

# **“Ungoverned Spaces,” Non-State Actors, and WMD Proliferation**

**Tomorrow’s Proliferation Pathways:  
Weak States, Rogues, and Non-States,  
Belfast, ME  
July 17-18, 2008**

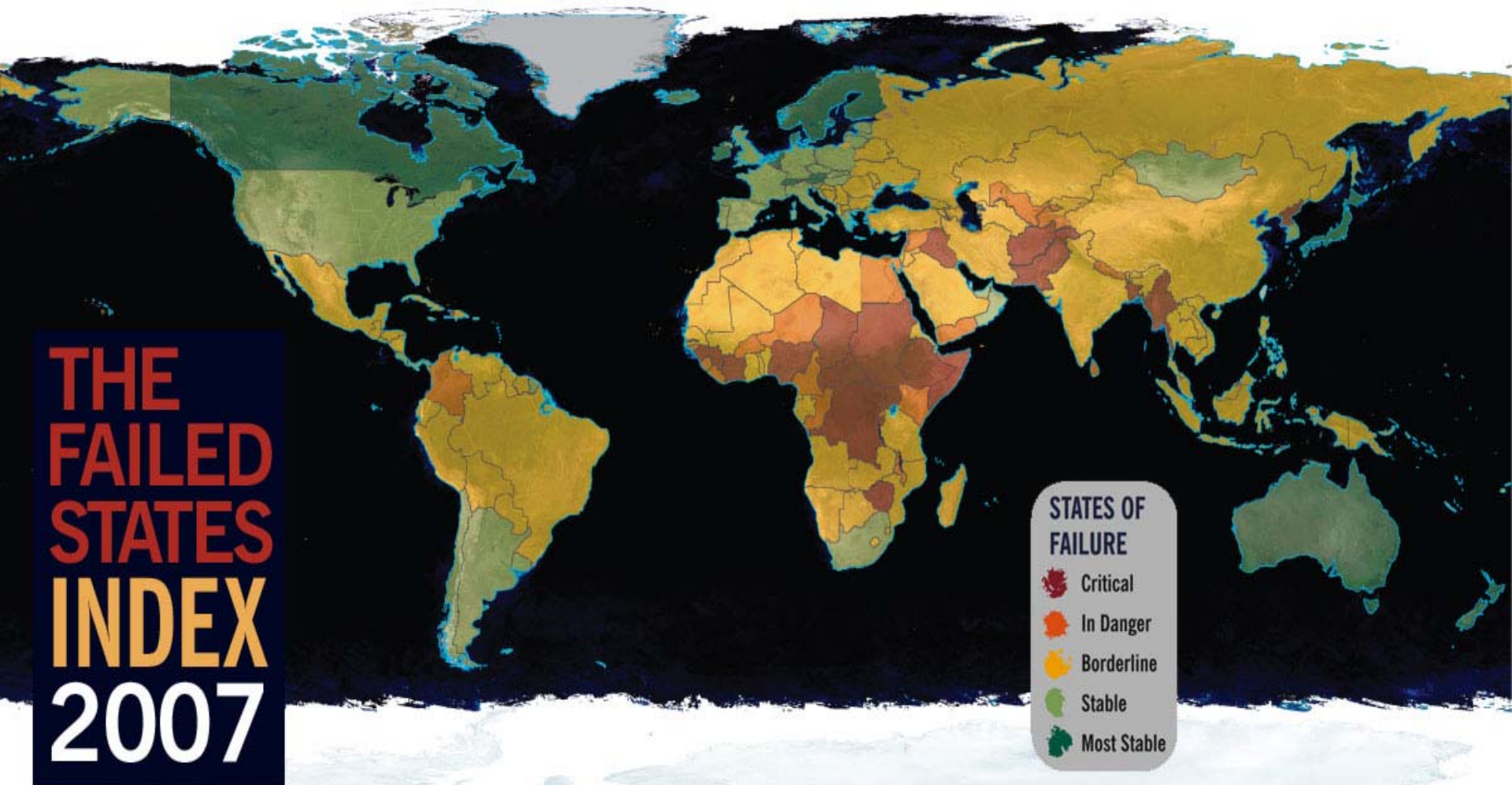
# Outline

- **Why the emergence of ungoverned spaces and non-state actors?**
- **The potential for proliferation pathways**
  - Dangerous spaces
  - NRM trafficking
- **Conclusion**

