

## Treating or Feeding the Disease?: Elite Capture of the Security Sector

### Description

Is it possible to disentangle the problems contributing to elite capture of the security sector? What can and should the US government do when engaging with partners where the risk for elite capture is high? What does elite capture look like in Afghanistan versus Mexico?

In Episode 83 of the Irregular Warfare Podcast, our guests address these and other issues presented by the persistent and complex problem of when elites take over elements of the security sector in a given country. The episode features a departure from the typical two-guest format, with Ambassador [Anne Patterson](#), and [Karl Eikenberry](#) (LTG, retired), alongside a third guest, security governance expert, [Dr. Louis-Alexandre Berg](#) from Georgia State University and the US Institute of Peace. The three were contributors to the recent [USIP report](#) “Elite Capture and Corruption of Security Sectors.”

The guests first describe the problem of elite capture of the security sector and then discuss some of the confounding factors that make this problem so challenging to address. They explain how their report on [Elite Capture and Corruption in Security Sectors](#) came about and why it was necessary. Drawing on their official experiences, they then discuss peculiar challenges for disentangling trends in elite capture in Afghanistan and Mexico. Our guests conclude with brief thoughts on implications for Great Power Competition. You can hear the full episode, hosted by [Julia McClenon](#), below. And be sure to subscribe to the *Irregular Warfare Podcast* on [Apple Podcasts](#), [Stitcher](#), [TuneIn](#), [Spotify](#), or your favorite podcast app so you don’t miss an episode!

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