'The Threat That Grows While America Sleeps': The US Securitisation of Hezbollah in Latin America during the Obama Administration

Master Thesis

June 2019

Daisy Ireton

6418422

Supervisor:

Prof. Dr. Bob de Graaff

International Relations in Historical Perspective

Faculty of Humanities

University of Utrecht

Utrecht University

AUTHOR

Daisy Ireton

d.g.ireton@students.uu.nl

Student number: 6418422

SUPERVISOR

Prof. Dr. Bob de Graaff

SECOND READER

Dr. Trineke Palm

WORD COUNT

16,859

Abstract

This thesis looks at Hezbollah's alleged activities in Latin America, in particular, their connection with drug traffickers and involvement in money laundering. It is my contention that during the Obama administration the US government securitised this issue constructing it as a threat to the nation which allowed it to ramp up sanctions against the group without having to provide proper evidence of the danger it poses. My aim is to discover *how* these securitising actors were able to construct this threat. In order to do so I examined congressional records from this period using critical discourse analysis, specifically Roxanne Lynn Doty's discursive practises approach. In line with my hypothesis, I discovered that the securitising actors relied on the linguistic conventions found in both the war on drugs and the war on terror rhetoric. Additionally, the securitising actors conceptualised Latin America as the US' 'backyard'. Together this enabled the securitising actors to amplify the severity of the threat to the extent that some kind of securitising action became imperative, in this case, the enacting of the Hezbollah International Financing Prevention Act of 2015. Finally, by using analysis by contrasting narratives throughout I identified a rift between Obama and the securitising actors. This is explored in more detail looking at the Iran nuclear deal and the suspended Drug Enforcement Administration operation Project Cassandra and the possible ramifications of this in regard to realist and constructivist International Relations theory, two theories supposed by many to be irreconcilable but which I propose might work together after all.

Acknowledgements

CONTENTS

List of tables

List of figures

List of abbreviations

ACN	Analysis by Contrasting Narratives
CBO	Congressional Budget Office
CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CRS	Congressional Research Service
CSIS	Center for Strategic and International Studies
DEA	Drugs Enforcement Administration
EU	European Union
FARC	*Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia* (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia)
FTO	Foreign Terrorist Organisation
GPO	Government Publishing Office
HSDL	Homeland Security Digital Library
UK	United Kingdom
US	United States

1. Introduction

In October 1997, Shi'a Islamist political party and militant group Hezbollah was designated a Foreign Terrorist Organisation (FTO) by the US State Department. Fourteen other countries list Hezbollah as a terrorist group and there have been calls for the European Union (EU) to blacklist the organisation. The group was founded in the early 1980s as part of an Iranian effort to gather militant Lebanese Shi'a groups into a unified organisation to act as a proxy for Iran in the country's ongoing conflict with Israel.[1] It has since risen to worldwide notoriety having grown its network across five continents and stands accused of carrying out a multitude of terrorist attacks across the globe.

Since the late twentieth century, it is believed by the US government that the group is operating in Latin America where it has centred itself around the Arab population which moved to the region following the 1948 Arab-Israeli War and the 1985 Lebanese Civil War.[2] Today, Latin America is home to the largest Arab population outside of the Middle East. The Arab American Institute estimates that anywhere between seventeen and thirty million Arabs live in the region.[3] Since the millennium, Iran, Hezbollah's closest political ally, has made significant diplomatic inroads in Latin America. A 2011 report by the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), a centrist think tank, details twenty-one Iran-Latin America leadership meetings from 2001 to 2011. Moreover, the country had built seventeen cultural centres in Latin America and maintained ten embassies at the time of the report, up from six in 2005.[4] Last year right-wing think tank the Gatestone Institute claimed that that number of centres had since risen to more than one hundred. This, the institute argues, has enabled Hezbollah to establish itself as the dominant force among Shi'a Muslim communities in Latin America.[5] Reports of this kind should, however, be

---

[1] Dominique Avon, Anaïs-Trissa Khatchadourian, and Jane Marie Todd, *Hezbollah: A History of the "Party of God"* (Cambridge MA, 2012)
[2] See Jeffrey Goldberg, 'In the Party of God', The New Yorker, 28 October 2002 https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2002/10/28/in-the-party-of-god-2 (Accessed 14 February); Pablo Gato and Robert Windrem, 'Hezbollah builds a Western Base', NBC News, 9 May 2007 http://www.nbcnews.com/id/17874369/ns/world_news-americas/t/hezbollah-builds-western-base/#.XGWBms9Kiv6 (Accessed 16 February 2019)
[3] Jacob Saliba, The Arabs to Our South: The Arab Diaspora in Latin America, Arab American Institute, 16 February 2016 http://www.aaiusa.org/the_arab_diaspora_in_latin_america (Accessed 2 March 2019)
[4] Brandon Fite, 'US and Iranian Strategic Competition: Peripheral Competition in Latin America and Africa' Centre for Strategic and International Studies, 7 November 2011 https://www.csis.org/analysis/us-and-iranian-strategic-competition-peripheral-competition-involving-latin-america-and (Accessed 22 April 2019)
[5] Judith Bergman, 'Iran in the US Backyard', Gatestone Institute International Policy Council, 8 May 2018

viewed with caution. The Gatestone Institute, for instance, has been the subject of several 'fake news' scandals.[6] This being said, Hezbollah is certainly no stranger in Latin America. It is reasonable to suggest that this large Arab diaspora has facilitated Hezbollah's move to the area, creating a potential source of support for the group and allowing operatives to blend in against the backdrop of this foreign population.

The following details some of Hezbollah's supposed exploits in the area. In 1994, Ansar Allah, a Palestinian Jihadist organization widely held as a front for Hezbollah, claimed responsibility for the bomb attack on the *Asociación Mutual Israelita Argentina* building in Buenos Aires, which killed eighty-five people and injured hundreds more. However, the true extent of Hezbollah's involvement is not widely agreed upon. By 2002, it is thought that Hezbollah was operating openly in Ciudad del Este, Paraguay, having established itself in much of the Tri-Border Area of Argentina, Paraguay and Brazil.[7] More recently an alleged Hezbollah operative was arrested in Peru on suspicion of planning a bomb attack in Lima.[8] In September 2018, police in Brazil arrested Assad Ahmad Barakat, a man accused by the US of being one of the main financial operators of Hezbollah.[9] The US government further claims that the group is trafficking weapons, drugs and people, and money laundering across the region, in order to finance its armed operations. By 2009 the US government had linked Hezbollah to drug cartels in twelve Latin American countries.[10] The geographical span of this thesis has thus been left intentionally wide to reflect the scope of Congress' focus.[11]

Hezbollah's presence in Latin America is indisputable. However, the details of their activities are trickier to establish owing to the clandestine nature of the organisation. As a result, a lot of literature on the topic is highly conjectural, particularly when it comes to the group's

---

https://www.gatestoneinstitute.org/12268/iran-latin-america (Accessed 16 February 2019)

[6] Lee Fang, 'John Bolton Chairs An Actual "Fake News" Publisher Infamous For Spreading Anti-Muslim Hate', The Intercept, 23 March 2018
https://theintercept.com/2018/03/23/gatestone-institute-john-bolton-chairs-an-actual-fake-news-publisher-infamous-for-spreading-anti-muslim-hate/ (Accessed 4 March 2019)

[7] See Goldberg, 'In the Party of God'; Gato and Windrem, 'Hezbollah builds a Western Base'

[8] Mitra Taj, 'Lebanese Detainee in Peru Denies Hezbollah Link, Says Police Coerced Confession', Haaretz, 14 November 2014
https://www.haaretz.com/lebanese-in-peru-denies-hezbollah-link-1.5328779 (Accessed 2 March 2019)

[9] 'Hezbollah treasurer' Barakat arrested in Brazil border city, BBC News, 22 September 2018
https://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-45610738 (Accessed 2 March 2019)

[10] Roger Noriega in Serial No. 112-35 'Hezbollah In Latin America--Implications for U.S. Homeland Security', hearing before the Subcommittee on Counterterrorism and Intelligence of the Committee on Homeland Security, House of Representatives, One Hundred Twelfth Congress, First Session, 7 July 2011, p. 7

[11] The term I have used throughout this thesis is Latin America this is a reflection of the language used in the sources themselves, however, there are instances of witnesses and the names of hearings referring to South America.

supposed affiliation with drug cartels.[12] The difficulty of establishing the facts of such activity is something that the Congressional Research Service (CRS) recognises: 'Threats posed by a crime-terrorism nexus may be particularly challenging, as the scale and nature of their cooperation are believed to vary widely and limited anecdotal evidence largely serves as the basis for current understanding of the problem.'[13] Yet despite the uncertain nature of Hezbollah's activities in Latin America, the US government during the Obama administration acted decisively against the perceived threat culminating in the passing of major legislation in 2015 under the Hezbollah International Financing Prevention Act. We thus arrive at a key analytical problem: the threat Hezbollah poses to the US in Latin America is undetermined, yet it is manifest in US policy in a very real sense. This thesis will seek to answer how this happened and what the implications of this have been.

1.1 Historiography

Not so long ago, focusing on non-state actors, like Hezbollah, was the reserve of just a few scholars of international security. However, since the end of the Cold War, a broad range of non-state actors have become fitting research subjects as globalisation has enabled these actors to have an increasingly influential role in global politics.[14] Securitisation theorists posit that traditional state powers have responded to the growing role such non-state actors play by securitising these actors and constructing them as threats to society, resulting in a boom of 'securitisation'. Although it must be said that not all non-state actors, like Hezbollah, are securitised, or securitised to the same extent.

Securitisation is generally associated with the Copenhagen School of security studies, most notably Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver and Jaap de Wilde.[15] Their conceptualisation provided a fresh take on the debate between those who saw threats as objective and those that maintained security was subjective. The Copenhagen School argues that security should be seen as a 'speech act' which looks at how certain issues are raised to the status of a security issue, by whom, and with what consequences. They show that securitisation has led to the inclusion of

---

[12] 'Arrested and expelled: drug trafficking and terrorism fears rising in Lebanon', The Global Initiative, 16 August 2016
https://globalinitiative.net/arrested-and-expelled-drug-trafficking-and-terrorism-fears-rising-in-lebanon/
(Accessed 14 February 2019)
[13] John Rollins and Liana Sun Wyler, 'International Terrorism and Transnational Crime: Security Threats, U.S. Policy, and Considerations for Congress', Congressional Research Service, 18 March 2010
[14] Andreas Kruck and Andrea Schneiker, *Researching Non-State Actors in International Security* (2017), p. 3
[15] See Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver, and Jaap de Wilde, *Security: A New Framework for Analysis* (Colorado, 1998); Ole Wæver, 'Securitisation and Desecuritisation', in Ronnie D. Lipschutz (ed,), *On Security*, (New York,1995), pp.46-86

non-traditional security threats and referents of security outside of the state. Not only are drugs and terrorism securitised, as is the case here, but issues such as migration and climate change too. Using the concept of securitisation as set out by the second generation of securitisation scholars, namely Thierry Balzacq, which takes into account the broader discursive contexts, it is the contention of this thesis that securitisation has become the dominant way in which modern societies focus on emerging issues which might disrupt the status quo. This, in turn, has had a huge impact on politics and how we perceive contemporary problems. In many areas, securitisation has become institutionalised as the only appropriate response, such as in immigration and with terrorism and drugs, as is seen here. It has also initiated a shift from defending physical territory to defending society at large and broken down the distinction between external and internal security. Securitisation theorists, therefore, show that security is not an objective value to be achieved but the construction of a certain discourse around existential threats. This boom of securitisation carried out by states is reflected in the recent establishment of journals such as *Critical Studies on Security,* the *European Journal of International Security* and the *Journal of Global Security Studies.*

Given what we know about Hezbollah - that they are an influential and extensive non-state actor - and the recent boom in securitisation - that traditional powers have reacted to such actors by securitising them - it is surprising that there are very few studies on Hezbollah which look at how the US has securitised the issue of their presence in Latin America.[16] Rather, existing literature takes the threat Hezbollah poses as a given. For example, Sean Goforth's book *Axis of Unity: Venezuela, Iran & the Threat to America* (2012), Steven O'Hern' *Iran's Revolutionary Guard: The Threat That Grows While America Sleeps* (2012), from which this thesis gets its title, and Matthew Levitt's *Hezbollah: The Global Footprint of Lebanon's Party of God* (2013). Such texts do not stop to critically appraise how the US government has raised this issue to a matter of security. Often, as is the case with Levitt, those who are writing on the subject are closely tied to the US government, Levitt, for example, has worked for the US Department of the Treasury in the terrorism and financial intelligence branch and has also testified at congressional hearings on the subject. Many studies that are currently available are thus 'too close' to the subject matter and may even be deemed to be contributing to the construction of the threat themselves.

---

[16] I found only one account which links Hezbollah and US securitisation. Susanne Mulbah talks about the securitisation of development and the US' speculation that Hezbollah was raising funds in Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia. See Susanne Mulbah, *State-building Interventions in Post-Conflict Liberia: Building a State without Citizens*, (London, 2017)

We can also see this happening when authors refer to Hezbollah in terms of the crime-terror nexus.[17] According to leading scholar Tamara Makarenko, 'the rise of transnational organised crime and the changing nature of terrorism means that two traditionally separate phenomena have begun to reveal many operational and organisational similarities'.[18] It is this development that is referred to as the crime-terror nexus. Scholars have pointed to this nexus to explain why governments have securitised certain actors. However, it is this thesis' contention that the nexus should not be seen as an explanatory or even facilitating factor of securitisation but rather as a product of securitisation itself. This is what I call the crime-terror fallacy. Positioning the nexus as such the thesis highlights the constructed nature of security by showing how in writing about such threats we can contribute to and validate their existence. This thesis will address this misconception by deconstructing the threat and giving a critical analysis of how Hezbollah has been securitised, thus addressing a gap in the literature.

1.2 Research objective

As set out in the introduction the presence of Hezbollah in Latin America is self-evident but establishing the details of such activity is a tricky business and a lot of literature on the topic is highly speculative. Much of what is written on the subject centres around the group's supposed affiliation with drug cartels. Steven O'Hern writes: 'Hezbollah is involved in producing and trading heroin in the Middle East and smuggling cocaine through and out of South America.'[19] Such declarations are commonplace in the literature.[20] Yet there are few grounds upon which to make such claims.[21] The Global Initiative observes 'the linkages between drug trafficking,

---

[17] See Steven Hutchinson and Pat O'Malley, 'A Crime–Terror Nexus? Thinking on Some of the Links between Terrorism and Criminality', *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 30 (2007), pp. 1095-1107; Tamara Makarenko, 'The Crime-Terror Continuum: Tracing the Interplay between Transnational Organised Crime and Terrorism', *Global Crime,* 6 (2004), pp. 129-145; Tamara Makarenko, *The Crime-Terror Nexus* (London, 2007)

[18] Makarenko, 'The Crime- Terror Continuum', p. 129

[19] Steven O'Hern, *Iran's Revolutionary Guard: The Threat That Grows While America Sleeps* (Washington, 2012), p. 7

[20] See Matthew Levitt, *Hezbollah: The Global Footprint of Lebanon's Party of God* (Washington, 2013); Sean Goforth, *Axis of Unity Venezuela, Iran & the Threat to America* (Washington, 2012); Jennifer L. Hesterman, *The Terrorist- Criminal Nexus: An Alliance of International Drug Cartels, Organised Crime and Terror Groups*, (London, 2013); Vanessa Neumann, 'The New Nexus of Narcoterrorism: Hezbollah and Venezuela', Foreign Policy Research Institute, 3 December 2011 https://www.fpri.org/article/2011/12/the-new-nexus-of-narcoterrorism-hezbollah-and-venezuela/ (Accessed 22 November 2018); Celina B. Realuyo, 'The Terror-Crime Nexus: Hezbollah's Global Facilitators', *PRISM*, 5 (2014), pp. 116-131

[21] Mitt Romney declared the imminent threat Hezbollah in Latin America posed to the US during his presidential campaign only for this statement to be rated 'Mostly false' by Politifact. See Becky Bowers, 'Mitt Romney says Hezbollah in Latin America poses an imminent threat to the United States', Politifact, 23 November 2011 https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2011/nov/23/mitt-romney/mitt-romney-says-hezbollah-latin-america-poses-imm/ (Accessed 22 April 2019)

organised crime and terrorism are unclear. There is no proof that Hezbollah is involved in the illicit trade [of drugs] in Lebanon [and elsewhere]'.[22]

This has not stopped the US government acting decisively against what it perceives to be a threat to homeland security. In 2010, the Obama administration pronounced Hezbollah 'the most technically capable terrorist group in the world'.[23] During Barack Obama's presidency, the government enacted several legislative changes including the introduction of the Hezbollah International Financing Prevention Act of 2015 in an attempt to impose sanctions on the group. Herein lies the analytical problem: the threat Hezbollah poses to the US in Latin America is uncertain, yet it is manifest in US policy in a very real sense. How did this happen? Using second generation securitisation theory, it is my contention, as evidenced in the previous two sections, that the US government have 'securitised' what they see as the multifaceted threat of Hezbollah's expansion in Latin America, constructing the group's activities as a threat to the security of the nation, in turn enabling it to ramp up sanctions against the group without proper evidence of the risk they pose to the US. This thesis will venture to understand how securitisation works and answer the following research question in order to do so: *How did the US government securitise the issue of Hezbollah's activities in Latin America during the Obama administration?*

My hypothesis is made up of two parts. It is my hypothesis that the US government was able to securitise Hezbollah's activities in Latin America as a result of the following: a) by using the rhetoric of both the war on drugs and the war on terror and b) by conceiving Latin America as the US' 'backyard'. To expand:

a) The securitising actors in Congress used the rhetoric of both the war on drugs and the war on terror to evoke the erroneous crime-terror nexus, in order to inflate the danger posed by Hezbollah's supposed activity by constructing the notion of a double threat encompassing two of the US' biggest existential enemies – drugs and terrorism – thus making it imperative for Congress to act.