# Current Concept of Ungoverned Spaces

- Spaces lacking “effective sovereignty” and/or “good governance”
  - Failed or failing states
  - Corrupt states
  - Ideologically undesirable or “rogue” states
  - “Safe havens”
- Seen as a key security threat by USG

# The Dominant Paradigm: The Territorial State System



# NRM Trafficking in Failed States

- Of 60 failed states, 29 involved in 1+ cases of unauthorized NRM activities
  - Countries of NRM origin (e.g., Iraq, DRC, Tajikistan)
  - Transshipment points (e.g., Georgia, Bangladesh, Nepal, Lebanon)
  - Seeking NRM (e.g., Iran, DPRK, Pakistan)
  - Unable to control NRM and NRM missing (e.g., Nigeria, Georgia, Tajikistan, Bolivia, Philippines)
    - Only 22 of the 60 are participants in IAEA Illicit Trafficking Database
- Pakistan: AQ Khan network; 1979 secured 500 tons of uranium oxide from Niger, via Libya
- Dem Rep of Congo: uranium-rich.
  - Alleged visits from NRM-seeking nationals from DPRK and other countries
  - Nov. 2003 French news report that Al Qaeda bought a case of enriched uranium there

# The Apex of the Territorial State-System was 1960s Western Europe

- **Effective sovereignty: control over the use of force, revenues and resources**
- **Good governance: rule of law, transparency and constitutional states**
- **Legitimacy: states responsible to publics, publics loyal to state and its laws**
- **Welfare: state intervention to promote economic growth and social equality**

# Current context of governance

- Territorial states are supposed to provide governance, but they often don't or won't
- Neo-liberal ideological context: state shouldn't provide capacity and services—greater role for private sector, NGOs or IGOs
- Globalization and information-communication technologies:
  - Non-state actors—from TNCs to NGOs to IGOs—play a more prominent and important role in governance at all levels

# Softened Sovereignty: A different paradigm

- A “multicentric” world exists along side the state-centric world, where multiple spheres of authority operate (Rosenau)
- Different lenses to focus on proliferation pathways
  - Dangerous spaces
  - Other governors than states

# Dangerous Spaces (Williams )

## ■ Strong states with governance gaps

- No-go zones in cities
- Rural insurgencies
- Virtual diasporas (London 7/7 and Glasgow bombings)
- Immigrants and radicalization (French riots)
- Refugees and “uncaptured urbanites” in South Africa (Landau)

## ■ Weak states with capacity gaps, functional holes

- Other actors become surrogates for the state (organized crime in FSU)
- Tribal regions and borders (Afghanistan/Pakistan, Yemen/Saudi Arabia, Central Asia)

# Dangerous Spaces

## ■ Alternatively governed spaces

- Warlords, insurgents,
- Social movements, tribes and clans
- Hybrids with state cooperation (favelas)
- Transnational linkages

