’s multiple-case study. In this chapter Nussbaum draws on a post-internationalist theoretical perspective to explore three significant cases of sub-state transnational cooperation – initiatives taken in recent years by the New York, London, and Los Angeles police departments. By taking a detailed look at these cases he provides empirical evidence of the increasing role of local law enforcement in international intelligence sharing, and thus evidence of sub-state practices in the transnationalization of security governance.
The final chapter in this section is by Mathieu Deflem. Deflem presents in his chapter a sociological framework for looking at international police cooperation vis-à-vis counter-terrorism; a framework defining police bureaucracies as driven by efficiency, rationalism, and autonomy. Despite much documented international policing efforts, Deflem suggests that these are still evidence of “national” thinking in that they tend to be either unilateral or bilateral, and even cases of multinational initiatives like INTERPOL do not aim to create a supranational police force but to provide a means for networking and exchanging of individual groups.