Since both the rhetoric of the war on drugs and the war on terror have been used before to successfully securitise both drugs and terrorism it is, therefore, reasonable to believe that using similar stylistic tools would enable the securitising actors to securitise Hezbollah too.

---

[22] 'Arrested and expelled: drug trafficking and terrorism fears rising in Lebanon'
[23] Jonathan Masters and Zachary Laub, 'Hezbollah', Council on Foreign Relations, 3 January 2014 https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/hezbollah (Accessed 16 February 2019)

b) The securitising actors relied heavily on the conception of Latin America as the US' 'backyard'. Using the term amplifies the proximity of this 'threat' further heightening the imperative to take action. It also gives the US an overexaggerated sense of their authority and stake in the region propelling the mistaken notion that it is their duty and even right to intervene in the affairs of the area by tackling Hezbollah's presence there.

The securitising actors use this sentiment to further aid them in their securitisation of Hezbollah.

Asking *how*-questions rather than *why*-questions has been done since it enables the researcher to be more critical and therefore has important implications for foreign policy analysis. This thesis will thus not only seek to validate securitisation theory but look at congressional records and employ critical discourse analysis (CDA) to show *how* and how it was *possible* for the US to securitise Hezbollah as it did. This approach enquires into 'the practices that enable social actors to act, to frame policy as they do, and to wield the capabilities they do'.[24]

The thesis will cover an eight-year period during Obama's presidency (20 January 2009 - 20 January 2017) using key moments as points of analysis, namely the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) campaign, Project Cassandra, which was launched in 2008 to tackle Hezbollah and operational during Obama's time as president, and the Hezbollah International Financing Prevention Act of 2015. Although Obama's tenure as president did not mark the beginning of the US securitisation of Hezbollah in Latin America, his policies towards Hezbollah's political ally Iran make this a particularly interesting period.[25] Speaking about US-Iran relations in Cairo in 2009 Obama stated '… There will be many issues to discuss between our two countries, and we are willing to move forward without preconditions on the basis of mutual respect…'[26] This approach was continued despite resistance from Congress in his second term. Moreover, evidence that Obama tamped down Project Cassandra in order to secure a nuclear deal with Iran in 2015, under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, reveals an international relations trade-off in which the security agenda was pushed off the table to

---

[24] Roxanne Lynn Doty, 'Foreign Policy as Social Construction: A Post-Positivist Analysis of U.S. Counterinsurgency Policy in the Philippines', *International Studies Quarterly*, 37 (1993), p. 299
[25] US securitisation of Hezbollah and Iran in Latin America was already evident as early as 2006. See for example H. Con. Res. 338, 'Expressing the sense of Congress regarding the activities of Islamist terrorist organisations in the Western Hemisphere', United States Senate, One Hundredth and Ninth Congress, Second Session, 13 June 2006
[26] Claudia Castiglioni, 'Obama's Policy Toward Iran: Comparing First and Second Term', ISPI, 220 (2013), p. 2

protect US-Iran relations.[27] During the same period, Congress passed the financing prevention act. This contradiction elucidates the constructed nature of so-called 'security threats'. In order to answer the research question as set out above, the thesis will also answer the following subsidiary questions: How have securitising actors in Congress linked Hezbollah to 'transnational crime'? Has the discursive linkage between Hezbollah and 'transnational crime' resonated with the rest of Congress? If so, what policy has this resulted in? And finally, how have these policies been implemented and with what effect?

1.3 Academic relevance

Most literature on this topic takes Hezbollah's status as a security threat as its first premise.[28] This thesis challenges the assumptions that this status is a given and attempts to show how this threat has been constructed. It thus stands to contribute to a much-needed critical appraisal of Hezbollah's status as a threat to US security. This thesis also seeks to validate the conception of security as set forth by the second generation of securitisation scholars. In doing this thesis will also endeavour to understand what is meant when something is construed as a security threat, and think critically about the validity of such threats and their wider purpose or significance - what end do they serve and for whom?[29] In investigating and revealing these taken for granted naturalised aspects of international politics, the reader can be more critical and aware of the norms and behaviours that dictate foreign policy, as well as many other remits of the political sphere which in turn affect our own beliefs and convictions. The thesis thus has societal relevance too. The thesis is also relevant to society as a piece of policy research since it seeks to identify the mechanisms at work behind policymaking and will look at the implementation of policies thus producing a kind of feedback loop.

This thesis also looks at how researchers can take into account their own role in knowledge production. In this respect, the thesis calls for self-reflexivity on behalf of both the reader and researcher. I believe that this is an important measure to ensure the integrity of the research since in the methodological sense it raises awareness of the observer-expectancy effect and will thus help me avoid confirmation bias. It also mirrors the objectives of the thesis in the sense that it calls upon both the reader and researcher to be critical about the claims they make,

---

[27] Josh Meyer, 'The secret backstory of how Obama let Hezbollah off the hook', Politico, 18 December 2017 https://www.politico.com/interactives/2017/obama-hezbollah-drug-trafficking-investigation/ (Accessed 14 February 2019)
[28] See Levitt, *Hezbollah: The Global Footprint of Lebanon's Party of God*; Goforth, *Axis of Unity* Venezuela; O'Hern, *Iran's Revolutionary Guard*
[29] Marianne W. Jørgensen and Louise J. Phillips, *Discourse Analysis as Theory and Method* (London, 2002), p. 2

their theoretical constructs, hunches and stereotypes. In order to be self-reflexive, I have continuously examined and acknowledged the assumptions and preconceptions I brought into the research and the ways in which these might have shaped the outcome. I did this by developing a reflexive journal in which I made regular entries during the research process where I recorded methodological decisions and the reasons for them and reflected upon what was happening in terms of my own opinions and interests.[30]

Which brings me to my motivation for writing this thesis. I first became interested in Hezbollah after reading Benedetta Berti's comparative piece on Hamas and Hezbollah which looks at the ways in which the two groups act as alternative providers of governance and international political actors.[31] I was intrigued by how Hezbollah can be a legitimate political actor in one part of the world but deemed a terrorist organisation in another. This led me to look into the designation of terrorist groups further and sparked my interest in securitisation theory. Beyond my interest in the subject, I hoped that in writing this thesis I would get a good indication of whether I see policy research and analysis as a possible career path for myself after graduation. In this regard, the outcome has been positive. Researching and analysing policy in this way has been a rewarding experience and has prompted me to apply for several jobs as a researcher in various think tanks.

1.4 Structural overview

This thesis is divided into six chapters. Chapter 1 covers the introduction as above. Chapter 2 looks at the theory and analytical concepts used in the thesis, namely securitisation and the crime-terror nexus. Chapter 3 lays out the methodology and sources and goes into more detail about how the research has been conducted. The next two chapters, Chapter 4 and Chapter 5, comprise the analytical body of the thesis. Chapter 4 looks at the first term of Obama's presidency analysing congressional documents using Roxanne Lynn Doty's discursive practises approach to examine *how* the US has securitised Hezbollah and in what context it was able to do so. Chapter 5 does the same for Obama's second term as president. These two chapters will also lay out the policies that have resulted from this securitisation. These chapters will show how policy confirms the threat it serves to tackle and hence breeds a supposed need for more policy. Securitisation is thus shown to be a self-fulfilling prophecy. Chapter 5 will also give an appraisal of the resulting policies followed by an examination of their

---

[30] Yvonna S. Lincoln and Egon G. Guba, *Naturalistic Inquiry* (Newbury Park, 1985)
[31] Benedetta Berti, 'Revel politics and the state: between conflict and post-conflict, resistance and co-existence', *Civil Wars*, 18 (2016), pp. 118-136

implementation and impact. This will focus on Obama's perceived handling of Project Cassandra and the potential international relations trade-off which took place in which the security agenda was pushed off the table to protect US-Iran relations.[32] Chapter 6 will conclude by setting out the findings in the thesis and demonstrate how these validate securitisation theory. Further areas of research will also be signposted.

This structure has been chosen because it reflects the policy process itself, as shown in the figure below. The introduction identifies the problem as defined and articulated by individuals, mass media, interest groups, and political parties. The analytical chapters show how the agenda is set and how policies are made, that is through securitisation. They also examine how executive agencies carry out, or implement, policy and evaluates its impact. The conclusion will reflect on the above elements thus forming a policy feedback loop.
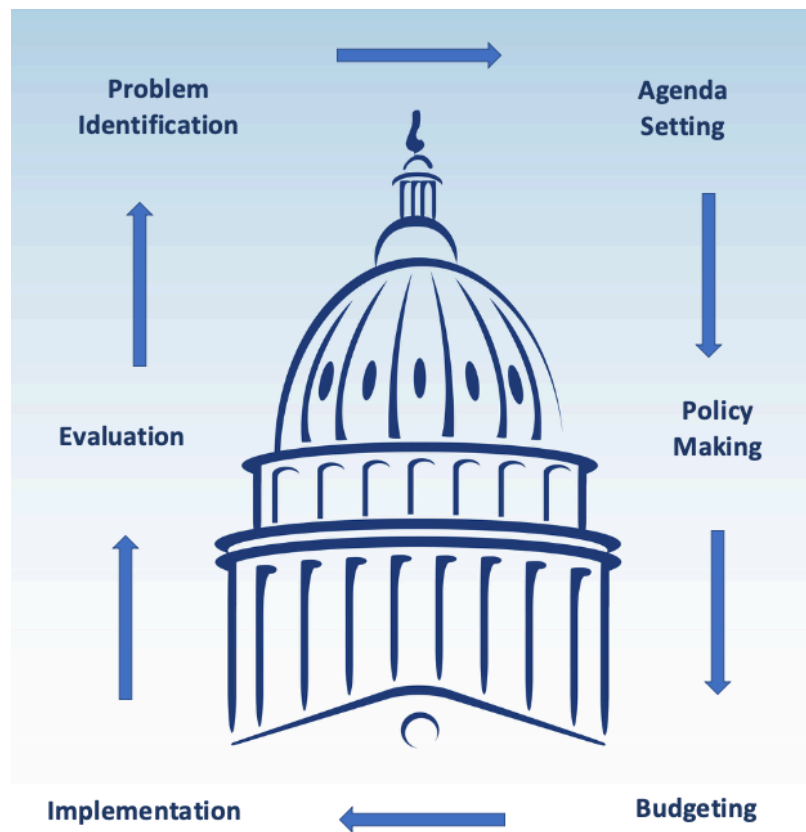

Figure 1. The Policy Process[33]

---

[32] Meyer, 'The secret backstory of how Obama let Hezbollah off the hook'

[33] Created by author. Image sourced from Clipart Library, http://clipart-library.com/clipart/313090.htm.

2. Theory and Analytic Concepts

2.1 Securitisation theory

Securitisation theory is at the core of this thesis. The concept of securitisation emanated from the Copenhagen School of security studies in the late 1990s under Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver and Jaap de Wilde. Securitisation theory seeks to remedy the tension between those that claim threats are objective and are concerned with what *really* constitutes a threat to security, and those that maintain security is subjective and look at what is *perceived* to be a threat. The traditional positivist paradigm restricted security to the politics of state survival, whilst the subjective stance failed to offer a robust theoretical framework. Offering a new perspective, the Copenhagen School suggests that security should instead be seen as an illocutionary speech act by which in merely articulating 'security' something is being done. This speech act is carried out by a securitising actor and then received and reacted on by an enabling audience. The issue thus becomes not whether threats are real or not, but the ways in which a certain issue, be that environmental, political or otherwise, can be socially constructed as a threat.[34]

The following example illustrates this point. In 2009 the State Department's annual 'Country Reports on Terrorism' indicated that there were no known Hezbollah-related operational cells in the Western Hemisphere.[35] In the same year it was reported in the Western Hemisphere Drug Policy Commission Act of 2009 in direct contrast with the former report that Hezbollah had connections in Latin America that were 'putting the people of the Americas in direct danger', the act continues 'The United States must continue to work with our democratic allies to stamp out these threats'.[36] Thus, as Wæver writes: 'It is by labelling something a security issue that it becomes one'.[37] After asserting that a particular referent object is threatened, a securitising actor claims a right to take extraordinary actions to protect the referent object. As a result, the issue is then moved into the realm of emergency politics, where the normal rules and regulations of policy-making do not apply and new policies can be enacted more quickly. Security thus no longer has any given established meaning but can be anything

---

[34] Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde, *Security: A New Framework for Analysis*
[35] 'Chapter 2. Country Reports: Western Hemisphere Overview', US Department of State, 5 August 2010 https://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/crt/2009/140888.htm (Accessed 19 February 2019)
[36] 'Western Hemisphere Drug Policy Commission Act Of 2009', Congressional Record, House of Representatives, One Hundred Eleventh Congress First Session 8 December 2009, p. H13562
[37] Ole Wæver, 'Aberystwyth, Paris, Copenhagen: New Schools in Security Theory and the Origins between Core and Periphery', ISA Conference: Montreal, (2004), p. 13

a securitising actor proclaims it to be and an audience accepts it as such. We should, therefore, view security as a social and intersubjective construction.[38]

The Copenhagen concept of securitisation offers a way to broaden the scope of security in a constructivist manner and better reflects the political climate of today, wherein anything can become a security issue, enabling us to make more accurate observations and analyses, hence why it has been selected in this thesis. However, critics have noted that securitisation, as it stands in the Copenhagen formulation, suffers from several internal conflicts. The terminology is accused of being too ambiguous and undertheorized, and the semantic side of the speech act is deemed to be overemphasised to the detriment of its social and linguistic elements.[39] The discursive speech act approach omits the enabling or constraining of wider social conditions, underlying forces, and non-discursive factors from the analysis.[40]

A second generation of securitisation scholars argue that securitisation is more intricate, dynamic, and nuanced, the second generation thus takes an externalist position and it is their formulation that shall be used here.[41] A leading figure in the second generation, Thierry Balzacq argues that securitisation is not a speech act, but a pragmatic act. This means that the use of language is explained within certain contexts, rather than as utterances of an autonomous speaker to an autonomous listener. Furthermore, securitisation can exist in practices other than words, such as bureaucratic procedures.[42] With this in mind, Holger Stritzel suggests a more constructivist reading, claiming that securitising speech acts need to be related to their broader discursive contexts since it is these that give both the securitising actor and the performance of the speech act itself their power.[43] This recommendation has been reflected in the methodology used here. It is also important to acknowledge the debate surrounding the nature of desecuritisation, although not within the remit of this thesis, considered by the Copenhagen School to mean the process by which issues are restored to the normal realm of politics and by Balzacq and others to be the process of transformation to the non-political.[44]

---

[38] See Rita Taureck, 'Securitization theory and securitization studies', *Journal of International Relations and Development*, 9 (2006), pp. 53-61
[39] Holger Stritzel, 'Towards a Theory of Securitization: Copenhagen and Beyond', *Europe Journal of International Relations*, 13 (2007), p. 358
[40] Matt McDonald, 'Securitisation and the Construction of Security', *European Journal of International Relations*, 14 (2008), pp. 563-587
[41] See for example, Thierry Balzacq, Maria Trombetta, Holger Stritzel, Roxanna Sjöstedt, Dirk Schmittchen, Juha Vuori, Michael Williams, Sarah Léonard, Christian Kaunert, Fred Vultee, Cai Wilkinson, Mark Salter, in Thierry Balzacq (ed.) *Contesting Security* (New York, 2015)
[42] See Balzacq (ed.) *Contesting Security*; Thierry Balzacq (ed.), *Securitisation Theory: How Security Problems Emerge and Dissolve* (London, 2011); Thierry Balzacq, 'The Three Faces of Securitization, Political Agency, Audience and Context', *European Journal of International Relations*, 11 (2005), pp. 171-201
[43] Stritzel, 'Towards a Theory of Securitization', p. 360
[44] Balzacq (ed.), *Contesting Security*

All securitisation acts involve four components. As already mentioned, there is an existential threat, an object that has been identified as potentially harmful, in this case, Hezbollah. This existential threat threatens a referent object which needs to be protected, in this case, the US. Then there is the securitising actor(s) which make the securitising move. The securitising actors identified here are the congressional committees which call the hearings and introduce the bills and the witnesses called forward by these committees to testify. Eight different committees have been identified here as securitising actors. Amongst those, the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations and the House Committee on Financial Services appeared most frequently.[45] It is interesting to note that it was not the committees tasked with homeland security that concerned themselves with this issue, further evidence of the fact that the securitising actors worked to securitise what had previously been deemed an issue of foreign affairs or relations rather than a matter of security.

