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ASSOCIATED PROGRAMS: Strategic Futures, Seven Revolutions, Transnational Threats Project, Militancy and the Arc of Instability in South Asia, The Future of Al Qaeda and Associated Movements (AQAM), Northern Distribution Network (NDN), Open Source, Trusted Information Network for Counterterrorism

Thomas Sanderson directs the CSIS Transnational Threats Project, where he investigates terrorism, insurgency, criminal networks, global trends, and intelligence issues. He has conducted field research in 70 countries and has authored or coauthored dozens of reports, as well as opinion pieces and articles for the Economist, New York Times, Washington Post, CTC Sentinel, and Harvard Asia-Pacific Review. He has testified before the U.S. Congress, provided expert commentary for the media and courts of law, and engaged a variety of sources, including journalists, terrorists, traffickers, foreign intelligence officials, business leaders, nongovernmental organizations, clergy, and academia.

Sanderson recently completed a multiphase study of emerging trends in terrorism covering South Asia, the Middle East, and Africa—partnering with relevant CSIS regional programs. Current research is focused on jihadi-salafi “foreign fighters,” Libya, Russia, and Central Asia. He has codirected an al Qaeda futures study and numerous additional studies on Central Asia. From 2004 to 2009, he directed studies on using open source intelligence networks to better analyze violent extremism in Europe and Southeast Asia. He serves as a course instructor and consultant for the U.S. government and the private sector on terrorism, geopolitics, and global threats. From 1998 to 2002, he worked for Science Applications International Corporation, conducting research on weapons of mass destruction and terrorism for the Defense Intelligence Agency’s office of counterterrorism. In 2005, Sanderson was a fellow at the American Academy in Berlin, Germany, and in 2001, he held a fellowship at Fudan University in Shanghai, China. He holds a B.A. from Wheaton College in Massachusetts and an M.A. from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University.