# Dangerous Spaces

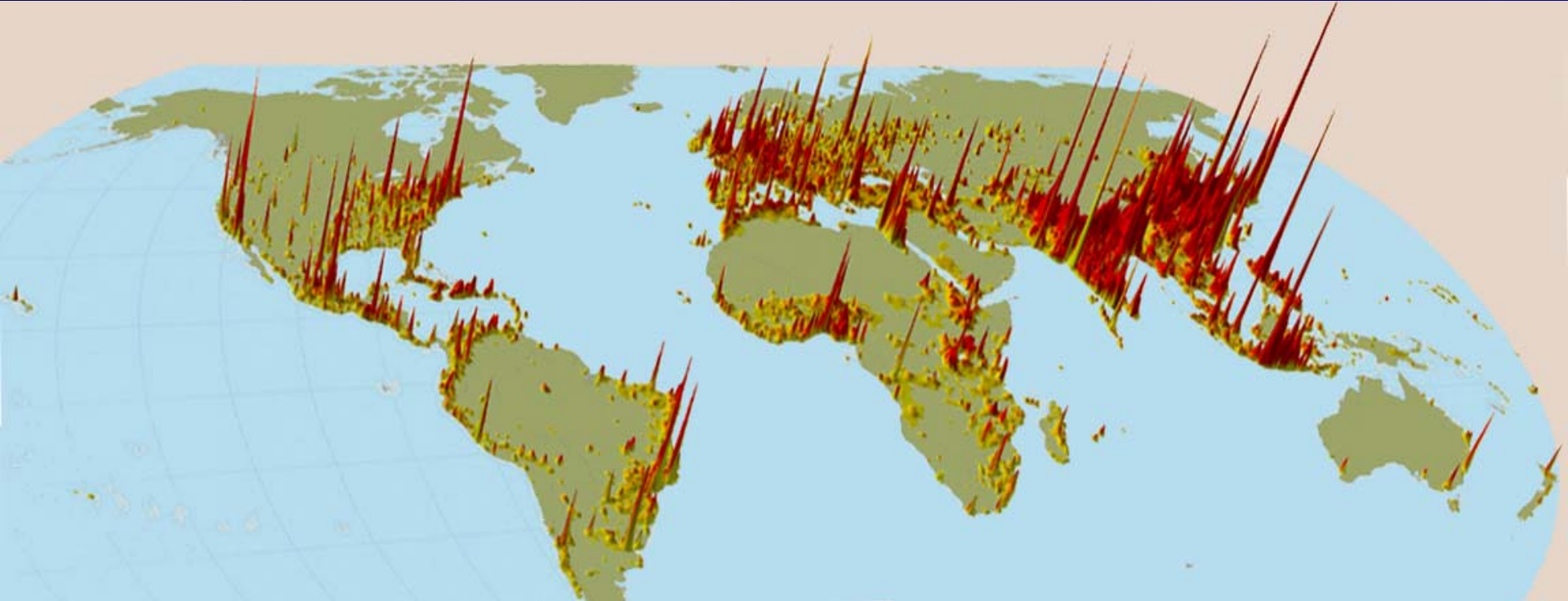
## ■ **Confrontational Spaces: Border Zones and Prisons**

- **Export environments: 850-900 loosely regulated Export Processing Zones today (UAE as proliferation hub)**
- **Magnets for illegal flows**
  
- **Paradox of Prisons –**
  - **Monument to state authority and its limits**
  - **Radicalization–Jamal Ahmidan and Madrid**
  - **Friendship and affiliation on the inside become basis cooperation on the outside**