As with most studies of securitisation, this thesis studies the discursive construction of meaning systems, which tends towards ontological holism. A successful discursive construction or linkage is what securitisation scholars call 'audience acceptance'. The audience is the target of the securitisation act. Here, the audience must accept the 'macro securitisation' of several intertwined subjects, terrorism and drugs, as opposed to a singular security issue. The acceptance of the securitisation comes at the point where the securitising actors have made a policy environment in which the threat is so potent it becomes imperative to enact some kind of securitising action. The enabling audience here is made up of two parts. Firstly, Congress who has the political and legal power to enact the securitising actors' preferred policies and codify them into law or to abstain from doing so. Secondly, the President whose approval Congress ultimately depends on in regard to any legislative change. A successfully securitised subject is one who receives a disproportionate amount of attention and resources compared to those subjects who are not securitised but who cause more damage.

Applying securitisation theory to the case of Hezbollah we can question its designation as a security threat and reveal the processes behind this. For instance, it raises the question of why Hezbollah's supposed affiliation with drug cartels has not been seen as an economic or a health issue but a security one. Applying Doty's discursive practises approach, which will be explained in the next chapter, we can see how the securitisation of Hezbollah in Latin America must be understood within the context of the US' long-standing war on both drugs and terrorism and its relationship with Latin America, something I return to in chapters 4 and 5.

---

[45] A full table of these can be found in Chapter 3.

2.2 The crime-terror fallacy

Those writing about Hezbollah's supposed affiliation with Latin American drug cartels often reach for the so-called crime-terror nexus in order to explain what is going on. The nexus also serves as the impetus for designating the group as a security threat. This, however, is flawed since the nexus itself can be shown to be a product of securitisation. The nexus as formulated by Makarenko refers to 'the straightforward use of crime by terrorist groups as a source of funding - such as taxing the drug trade, or engaging in credit card fraud'.[46] The nexus has also been used to describe the formation of alliances between criminal and terrorist organisations. This Makarenko argues has created a situation where 'the distinction between political and criminal motivated violence is often blurred'.[47] The crime-terror nexus has become a common framework for those explaining and analysing subversive phenomena today. The same goes for Hezbollah.[48]   For example, Celina Realuyo writes: 'Hezbollah and its global activities perhaps best represent the terror-crime convergence phenomenon through its networks in the Middle East, Africa, Europe, and the Americas.'[49] The use of this term, I shall argue, is flawed.

A critical appraisal of the way in which scholars use the crime-terror nexus allows us to see the nexus as a product of securitisation itself. By which I mean it is by using the term that such a nexus comes into existence. Evidence that terrorist groups and criminal enterprises are in collusion with one another is hard to come by, as has already been demonstrated, owing to the clandestine nature of their activities, yet by repeatedly decrying the existence of a nexus and writing about such threats we contribute to and validate their existence. The nexus should therefore not be seen as the explanatory force behind Hezbollah's designation as a security threat or as the justification of this designation but rather as a part of the construction of the threat and thereby a product of securitisation. This crime-terror fallacy demonstrates the need for a critical reflection and questioning of the security threat posed by Hezbollah in Latin America as perceived by the US government. The following chapter will outline how this will be done including an explanation and justification of the chosen methodologies and sources.

---

[46] Makarenko, 'The Crime-Terror Continuum', p. 130
[47] Makarenko, 'The Crime-Terror Continuum', p. 130
[48] See for example Roberta Belli, Joshua D. Freilich, Steven M. Chermak, & Katharine A. Boyd, 'Exploring the crime-terror nexus in the United States: a social network analysis of a Hezbollah network involved in trade diversion', *Dynamics of Asymmetric Conflict*, 8 (2015), pp. 263-281; Neumann, 'The New Nexus of Narcoterrorism: Hezbollah and Venezuela'
[49] Realuyo, 'The Terror-Crime Nexus', p. 117

3. Methodology and Sources

3.1 Discursive practises approach and analysis by contrasting narrative

This thesis situates itself in the realms of policy research, but foreign policy itself can be difficult to decipher when direct access to those foreign policy decision makers is minimal. Academic 'outsiders' are thus forced to study foreign policy circuitously which brings a multitude of methodological and epistemological challenges.[50] In order to overcome at least some of these challenges, this thesis will use critical discourse analysis (CDA); such a method also accommodates the critiques levied against the Copenhagen School as laid out in the previous section and is in keeping with the second generation formulation of securitisation used in this thesis.

The study of discourse structures, that is the structure of written and spoken communications, and language use within socio-political contexts is a fundamental part of the causal complex and is thus a relevant approach to security. CDA, as introduced by Norman Fairclough, queries the ontological and epistemological conventions of more positivist methodologies, for example, the realist approach, by observing that the world is socially constructed, not pre-given.[51] Traditional International Relations theories have neglected discourse and linguistics, instead favouring material factors as explanatory tools, leaving policy research somewhat wanting. This methodological approach thus enriches our understanding of international relations by highlighting the powerful role that discourse plays. Moreover, unlike conventional approaches to foreign policy analysis, which ask *why,* critical discourse analysis asks *how.* This is beneficial since *why* questions remain flawed in that they assume the systems and meanings which make possible the practices as well as the actors themselves. Identifying this as problematic, Doty asks *how-possible* questions. Instead of explaining why a particular outcome was achieved, she looks at how the subjects were socially constructed in such a way that particular practices were made possible.[52]

This is what Doty calls the discursive practices approach. It is this mode of critical discourse analysis which shall be used here. Doty identifies three analytical categories which researchers should apply in order to use this method. They are as follows: 1) presupposition,

---

[50] Oliver Daddow, 'Interpreting Foreign Policy Through Discourse Analysis', The London School of Economics and Political Science, 27 October 2015 http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/politicsandpolicy/interpreting-foreign-policy-through-discourse-analysis/#Author (Accessed17 January)

[51] See Norman Fairclough, *Critical Discourse Analysis* (Boston, 1995); Norman Fairclough, *Analyzing Discourse, Textual analysis for Social Research* (London, 2003)

[52] Doty, 'Foreign Policy as Social Construction', p. 298

this creates background knowledge and builds a certain kind of world in which particular things are deemed to be true; 2) predication, this involves the connecting of specific qualities to particular subjects by using predicates and the adverbs and adjectives that modify them, thus confirming a value, attribute, or characteristic of a person or object, and; 3) subject positioning, this demonstrates how a large proportion of what defines a particular subject is its positioning in relation to other subjects.[53] Identifying these textual mechanisms, researchers can show that, given the world constructed in a particular policy discourse some kind of action, in this case, some form of securitisation, becomes imperative. Doty's method has been chosen since it fits the *how*-question asked in this thesis. Moreover, she provides three distinct analytical categories that can be used when working with primary sources. In order to apply the discursive practices approach, a close reading method will be employed.

Applying this social-constructionism to the case of security, Jef Huysmans warns that researchers face a normative dilemma: 'how to write or speak about security when the security knowledge risks the production of what one tries to avoid, what one criticizes: that is, the securitisation of migration, drugs, and so forth.'[54] As well as being aware of this, this thesis will also try to moderate the selectivity in knowledge production resulting from the use of a specific method by using method triangulation, in which two or more methods are used.[55] Triangulation is *not* used here in order to validate the hypothesis set forth in the introduction since this thesis takes a relativist perspective and concedes that there are multiple views of equal validity. Instead, the purpose of triangulation is to provide comprehension. Moreover, using triangulation contradictions or exceptions to the hypothesis can be identified and provide scope for refining theories and indicating future areas of research.

The second methodology I have selected is analysis by contrasting narratives (ACN). In his doctoral thesis, Peter de Werd conceptualises ACN as a method that seeks to 'identify basic analytic narratives for various entities that manifest at different levels and dominate the attribution of meaning, especially in terms of securitisation'.[56] De Werd notes that research on securitisation has mostly focused on the use of language in a specific discourse and in doing takes a normative stance ignoring the fact that social events become parts of multiple discourses or narratives as they are interpreted at different levels and by different actors.[57] ACN will be

---

[53] Doty, 'Foreign Policy as Social Construction', p. 306
[54] Jef Huysmans, 'Defining Social Constructivism in Security Studies: The Normative Dilemma of Writing Security', *Alternatives,* 27 (2002), p. 43
[55] Kruck and Schneiker, *Researching Non-State Actors in International Security,* p. 6
[56] Peter de Werd, 'Critical Intelligence: Analysis by Contrasting Narratives Identifying and analyzing the most relevant truths' (Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Utrecht, 2018), p. 78
[57] de Werd, 'Critical Intelligence', p. 78

applied in order to distinguish between the different narratives identified here. Those are the Democrat, Republican, independent – witness hearings and CRS reports – and finally, the White House - this refers to what can be seen as the official government stance as espoused by Obama and the bills and legislation that are passed. In identifying and acknowledging these narratives and using ACN to compare them the hypothesis set forth in this thesis can be assessed with more rigour. For example, it might illuminate whether one party or another raises the issue of Hezbollah more often and with what intensity and can thus reveal whether the US government as a whole securitises Hezbollah or only one party or particular committee does. A more vigorous application of ACN might examine other narratives which exist outside of Congress, for example, the media.

3.2 Congressional records

To answer the research question as set out in the introduction, congressional records and documents have been used to analyse the actions and policies of the US government towards Hezbollah during the Obama administration using Doty's method as shown above. Sources from both the House of Representatives, hereafter the House, and the United States Senate, hereafter the Senate, will be consulted. The House and the Senate are both divided into various committees who are tasked with specific duties. The table below presents a list of all the committees which appear in this paper and are identified as securitising actors.

House Committees	Committees
Committee on Foreign affairs Committee on Financial Services Committee on Oversight and Government Reforms Committee on Homeland Security Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure	Committee on Foreign Relations Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Select Committee on Intelligence

Table 1. Congressional Committees

Several types of sources have been used including but not limited to committee reports, hearings, resolutions and legislation. These will be used to trace how the US securitised the problem of Hezbollah, constructing it as a threat, and how this was implemented in policy.

The Obama administration has been chosen since it encompasses two crucial moments in US policy towards Hezbollah: the DEA's Project Cassandra and the Hezbollah International Financing Prevention Act of 2015. The US was also working towards a nuclear deal with Iran which resulted in tensions between Obama's policy and the will of Congress. Congressional

documents from this period have been accessed online using the in-house search engine on the congressional website. In order to be as thorough as possible, congressional documents have also been searched for on the Government Publishing Office (GPO) website and the Homeland Security Digital Library (HSDL).[58] It was not possible, however, to access all the documents available. For example, over half of the HSDL resources are not openly available to the public. When searching for documents a keyword search was used, using the terms 'Hezbollah' and 'Latin America' in order to bring up relevant material. The sources presented here vary in length from one to one hundred pages. In order to focus on the most relevant parts of the documents, the sources have been added to a corpus for each analytical chapter. Then using Sketch Engine, an online text analysis tool, a breakdown of the keywords and their predicates and the adverbs and adjectives which modify them has been created.[59] Having identified where in the sources there is relevant material a close reading analysis has been carried out.

In order to ensure a true representation of the sources available for this period I created a scheme to categorise the sources by type and date, this is presented in full in an appendix and can be seen as a template below.[60] Those fields marked in blue represent a Democrat majority and the red a Republican majority.

	House						Senate					
	Report	Hearing	Resolutions	Records	Bills	Legislation	Report	Hearing	Resolutions	Records	Bills	Legislation
2009												
2010												
2011												
2012												
2013												
2014												
2015												
2016												
2017												

Table 2. Scheme of Sources Template

It was important to get an equal spread of sources over time as the context in which discussions were held and decisions were made might have changed due to new events, information and circumstances. It was also important to ensure an equal representation of both the House and Senate because these can have different party majorities which might effect how easy it is for a certain policy to go through and dictate which topics get on the agenda.

---

[58] Initial searches on these websites did not bring up any results for documents originating from the Senate, this was because these documents had to be searched for separately on the relevant committee websites, which was not the case for the House although some documents from the House were found this way too.

[59] See more at https://www.sketchengine.eu/

[60] 'Researching Congressional Documents and Federal Legislative History Using ProQuest: Types of Congressional Documents', University of South Carolina Law Library, 3 December 2015 http://guides.law.sc.edu/federallegislativehistory/ (Accessed 18 February 2019)

4. US Foreign Policy Critical Discourse Analysis Part 1

In this chapter, I will apply the discursive practises approach and ACN to look at how the US securitised Hezbollah's presence in Latin America during Obama's first presidential term (20 January 2009 - 19 January 2013). Using congressional sources from this period, I will show how the securitising actors created a threat narrative evoking the rhetoric of both the war on drugs and the war on terror, in the hope that Congress feels compelled to act, namely by enacting some form of securitisation, as set out in my hypothesis. I will also highlight the way in which Latin America is conceptualised as the US' 'backyard' further artificially heightening the threat that Hezbollah's presence in this region poses to the security of the US. However, these efforts are not entirely successful, and the securitising actors only achieve the partial securitisation of Hezbollah.

4.1 Existential threats, binary constructs and American exceptionalism

Before we get to the source analysis, I will lay out what I take to be the rhetoric surrounding the war on drugs and the war on terror. Both rely on the notion of existential enemies and make use of binary distinctions, most notably good versus evil. Starting with the war on drugs, Emily Crick shows how in constructing drug users, traffickers and producers as 'the other' in contrast to the self, political actors were able to induce the good versus evil binary.[61] Further, by centring on the damage done to individuals and society, which is equated with human security, by drug users, these outsiders are shown to threaten the fabric of society. Drugs are hereby constructed as an existential threat to the security of the state.[62] This construction was ramped up by Richard Nixon's declaration of drugs as 'public enemy number one'.[63] In eliciting the war metaphor Nixon set a precedent for the US' harsh stance on illicit substances. In 1986 Ronald Reagan signed National Security Directive 221 which identified drug trafficking and organised crime as a threat to the state.[64] This punitive approach would become the status-quo in the US and although Obama's top drug official, Cil Kerlikowske, announced that the administration would take a different approach calling for an end to the 'war on drugs', the

---

[61] Emily Crick, 'Drugs as an existential threat: An analysis of the international securitisation of drugs', *International Journal of Drug Policy,* 23 (2012), p. 408
[62] Crick, 'Drugs as an existential threat', p. 408
[63] Crick, 'Drugs as an existential threat', p. 411
[64] Crick, 'Drugs as an existential threat', p. 411

attitudes of the past fifty years and the rhetoric which has shaped them would remain in the government, as will be seen.[65]

The rhetoric around the war on terror relies on similar constructs. Joanne Esch refers to these constructs as political myths. She writes that the myths of American exceptionalism and barbarism versus civilisation have helped define American identity and have been elements of war rhetoric throughout the country's history.[66] According to Esch, American exceptionalism details the US' ideal image of its place in the world and is based around the following beliefs: the US is a 'chosen nation', the US has a 'calling' – in this case to fight terrorism and drugs – and in answering that calling the US represents the forces of good against evil.[67] Stemming from this belief is the myth of civilisation versus barbarism. This espouses the classic us versus them mentality. Here we can see how words that have clear opposites – Western, evil, freedom, hate – become powerful lexical triggers of political myth.[68]

As with the war on drugs, the Obama administration announced early on that it would drop the war on terror from its lexicon.[69] Yet less than a year later Obama declared 'We are at war' in the wake of the failed Christmas Day bomb plot.[70] This, Trevor McCrisken argues, is the result of the institutionalisation of the war on terror within US society. As such, even though a new president may wish to take a different approach where terrorism is concerned he is prevented from doing do so by the core assumptions established by the Bush administration about the existential nature of the terrorist threat and the need to tackle that threat globally.[71] It is this rhetoric which I propose the securitising actors make use of in order to securitise Hezbollah's presence in Latin America.

