

**College of International Security Affairs
National Defense University**

Elena Pokalova, Ph.D.

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Education

Ph.D., Kent State University
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Research Interests

Terrorism and counterterrorism
Radicalization
CVE
Conflict resolution
The Caucasus
Russia and Post-Communist Transformations
Ethnic separatism

Dr. Elena Pokalova is Department Chair of International Security Studies Department and Associate Professor at the College of International Security Affairs (CISA), National Defense University (NDU), Washington, DC. She is an expert in security issues, with a focus on terrorism, counterterrorism, and ethnic conflict. Dr. Pokalova has a vast record of publications with her articles featuring in such journals as *Terrorism and Political Violence* and *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*. She has regularly contributed her expertise to such media outlets as the Voice of America and Stratfor. Her book “[Chechnya’s Terrorist Network: The Evolution of Terrorism in Russia’s North Caucasus](#)” explores the developments in terrorism and counterterrorism in Russia. Her book “[Returning Islamist Foreign Fighters: Threats and Challenges to the West](#)” examines the return home of Western foreign fighters from Syria and Iraq. The book analyzes the challenges returnees pose to their home countries and the major approaches in addressing them. Dr. Pokalova has worked on a number of CVE projects in multiple countries and has served as an advisory board member for several organizations.