# Dangerous Spaces

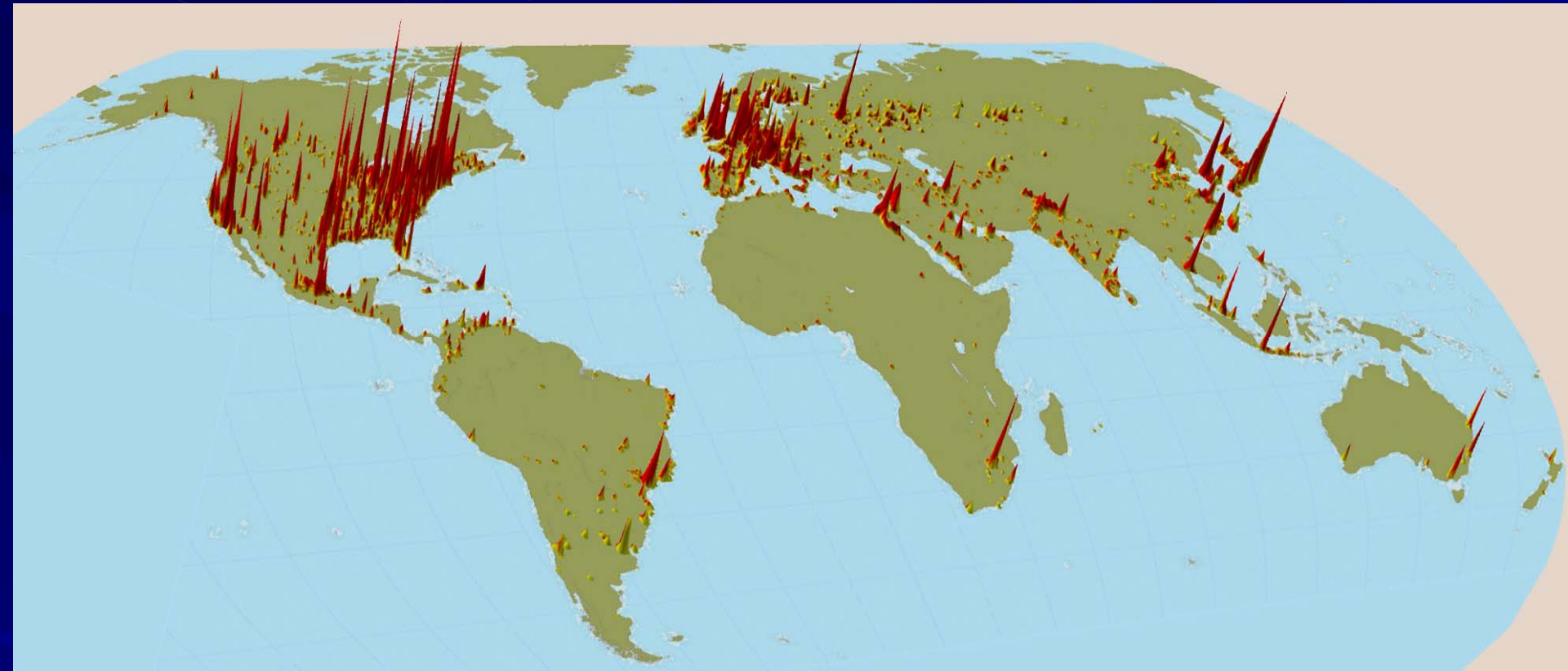
- **Concentrated spaces, zones of exclusion and “feral cities”**
  - Growth of slums – 1.2 to 1.4 billion soon
  - Sharp juxtaposition of wealth and poverty
  - Pernicious interactions with unemployment and youth bulge
  - Key part of global connectivity - transmit crime and disease

# Challenges for State Governance: Urbanization



**Fifty percent of the world's population lives in cities, a proportion that continues to increase in both rich and poor countries.**  
**(Florida)**

# Light Emissions



**Light emissions are a general measure of economic, particularly industrial, activity. Many cities with large populations barely register in terms of aggregate or per capita productivity.**

Anne Clunan, NPS

# Dangerous Spaces

## ■ The Space of Dangerous Flows

- Digital flows – cyberspace as both venue and channel
- Dirty money
- Illicit economies
  
- These overlap and interpenetrate the others

## ■ Look for areas of overlapping spaces as foci for pathways

# Nuclear Trafficking in Ungoverned Spaces and Failed States, 1991-2006 (Zaitseva)

- **Not all ungoverned spaces equally problematic for NRM proliferation**
- **Most problematic:**
  - Those that have own NRM
  - Those geographically located between potential supplier and end-user states
  - In places where dangerous spaces overlap

# Chechnya

- **Most problematic of all others put together**
- **Multiple cases of NRM trafficking and threats to use NRM**
  - 1995 cesium 137 in Ismailovsky Park in Moscow
  - 2000 radiological material attached to mine defused in Argun, Chechnya
  - 450 cubic meters of missing radioactive waste
  - Multiple cases of attempted theft of radioactive sources within Chechnya
  - Chechens allegedly trafficking in NRM stolen outside of Chechnya as well, Chechnya as transshipment point
  - Unknown if Al Qaeda efforts to use Chechens to get NRM succeeded or not
- **Russian gov't from 2000 attempts to recover NRM**
  - 80 sources recovered 2000-2003, 12 missing