---

[65] Andy Sullivan, 'US drug czar calls for end to 'war on drugs'' Reuters, 8 June 2009 https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-drugs-czar-interview/u-s-drug-czar-calls-for-end-to-war-on-drugs-idUSTRE55750K20090608 (Accessed 21 March 2019)
[66] Joanne Esch, 'Legitimizing the 'War on Terror': Political Myth in Official-Level Rhetoric', *Political Psychology*, 31 (2010), p. 365
[67] Esch, 'Legitimizing the 'War on Terror'', p. 366
[68] Esch, 'Legitimizing the 'War on Terror'', p. 370
[69] Sue Pleming, 'Obama team drops: 'war on terror' rhetoric', Reuters, 31 March 2009 https://www.reuters.com/article/us-obama-rhetoric/obama-team-drops-war-on-terror-rhetoric-idUSTRE52T7MH20090330 (Accessed 21 March 2019)
[70] Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab, a 23-year-old from Nigeria, was able to board a plane for Detroit with explosives despite his father visiting the US embassy in Lagos to denounce his son to the authorities. The day after the failed Detroit attack, Obama's rhetoric became more openly martial. See more Trevor McCrisken, 'Ten years on: Obama's war on terrorism in rhetoric and practice', *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-),* 87 (2011), p. 784
[71] Trevor McCrisken, 'Ten years on: Obama's war on terrorism in rhetoric and practice', *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-),* 87 (2011), p. 786

4.2 Attitudes towards Hezbollah

Before looking at how the securitising actors used this rhetoric to create a threat narrative it is important to look at Obama's policies towards Hezbollah and the Middle East, this forms the context in which the sources presented should be understood and will be important for the ACN later. When Obama entered office in 2009, he promised to improve relations with Iran as part of a wider rapprochement with the Muslim world. During his campaign trail, he repeatedly asserted he would take a different approach to the Bush administration's failed efforts to pressure Iran to stop its illicit nuclear programme by reaching out to Tehran to reduce tensions.[72] Obama's speech in Cairo shortly after his election, entitled 'A New Beginning', captures these sentiments.[73]

This new reconciliatory tone should not, however, be mistaken for a soft Democratic stance on Hezbollah, Iran's proxy, as has been alleged.[74] Speaking in Lebanon in 2009 ahead of the country's national elections former President of the Senate Joe Biden warned that US aid to Lebanon would be reconsidered should Hezbollah win.[75] This critical stance is mirrored in the Republican party. Here we see a dissidence between the presidential agenda and the attitudes in Congress, this will be further discussed in the ACN. It is in this light that the securitisation of Hezbollah must be seen: a desire for more inclusive and progressive policies in regard to the Middle East and Hezbollah emanating from the top coupled with unsubstantiated claims about the group's activities in Latin America emerging from various sources. This is played out in the context of the anti-Hezbollah sentiment in Congress.

4.3 Constructing the threat narrative

In the remainder of this chapter, I want to show the linguistic construction of reality by highlighting the way in which Congress created a threat narrative which in turn enabled them to securitise the issue of Hezbollah in Latin America. As explained in the previous chapter there will be three analytical categories: predication, presupposition and positioning. Table 3 below shows the frequency with which keywords and their predicates appear in the sources, then the analysis will look in more detail at these predicates and the adverbs and adjectives which modify them and the presupposition and positioning of these words. The presupposition

---

[72] Meyer, 'The secret backstory of how Obama let Hezbollah off the hook'
[73] 'Text: Obama's Speech in Cairo', The New York Times, 4 June 2009
https://www.nytimes.com/2009/06/04/us/politics/04obama.text.html (Accessed 18 March 2019)
[74] Meyer, 'The secret backstory of how Obama let Hezbollah off the hook'
[75] Robert F. Worth, 'Biden Arrives in Beirut Ahead of Vote', The New York Times, 22 May 2009
https://www.mercurynews.com/2009/05/22/bidens-election-support-irks-hezbollah/ (Accessed 19 March 2019)

and positioning of these words should be understood in terms of their enabling qualities, in other words in what context and setting are securitising actors able to construct the narratives they do. Afterwards, I will present the ACN.

Threat (463)	Security (964)	Hezbollah (2,649)	US (2,419)	Latin America (438)
Terrorist (terroristic) (16)	Homeland (49)	(Combat) Terrorism (28)	Effort (30)	Improve (24)
Counterterrorism (7)	United States (American) (25)	Support (20)	Action (25)	Struggle (10)
Potential (7)	National (21)	Weaken (16)	Sanctions (21)	Corruption (7)
Security (6)	Border (14)	Capable (13)	Anti-America(n) 20	Reluctance (7)
Serious (6)		Network (9)	Assistance (8)	Weak (7)
Significant (6)		Combat (8)	Influence (8)	Backyard (6)
Direct (4)		(Combat) Trafficking (8)	Attack (4)	Battleground (4)
Great (3)		Confront (8)	Target (3)	(Lack of) cooperation (4)
Hezbollah (3)		(Combat) Laundering (7)		Lawless (3)
Immediate (2)		Deadly (6)		Assisted (1)
International (2)		(Combat) Extremism (4)		
Multidimensional (2)		(Combat) Insurgency (4)		
Potent (2)				
Unacceptable (2)				
Clear (1)				
Constant (1)				
Continued (1)				
Existential (1)				
Global (1)				
Many (1)				
National (1)				
Powerful (1)				
Real (1)				
Strategic (1)				

Table 3. Keywords and Predicates (Part 1)[76]

As shown in the table above the word 'threat' is routinely used in reference to Hezbollah's presence in Latin America appearing almost five hundred times across the twenty sources gathered for this period.[77] 'Danger' and 'risk' are also used in this context but far less frequently appearing only five times between them. Before looking more closely at how the word is used and the narrative constructed around it, it is important to note once again that

---

[76] Some of the predicates are not relevant to the analysis and have not been included, additionally some of the predicates have not been used in reference to the specific situation of Hezbollah in Latin America, therefore the total number of results given next to each keyword is different to the sum of the various predicates as listed in the table, nonetheless the total gives a good overall impression of the frequency with which each word is mentioned in the sources. Moreover, it should be noted that the number given next the predicate might include repetitions of quotes and evidence which has been used across different sources, or indeed repeated in the same document.

[77] As can be seen in the appendix there is a significantly larger portion of sources from the House, this has not been done intentionally and is a reflection of the available sources.

those using the term make reference to a phenomenon which is itself unproven. As Vanda Felbab-Brown, a fellow at non-partisan think tank the Brookings Institute, notes 'Allegations of al Qaeda, Hamas and Hezbollah contacts with the [*Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia* (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia)] FARC or these groups' penetration of the Latin America drug trade have not proven robust.'[78] Daniel Benjamin, Coordinator for Counterterrorism, Department of State, similarly acknowledges there is 'no credible information' on the matter.[79] This stands as testimony to the power of language as social reality.

The word 'threat' is used in several key ways in these documents. Firstly, it refers to different types of threat. Referring to Hezbollah's political ally Iran, Republican Representative Eric Cantor remarks 'The fact of the matter is that Iran poses an existential threat to the entire civilized world.' [80] As Iran's proxy, Hezbollah by extension is also conceived of as an existential threat. In talking about existential threats Cantor mirrors the rhetoric used in the war on drugs in which illicit substances became existential threats to civilisation in much the same way. The use of the word 'civilized' also implies that in contrast to the US, Iran is barbarous, a common demarcation in the war on terror rhetoric. It is also interesting to note the use of the word 'fact', in using it Cantor presupposes he is in a position as a representative of the US to make such a claim, he equates the US with the truth.

In addition to the type of threat, the proximity or severity of the threat is distinguished. It is in reference to Hezbollah's alleged affiliation with drug cartels that the threat the group poses is deemed most severe. Private security consultant and witness Douglas Farah states:

> […] Hezbollah's presence constitutes a significant threat to the U.S. homeland. To view Hezbollah as an isolated actor gaining a small foothold in Latin America, as is often done in policy circles, is to misunderstand the nature of the threat, the meaning of the realities on the ground, and their potential consequences.[81]

---

[78] Vanda Felbab-Brown in Serial No. 111-61 'Transnational Drug Enterprises: Threats to Global Stability and U.S. National Security from Southwest Asia, Latin America, and West Africa', hearing before the Subcommittee on National Security and Foreign Affairs of the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, House of Representatives, One Hundred Eleventh Congress, First Session, 1 October 2009, p. 58

[79] Daniel Benjamin in S. HRG. 111-700 'Assessing the Strength of Hezbollah', hearing before the Subcommittee on Near Eastern and South and Central Asian Affairs of the Committee on Foreign Relations, United States Senate, One Hundred Eleventh Congress, Second Session, 8 June 2010, p. 13

[80] Eric Cantor in H7868, 'Department of State Foreign Operations and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2010', Congressional Record, House of Representatives, One Hundred Eleventh Congress, First Session, 9 July 2009, p. H7874

[81] Douglas Farah in 'Hezbollah In Latin America--Implications for U.S. Homeland Security', p. 26

Farah not only highlights the proximity of the threat to the US but also attempts to discount the reservations of some that Hezbollah is not the threat others suppose it to be. However, his reference to the 'potential consequences' is telling of the fact that the threat is yet to actually manifest itself, as this thesis has repeatedly highlighted. Here we are reminded of Wæver's rationale that by declaring something a threat it becomes one. Moreover, the fact that Farah has his own security company might indicate that it is in his own interest to construct such a security threat.

4.4 Linking the threat to the security of the state

Constructing the threat narrative, as shown above, is only the first part of the securitisation process, the securitising actors must now start to link this threat to the security of the US. Below we see Republican Representative Patrick Meehan doing so:

> […] Hezbollah is already working with like-minded allies and hostile regimes in Latin America to undermine American national security by raising funds, spreading anti-American and anti-Israeli propaganda, recruiting operatives, laundering money, and smuggling weapons and drugs, all activities that have a direct impact on the United States' homeland security.[82]

In talking about 'like-minded allies and hostile regimes' Meehan further pushes the potency of the threat narrative by using warlike terminology as seen with the rhetoric of the war on drugs and the war on terror. It is also interesting to note that the US is conceptualised here as the victim yet is never portrayed as such. Instead, the US is talked about in terms of its efforts, influence and power, more on this later.[83] Meehan's statement also evokes the idea that Hezbollah's activities in Latin America represent a crime-terror nexus. Referring to this nexus, Farah, appearing again as a witness, warns 'These hybrid franchises should now be viewed as a tier-one security threat for the United States.'[84] In using the arbitrary predicate 'tier-one' Farah is able to stress the urgency of the matter without having to present actual evidence to verify this, instead he infers it with his language.

---

[82] Patrick Meehan in 'Hezbollah In Latin America--Implications for U.S. Homeland Security', p. 2
[83] See Mark P. Sullivan, 'Latin America: Terrorism Issues', Congressional Research Service for Congress, 5 January 2012; 'Hezbollah In Latin America--Implications for U.S. Homeland Security', p. 23
[84] Farah in S. HRG. 112-369 'Iran's Influence and Activity in Latin America', hearing before the Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere, Peace Corps, and Global Narcotics Affairs of the Committee on Foreign Relations, United States Senate, One Hundred Twelfth Congress, Second Session, 16 February 2012, p. 15

The way Hezbollah itself is talked about is also very significant and reveals a great deal about how Congress is able to securitise the group. Hezbollah is repeatedly conceptualised as an enemy which needs to be combatted.[85] The term combat is used fifty-nine times in reference to Hezbollah, this includes references to combatting terrorism, trafficking, laundering, extremism and insurgency all of which are associated with Hezbollah. This strengthens the notion of a crime-terror nexus as shown below:

> Mark my word, as we speak here today, operatives from al Qaeda, Hezbollah, and Hamas— perhaps others—are rubbing shoulders with the Latin American and Mexican drug cartels[...] They are frequenting the same seedy bars and sleazy brothels, and they are lodging in the same seamy hotels. And they are 'talking business.'[86]

Quoted above former DEA agent Michael Braun's use of the idiom 'mark my words' reminds us of the fact that the threat of which he speaks is yet to materialise in any substantial way. Aware of this he is reduced to speaking about what might happen in the future in order to establish the group's status as a threat. An oft used tactic in this regard is the repeated reminders of the group's past terrorist attacks and their status as 'the most technically capable terrorist group in the world', this acts to verify the legitimacy of the threat without presenting any evidence of the danger they pose in the here and now.[87] 'Perhaps others' also speaks to the uncertainty of the claims Braun is making, it is only a possibility that Hezbollah is talking to others. Moreover, the term 'other' enables Braun to conjure up a wider group of potential threats in order to enlarge the supposed threat Hezbollah poses. Further, his use of moralising words such as 'seedy', 'sleazy' and 'seamy' not only vilify the group but imply that he as a representative of the US is in a position of moral superiority to make these judgements, therefore implying the moral superiority of the US as a whole. This also evokes the good versus evil and us versus them binaries which increases the imperative to securitise the group by portraying it as a dangerous other. Finally, in referring to Hezbollah 'talking business' Braun further constructs the idea of the crime-terror nexus by highlighting the groups' supposed 'business' relationship with criminal enterprises.

---

[85] Hezbollah is referred to as the enemy four times, its political ally Iran is referred to as the enemy many more times.
[86] Michael A. Braun, 'Statement for the Record', Before the Subcommittee on Foreign Relations, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, One Hundred Eleventh Congress First Session, 23 June 2009, p. 5
[87] Jeffrey D. Feltman and Benjamin in 'Assessing the Strength of Hezbollah', p. 7

4.5 US-Latin America relations and subject positioning

Having started to link the threat narrative to the security of the nation, the securitising actors now need to create a situation in which some sort of securitising action becomes imperative. They will do this by continuing to use the rhetoric familiar to the war on drugs and the war on terror and secondly, by conceptualising Latin America as the US' backyard. The region is also referred to as the US' front yard and doorstep.[88] This is significant in terms of what Doty describes as 'a radically new conception of power which is inherent in the linguistic practices by which agents are constructed and become articulated within particular discourses'.[89] In the following section, I will demonstrate what Doty means by this.

The notion of Latin America as the US' 'backyard' should be understood in the context of the US' historical relationship with Latin America. Starting with the Monroe doctrine in 1823 a policy which saw the efforts of European nations to colonise the New World interpreted as 'an unfriendly disposition' towards the US.[90] Many understand the doctrine to be a thinly veiled effort to allow the US to exert its own influence undisturbed.[91] In many ways, this can be seen as an extension of the US' manifest destiny, the belief that the US settlers would expand across North America, which builds upon the idea of American exceptionalism. This belief that Latin America was duly in the US' circle of influence continued to shape relations between the two countries. During the Cold War, the US was heavily involved in regime changes in the region which included the use of covert operations and support of right-wing dictatorship.[92] The relationship can thus be understood as one characterised by dominance and interference. This is in keeping with the idea that Latin America is the US' 'backyard'.

Using the term 'backyard' in relation to Latin America has two effects. Firstly, it increases the proximity of the 'threat' to the US further heightening the imperative to take action. Democrat Representative Henry Cuellar hypothesises to Congress, 'If I was a bad guy, and I wanted to attack the United States, I would go to the backyard, which is Mexico, Central

---

[88] See Noriega in 'Hezbollah In Latin America--Implications for U.S. Homeland Security'; Robert Menendez in 'Iran's Influence and Activity In Latin America', p. 54

[89] Doty, 'Foreign Policy as Social Construction', p. 302

[90] 'Monroe Doctrine; 2 December 1823', Yale Law School Lillian Goldman Law Library http://avalon.law.yale.edu/19th_century/monroe.asp (Accessed 20 May 2019)

[91] Jay Sexton, *The Monroe Doctrine: Empire and Nation in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York, 2011)

[92] For more on this see: David Dent, *The Legacy of the Monroe Doctrine: A Reference Guide to US Involvement in Latin America and the Caribbean* (Westport, 1999); Grace Livingstone, *America's backyard: The United States and Latin America from the Monroe Doctrine to the War on Terror* (London, 2013), ProQuest eBook, pp. 8-100; Joseph Smith, *The United States and Latin America: A history of American diplomacy, 1776-2000* (Abingdon, 2005), ProQuest eBook, pp. 111-140

America, South America.'[93] Cuellar makes clear that the threat, 'the bad guy', and therefore the US' vulnerability, is close to home along its southern border.

Secondly, 'backyard' implies that the US has a stake in the region and a duty to help it as they see fit, in this case securitising Hezbollah. This, in turn, creates a sense of US authority in the region inferring that they have the right to intervene in the affairs of the area by tackling Hezbollah's presence there, further enabling the securitisation of the group. This speaks to the idea of American exceptionalism as found in the rhetoric of the war on drugs and the war on terror seen earlier. To this end, the US is continuously seen to assist Latin America for fear that Iran will 'strangle [its] struggling liberal democracies'.[94] Here we see how 'liberal democracies' a phrase which has a clear opposite is used to trigger the political myth of the war on terror, the US representing civilisation must uphold democracy and fight the barbaric enemy. The US is also described in terms of its 'action' and 'effort', these proactive words give the US a sense of power and control. It is also stated that 'the United States has assisted Latin American and Caribbean nations over the years in their struggle against terrorist or insurgent groups'.[95] 'Assistance' and 'struggling' imply that the region is unable to help itself stressing the need for US intervention.

