

Transnational Threats Audit 2005

Information Sharing in the Public/Private Sectors

The CSIS Transnational Threats Project (TNT) hosted its third annual Transnational Threats Audit on February 15, 2005. This off-the-record closed forum provides a platform for Fortune-500 senior corporate executives and senior national security experts to analyze the scope and effect of transnational threats to the public and private sectors. This year's conference focused on information sharing between law enforcement and the private sector and homeland security in the next four years.

The Honorable William Webster, Chair of the TNT Senior Steering Committee and former Director of the CIA and FBI opened the conference, highlighting the increased national debate on homeland security and protection of the U.S. through the development of a new intelligence system.

Dr. David A. Kay, former Special Advisor for Strategy on Iraqi Weapons of Mass Destruction started the session with a discussion on future global threats and the relevance of information sharing in the public and private sectors.

Following his discussion, Mr. John S. Pistole, Deputy Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, provided insight on successes in information sharing between law enforcement, intelligence agencies, and the private sector and improvement in intelligence collection and analysis. He stressed the need for better cooperation and information sharing.



John S. Pistole, Deputy Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation

Mr. Daniel Benjamin, Senior Fellow in CSIS' International Security Program discussed the changing nature of Al Qaeda and the global jihadist movement. He emphasized Al Qaeda's increasing ideological inspiration and tactics adopted by many independent jihadists around the world, as well as threats coming from elements with terrorist skills and ideology acquired from the Internet. Benjamin highlighted some tactical successes in combating global terrorism but also noted significant strategic failures. Frederick Barton, Senior Adviser and Co-director of the Post-Conflict Reconstruction Project at CSIS discussed security challenges and the progress made in Iraq, emphasizing the significance of a referendum on foreign troops which will make their presence or absence decided by a public vote. The Honorable Richard Danzig, Sam Nunn Prize Fellow at CSIS, focused on the challenges posed by biological weapons to national and international security as well as terrorist preparation and acquisition by relatively cheap technological means.

The final panel commenced with a presentation by Commander Stephen E. Flynn, Jeane J. Kirkpatrick Fellow in National Security Studies at Council on Foreign Relations addressing problems associated with infrastructure protection and the need for development of new mechanisms that would encourage better public/private information sharing. Mr. Al Martinez-Fonts, Special Assistant to the Secretary at the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), followed the discussion highlighting issues surrounding transportation safety and stressed public/private partnership in bridging and closing the security gap. Mr. Robert Liscouski, former Assistant Secretary for Infrastructure Protection at DHS, concluded the panel discussing how to provide incentives to industry for effectively safeguarding and protecting infrastructures across all industry sectors.

Luncheon keynote speaker The Honorable Tom Ridge addressed general concerns germane to homeland security and the role of the DHS, as well as the effects of international security challenges to the U.S. Governor Ridge noted some of the progress made in maritime security and lessons learned from negotiations with the European Union in sharing sensitive information and pertinent privacy issues. In conclusion, Mr. Ridge underlined the key role of public and private sector information sharing in protecting infrastructure lest the country face catastrophic economic losses.



The Honorable Tom Ridge

The PSAG, co-chaired by Carol Hallett, of Counsel, U.S. Chamber of Commerce, and Robert Littlejohn, Vice President of Global Security, Avon Products, provides a forum for Fortune 500 corporate security executives and national security specialists to interact in off-the-record sessions to examine effective approaches to information sharing between the public and the private sectors through developing partnerships with senior U.S. government officials. PSAG members also provide strategic direction to the Transnational Threats Audit annual conference and initiatives.