# Abkhazia, Republic of Georgia

- **Strategic Location: South Caucasus major drug smuggling route for past 15 years between Europe, Mid East, Asia**
- **Abkhazia a safe haven for smugglers**
- **No record of NRM transit across Abkhazia**
- **2 Thefts of NRM**
  - **Between 650 g.-2 kg. of HEU enriched to 90% stolen from research institute in Sukhumi between 1992-1997**
    - **Only known theft of weapons-usable NRM which did NOT result in its subsequent recovery**
  - **Medical radiological source with cesium-137. Stolen for its lead casing, cesium discarded.**
- **Like Chechnya but on a smaller scale, Abkhazia has lost control of its NRM**

# South Ossetia, Republic of Georgia

- **No reported thefts or seizures of NRM**
- **But sting operation involving 79.5 g of weapons-usable uranium (89% HEU) initiated there in 2006**
  - North Ossetian/Russian citizen attempts sale of HEU to undercover Georgians (intel from US)
  - South Ossetia doesn't require visas for North Ossetian residents
- **Perpetrator may have been a drug smuggler**
  - If so, suggests that feared link-up between drug trafficking networks and NRM is happening in South Ossetia

# Nagorno-Karabakh

- **20% of Azerbaijan's territory controlled by Karabakh army**
  - 132 km of border with Iran not under Azerbaijani control
- **No known NRM trafficking incidents**
- **But its geographic location between countries with high number of nuclear smuggling cases (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkey) and border with Iran make it perfect transshipment point**
- **Can't verify Azerbaijan govt claims of NRM trafficking because of no knowledge of what occurring in Nagorno-Karabakh**

# Transdniestria

- **1992 Thieves stole container of cesium 137 and threatened to detonate if fighting didn't stop**
- **No other recorded incidents**
- **But Ukraine has prevented several NRM smuggling efforts at border with Transdniestria so it appears to be a conduit**
- **Moldova itself a significant player in nuclear black market**
  - 6 thefts & seizures within Moldova from 1992-2006
  - 17 others where NRM seized from Moldovan nationals abroad or smuggled to/from/through Moldova
  - 2 cases of HEU seizures smuggled through Moldova

# FARC-controlled areas of Colombia

- **Post 9/11 US intel that Al Qaeda seeking uranium from FARC**
  - No confirming or disconfirming evidence
- **Feb 2006 13.5 kg of depleted uranium seized**
  - No connection to FARC, though sellers may have been trying to contact them to sell
- **No other known reported incidents**
- **Africa: No known incidents, though permissive conditions (Piombo)**

# How big a problem?

- **Small-scale relative to all smuggling**
  - IAEA: gov't confirmed cases: 1079 between 1993-2006
  - DSTO: 1704 cases between 1991-2006
  - Real number is higher
    - E.g. Chinese experts: ca. 300 cases of theft/loss of NRM over 1988-1998 never reported to IAEA
- **27 of these cases involved weapons-grade materials**
- **Data source: Database on Nuclear Smuggling, Theft and Orphan Radiation Sources (DSTO)**
  - Gov't-confirmed incidents
  - Open source reports
  - Nuclear and radiological materials (NRM)
- **Problems with data collection:**
  - Open source only gets a small number of cases because of lack of access (Kosovo, Waziristan, Burma, S. Philippines, Indonesian islands, Somalia)
  - IAEA Illicit Trafficking Database—only 95 of 192 countries participate
- **Strong likelihood of underreporting**

# Conclusions

- **Empirical record:**
  - mainly radiological smuggling;
  - CBW seen efforts to develop
  - Little impact or success
  - Conventional weapons are still easier and more legitimate
- **Continue to implement existing countermeasures but recognize the limits of state-building strategies**
- **Focus on who governs these spaces, not governments**
  - Fact of softened sovereignty
  - Nexus of dangerous spaces as pathways
  - Best information may come from nongovernmental intel networks