In addition to the conceptualisation of Latin America as the US' 'backyard', the region is also depicted in direct contrast to the US. Firstly, the region is deemed out of control. Securitising actors repeatedly refer to it in terms of its 'weak and failing states'.[96] For example, Democratic Representative, Jackie Speier, declares the region 'undergoverned'.[97] This is compared to the civilised US, again suggesting the political myth of civilisation versus barbarism. To the same effect Eric Olson, security advisor and consultant to the centrist think tank the Wilson Center , talks about the weak and failing states of Latin America: 'There are weak states, states, that are failing to maintain a state presence in certain areas, and states that are failing to maintain a state presence in certain areas, and states that have been deeply penetrated by organised crime.'[98]

Building upon this last point, the region is deemed corrupt, complicit with the terrorists. Therefore, any attempts made by those in Latin America to tackle the problem that the terrorists

[93] Henry Cuellar in 'Hezbollah In Latin America--Implications for U.S. Homeland Security', p. 53
[94] Farah in 'Hezbollah In Latin America--Implications for U.S. Homeland Security', p. 25
[95] Mark P. Sullivan, 'Latin America: Terrorism Issues', Congressional Research Service for Congress, 11 March 2009, p. 4
[96] Farah in 'Transnational Drug Enterprises: Threats to Global Stability and U.S. National Security from Southwest Asia, Latin America, and West Africa', p. 32
[97] Jackie Speier in 'Hezbollah In Latin America--Implications for U.S. Homeland Security', p. 3
[98] Eric L. Olson in 'Transnational Drug Enterprises: Threats to Global Stability and U.S. National Security from Southwest Asia, Latin America, and West Africa', p. 12

pose are deemed fruitless since progress is stifled by 'corruption, weak government institutions, insufficient interagency cooperation, weak or non-existent legislation, and reluctance to allocate sufficient resources.'[99] The implication of all of this is that Latin America lacks agency, especially compared to the US. This is clear to see in Democratic Senator, Robert Menendez's statement, 'Venezuela, Nicaragua, Ecuador, and Bolivia allow themselves to be courted by [Mahmoud] Ahmedinejad to stick a proverbial finger in America's eye'.[100] The way in which these countries 'allow themselves' takes away any assertiveness on their part. The phrase 'America's eye' also works to personify the US further adding to its exceptionalism by evoking a sense of individualism. It is also presupposed by the securitising actors that Latin America has been commandeered by Iran because of its openness to oppose the US. This is expressed by hearing witness Cynthia Arnson, a fellow at the Wilson Centre: 'I think that the mutual interests of the Iranians in showing up in the so-called United States backyard has a flip side, which is the interest of these governments in showing that they will oppose the United States and act to undermine its interests.'[101] Hearing witness Ilan Berman, Vice President of the conservative think tank the American Foreign Policy Council, makes similar remarks of Latin America, a region as he sees it 'typified by vast ungoverned areas and widespread anti-Americanism'.[102] It is in their anti-Americanism then those in the region are afforded some agency.

In light of the above, especially Latin America conceived of as the US' 'backyard', securitising Hezbollah is framed as a way for the US to fulfil their duty by helping Latin America to flush the group out of this area, in turn making the securitisation imperative. As a result, Latin America finds itself subject to the outside involvement of two powers both the US and Iran it thus becomes a political battleground something which is plainly referenced in the sources.[103]

4.6 Partial securitisation

It has been established above that the securitising actors were able to form a threat narrative which enabled them to start securitising the issue of Hezbollah in Latin America. Over the four-year period, the sources grew more alarmist in their tone however little new evidence was

---

[99] 'Chapter 2. Country Reports: Western Hemisphere Overview', US Department of State, 18 August 2011 https://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/crt/2009/140888.htm (Accessed 22 April 2019)
[100] Menendez in 'Iran's Influence and Activity In Latin America', p. 3
[101] Cynthia Arnson in 'Iran's Influence and Activity In Latin America', p. 47
[102] Ilan Berman in 'Iran's Influence and Activity In Latin America', p. 39
[103] Mark P. Sullivan, 'Latin America: Terrorism Issues', Congressional Research Service for Congress, 11 March 2009), p. 1

brought forward by witnesses to substantiate the claims made. The CRS report written by Mark Sullivan 'Latin America: Terrorism Issues' was published ten times over the four-year period but remained largely unchanged in substance with the same conclusions drawn each time.[104] This is significant because the CRS is committed to providing factual impartial reporting, it is, therefore, likely that these reports are amongst the best indication of the situation on the ground. The fact that these reports do not mirror the threat narrative is thus evidence of its constructed nature.

The extent to which the securitising actors succeeded in securitising Hezbollah can be determined by whether or not the group received a disproportionate amount of attention and resources. In order to determine whether or not the treatment of Hezbollah was disproportionate, I am going to compare the number of hearings and laws passed concerning Hezbollah to those concerning road traffic accidents.[105] This is an example often picked by securitisation scholars as something which, despite causing more deaths than terrorist attacks, is not securitised by demanding extraordinary measures, but dealt with within the realm of ordinary politics and legal regulations.[106]

In regard to the amount of attention placed upon the issue, Hezbollah can certainly be seen to have been successfully securitised. There were four hearings held which dealt with Hezbollah in Latin America compared to eight on road traffic accidents and safety. This is certainly disproportionate when you consider the total number of deaths caused each year by terrorist attacks compared to those caused by road traffic accidents.[107] However, in regard to resources, there is yet to be any decisive action against the group in terms of resulting policies, so in this sense, we cannot yet talk about the successful securitisation of Hezbollah. The only legislation passed regarding Hezbollah, the Countering Iran in the Western Hemisphere Act of

---

[104] Only four (chronologically spread) of the ten reports published by Suvillan have been included in the word counts given in Table 3, this has been done in order to prevent skewing the results by including multiple results that emanate from the same source.

[105] Hearings regarding road traffic accidents have been done on the Government Publishing Office website where you can view all the hearings held during a particular congress.

[106] Andrej Zwitter and Jaap de Wilde 'Prismatic Security Expanding the Copenhagen School to the Local Level', Department of International Relations and International Organization (IRIO), University of Groningen, https://www.academia.edu/528346/Prismatic_Security_Expanding_the_Copenhagen_School_to_the_Local_Level (Accessed 23 May 2019)

[107] Traffic incidents cause on average 150,000 deaths a year in 56 states covered by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE). Terrorist attacks between 1994-2004 worldwide caused an average of about 5,312 death per year. This is less than 5% of those killed annually in traffic accidents in UNECE countries alone. See Andrej Zwitter and Jaap de Wilde 'Prismatic Security Expanding the Copenhagen School to the Local Level', Department of International Relations and International Organization (IRIO), University of Groningen, https://www.academia.edu/528346/Prismatic_Security_Expanding_the_Copenhagen_School_to_the_Local_Level (Accessed 23 May 2019)

2012, did not target the group specifically only linking it to criminal enterprises. What this tells us is that although the threat narrative created in Congress enabled members to start the process of securitising Hezbollah it has not yet been able to do so fully. It is worth noting however that the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) estimated that implementing the Iran act would cost $18 million.[108] Legislation for this period passed concerning road traffic safety only reached $17.5 million.[109] Again, Hezbollah can be seen to be treated disproportionately to the actual threat it poses.

4.7 Dissidence between Obama and the securitising actors

In this next section, I will use ACN to compare the various narratives within the sources. In the texts I used for my analysis four main narratives could be detected; Democrat, Republican, independent, that is witnesses called to testify and the CRS and lastly, the White House, that is Obama's policies and what is actually written into law. Notably, there was not a big difference between the sentiments of Democrats or Republicans on the matter; both take a strong stance against the group and push the threat narrative. It is important to note that there are markedly fewer Republicans testifying at these hearings and so talking about the party as a whole should be heeded with caution. With regard to the independent narrative, we see that those called forward in the hearings take a similarly strong stance, pushing the threat narrative and calling for securitising measures. Although official policy calls on committees to ensure a range of views are represented it is often the case that committees invite witnesses who express only particular points of view or who will speak to specific parts of the hearing's topic.[110] Thus, you have a situation as emerges here where even though the witnesses have a range of backgrounds; one private sector, two former government employees and four academics, the 'independent' voice often aligns with the majority opinion in the committee.

Most interestingly we can see a tension between the White House and the securitising actors in Congress who believe the former is not doing enough to tackle the problem. Democratic Representative, Kathy Hochul asks 'where is the Homeland Security

---

[108] 'H.R. 3783, Countering Iran in the Western Hemisphere Act of 2012', Congressional Budget Office, 1 May 2012
https://www.cbo.gov/publication/43214 (Accessed 25 May 2019)
[109] As part of the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21) $17.525 was authorities as grants to help tackle the problem of distracted drivers. See more 'New Federal Grant Helps States Fight Distracted Driving', Charles G. Monnett III & Associates, 30 August 2012
https://carolinalaw.com/blog/new-federal-grant-helps-states-fight-distracted-driving/ (Accessed 25 May 2019)
[110] See Valerie Heitshusen, 'Senate Committee Hearings: Arranging Witnesses', Congressional Research Service, 6 December 2017, p. 1; Christopher M. Davies, 'House Committee Hearings: Arranging Witnesses', Congressional Research Service, 25 August 2015, p. 1

Department?'[111] There are also hints of mistrust between the two bodies. Former diplomat and policymaker, Roger Noriega declares 'My conclusion is that US authorities know more than they are willing to say publicly about this subject, and this Congress is right to insist on a thorough explanation of the threat and of our effective counter-measures.'[112] This rift might be explained with reference to Obama's policy of rapprochement in the Middle East as discussed earlier. Clearly, such an approach is not shared in Congress. The ACN then confirms what the discursive practises approach highlights that the securitising actors have created a threat narrative despite the fact that this does not align with presidential policy. This dissidence explains why the securitising actors have been unable to fully securitise the issue, having failed to find a listening ear in the White House.

In conclusion, the first term of Obama's presidency shows a clear threat narrative emerging from Congress. This threat is constructed by the securitising actors in order to securitise Hezbollah. However, tensions between the securitising actors and the White House over the Middle East and the treatment of Hezbollah mean that the securitising actors fail to find a listening ear in the White House which prevents some sort of securitising action becoming imperative. The securitising actors are only able to partially securitise the issue allocating disproportionate attention but not resources to the matter. In the next chapter, we will see how during Obama's second term there is an increased emphasis and a new sense of urgency placed upon this threat narrative which brings about the passing of significant legislation on the matter – the Hezbollah International Financing Prevention Act of 2015 – this confirms the process of securitisation.

---

[111] Kathy Hochul in 'Hezbollah In Latin America--Implications for U.S. Homeland Security', p. 51
[112] Noriega in 'Hezbollah In Latin America--Implications for U.S. Homeland Security', p. 5

5. US Foreign Policy Critical Discourse Analysis Part 2

In this chapter I will examine the second term of Obama's presidency (20 January 2013 – 20 January 2017), here we will see how the securitising actors continued to push the threat narrative resulting in significant legislative change with the introduction of the Hezbollah International Financing Prevention Act of 2015. This marks the successful completion of the securitisation process wherein both disproportionate attention and resources are allocated to the issue. At the end of the chapter, there will be an appraisal of the resulting policies followed by an examination of their implementation and impact.

During Obama's second term the administration continued with its policy of rapprochement with the Middle East. Obama's new top counterterrorism adviser, John Brennan, also set the tone for new relations by calling for the 'greater assimilation of Hezbollah into Lebanon's political system'.[113] Securing a nuclear deal with Iran was a prominent feature of this policy of rapprochement something which caused considerable controversy. In 2015, House speaker Republican Paul Ryan, made comments similar to his predecessor John Boehner's when he described Hezbollah as 'an Iranian proxy responsible for hundreds of American deaths.' He continued '[Nuclear] deal or no deal, we cannot allow Iran's threatening activities to continue without consequence.'[114] Given the circumstances, we can expect to see the continuation of the dissidence seen in the first term between Obama and the securitising actors in Congress in the ACN later.

5.1 Pushing the threat narrative further

Following the structure of the previous chapter, we will begin with the keywords and their predicates as shown in Table 4 below.

---

[113] Meyer, 'The secret backstory of how Obama let Hezbollah off the hook'
[114] Patrick Goodenough, 'In Signal to Iran, US Lawmakers Pass Bill Targeting Hezbollah in 425-0 Vote', CNS News, 17 December 2015, https://www.cnsnews.com/news/article/patrick-goodenough/us-lawmakers-send-signal-iran-pass-legislation-targeting-hezbollah (Accessed 18 March 2019)

Threat (511)	Security (576)	Hezbollah (1,176)	US (1,745)	Latin America (408)
Terrorist (terroristic) (28)	National (77)	Activity (Active) 31	Assistance (19)	Backyard (6)
Security (20)	Border (43)	Support (8)	Effort (19)	Improve (5)
Significant (16)	United States (American) (15)	Proxy (5)	Influence (9)	Lawless (5)
Potential (12)	Homeland (6)	Influence (4)	Sanctions (9)	(Lack of) cooperation (4)
Global (11)		Terrorist (4)	Anti-America(n) (6)	Weak (3)
Great (8)		Effort (3)	Action (4)	Assisted (2)
National (8)		Expand (3)	Target (4)	Battleground (2)
Real (6)				Corruption (2)
Serious (6)				Reluctance (1)
Major (5)				
Strategic (5)				
Direct (5)				
Serious (4)				
Clear (2)				
Hezbollah (2)				
Immediate (2)				
International (2)				
Unacceptable (2)				

Table 4. Keywords and Predicates (Part 2)[115]

As before, the word 'threat' appears with considerable frequency across the sources, slightly more this time than the previous period.[116] This is probably due to the fact that there are also more sources available for this period, twenty-nine compared to twenty. This is because the securitising actors have already partially securitised the issue and are therefore able to justify spending more time and attention on it having now established it as a matter of security. Once again associated words such as 'danger' and 'risk' also appear but less frequently than 'threat'.

The word 'threat' is used in much the same way as it was during Obama's first term in the sense that it denotes several interrelated types of threat. However, this time it is used in a more urgent and pressing manner. Noriega says, 'Our Government must take effective measures to disrupt and dismantle illicit operations and neutralize unacceptable threats before

[115] Some of the predicates are not relevant to the analysis and have not been included, additionally some of the predicates have not been used in reference to the specific situation of Hezbollah in Latin America, therefore the total number of results given next to each keyword is different to the sum of the various predicates as listed in the table, nonetheless the total gives a good overall impression of the frequency with which each word is mentioned in the sources. Moreover, it should be noted that the number given next the predicate might include repetitions of quotes and evidence which has been used across different sources, or indeed repeated in the same document.
[116] As can be seen in the appendix there is a significantly larger portion of sources from the House, this has not been done intentionally and is a reflection of the available sources.

it is too late.'[117] In using the adjective 'unacceptable' he forces the government into a position of action, it is no longer allowed to let the threat continue. There is a sense that those in Congress now blame the administration for not acting which has allowed the threat to grow. Matthew Levitt, a senior fellow at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, a centre-right think tank, explains 'The nature of th[e] threat has indeed increased dramatically over the past few years.'[118] Speaking again at a separate hearing Levitt declares 'The need for attention is perhaps greater today than it has been in years past'.[119] Republican Representative Ileana Ros-Lehtinen describes the threat as 'imminent' which also brings a new sense of immediacy to the issue and by turn makes some kind of securitising action imperative.[120] The word 'immediate' is used elsewhere to the same effect.[121]

Finally, it can be observed in this second period that the threat is more explicitly constructed as being both a criminal and terrorist threat. Hezbollah is increasingly talked about in the same context as criminal organisations. Republican Representative Ted Poe says, 'Transnational criminal and terrorist groups in Latin America are a threat to the United States national security.'[122] This linkage between organised crime and drug trafficking and the threat this poses to the state can be traced back to the war on drugs and Reagan's National Security Directive 221 as mentioned at the beginning of Chapter 4. This sets the tone for the rest of the period, further cementing the notion of Hezbollah as both a criminal and terroristic organisation as set out by the use of the term 'crime-terror nexus' in the previous section.

