

ANU PUBLIC LECTURE 2009

THE ACCIDENTAL GUERRILLA: FIGHTING SMALL WARS IN THE MIDST OF A BIG ONE

Dr David Kilcullen
Counterterrorism Strategist



Monday 1 June, 12–1pm

HC Coombs Lecture Theatre, Building 8a, Fellows Rd, ANU

This lecture is free and open to the public. Please register attendance with ANU Events.

Enquiries E: events@anu.edu.au T: 02 6125 4144

In the first few years of the post-9/11 era, the established models for fighting 'small wars' proved distressingly ineffective against resilient insurgencies in Iraq and Afghanistan. As the insurgents fought Western armies to a stalemate, it was clear that a new approach was necessary. Dr David Kilcullen, a former Australian army officer, and one of the world's most influential experts on guerrilla warfare, became a key architect of the West's revamped military strategy. As the senior advisor to General David Petraeus in Iraq, Kilcullen's revolutionary approach to counterinsurgency was an intellectual foundation for 'the Surge' of 2007.

Kilcullen will uncover the face of modern warfare, illuminating both the global challenge, the 'War on Terrorism,' and small wars across the world in Afghanistan, Iraq, Indonesia, Thailand, East Timor, and Pakistan. He will explain that today's conflicts are a complex hybrid of contrasting trends that America has tended to conflate, blurring the distinction between local and global struggles, and thereby enormously complicating the challenges. The West has continually misidentified insurgents with limited aims and legitimate grievances—'accidental guerrillas'—as members of a unified worldwide terror network.

David Kilcullen is one of the world's leading experts on guerrilla warfare and, rarely among his kind, has a PhD (UNSW) in political anthropology. He has served in every theatre of the 'War on Terror' since 9/11 as special advisor for counterinsurgency to Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, senior counterinsurgency advisor to General David Petraeus in Iraq, and chief counterterrorism strategist for the US State Department. He is a former Australian army officer with combat experience in South-East Asia and the Middle East.

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