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## **New terrorists step up to replace those jailed**

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A FRESH crop of home-grown jihadis have been groomed ready to step up and replace the leaders of Australian terror cells who have been arrested or jailed.

International terrorism expert Rohan Gunaratna said home-grown terrorists were the biggest security threat to Australia and said as much as 80 per cent of the nation's counter-terrorism resources were being dedicated to monitoring, tracking and targeting them.

Dr Gunaratna, the author of *Inside Al-Qaeda*, also revealed that a number of home-grown terror suspects were under investigation by Australian law enforcement agencies.

"Terrorist structures in Australia, Canada and Europe are such that when a leader is arrested a member becomes a leader and a supporter or a sympathiser moves up to become a member," he said.

Dr Gunaratna said Britain had already experienced that scenario with its July 7 bombings in 2005. Some of the bombers had moved up from being supporters and sympathisers to active members and leaders of the cell within a couple of years.

"Because the ideology of the terrorist groups is quite robust we are seeing the continuous generation and the formation of new terrorist cells," he said.

Dr Gunaratna was speaking at Macquarie University's Centre for Policing Intelligence and Counter Terrorism in Sydney yesterday.

He said numerous terrorist cells were operating in Australia, particularly providing support services such as propaganda, recruitment and financing.

He said the pace of radicalisation in Australia had been increased because of the US invasion of Iraq. "It is having a profound impact on the radicalisation of Muslims in this country," he said.