5.2 Hezbollah becomes a national security issue

Another development in the threat narrative is the successful establishment of Hezbollah as a national security issue as the earlier linking of the group to the national security of the US becomes more explicit. Talking about Hezbollah, Scott Modell, former CIA officer and a non-

---

[117] Noriega in Serial No. 113-6 'Hezbollah's Strategic Shift: A Global Terrorist Threat', hearing before the Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives, One Hundred Thirteenth Congress, First Session, 20 March 2013, p. 40

[118] Matthew Levitt in 'Hezbollah's Strategic Shift: A Global Terrorist Threat', p. 21

[119] Levitt in Serial No. 113-24 'Threat to the Homeland: Iran's Extending Influence in the Western Hemisphere', hearing before the Subcommittee on Oversight and Management Efficiency of the Committee on Homeland Security, House of Representatives, One Hundred Thirteenth Congress, First Session, 9 July 2013 p. 20

[120] Ileana Ros-Lehtinen in Serial No. 114-163, 'Hezbollah's Growing Threat Against U.S. National Security Interests in The Middle East', hearing before the Subcommittee on the Middle East and North Africa of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives, One Hundred Fourteenth Congress, Second Session, 22 March 2016, p. 3

[121] Levitt in 'Hezbollah's Strategic Shift: A Global Terrorist Threat', p. 32

[122] Ted Poe in Serial 113-121, 'Terrorist Groups in Latin America: The Changing Landscape', hearing before the Subcommittee on Terrrorism Nonproliferication and Trade of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives, One Hundred Thirteenth Congress, Second Session, 4 February 2014, p. 1

resident fellow at CSIS, states 'Terrorism financing has become one of the most pressing national security challenges.'[123] This focus on the financial aspect of Hezbollah's activities is another development in the threat narrative. For example, Republican Representative Michael Fitzpatrick declares '…the money that is funding terrorist organizations around the world. This is an urgent national security issue…'[124] Here he explicitly talks about Hezbollah being a national security issue. As with the word 'threat' there is also an increased sense of urgency here when it comes to the severity of the security issue. Seth Jones, a senior political scientist at the independent think tank the RAND Corporation, deems the issue of Hezbollah to be the 'most dangerous to U.S. security'.[125] What is important to note here is that the threat Hezbollah poses has graduated to a security issue in its own right. Similarly, Republican Representative Robert Pittenger talks about 'the steps we can take to better ensure that we are cutting the funding to terrorists, and protecting the security of America against our enemies.'[126] Note here the use of warlike terminology. Tellingly the financing of Hezbollah is the subject of just over one third of the sources examined for Obama's second term. This shows that the discursive linkage between transnational crime and Hezbollah created by the securitising actors has resonated with Congress.

Now let us turn our attention towards how Hezbollah itself is portrayed in this second period. As already mentioned, the group has now decidedly been cast as a dual threat. Appearing as a witness in her capacity as Professor at the National Defense University, Realuyo, concludes 'Hezbollah and its global facilitators represent an emerging terror-crime nexus'[127] Moreover, 'nexus' has become the accepted term in Congress reflected by the tellingly named hearing, 'A Dangerous Nexus: Terrorism, Crime, and Corruption'. Interestingly in contrast to before where Hezbollah was described in morally reprehensible terms it is now described as 'savvy', 'innovative' and 'motivated', whilst outwardly quite positive terms the effect of their usage is much the same as the frequent references to their past

---

[123] Scott Modell in Serial No. 114-48, 'Could America Do More? An Examination of U.S. Efforts to Stop the Financing of Terror', hearing before the Task Force to Investigate Terrorism Financing of the Committee on Financial Services, House of Representatives, One Hundred Fourteenth Congress, First Session, 9 September 2015, p. 5

[124] Michael Fitzpatrick in Serial No. 114-92, 'The Enemy in Our Backyard: Examining Terror Funding Streams from South America', hearing before the Task Force to Investigate Terrorism Financing of the Committee on Financial Services, House of Representatives, One Hundred Fourteenth Congress, Second Session, 8 June 2016, p. 3

[125] Seth G. Jones in Serial No. 114-15, 'A Survey of Global Terrorism and Terrorist Financing', hearing before the Task Force to Investigate Terrorism Financing of the Committee on Financial Services U.S., House of Representatives, One Hundred Fourteenth Congress, First Session, 22 April 2015, p. 13

[126] Robert Pittenger in 'Could America Do More? An Examination Of U.S. Efforts To Stop The Financing Of Terror', p. 3

[127] Celina B. Realuyo in 'Terrorist Groups in Latin America: The Changing Landscape', p. 14

terrorist actions, that is it ramps up the urgency and need to tackle Hezbollah by stressing their capabilities.[128] Hence helping to create a policy environment in which some kind of securitising action is imperative.

As before there is also a trend in using warlike terminology, similar to that found in the rhetoric of the war on drugs and the war on terror, to discuss the group. Although the word 'combat' does not appear as frequently as before the language used in the sources leaves no doubt that Hezbollah is a group which needs to be confronted in such a manner. Braun describes the drug trade as 'provid[ing] a never-ending source of funding for [Hezbollah's] war chest'.[129] Moreover, Hezbollah is often referred to in terms of 'asymmetric battle' or 'asymmetric warfare'.[130] In doing so the securitising actors further push the severity of the security threat by stressing the fact that Hezbollah is not a conventional enemy and requires different tactics and may, therefore, be harder to defeat. The prospect of facing such an opponent makes some kind of securitising action imperative forcing those in power to take steps to counter this threat.

5.3 US-Latin America relations and subject positioning

Once again, across the sources, Latin America is treated as the US' 'backyard'. The use of the term in the title of this joint hearing 'The Enemy In Our Backyard: Examining Terror Funding Streams From South America' is evidence of a worrying development, that such a linguistic turn has become part of the official discourse. The name of the hearing is also evidence of the new emphasis on the financial aspect of this issue as evidence in the previous section. In fitting with this 'backyard' narrative the US is held up as a leading light and exemplary nation which serves as a self-affirmation of its duty to intervene in the affairs of others as denoted by its American exceptionalism. Appearing in another hearing, Braun states in a typical manifest destiny expression, 'When real justice is meted out in a Federal courthouse somewhere in the United States or some other competent jurisdiction…'[131] Using concepts such as justice which have clear opposites is one of the tools used by so-called political myth-makers since they conjure up an easily recognisable us versus them binaries. Here we are led to think about the jurisdictions of Latin America which have previously been described in less favourable, *in*competent terms.

---

[128] Peter T. King in Serial No. 114-68 'Following the Money: Examining Current Terrorist Financing Trends and the Threat to the Homeland', hearing before the Subcommittee on Counterterrorism and Intelligence of the Committee on Homeland Security, House of Representatives, One Hundred Fourteenth Congress, Second Session, 12 May 2016, p. 2
[129] Braun in 'The Enemy in Our Backyard: Examining Terror Funding Streams from South America', p. 38
[130] See for example Noriega in 'Hezbollah's Strategic Shift: A Global Terrorist Threat', p. 44
[131] Braun in 'The Enemy in Our Backyard: Examining Terror Funding Streams from South America', p. 8

The portrayal of Latin America is fairly consistent with its treatment in the first period and is based upon the conception of Latin America as the US' 'backyard'. Once again, the region is portrayed in contrast to the US. Firstly, let us examine Noriega's term 'rogue regimes'.[132] This is used in contrast to the US which represents law and order carried out in the 'proper' or 'real' way. Likewise, 'regime' is used in contrast to the free and liberal US. The idea of rogue entities which must be tamed can be traced to both the war on drugs with its addicts and the war on terror and those who commit or endorse terroristic acts. The region is also cast again as corrupt. Author and national security specialist Joseph Humire talks of what he deems to be 'the high-level of corruption rampant throughout the region'.[133] Farah links this corruption to what he sees as the region's complicity with the crime-terror nexus, Farah describes transnational criminal organisations as 'state-protected and state-driven', this situation he continues 'opens the door for what you see Hezbollah doing in the region'.[134] In declaring their complicity the securitising actors bestow a misguided agency upon the region. Theodore Deutch, Democrat Representative, pronounces 'In Latin America, Iran found several partners that were open to collaborating with a pariah state and were willing to accept the risks of violating international sanctions to do so.'[135] Latin America is seen as 'open to collaborating' and 'willing to accept the risks', it has, seemingly, entered this relationship with full knowledge and awareness of the consequences, an active participant. This stands against the previous depiction of a region with no agency. Note also the threatening use of 'accept the risks' which implies a backlash from the US. Latin America is therefore shown to be inextricably complicit with the terrorists.

Given the region's inability to control its own territories and its ill-fated agency we reach the conclusion that the region needs the help of the US which the US is duty-bound and possibly even has a right to give. Emanuele Ottolenghi, a senior fellow at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies, a conservative think tank, embodies these sentiments in the following statement:

---

[132] Noriega in 'Hezbollah's Strategic Shift: A Global Terrorist Threat', p. 39
[133] Joseph Humire in Serial No. 114-34 'Iran and Hezbollah in the Western Hemisphere', joint hearing before the Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere and the Subcommittee on the Middle East and North Africa of the Committee of Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives, One Hundred Fourteenth Congress, First Session, 18 March 2015, p. 11
[134] Farah in Serial No. 114-27, 'A Dangerous Nexus: Terrorism, Crime, and Corruption', hearing before the Task Force to Investigate Terrorism Financing of the Committee on Financial Services U.S., House of Representatives, One Hundred Fourteenth Congress, First Session, 21 May 2015, p. 21
[135] Theodore E. Deutch in 'Iran and Hezbollah in the Western Hemisphere', p. 7

Latin America is a land with huge potential. Transnational crime is a serious obstacle to the development of strong institutions and robust economics, two pillars of democratic consolidation. It is in the national interest of the United States to help Latin American governments build them.[136]

Here we see not only how the US must 'help' Latin America by securitising Hezbollah and thus tackling transnational crime but also for the first time a hint as to its motivation for doing so. The focus on the region's 'potential' and the US' 'national interests' smacks of self-interest. Moreover, in helping Latin America build 'strong institutions' which are based upon the same democratic values as itself the US might hope for more cooperation and collaboration than previously possible and in doing benefit from the region's 'potential'. Interestingly in discussing the potential of democratic development in Latin America Ottolenghi damages the claims of others that the region is regime-like and thus shows the fabricated nature of the claims often made by the securitising actors. In light of Ottolenghi's statement, we might conceive securitisation as a way for the US to assert its control over the region by imposing sanctions and restrictions on those operating within the area and by extension the area itself. However, exploring this in detail is not within the remit of this thesis, instead, this will be discussed in the conclusion under a suggested future research agenda.

5.4 Successful securitisation

Following the partial securitisation of Hezbollah in Obama's previous term, we can now see the complete securitisation of the group as a result of major legislation being enacted into law which represents the allocation of both disproportionate attention and crucially, resources. This time there were seventeen hearings held concerning Hezbollah in Latin America compared to the four held in Obama's previous term. This also compares to just three hearings concerning road traffic accidents. Overall there were fewer bills proposed over this period but those that were proposed were more significant in terms of their focus on Hezbollah. On 18 December 2015, Obama signed into law the Hezbollah International Financing Prevention Act. Its purpose was to 'prevent Hezbollah and associated entities from gaining access to international financial and other institutions, and for other purposes'.[137] The act declares the following:

---

[136] Emanuele Ottolenghi in 'The Enemy in Our Backyard: Examining Terror Funding Streams from South America', p. 77
[137] H.R. 2297 'Hizballah International Financing Prevention Act Of 2015', Public Law, One Hundred Fourteenth Congress, 18 December 2015, 129 Stat. 2205

It shall be the policy of the United States to—

(1) prevent Hezbollah's global logistics and financial network from operating in order to curtail funding of its domestic and international activities; and

(2) utilize all available diplomatic, legislative, and executive avenues to combat the global criminal activities of Hezbollah as a means to block that organization's ability to fund its global terrorist activities.[138]

The CBO estimated that the law would cost $3 million to implement over the 2015–2019 period.[139] Exact figures showing how much the act has actually cost thus far were not available at the time of writing. Just weeks before the financing prevention act was passed Obama passed the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act which secured major funding for highway safety. In 2016, the first year of its enactment, just over $2 billion was dedicated to improving highway safety.[140] Despite this enormous sum the $3 million assigned to the financing prevention act still represents a disproportionate allocation of resources when you compare the fact that in 2016 there were 34,436 fatalities on US roads compared to zero deaths related to Hezbollah's terrorist activities.[141] This disproportionate allocation of resources is evidence of the successful US securitisation of Hezbollah in Latin America.

5.5 Tensions remain between Obama and the securitising actors

The implementation of this legislation suggests that the securitising actors had been able to find a listening ear at the White House and that the administration was now prepared to tackle the threat with the full weight of the law. The ACN presented below sheds some light on the accuracy of this inference. As before, the Democrats and Republicans seem fairly aligned on the matter with representatives of both parties taking a strong stance against the group, calling for action to be taken. However, there are markedly fewer Democrats testifying at hearings and so talking about the party as a whole should be heeded with caution. Interestingly the opposite was true last time, this might suggest that the presence of fewer Democrats has enabled the

---

[138] REPT. 113-543 'Hezbollah International Financing Prevention Act Of 2014', report committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union, House of Representatives, One Hundred Thirteenth Congress, Second Session, 22 July 2014, p. 2
[139] 'Hezbollah International Financing Prevention Act Of 2014', p. 13
[140] 'Highway Safety Improvement Program', Federal Highway Administration, 8 February 2017 https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/fastact/factsheets/hsipfs.cfm (Accessed 25 May 2019)
[141] 'Quick Facts 2016', NHTSA Crash Stats, February 2018 https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/812451 (Accessed 25 May 2019)

complete securitisation, in turn, suggesting that it is the Republican party who are backing this move more resolutely.

The independent narrative also fits into the picture in much the same way. The CRS reports tell a similar story to the previous period, frequent reports which make use of the same repeated information and do not draw grand conclusions. The independent witnesses, several of whom had already testified previously, were drawn from a similar pool as those in Obama's previous term; one government employee, one private sector, three former government employees and five academics. They continue to align themselves with the opinion of those securitising actors in Congress that Hezbollah is an unacceptable threat and a national security issue which must be dealt with as such. As before this alignment of opinion is explained by the process by which witnesses are called upon.

The ACN also highlights the continued dissidence between the White House and the securitising actors in Congress. Modell observes, 'We are not all on the same page with regard to tackling these issues.'[142] Equally, Poe declares, 'the State Department takes the position, insists that there is no real Hezbollah threat in Latin America, even though the Defense Department and the DEA have said otherwise.'[143] This time there is also a new dimension to this discord, one of accusation. Poe argues 'Despite clear evidence that Hezbollah is colluding with drug organizations to launder money and gather support, the Obama Administration continues to downplay this threat.'[144] The Department of State rebuts these claims. Here Alex Lee, Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs, declares, 'We take any allegations that threaten our national security seriously. The Department closely watches all signs of activity of Iranian influence in the Western Hemisphere.'[145] Indeed, the 2015 act is testimony to this. Following the passing of the law the White House press secretary, Josh Earnest released the statement:

> […] We continue to work with Congress in a bipartisan way to ensure that we maximize
> the tools available to us to thwart Hizballah's network at every turn, and we look
> forward to working together as we implement these new authorities. […] We are

---

[142] Modell in 'Could America Do More? An Examination of U.S. Efforts to Stop the Financing of Terror', p. 26
[143] Poe in 'Terrorist Groups in Latin America: The Changing Landscape', p. 68
[144] Poe in E300, 'Iran Support for Terrorism Worldwide', Congressional Record- Extension of Remarks, House of Representatives, One Hundred Thirteenth Congress, Second Session, 4 March 2014, p. E300
[145] Alex Lee in S. HRG. 114-69 'Deepening Political and Economic Crisis in Venezuela: Implications for U.S. Interests and the Western Hemisphere', hearing before the Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere Transnational Crime, Civilian Security, Democracy, Human Rights, and Global Women's Issues of the Committee on Foreign Relations, United States Senate, One Hundred Fourteenth Congress, First Session, 17 March 2015, p. 75

committed to continuing to take strong action, such as imposing sanctions, to counter the activities of Hizballah operatives and supporters, wherever they are located.[146]

The ACN then bears very similar results to in the previous chapter. Unlike last time, however, the White House makes an effort to resolve the dissidence between itself and the securitising actors by implementing significant legislation, however, this is not entirely successful. Given the political climate, namely the looming Iran nuclear deal, identifying why there was this change of position in the White House would make for interesting further research. Ideas on how this might be conducted will be presented in the conclusion. The next section shall examine the implementation and impact of this legislation.

5.6 Obama, Project Cassandra and an international relations trade-off

The 2015 legislation saw early success. Just six months after it was passed into law the US Treasury had imposed sanctions on four operatives and a firm who had been assisting the group.[147] Yet despite these actions there remained doubts and concerns that the administration was not doing enough. Following delays, the Office of Foreign Assets Control had to issue a final rule for implementing the act. In response, Obama stated that his administration was 'committed to continuing to take strong action, such as imposing sanctions, to counter the activities of Hezbollah operatives and supporters, wherever they are located.'[148] The administration's continued policy of rapprochement and the ongoing nuclear negotiations with Iran, however, led many to doubt these reassurances. Referring to the Countering the Iranian Threat in the Western Hemisphere Act of 2012, Republican Representative Jeff Duncan raised similar concerns that the administration was not enforcing the law. He testified 'I am deeply concerned that in their hope for a nuclear deal with Iran, the Obama administration and governments in the region are not paying enough attention to this issue.' [149] Likewise, Ros-

---

[146] Josh Earnest, 'Statement by the Press Secretary on the Hizballah International Financing Prevention Act of 2015', Obama White House, 18 December 2015
https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2015/12/18/statement-press-secretary-hizballah-international-financing-prevention (Accessed 13 May)
[147] Arsha Mohammed and Yeganeh Torbati, 'U.S. government sanctions Hezbollah operatives, fundraiser', Reuters, 20 October 2016
https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-hezbollah-idUSKCN12K1WO (Accessed 9 May 2019)
[148] White House statement in Rena S. Miller, Liana W. Rosen and James K. Jackson, 'Trade-Based Money Laundering: Overview and Policy Issues', Congressional Research Service, 22 June 2016, p. 15
[149] Jeff Duncan in 'Iran and Hezbollah in the Western Hemisphere', p. 2

Lehtinen demands: 'It is time for the President to stop trying to burnish his foreign policy legacy and stop putting politics ahead of national security.'[150]

These worries were also echoed in relation to the 2015 legislation. Having found a listening ear in the White House and a willingness to use the law against this threat the securitising actors were now to see the promises made in the 2015 act fall flat as the government pursued other priorities. That is the maintenance of its relationship with Iran in the run-up to the country's implementation of the nuclear deal which had been reached earlier that year, something that, as mentioned, was critiqued by the securitising actors and Congress at large.

In December 2017, almost a year after Obama had stepped down as president investigate journalist Josh Meyer published an article on political journalism website Politico entitled 'The secret backstory of how Obama let Hezbollah off the hook'. The article cited evidence from government officials which Meyer claimed proved that Obama had deliberately thwarted the efforts of DEA agents investigating Hezbollah in Project Cassandra.[151] Meyer argues that this was because the operation was jeopardising Obama's plans for a nuclear deal with Iran by pursuing its proxy Hezbollah. Within days many other publications were running Meyer's story. Speaking in Congress Republican Representative Jody Hice explains the effects she believes this had on the operation:

> We lost all that we had gained in 8 years of investigations – all the information. We had them in our grasp, Mr. Speaker, after 8 years of investigation. We lost unprecedented insight into these global criminal networks. Mr. Speaker, this is morally reprehensible. It is stunning that we had our previous administration and that administration's Justice Department and State Department evidently involved, engaged, and deliberately letting these criminals off the hook.[152]

Former Obama officials moved resolutely against the story whilst the former president was silent on the issue.[153]

---

[150] Ros-Lehtinen in 'Iran and Hezbollah in the Western Hemisphere', p. 6
[151] Meyer, 'The secret backstory of how Obama let Hezbollah off the hook'
[152] Jody B. Hice in H10335, 'Project Cassandra', Congressional Record, House of Representatives, One Hundred and Fifteenth Congress, First Session, 20 December 2017, p. H10335
[153] Erik Wemple, 'Former Obama officials criticize Politico story alleging weakness against Hezbollah', The Washington Post, 21 December 2018
https://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/erik-wemple/wp/2017/12/21/former-obama-officials-criticize-politico-story-alleging-weakness-against-hezbollah/?utm_term=.137ffc41b075 (Accessed 9 May 2019)

Obama's downplaying of this threat, if it is true, bears marked similarities with Richard Nixon's handling of the Russian threat during the Cold War. Rhodri Jeffreys-Jones argues that Nixon was able, alongside his foreign-policy adviser Henry Kissinger, to manipulate intelligence 'with a view to the achievement of a strategic arms limitations treaty'.[154] In the same way then we see a government either downplaying or playing up a threat in accordance with its wider policy aims and pursuit of power. It is not my intention to either prove or debunk Meyer's story; rather it has been introduced to raise some questions concerning securitisation.

Obama's perceived handling of Project Cassandra, as portrayed by Meyer, might be conceived of as an international relations trade-off in which the security agenda was pushed off the table to protect US-Iran relations. Obama's prioritisation of US' relations with Iran above Hezbollah's presence in Latin America shows that foreign policy is ultimately dictated by power interests and therefore is realist. Yet the fact that Obama is able to drop the pursuit of Hezbollah by scrapping Project Cassandra and not properly implementing the 2015 act is also evidence of the constructed nature of the threat and foreign policy more generally proving securitisation theory to be right. In showing evidence for both the validity of securitisation theory and the use of realist foreign policy this thesis presents an opportunity to discuss how realism and constructivism might interact in International Relations theory. J. Samuel Barkin has contended that constructivist research is compatible with a realist world view, something long disputed by proponents of both sides.[155] Barkin argues that this 'realist constructivism' would incorporate both the study of power and the study of ideals and clarify the relationship between the two whilst enabling protagonists of both realism and constructivism to speak to, rather than past, each other. Such a theory would also function as a bridge between mainstream approaches to international relations and more critical postmodern approaches.[156] Future research might wish to explore Barkin's theory by applying it to this case, this will be expanded upon in the conclusion.

In conclusion, Chapter 5 has shown how the securitising actors continued to make use of the same linguistic practises to push the threat narrative and securitise Hezbollah. This time their efforts were met with success as they were able to fully securitise the group by allotting both disproportionate attention and resources to the issue as the White House enacted the Hezbollah International Financing Prevention Act of 2015. However, the ACN reveals a

---

[154] Rhodri Jeffreys-Jones, *The CIA and American Democracy,* 3rd ed. (New Haven, 1991), ProQuest eBook, p. 176

[155] J. Samuel Barkin, Realist Constructivism', *International Studies Review,* 5 (2003), pp. 325-342

[156] Barkin, Realist Constructivism', p. 326

continued mistrust between the White House and the securitising actors in Congress with the latter accusing the former of placing foreign policy interests above national security. Obama's alleged tamping down of Project Cassandra also speaks to this issue. This supposed show of realist foreign policy whilst at first appearing to discredit securitisation theory actually acts to verify it and the constructivist approach to international relations more generally. This opens up the possibility that the two approaches are compatible after all.

6. Conclusion

This thesis began with an analytical problem: how to reconcile the US government's decisive action against Hezbollah in Latin America during the Obama administration with the fact that the threat posed by the group is uncertain and based on unfounded and highly speculative claims. I contended that the US government was able to adopt such policy through a process of securitisation. This gets to the heart of the constructed nature of international relations, in particular, the constructed nature of security threats. Over the course of two analytical chapters, covering the first and second term of Obama's presidency respectively, I used Doty's discursive practises approach to examine the language used in forty-nine congressional sources and showed how the securitising actors – those sitting on the congressional committees which called the hearings and introduced the bills, and the witnesses testifying at these hearings – were able to securitise the issue by achieving audience acceptance firstly, in Congress and secondly, in the White House. This acceptance signals that the securitising actors have succeeded in creating a policy environment in which some kind of securitising action becomes imperative. The securitised subject, in this case, Hezbollah, is one who receives a disproportionate amount of attention and resources.

I was able to show evidence of this disproportionate attention by comparing the number of hearings regarding Hezbollah to those regarding road traffic incidents, something which is not commonly securitised but causes significantly higher fatalities than terrorist attacks which are highly securitised. In the first period, Hezbollah was the subject of four hearings compared to eight concerning road traffic safety which represents significant disproportionally when considering the number of deaths causes as a result of each. Similarly, legislation passed in this period concerning Hezbollah, the Countering Iran in the Western Hemisphere Act of 2012, surpassed that concerning road traffic safety in terms of budget allocation with the Iran bill costing $18 million compared to the $17.5 million allotted to improving road safety. I was able to show the same disproportionately for the second period in which Hezbollah was the subject of seventeen hearings and road traffic accidents just three. In the second period, major legislation was passed concerning Hezbollah with the Hezbollah International Financing Prevention Act of 2015. Although the $3 million allocated to implement this legislation is outstripped by the $2 billion set aside for road safety funding in 2016, Hezbollah can still be seen to have disproportionate resources spent on it when you compare the fact that Hezbollah caused zero deaths in the US in 2016 whilst 34,436 US citizens were killed on the roads in the same period.

The main purpose of my research was not merely to prove the securitisation of Hezbollah's presence in Latin America by the US but to show *how* this was done. I proposed that the securitising actors were able to do so by using the rhetoric of both the war on drugs and the war on terror which enabled them to construct Hezbollah as a security threat. I proposed that the effect of this would be to evoke the erroneous crime-terror nexus inflating the danger posed by Hezbollah's supposed activity by constructing the notion of a double threat encompassing two of the US' biggest existential enemies – drugs and terrorism – thus making it imperative for Congress to act. This was certainly evident in many of my sources. Another effect of using this rhetoric was to elicit the notion of the US as an exceptional nation with a calling to help others, in this case, Latin America. A dynamic I had not appreciated before writing but which became evident as I carried out my research.

In addition, I proposed that the securitising actors would rely heavily on the conception of Latin America as the US' 'backyard'. I was able to show how using the term enabled the securitising actors to amplify the proximity of the 'threat' further heightening the imperative to take action. I also found that in conceptualising Latin America as its 'backyard' the securitising actors further evoked the idea of American exceptionalism propelling the belief that in tackling Hezbollah in Latin American the US was fulfilling its duty to help others. Thus, I was able to prove both parts of my original hypothesis in my analysis. I was also able to speak to wider themes concerning: the power of language, the constructed nature of reality and international relations, and the power dynamics inherent in relationships as shown here through the US' conceptualisation of Latin America as its 'backyard'.

The analysis of the primary sources was set against the backdrop of Obama's policy of rapprochement with the Middle East and his pursuit of a nuclear deal with Iran. Obama's policies in this regard often seemed at odds with the general consensus of Congress, in particular in regard to the treatment of Hezbollah. I was able to prove this dissidence by using ACN. Comparing between the four narratives identifiable across the sources – Democrat, Republican, independent and the White House – I found that representatives of both parties on the matter were aligned, as were the independent witnesses who testified at the hearings. In contrast, there was a notable rift between these securitising actors and the President with the White House often appearing reluctant to take action against the group. Six years after his presidency began, the securitising actors would eventually find a listening ear in Obama as he passed the first piece of legislation specifically tackling the issue of Hezbollah in Latin America. However, the promises held by this legislation soon fell flat as the government prioritised its relations with Iran. After initial successful implementation, those who had pushed

for the legislation were once again left frustrated. Allegations started circulating that Obama was failing to uphold the act as its implementation was delayed. The White House maintained its commitment to the bill, yet these reassurances failed to restore Congress' confidence in the administration as it was alleged that Obama had tamped down a DEA operation, Project Cassandra, tasked with tackling Hezbollah, in order to maintain relations with Iran. This allegation is demonstrative of an international relations trade-off in which security concerns were pushed off the table in order to pursue good relations with a foreign power. This show of realist foreign policy stands at odds with the constructivist conception of international relations I had evidenced thus far. However, in casting aside the security concerns over Hezbollah Obama actually confirms the constructed nature of the threat. This prompts us to think about how constructivism and realism might work together in international relations, two theories that many supposed irreconcilable.

As this paper draws to a close it important to reflect upon the theory, method and sources chosen here and the benefits and limitations of these. Using securitisation theory has enabled me to look at the constructed nature of power, how it is yielded and in what contexts. The constructed nature of the security threat examined here has been made particularly resonant to me personally as I have watched the continued securitisation of Britain's relationship with the EU as it negotiates its withdrawal whilst writing this thesis.[157] Such a thorough analysis of the constructed nature of this security threat would not have been possible without the use of Doty's discursive practises approach and ACN. In combination with Sketch Engine, these methods allowed me to look very closely at the language used across a vast array of congressional documents. Moreover, the ACN provided comprehension in regard to the conclusions drawn from the main body of analysis.

Nevertheless, I must add a critical note on the theories, methods and sources presented in this thesis and the conclusions drawn from those. Securitisation has been criticised for its lack of practical application. Unlike other schools of International Relations, such as liberalism or realism, which provide an understanding and framework for how to conduct diplomacy, securitisation is limited to providing little more than an interesting observation. Securitisation theorists have remedied this shortcoming by proposing the 'desecuritisation' of issues which have been irrationally securitised thus allowing political actors to deal with them in the

---

[157] Jennifer Jackson-Preece, 'Britain risks securitising its future relationship with the EU, The London School of Economics and Political Science
https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/brexit/2017/10/03/brexit-risks-securitising-the-future-relationship-with-the-eu/ (Accessed 26 May 2019)

appropriate way, in the area of normal negotiations in the political sphere.[158] I would also add that being aware of the status of a threat, that is whether it is constructed or not, enables political actors to get at the motives of other political actors or bodies and may give them an advantage when it comes to their relationship with said entities. Moreover, while the selection of a certain theoretical lens and use of particular methodologies enabled me to focus my analysis, this inevitably led to a limited range of interpretations.

There were also limitations concerning the methods and sources used. Due to the time constraints of this thesis, I was only able to focus on the securitising actors in detail. Apart from a few specially sourced sources, the White House narrative was mainly inferred from, and in that sense a reflection of, its depiction in the sources emanating from the securitising actors in Congress. To address this imbalance the political speeches and statements of Obama on this matter and those made in his name by White House staff could also be included in the analysis. Moreover, the media was not looked at in any great detail. An analysis of newspaper articles could, therefore, be added to look at another way in which this security threat was interpreted at different levels and by different actors.

To end, I present a programme of possible future research. Following the successful application of securitisation theory presented here, future researchers might wish to apply the theory to similar cases pertaining to the US-Latin America relationship. One way to do this would be to expand temporally and look at developments since Obama's presidency. For example, immigration at the US-Mexico border which has particular pertinence in light of President Donald Trump's tenure thus far. One might also apply this theory to look at the case of US relations with the FARC. Unlike the EU and the UK, the US has not lifted sanctions on the group or removed its designation as a FTO following the successful conclusion of the peace process in Columbia between the FARC and the government there.[159] Speaking in March 2017, US Ambassador to Colombia Kevin Whittaker stated the 'FARC continues to be one of the world's largest drug-trafficking organizations and an organ of international terrorism.'[160] The

---

[158] Balzacq (ed.), *Contesting Security*
[159] See: 'Proscribed terrorist groups or organisations', GOV.UK, 12 April 2019
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/proscribed-terror-groups-or-organisations--2 (Accessed 1 June 2019);
'Colombia: EU suspends sanctions against the FARC', European Council, Council of the Eurpean Union, 27 September 2016
https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2016/09/27/colombia-eu-suspends-farc/ (Accessed 1 June 2019)
[160] 'Sanctions Intelligence Update – Farc: Peace Accord and the Enduring Illicit Finance Threat', The Camstoll Group
https://www.camstoll.com/research/sanctions-intelligence-update-farc-peace-accord-and-the-enduring-illicit-finance-threat/ (Accessed 26 May 2019)

US' continued sanctions against the FARC despite the revocation of its status as a FTO by many countries might serve as another interesting case of securitisation. In both cases, the discursive practises approach and ACN could be used again as effective methodological approaches.

I also wish to address the limitations of my own research and present some possible research agendas that were briefly touched upon earlier and that might serve to build upon the conclusions already reached by myself. Firstly, future research could explore the motivations behind those pressing for securitisation by asking what, if anything, does the US gain from securitising Hezbollah? To this end, one might look at how the Latin American countries Hezbollah is allegedly operating out of have been affected by the 2015 legislation and how their relationships with the US might have changed. Secondly, additional research might enrich the analysis by looking in more detail at the White House and its apparent change of stance with the passing of the 2015 act. To this end, researchers might look at Obama's foreign policy in the Middle East in more detail. Identifying a possible tipping point would also be useful. Lastly, additional research could use this case to test Barkin's theory of 'realist constructivism'. Should a reconciliation between the two theories be possible in such a format, further research could help elucidate the relationship between the position of power in global politics and the notion of international relations as a social construction, both issues that this thesis speaks to.[161]

On one last note, in October 2018 President Trump signed into law the Hezbollah International Financing Prevention Amendments Act. This added a list of specified sanctions against foreign individuals known to be assisting Hezbollah, agencies or foreign governments which provide support to the group and its networks in relation to drugs trafficking.[162] The CBO estimates that this amendment will cost a further $1 million to implement.[163] This is further evidence of how policy confirms the threat it serves to tackle and hence breeds a perceived need for more policy. Securitisation is thus shown to be a self-fulfilling prophecy.

---

[161] Barkin, J. Samuel, 'Realist Constructivism', *International Studies Review,* 5 (2003), pp. 325-342
[162] 'S. 1595 (115th): Hizballah International Financing Prevention Amendments Act of 2018', GovTrack, https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/115/s1595 (Accessed 26 May 2019)
[163] 'H.R. 3329, Hizballah International Financing Prevention Amendments Act of 2017', Congressional Budget Office, 19 October 2017
https://www.cbo.gov/publication/53218 (Accessed 26 May 2019)

7. Bibliography

7.1 Primary sources

https://catalog.gpo.gov/

https://www.congress.gov/

https://foreignaffairs.house.gov/

https://www.foreign.senate.gov/

https://homeland.house.gov/

https://www.hsdl.org/

https://www.hsgac.senate.gov/

https://intelligence.house.gov/

https://www.intelligence.senate.gov/

https://www.state.gov/

7.2 Published secondary literature

Avon, Dominique, Khatchadourian, Anaïs-Trissa, and Todd, Jane Marie, *Hezbollah: A History of the "Party of God"* (Cambridge MA, 2012)

Balzacq, Thierry (ed.), *Contesting Security* (New York, 2015)

Balzacq, Thierry (ed.), *Securitisation Theory: How Security Problems Emerge and Dissolve* (London, 2011)

Balzacq, Thierry, 'The Three Faces of Securitization, Political Agency, Audience and Context', *European Journal of International Relations*, 11 (2005), pp. 171-201

Barkin, J. Samuel, 'Realist Constructivism', *International Studies Review,* 5 (2003), pp. 325-342

Barthwal-Datta, Monika, 'Strategic narratives and non-state actors', *Critical Studies on Security*, 3 (2015), pp. 328-330

Belli, Roberta, Freilich, Joshua D., Chermak, Steven M., & Boyd, Katharine A., 'Exploring the crime-terror nexus in the United States: a social network analysis of a Hezbollah network involved in trade diversion', *Dynamics of Asymmetric Conflict*, 8 (2015), pp. 263-281

Berti, Benedetta, 'Revel politics and the state: between conflict and post-conflict, resistance and co-existence', *Civil Wars*, 18 (2016), pp. 118-136

Buzan, Barry, Wæver, Ole, and de Wilde, Jaap, *Security: A New Framework for Analysis* (Colorado, 1998)

Castiglioni, Claudia, 'Obama's Policy Toward Iran: Comparing First and Second Term', *ISPI,* 220 (2013), p. 2

Crick, Emily 'Drugs as an existential threat: An analysis of the international securitisation of drugs', *International Journal of Drug Policy,* 23 (2012), pp. 407-414

Davies, Christopher M., 'House Committee Hearings: Arranging Witnesses', Congressional Research Service, 25 August 2015

Dent, David, *The Legacy of the Monroe Doctrine: A Reference Guide to US Involvement in Latin America and the Caribbean* (Westport, 1999)

Doty, Roxanne Lynn, 'Foreign Policy as Social Construction: A Post-Positivist Analysis of U.S. Counterinsurgency Policy in the Philippines', *International Studies Quarterly,* 37 (1993), pp. 297-320

Elwood, William N., *Rhetoric in the War on Drugs: The Triumphs and Tragedies of Public Relations* (Westport, 1994)

Esch, Joanne, 'Legitimizing the 'War on Terror': Political Myth in Official-Level Rhetoric', *Political Psychology*, 31 (2010), pp. 357-391

Fairclough, Norman, *Analyzing Discourse, Textual analysis for Social Research* (London, 2003)

Fairclough, Norman, *Critical Discourse Analysis* (Boston, 1995)

Goforth, Sean, *Axis of Unity Venezuela, Iran & the Threat to America* (Washington, 2012)

Hansen, Lene, *Security as Practice: Discourse analysis and the Bosnian War* (London, 2006)

Heitshusen, Valerie, 'Senate Committee Hearings: Arranging Witnesses', Congressional Research Service, 6 December 2017

Hesterman, Jennifer L., *The Terrorist- Criminal Nexus: An Alliance of International Drug Cartels, Organised Crime and Terror Groups*, (London, 2013)

Hutchinson, Steven and O'Malley, Pat, 'A Crime–Terror Nexus? Thinking on Some of the Links between Terrorism and Criminality', *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 30 (2007), pp. 1095-1107

Huysmans, Jef, 'Defining Social Constructivism in Security Studies: The Normative Dilemma of Writing Security', *Alternatives,* 27 (2002), pp. 41-62

Jackson, Richard, *Writing the War on Terrorism* (Manchester, 2005)

Jeffreys-Jones, Rhodri, *The CIA and American Democracy,* 3rd ed. (New Haven, 1991), ProQuest eBook

Jørgensen, Marianne W. and Phillips, Louise J., *Discourse Analysis as Theory and Method* (London, 2002)

Katzenstein, J. P. (ed.), *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics* (New York, 1996)

Kruck, Andreas and Schneiker, Andrea, *Researching Non-State Actors in International Security* (London, 2017)

Levitt, Matthew, *Hezbollah: The Global Footprint of Lebanon's Party of God* (Washington, 2013)

Lincoln, Yvonna S., and Guba, Egon G, *Naturalistic Inquiry* (Newbury Park, 1985)

Livingstone, Grace, *America's backyard: The United States and Latin America from the Monroe Doctrine to the War on Terror* (London, 2013), ProQuest eBook

Makarenko, Tamara, 'The Crime-Terror Continuum: Tracing the Interplay between Transnational Organised Crime and Terrorism', *Global Crime,* 6 (2004), pp. 129-145

Makarenko, Tamara, *The Crime-Terror Nexus* (London, 2007)

McCrisken, Trevor, 'Ten years on: Obama's war on terrorism in rhetoric and practice', *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-),* 87 (2011), pp. 781-801

McDonald, Matt, 'Securitisation and the Construction of Security', *European Journal of International Relations*, 14 (2008), pp. 563-587

McSweeney, Bill, 'Identity and Security: Buzan and the Copenhagen School', *Review of International Studies*, 22 (1996), pp. 81-93

Mulbah, Susanne *State-building Interventions in Post-Conflict Liberia: Building a State without Citizens*, (London, 2017)

Norton*,* Augustus R., *Hezbollah: A Short History* (Princeton, 2007)

O'Hern, Steven, *Iran's Revolutionary Guard: The Threat That Grows While America Sleeps* (Washington, 2012)

Petras, James and Veltmeyer, Henry, *Power and Resistance: US Imperialism in Latin America* (Leiden, 2015)

Realuyo, Celina B., 'The Terror-Crime Nexus: Hezbollah's Global Facilitators', *PRISM*, 5 (2014), pp. 116-131

Sexton, Jay, *The Monroe Doctrine: Empire and Nation in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York, 2011)

Smith, Joseph, *The United States and Latin America: A history of American diplomacy, 1776-2000* (Abingdon, 2005), ProQuest eBook

Stritzel, Holger, 'Towards a Theory of Securitization: Copenhagen and Beyond', *Europe Journal of International Relations*, 13 (2007), pp. 357-383

Taureck, Rita, 'Securitization theory and securitization studies', *Journal of International Relations and Development*, 9 (2006), pp. 53-61

Wæver, Ole, 'Aberystwyth, Paris, Copenhagen: New Schools in Security Theory and the Origins between Core and Periphery', ISA Conference: Montreal, (2004), pp. 17-20

Wæver, Ole, 'Securitisation and Desecuritisation', in Ronnie D. Lipschutz (ed,), *On Security*, (New York,1995), pp.46-86

Wæver, Ole, 'Security, Insecurity and Asecurity in the West-European NonWar Community', in Emmanuel Adler and Michael Barnett (eds.), *Security Communities*, (Cambridge, 1998), pp. 69–118

Werd de, Peter, 'Critical Intelligence: Analysis by Contrasting Narratives Identifying and analyzing the most relevant truths' (Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Utrecht, 2018)

7.3 Other secondary literature

'Arrested and expelled: drug trafficking and terrorism fears rising in Lebanon', The Global Initative, 16 August 2016
https://globalinitiative.net/arrested-and-expelled-drug-trafficking-and-terrorism-fears-rising-in-lebanon/ (Accessed 14 February 2019)

Bergman, Judith, 'Iran in the US Backyard', Gatestone Institute International Policy Council, 8 May 2018
https://www.gatestoneinstitute.org/12268/iran-latin-america (Accessed 16 February 2019)

Bowers, Becky, 'Mitt Romney says Hezbollah in Latin America poses an imminent threat to the United States', Politifact, 23 November 2011
https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2011/nov/23/mitt-romney/mitt-romney-says-hezbollah-latin-america-poses-imm/ (Accessed 22 April 2019)

Byman, Daniel L., 'Hezbollah: Most Powerful Political Movement in Lebanon', Council on Foreign Relations, 29 May 2008
https://www.cfr.org/interview/hezbollah-most-powerful-political-movement-lebanon?breadcrumb=%252F (Accessed 14 February 2019)

'Chapter 2. Country Reports: Western Hemisphere Overview', US Department of State, 5 August 2010
https://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/crt/2009/140888.htm (Accessed 19 February 2019)

'Chapter 2. Country Reports: Western Hemisphere Overview', US Department of State, 18 August 2011
https://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/crt/2009/140888.htm (Accessed 22 April 2019)

'Colombia: EU suspends sanctions against the FARC', European Council, Council of the European Union, 27 September 2016
https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2016/09/27/colombia-eu-suspends-farc/ (Accessed 1 June 2019)

Daddow, Oliver, 'Interpreting Foreign Policy Through Discourse Analysis', The London School of Economics and Political Science, 27 October 2015
http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/politicsandpolicy/interpreting-foreign-policy-through-discourse-analysis/#Author (Accessed 17 January 2019)

Earnest, Josh, 'Statement by the Press Secretary on the Hizballah International Financing Prevention Act of 2015', Obama White House, 18 December 2015
https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2015/12/18/statement-press-secretary-hizballah-international-financing-prevention (Accessed 13 May)

Fang, Lee, 'John Bolton Chairs An Actual "Fake News" Publisher Infamous For Spreading Anti-Muslim Hate', The Intercept, 23 March 2018
https://theintercept.com/2018/03/23/gatestone-institute-john-bolton-chairs-an-actual-fake-news-publisher-infamous-for-spreading-anti-muslim-hate/ (Accessed 4 March 2019)

Fite, Brandon, 'US and Iranian Strategic Competition: peripheral Competition in Latin America and Africa', Centre for Strategic and International Studies, 7 November 2011
https://www.csis.org/analysis/us-and-iranian-strategic-competition-peripheral-competition-involving-latin-america-and (Accessed 22 April 2019

Gato, Pablo and Windrem, Robert, 'Hezbollah builds a Western Base', NBC News, 9 May 2007
http://www.nbcnews.com/id/17874369/ns/world_news-americas/t/hezbollah-builds-western-base/#.XGWBms9Kiv6 (Accessed 16 February 2019)

Goldberg, Jeffrey, 'In the Party of God', The New Yorker, 28 October 2002
https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2002/10/28/in-the-party-of-god-2 (Accessed 14 February 2019)

'H.R. 3329, Hizballah International Financing Prevention Amendments Act of 2017', Congressional Budget Office, 19 October 2017
https://www.cbo.gov/publication/53218 (Accessed 26 May 2019)

'H.R. 3783, Countering Iran in the Western Hemisphere Act of 2012', Congressional Budget Office, 1 May 2012
https://www.cbo.gov/publication/43214 (Accessed 25 May 2019)

'Hezbollah and allies topple Lebanese unity government', BBC News, 12 January 2011
https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-12170608 (Accessed 19 March 2019)

'Hezbollah treasurer' Barakat arrested in Brazil border city, BBC News, 22 September 2018
https://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-45610738 (Accessed 2 March 2019)

'Highway Safety Improvement Program', Federal Highway Administration, 8 February 2017
https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/fastact/factsheets/hsipfs.cfm (Accessed 25 May 2019)

Jackson-Preece, Jennifer, 'Britain risks securitising its future relationship with the EU, The London School of Economics and Political Science
https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/brexit/2017/10/03/brexit-risks-securitising-the-future-relationship-with-the-eu/ (Accessed 26 May 2019)

Masters, Jonathan and Laub, Zachary, 'Hezbollah', Council on Foreign Relations, 3 January 2014
https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/hezbollah (Accessed 16 February 2019)

Meyer, Josh, 'The secret backstory of how Obama let Hezbollah off the hook', Politico, 18 December 2017
https://www.politico.com/interactives/2017/obama-hezbollah-drug-trafficking-investigation/ (Accessed 14 February 2019)

Mohammed, Arsha and Torbati, Yeganeh 'U.S. government sanctions Hezbollah operatives, fundraiser', Reuters, 20 October 2016
https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-hezbollah-idUSKCN12K1WO (Accessed 9 May 2019)

'Monroe Doctrine; 2 December 1823', Yale Law School Lillian Goldman Law Library
http://avalon.law.yale.edu/19th_century/monroe.asp (Accessed 20 May 2019)

Neumann, Vanessa, 'The New Nexus of Narcoterrorism: Hezbollah and Venezuela', Foreign Policy Research Institute, 3 December 2011
https://www.fpri.org/article/2011/12/the-new-nexus-of-narcoterrorism-hezbollah-and-venezuela/ (Accessed 22 November 2018)

'New Federal Grant Helps States Fight Distracted Driving', Charles G. Monnett III & Associations, 30 August 2012
https://carolinalaw.com/blog/new-federal-grant-helps-states-fight-distracted-driving/ (Accessed 25 May 2019)

Pleming, Sue, 'Obama team drops: 'war on terror' rhetoric', Reuters, 31 March 2009
https://www.reuters.com/article/us-obama-rhetoric/obama-team-drops-war-on-terror-rhetoric-idUSTRE52T7MH20090330 (Accessed 21 March 2019)

'Proscribed terrorist groups or organisations', GOV.UK, 12 April 2019
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/proscribed-terror-groups-or-organisations--2 (Accessed 1 June 2019)

'Quick Facts 2016', NHTSA Crash Stats, February 2018
https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/812451 (Accessed 25 May 2019)

'Researching Congressional Documents and Federal Legislative History Using ProQuest: Types of Congressional Documents', University of South Carolina Law Library, 3 December 2015
http://guides.law.sc.edu/federallegislativehistory/ (Accessed 18 February 2019)

'S. 1595 (115th): Hizballah International Financing Prevention Amendments Act of 2018', GovTrack
https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/115/s1595 (Accessed 26 May 2019)

Saliba, Jacob, The Arabs to Our South: The Arab Diaspora in Latin America, Arab American Institute, 16 February 2016
http://www.aaiusa.org/the_arab_diaspora_in_latin_america (Accessed 2 March 2019)

'Sanctions Intelligence Update – Farc: Peace Accord and the Enduring Illicit Finance Threat', The Camstoll Group
https://www.camstoll.com/research/sanctions-intelligence-update-farc-peace-accord-and-the-enduring-illicit-finance-threat/ (Accessed 26 May 2019)

Sullivan, Andy, 'US drug czar calls for end to 'war on drugs'' Reuters, 8 June 2009
https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-drugs-czar-interview/u-s-drug-czar-calls-for-end-to-war-on-drugs-idUSTRE55750K20090608 (Accessed 21 March 2019)

Taj, Mitra, 'Lebanese Detainee in Peru Denies Hezbollah Link, Says Police Coerced Confession', Haaretz, 14 November 2014
https://www.haaretz.com/lebanese-in-peru-denies-hezbollah-link-1.5328779 (Accessed 2 March 2019)

'Text: Obama's Speech in Cairo', The New York Times, 4 June 2009
https://www.nytimes.com/2009/06/04/us/politics/04obama.text.html (Accessed 18 March 2019)

Wemple, Erik, 'Former Obama officials criticize Politico story alleging weakness against Hezbollah', The Washington Post, 21 December 2018
https://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/erik-wemple/wp/2017/12/21/former-obama-officials-criticize-politico-story-alleging-weakness-against-hezbollah/?utm_term=.137ffc41b075 (Accessed 9 May 2019)

Worth, Robert F., 'Biden Arrives in Beirut Ahead of Vote', The New York Times, 22 May 2009
https://www.mercurynews.com/2009/05/22/bidens-election-support-irks-hezbollah/ (Accessed 19 March 2019)

Zwitter, Andrej and Wilde de, Jaap, 'Prismatic Security Expanding the Copenhagen School to the Local Level', Department of International Relations and International Organization (IRIO), University of Groningen,
https://www.academia.edu/528346/Prismatic_Security_Expanding_the_Copenhagen_School_to_the_Local_Level (Accessed 23 May 2019)

8. Appendix

Year	House						Senate					
	Report	Hearing	Resolutions	Records	Bills	Legislation	Report	Hearing	Resolutions	Records	Bill	Legislation
2009		Serial No. 111-61		H6430 H7868							H.R.2134	
2010								S. HRG. 111-700				
2011		Serial No. 112-35	H. RES 247 H. RES 429									
2012				H1525		H.R.6067 H.R.3783		S. HRG. 112-369				
2013		Serial No. 113-6 Serial No. 113-24		H3162								
2014	REPT. 113-543 E3000											
2015		Serial No. 114-15 Serial No. 114-21 Serial No. 114-27 Serial No. 114-34 Serial No. 114-48 Serial No. 114-68			H. R. 1812	H.R. 2297		S. HRG 114-652 S. HRG. 114-69		S8077		
2016		Serial No. 114068 Serial No. 114-70 Serial No. 114-92 Serial No. 114-94 Serial No. 114-155 Serial No. 114-163						S. HRG. 11-722				
2017				H10335								

Table 5. Scheme of Sources